

WESTERN Recorder

December 18, 2012

Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

Volume 186, Issue 49

Embracing the unengaged

Churches urged to connect with often forgotten cultures, share the gospel with them

By Will Stuart

South America—Grace, a member of one of the indigenous tribes of South America, speaks with intensity about the future of her people.

There are outsiders who would keep them in something of a museum—as living history, she says—stuck in a time that has not been a reality for generations.

It's not what she wants. Yet the issue is not an easy one.

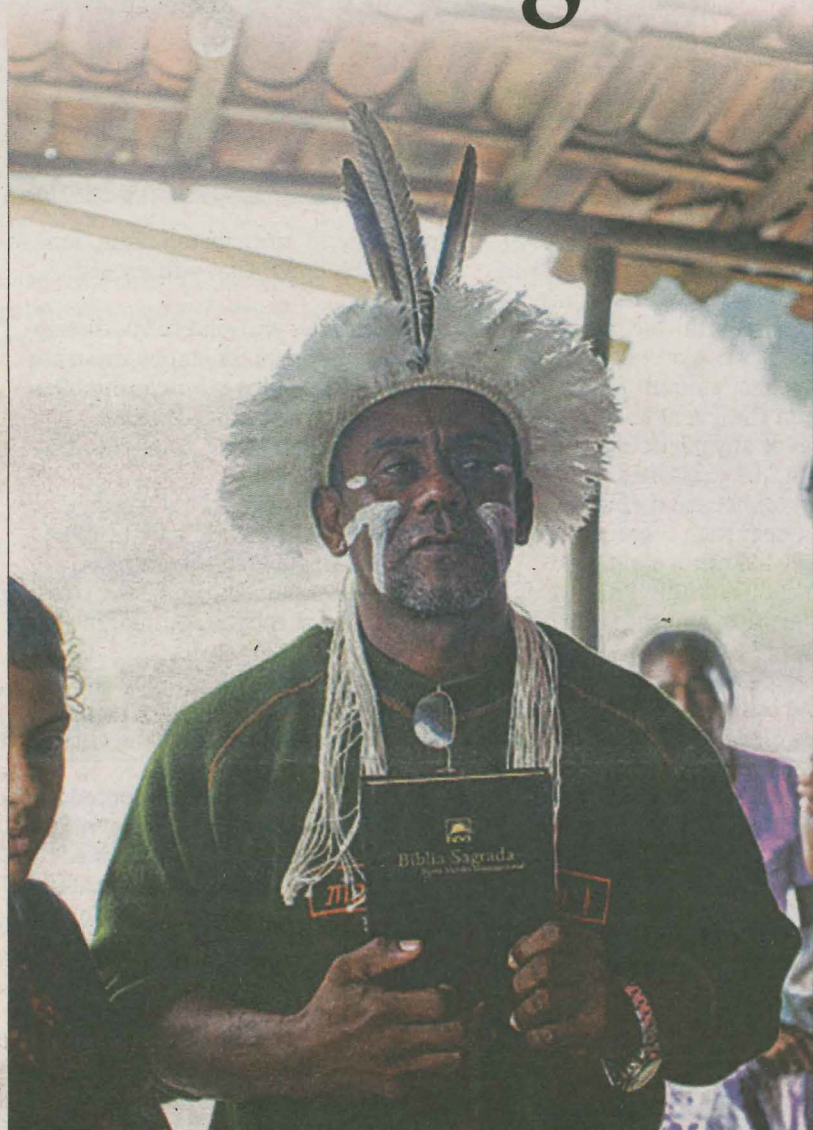
"A lot of our people don't even know our" culture, she noted. "They say they do, but they hide behind it."

Grace said she wants her people to move ahead—to "win." She wants them to take advantage of all that is going on about them while retaining the best of their culture.

That means they will have to change, she explained.

Grace has been active—in her words, militant—in the Indian rights movement. She and her sister have traveled to New York and Florida for conferences. They were part of a group that surrounded the Catholic church in a nearby town and demanded their land back, threatening to breach

□ See *Embracing the Unengaged* ... Page 8



NEVER HEARD THE GOSPEL One of the elders of an indigenous people group accepts a Bible from strangers visiting the tribe during an early contact with this unengaged, unreached people group. These tribal people prefer to hold on to their traditional faith—but they've never heard a clear gospel presentation. (IMB photo)



Plush puppies become LifeWay stores' ministry

By Jon Wilke

Southaven, Miss.—What started as an idea sparked by a hospitalized child has grown into a "Jesus Loves Me Plush Dog" outreach through LifeWay Christian Stores.

Sherry Parnell started the Christmas Plush Donation at the LifeWay store she was managing in Southaven, Miss., just outside of Memphis, Tenn.

But call it her idea, and she is quick to say it was all God's—that He spoke to her out of a crisis her family experienced.

In 2006, Parnell's infant grandson, Will, was hospitalized for a serious illness during Christmas. A year later, Parnell was thanking the Lord that Will was healthy and wasn't in the hospital. That's when God reminded her that other families were experiencing what her family had been through.

□ See *Plush puppies* ... Page 6



Kentuckian called to Israel to reach 'my people'

By Robin Cornet Bass

Louisville—Everything for the past 15 years has prepared Joan England* for this moment.

Her missions trips to 13 foreign counties.

Her university training.

Her trials of doubt—met with reassurance from the Holy Spirit.

Each experience preparing the 23 year old to sell most of her possessions, leave her family and friends behind, and answer God's call to become a

missionary in Israel.

Growing up as a Southern Baptist in Louisville, England said she heard something most Christians will not hear until the day they stand face to face with their Savior. God spoke to her, England said.

"I'm hearing impaired," England explained, "and when I was 8 years old, I had my hearing aids out, so I should only be able to hear thunder really clearly. But I audibly heard the voice of God, like you hear mine right now. It was perfect. Deep, rich and beautiful, just like it says in the Psalms. And He

□ See *Called to serve* ... Page 3



Just a Reminder...

The Western Recorder offices will be closed Dec. 24-Jan. 1.

Look for our first issue of the new year Jan. 8.

Merry Christmas from the Western Recorder staff

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Western Recorder 12-18-2012

Mission Board meeting closes out 'eventful year' for convention

By Drew Nichter

Louisville—The final piece of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's year-long reorganization puzzle was fit into place last week with the hiring of a full-time worship and music consultant.

The agenda for the Mission Board's December meeting last week was light but significant as it closed out a "very eventful year in the life of the KBC," as Executive Director Paul Chitwood described it.

The unanimous approval of Jason Stewart as the KBC's worship and music consultant represents the last "key position" filled to "max out the intended staffing structure of the KBC Mission Board," administrative committee chairman, Adam Greenway, told board members.

Stewart will serve as part of the KBC's newly created church consulting and revitalization team. He has served as the minister of music and worship at Parkland Baptist Church in Louisville since 2009. Prior to that, he served in a similar role at Louisville's Shively Baptist Church for five years.

In addition to the two Louisville churches, Stewart has served as a music minister at Valley Creek Baptist Church in Elizabethtown and at churches in Alabama, Georgia, Indiana and South Carolina. He is a graduate of Jacksonville State University in Alabama and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Stephanie, have two children.

The full-time worship and music consultant position replaces five previous part-time church music consultants employed by the KBC prior to the reorganization. Stewart had held one of those positions, that of the youth music consultant.

Chitwood said combining the five part-time functions into one full-time role "would be a more effective way to minister to our churches."

Stewart's hire is the culmination of a staff reorganization process that was announced at the December 2011 meeting of the Mission Board. Chitwood said at the time he would present a plan for a new staff structure at the board's May meeting.

In early March, all of the KBC's

full-time employees were offered early retirement or voluntary resignation packages. More than 30 KBC staff members accepted the offers or found other employment, while some contract employees were not retained.

In May, Chitwood's plan for a new convention staff structure was overwhelmingly approved by the Mission Board. The proposal included fewer staff, restructured teams and departments, shifts in responsibility for certain ministries, and a more focused vision statement for the convention.

The new staff structure left 11 positions vacant, all of which now have been filled. Even with the new hires, Chitwood said last week, more than \$900,000 has been cut from the KBC's personnel budget over the past two years.

But with the convention's expedited push to a 50/50 split of Cooperative Program funds to KBC and Southern Baptist Convention ministry causes, further budget cuts are needed, Chitwood noted.

Recommending from where that money will come is the task of an advisory committee that is studying the KBC's 10 agencies and institutions. The group, which has been meeting since October, is reviewing covenant agreements and financial investments the convention makes to each organization.

The KBC's agencies and institutions include: Baptist Healthcare Systems, Campbellsville University, Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Crossings Ministries, Kentucky Baptist Foundation, Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union, Oneida Baptist Institute, Sunrise Children's Services, University of the Cumberland and the Western Recorder.

The 2013-14 Cooperative Program budget goal of \$22.5 million, approved by KBC messengers last month, stipulates that 10 percent of CP funds be allocated as shared expenses between the KBC and the SBC (referred to as "Cooperative Program Resourcing"). Chitwood has noted that the 2014-15 CP budget—and all subsequent budgets—will contain only 7 percent for "CPR"—a difference of 3 percent, or \$675,000, based on the 2013-14 budget.

Chitwood told the Western Recorder last week that the KBC does need to

NEW CONSULTANT

Jason Stewart (center) addresses Mission Board members shortly after they unanimously voted him as the Kentucky Baptist Convention's new worship and music consultant. He is flanked by administrative committee chairman, Adam Greenway (left), and business and finance committee chairman, Don Mathis. (Photos by Robin Cornet Bass)



move allocate approximately \$660,000 more to the SBC, but it has not yet been decided as to how that will be done.

The advisory committee "is aware of that need but has not yet taken up the matter of an exact amount that may be required from the (agencies and institutions) budget or any particular agency or institution," he explained.

Chitwood told board members last week that he sees each organization as a vital ministry to Kentucky Baptists.

"Given the longstanding nature of these relationships, and the fact that each agency and institution feels the same economic strains felt by our churches and our Mission Board, these are intensely difficult decisions," he said.

Chitwood said the advisory committee will have "definite recommendations" to present to the KBC's business and finance committee in late March when it meets to finalize specific budget allocations for 2013-14. The full Mission Board will vote on those budget details in early May.

In other business:

■ Board members approved the distribution of \$225,000 of unspent budget funds and short-term interest funds to several KBC ministry areas. They also voted to withhold \$200,000 in unspent

funds due to "anticipated reductions in non-CP revenue" that will exceed \$150,000.

Among the year-end funds distributed was \$40,000 for statewide strategists working with ethnic ministries, funds which are expected to be matched by the North American Mission Board.

The new disaster relief partnership between the KBC and Baptist Global Response in sub-Saharan Africa received \$25,000. The endeavor was first announced at the KBC annual meeting last month.

The ongoing Send St. Louis partnership was allotted \$15,000 to help train lead pastors who are planting churches in that city.

As part of the strategy adopted by the new church consulting and revitalization team, \$10,000 was earmarked for "church revitalization grants" intended to help churches fund small ministry needs. Such needs will be assessed by the new pastoral ministry consultants as they visit churches throughout their regions, according to team leader Steve Rice.

■ The evangelism and church planting committee adopted a resolution recognizing Keith Inman's 25 years of service to the KBC. Inman has overseen the work of collegiate ministries in the state since 1999 and was the campus minister at Murray State University from 1987-99.

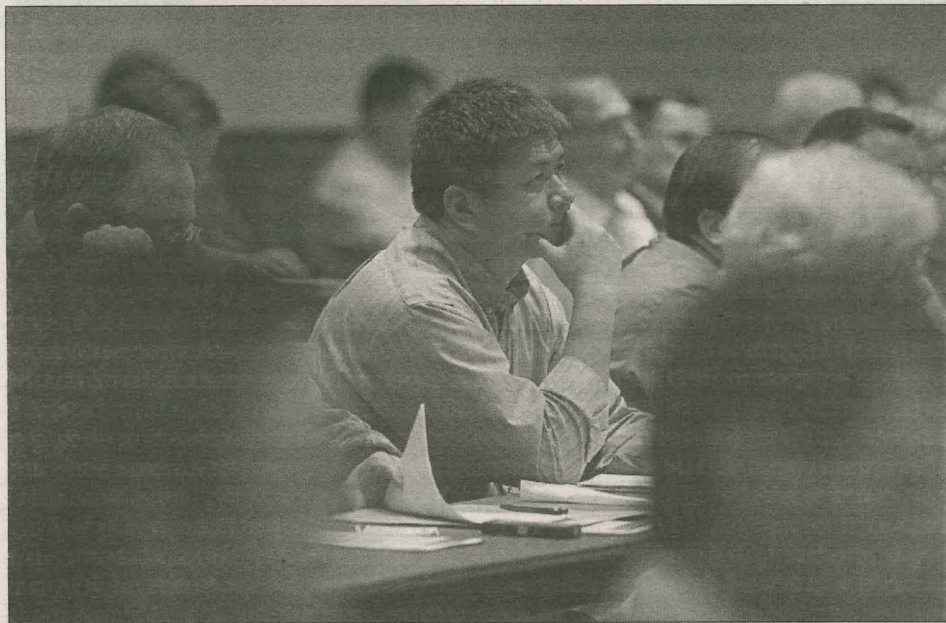
In October, Inman was called as pastor at First Baptist Church of Murray. He will begin his duties there Jan. 1.

With Inman departing, the KBC's administrative committee approved Brian Combs to serve as collegiate evangelism strategist on an interim basis. Combs currently is the Baptist campus minister at Northern Kentucky University.

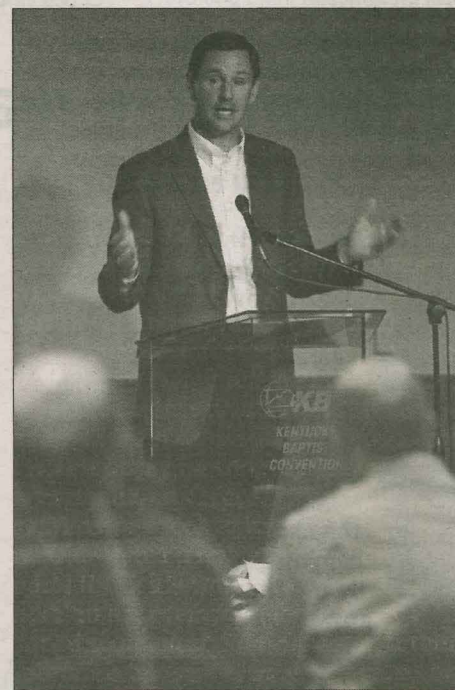
Combs' move to the KBC elicited a call to Jeremy Ellis as interim part-time campus minister at NKU starting Jan. 1. He is on contract with the KBC through May 31.

With the recent move of Mark Whitt from Murray State to LifeWay Christian Resources, the administrative committee tapped Jeff Finley and Susan Harris to serve as co-interim part-time campus ministers at the school. They, too, are on contract through May 31.

Two previously approved part-time interim campus ministers had their contracts extended through the end of May: Paul Gibson at the University of Louisville and Brian Hinton at Kentucky State University. (WR)



BOARD REPORTS Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board members listen intently as they hear reports from heads of the convention's agencies and institutions.



'EVENTFUL YEAR' Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Director Paul Chitwood recaps the events of 2012 for Mission Board members, a year which marked a number of significant changes for the Mission Board staff and the overall mission of the convention.

Page calls for convention-wide, year-long time of prayer in 2013

CALL TO PRAYER

By Roger Oldham

Nashville, Tenn.—Frank Page, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee, is asking Southern Baptists to come together in 2013 for a year of emphasis on prayer "like none we've ever seen before."

"For some time, God has been burdening my heart about prayer and spiritual awakening," Page wrote in a Dec. 11 Baptist Press op-ed piece. "I talked about this a great deal when I was president of the Southern Baptist Convention (2006-08). I saw then what was happening in our nation, in our churches and in our convention. That deep sense of need for revival in our land has only gotten stronger over these past six years."

Page said he will be enlisting others to help elevate the call to prayer throughout the year, sharing historical insights about prayer and spiritual awakening; first-person accounts about spiritual breakthroughs; organized prayer ministry initiatives such as GuideStone's "Widow's Might"; focused prayer reminders, such as prayer for the U.S. Supreme Court justices as they consider the constitutionality of the Defense of Marriage Act and California's Proposition 8; as well as pastoral and theological reflections.

Page noted he is not alone in his call for prayer and spiritual awakening. Earlier this year, SBC President Fred Luter addressed the SBC's Committee on Order of Business expressing his desire to see spiritual awakening and revival sweep across the convention and the nation. Luter, the pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans, said it is his "heart's desire" for the SBC to "work together as one."

"This will not happen unless there's passionate, purposeful revival," Luter told the committee. "My theme (for the 2013 SBC annual meeting) will be centered around revival and prayer. Prayer is the great equalizer, the great energizer."

Luter also has underscored the SBC Call to Prayer scheduled for the month of January. In a Baptist Press story last week, Luter said the call to prayer is "a pivotal opportunity as churches cast a vision for ministry in 2013. This coming January, we will have the chance to gather as a denomination and center our thoughts and prayers on the lost in our communities and around the world."

Tom Elliff, president of the

International Mission Board, has noted the urgency of prayer and spiritual awakening in addressing the IMB's board of trustees.

"The truth of the matter is that if we don't experience spiritual awakening we will forfeit our capacity to effectively partner with others in carrying out the Great Commission," he said at the board's fall trustee meeting last year.

Spiritual awakening "is a missions issue, because if we don't have an awakening in the hearts of Southern Baptists, then the pool out of which we fish for missionar-

ies ... gets smaller and smaller," Elliff explained. "We'll just become another denomination that had its day and has now slipped off into irrelevancy, and when people say 'Southern Baptist Convention,' they will probably say it with a yawn."

Such an awakening, Elliff noted, will require a "totally different" kind of prayer, one that rests on God's character rather than our own.

"I'm afraid that so much of our praying is a shot at getting something done

by God with the thought that if He doesn't come through we've got another plan," Elliff said. "If God doesn't come through, we don't have a plan."

Kevin Ezell, president of the North American Mission Board, has echoed a similar message.

"We're at a pivotal point as Southern Baptists as we do the work to penetrate lostness in North America and around the world," he noted. "We are a people of action and sacrifice, but we also need to be a people of wholehearted prayer. I hope to see amazing things happen as God works through a faithfully-praying people."

Pointing to the SBC Call to Prayer slated for next month, Ezell said the prayer emphasis is designed to be a tool churches can use as they focus prayer on family and friends, their community, the nation and the world, at each point seeking ways to reach those without Christ.

Page also has met with LifeWay Christian Resources President Thom Rainer and discussed Page's burden for prayer. Rainer has pledged to assemble a list of prayer resources to assist the convention and its churches in setting prayer and spiritual awakening as a top priority. (BP)



Frank Page

Called to serve

Continued from page 1

said, "(Joan), go to Jerusalem and teach other people about me."

Working with a Christian missions organization, England plans to move next month to an undisclosed city on Israel's Mediterranean coast and begin her ministry as a self-supporting missionary. Once settled in an apartment complex with about 40 other missionaries, England will begin Hebrew classes at a nearby university. Her studies will provide the needed language training and provide opportunities to develop relationships with local students.

"In Israel, you can't just walk up to people and say, 'Hey, do you believe in Jesus Christ?' If they are under 18, it's completely against the law. You'll get kicked out in a heartbeat," she noted. "With others, they can report you, and you can be kicked out."

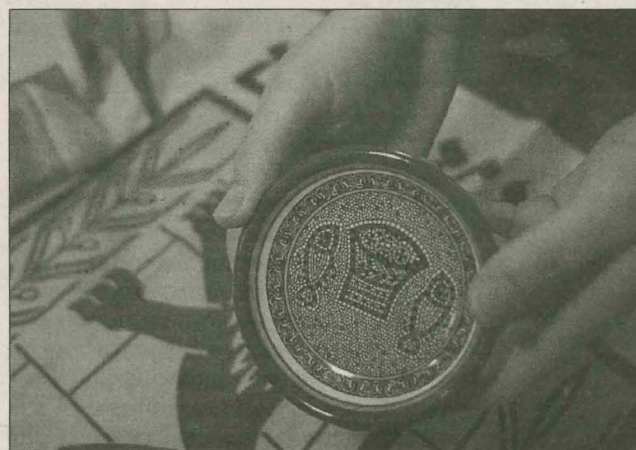
Dangerous mission

England's demeanor is peaceful—even joyful—as she discusses the potential dangers of serving God in a closed country. But she has, after all, been prepared.

"I've been in several dangerous situations before," England said, recalling a mission trip to Cambodia.

From the rooftop of their hotel, England and her teammates could see as many as seven brothels. Each had men guarding the front doors controlling who could come in—and who could leave. Their hearts broke for the women and girls inside. They prayed God would open a path to those held captive.

"We had angels walk with us and protect us," England said. "We went into



WILLING TO GO "The Lord has to bring you to a point where you are willing to die daily to yourself, pick up your cross, to follow Him and leave everything behind," said Joan England, who plans to serve as a missionary in Israel. England, a Kentucky Baptist from Louisville, said God instructed her to go teach the gospel in Israel when she was only eight years old. In her hands, she holds a memento from her first mission trip to the country. (Photo by Robin Cornet Bass)

brothels, and the pimps would see the angels and just flee the scene."

At the time, the team did not understand why men guarding the brothel doors fled in obvious fear. All the team saw was a clear entrance. But word got back to the team: angels had accompanied them.

England said she felt the protective touch of an angel again while in college. It was Feb. 5, 2008, and tornado warnings flashed across a TV screen in her dorm's common area. She and a dozen other girls thought about waiting out the storm in a small adjacent bathroom—but surely they could not all fit, she said.

Then came the roaring sounds of an approaching tornado. Ten of the girls immediately scrambled for the bathroom. England, who was unable to pick

up on what the other girls heard, reacted to their panic and carried a fear-frozen friend to safety.

England said she was about a foot shy of the bathroom threshold when a debilitating pain from the drop in air pressure made her stop where she stood.

"My thought process was: God, this really hurts. God, please make it stop. God, just kill me now. It got that bad," England recalled. "I couldn't do anything. I was totally out of it. And that's when I felt a hand on the small of my back shove me forward. I turned around (and saw) the room being blown apart. A door sailed

through the air right where I had been standing. And I was able to shut the door somehow when there was 240-mph wind."

Later that day, rescue crews were reportedly amazed no one was seriously injured or killed on campus. England remembered it as the day she encountered the providence of God.

A month after England received word of her acceptance as a missionary to Israel, news agencies reported Hamas rockets being fired in record numbers and reaching targets further away from the Gaza Strip than ever before. Some exploded on the outskirts of Jerusalem, one of the cities England plans to visit.

"I would cry because I wanted to be with my people so bad," England said, referring to all 53 people groups

inhabiting Israel. "It doubled my love for them and my passion. It made me want to go even more."

'Walking in His care'

England's parents expressed some concern about sending off the eldest of their three daughters to the historically volatile country. The missions organization has offered reassurance by informing the parents that the apartment complex where England will be staying has a bomb shelter, and, if necessary, missionaries would be evacuated.

"We're not thrilled with the last couple of weeks' news," said England's mother. "We just have to trust Him. She's walking in His care."

England's father said he learned a long time ago that God loves his daughters much more than he ever could. As parents, they are merely stewards of God's children. "And this is what she's called to do," he said.

Part of England's shared mission with the sending organization is to preach unity among God's church in Israel. Because of deep-seated cultural clashes, Jewish Christians and Arab Christians in the country typically do not worship together, England pointed out, and the division between the two groups is crippling the church as a whole.

"I want to eventually get into deaf ministry," she said, describing a group of deaf Christians that meet in secret. "In the deaf church, they are so unified in their deafness that cultural differences don't matter to them."

"It's the beginning of a very fruitful time in Israel," she added. "There are lots of revivals. Our biggest prayer as a team is that God would send more workers. I feel like I'm going home." (WR)

Don't forget the bread

This week's column is written by Coy Webb, disaster relief director for the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Webb and other members of the KBC's missions mobilization team blog at www.kyandbeyond.com.

Together We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

I typically take a list when I shop for groceries. I do it for this reason: In the midst of Oreos, the Breyers Ice Cream and the Doritos, it is easy to forget the bread. It is important in a sea of choices not to forget the main item.

Kentucky Baptists have been invited to partner with Baptist Global Response to serve as the primary responders to regional disasters in Africa.

Working through international missionaries—and Ashland-area natives—Mark and Susan Hatfield, we will partner to send teams to sub-Saharan Africa to assist in the wake of disasters such as floods and brush fires, which can wipe out entire villages and crops.

We also will seek church and associational teams to meet critical human needs through strategic community development projects in the region.

Africa is a vast continent, a place of breathtaking beauty, incredible wildlife, gracious generosity and endless potential. The land is rich in people, diverse tribal cultures and strong family ties. However, it also is an area ravaged by poverty, hunger, disease and war. The AIDS pandemic alone has left more than 16 million orphans and millions upon millions of child-headed homes scattered across the scarred continent.

God is calling Kentucky Baptists, calling us to pray for the people and tribes of Africa. He is calling us to go with disaster relief to flooded communities and villages destroyed by fires. He is calling us to share food and care in refugee camps where thousands have been driven from their homes. He is calling us to send our medically gifted people to facilities deep in the bush to meet basic needs and to offer training in places where few have any medical care.

God is calling us to bring construction skills to restore and build new facilities for Baptist hospitals and ministry centers. He is calling us to dig wells and bring water purification to lands where a child dies every 20 seconds from unclean water. He is calling us to go and minister to seas of orphans scattered all across the vast continent. He is calling us to bring His compassion to the forgotten and the broken in the uttermost places.

I would offer this one reminder as we go: Do not forget the bread. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life, He who comes to Me shall never hunger" (John 6:35).

It is right for us to go bearing medicine, clean water, food and helping hands, but let us not forget the most vital of all: the wonderful, life-changing good news of Jesus Christ.

Remember the bread.

Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

A Christmas hymn, James' experience & our commission

"Go, Tell It on the Mountain" is one of my all-time favorite Christmas hymns. Not only does it have a lively tempo to which it is hard not to bob your head and tap your feet, it also intones the joyous news of the birth of our Savior while capturing the essence of the Great Commission: Because He came, we go!

With scant business on the agenda, the December meeting of the Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board took on a decidedly missionary tone as KBC agency leaders and various committee chairs reported. But one testimony in particular stood out, passionately conveying the same message as the hymn through the exciting experiences of one who actually went to tell it on the mountain—and everywhere.

Like dynamite rearranges things, "when the Holy Spirit is detonated in our lives, He tends to rearrange our priorities," began Tom James, the new first vice president of the state convention. "All of a sudden, His priorities become our priorities; His desire becomes our desire," James said. He observed that the biggest problem Southern Baptists face is not orthodoxy, but orthopraxy, pointedly charging, "Are we practicing what we know and believe is true?"

"We don't need directions to go where the lost are; what we need is willingness and obedience," James said. "People say, 'You can't get lost people to come to church the way you used to,'" he added. "If the Lord were to come back today, He wouldn't go to the lost people and say, 'Why don't you come?' He'd go to the church and say, 'Why don't you go?'"

James and a team from Eastwood Baptist Church in Bowling Green, where he is pastor, recently returned from southeast Asia, where they sought to carry the gospel to a place it has not gone before. Eastwood has ongoing mission partnerships in Asia, Africa and North and South America through which members serve with International Mission Board workers on short-term projects, but they wanted to connect with an unreached people group of about 700,000.

In a recent blog titled, "That's why we go," James shares the same story he told the Mission Board last week about an encounter his group had with a large family in a remote area. The Eastwood group split into two teams to go out in search of members of the unreached people group. If they found any, they wanted to share the hope of Christ and offer a copy of the "Jesus" film in their native language. Two members of the Eastwood group who had served as journeymen in the region would assist as translators.

At first, his team set out on a dirt road, walking up a mountain toward what they thought was an observatory. But they quickly found themselves in trouble when they stumbled upon what appeared to be a military compound. "One soldier, in no uncertain terms, told us we needed to turn and go back down the mountain," James recalled in his blog. "Little did we know, this was the Lord's way of get-

ting us where He wanted us."

They returned to a remote village, ate some fruit for lunch and headed off in another direction. After walking a few miles, they left the main road and started up a dirt road, James recalled. A bit further, they left the road to travel on a path. "We'd been on the path for about three-fourths of a mile when we heard many voices," he said.

They soon saw a house where a large extended family, comprised of 15 members of the unreached people group, lived.

The family had lived there for 50 years, and the group from Eastwood was the first Westerners ever to visit. The group's translator asked permission from the patriarch to tell a story. After she relayed the biblical story from creation to Christ, the family's patriarch replied that he had

never heard that story before, but as she told it, a "great peace came over him."

The Eastwood team then presented a copy of the "Jesus" film and a Bible to the family. It was the first Bible any of them had ever seen. "No one had ever told them the story!" James exclaimed. "That's hard for us to comprehend with churches on every corner. But if we hadn't come, who would have? How many more of this family would have died without every hearing the story?" he asked.

After Thought

By Todd Deaton



FIRST BIBLE Family members on a remote island in southeast Asia look at their very first Bible, written in their native language and given to them by a mission team from Eastwood Baptist Church in Bowling Green, led by Pastor Tom James. (Photo courtesy of Tom James)

James challenged fellow board members not just to give, but go. "It's not enough for us to gather together and discuss our calling as fishermen. It's not enough for us to define what fishing is and to defend it as an occupation. It's not enough to build large and beautiful buildings for fishermen to gather in occasionally and talk about fishing. ... It's not enough to share techniques and learn the latest methods on the market. It's not enough to study the felt needs of fish.

"At some point, somebody's got to wet a hook and fish."

Just as angels shared the glorious news with shepherds on a Bethlehem hillside, let the retelling of the Christmas story this season also remind us of our commission: Because He came, we go ... tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere.

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Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

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Is American culture at war with Christmas?

By Russell Moore

Flipping through magazines on an airplane the other day, I found myself sighing with irritation. A beer advertisement was tagged with the headline, "Silent Nights Are Overrated." A few minutes later, in a second magazine, I came across an ad for a high-end outdoor grill, which read: "Who says it's better to give than to receive?"

My first reaction was one that I've critiqued in others, to take some sort of personal, or at least tribal, offense: "Would they advertise in Turkey during Ramadan with the line, 'Fasting is Overrated?' or by asking in India, 'Who says everything is one with the universe?'"

I was missing the point—and that matters.

Every year about this time, there's a lot of hubbub about a so-called "war on Christmas." In some instances, there are legitimate questions of religious liberty involved and complicated church/state questions with which we ought to be concerned. More commonly, though, the outrage is directed toward the commercial marketplace for replacing "Merry Christmas" with "Happy Holidays" and so on.

As Christians, we ought to recognize that a militant pull toward what Richard John Neuhaus called a "naked public square" is bad for people of any and all religious traditions. But there's a difference between, for instance, standing against a school system penalizing a child for writing "Merry Christmas" on her "holiday card" and the kind of huffing and puffing we do when commercial marketers don't "get" our Christian commitments.

I should have thought about the fact that the advertising agencies behind this beer company and this grill corporation are trying to sell products, not offend constituencies. Taking shots at any group's religious beliefs isn't good economics, and that's just the point. I'm willing to bet whoever dreamed up these ad campaigns didn't "get" at all that they might be making fun of Jesus Christ.

Madison Avenue probably didn't trace through that

the song "Silent Night" is about the holy awe of the dawning incarnation in Bethlehem. To them, it's just a Christmas song, part of the background music in our culture this time of year. Saying it's overrated probably didn't feel any more "insensitive" to these copywriters than making a joke about, say, decking the halls or reindeer games or Heat Miser and Cold Miser.

COMMENTARY

And they probably never thought about the fact that the statement, "It is better to give than to receive," is a quotation from Jesus (Acts 20:35). To them, it probably just seems like a Benjamin Franklin-style aphorism. It's the same kind of thing that happens when someone says "scarlet letter" without recognizing Hawthorne or "to be or not to be" while not knowing the difference between Hamlet and Shrek.

We ought not get outraged by all that, as though we were some protected class of victims. We ought to see instead the ways that our culture is less and less connected with the roots of a basic knowledge about Christianity. Many, especially in the culture-making wing of American life, see Christmas in the same way they see Hanukkah. They know about Menorahs and dreidels, but not about the Maccabean fight.

That ought not make us angry. Instead, it ought to give us an opportunity to understand how we look to our neighbors. They see us more in terms of our trivialities than in terms of the depths of meaning of incarnation and blood atonement and the kingdom of Christ. They know something about "Silent Night," just as they know something about "Grandma Got Run Over By a Reindeer." What they don't recognize is the cosmos-shifting mystery of Immanuel as God with us.

All that means is that we need to spend more time lovingly engaging our neighbors with the sort of news that shocks angels and redirects stargazers and knocks sheep herders to the ground. That it seems increasingly strange is all the better—because it is strange. A gospel safe enough to sell beer and barbecue grills is a gospel too safe to make blessings flow far as the curse is found.

Christmas, then, isn't about a fight for our right to party. It's a reminder that we, like every generation before us, live in a "land of deep darkness" (Isaiah 9:2). The darkness isn't overcome by sarcasm or personal offense or retaliatory insults. The light of Bethlehem shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not, cannot, will not overcome it. (BP)

Russell Moore is dean of the school of theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

'Fiscal cliff' charitable giving idea

By Laurie Valentine

The federal gift tax and estate tax exemptions are \$5.12 million for gifts made or deaths occurring in 2012. If Congress does not act, the federal estate tax and gift tax exemptions both will drop back to \$1 million and the top transfer tax rate will increase to 55 percent on Jan. 1, 2013.



As 2012 draws to a close, many are focused on how to use all, or a significant portion, of the current \$5.12 million gift tax exemption, rather than miss the opportunity that could disappear if Congress fails to act and we fall off the "fiscal cliff" (or it acts to reduce the current level of exemption).

If you would like to fund your annual giving for missions, child care ministries or other charitable causes for the next few years in a new and creative way and coordinate your charitable giving with a plan that allows you to use as much as possible of the 2012 federal gift tax exemption amount to make gifts to your family, a charitable lead annuity trust may be a good giving plan to consider.

A charitable lead annuity trust (or CLAT) is a giving plan that provides a fixed income stream to one or more charitable causes for a designated period of years. At the end of the trust term, the trust remainder either can be returned to you (this is a "grantor lead trust") or be distributed to your children and/or other family members (a "non-grantor lead trust").

While a lifetime gift to a "non-grantor" CLAT does not entitle you to a charitable income tax deduction, it does provide a way to pass assets to your children or family at a reduced gift and estate tax cost.

Gift tax savings come from the fact the tax value of the future gift to your family is the present value of the remainder trust interest, not the full value of what you give to the trust. Estate tax savings result from the removal of the asset, any subsequent appreciation and the future income it generates from your estate.

Ask your legal and tax advisers how you should be planning for the possibility of reduced estate and gift tax exemptions. A CLAT may be the answer.

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation.

Improving communication

By Scott Wigginton

Q: My spouse and I have set a goal for 2013 to improve our communication. How can we go about doing this?

A: A week holds 10,080 minutes. Yet, one study suggests couples spend only an average of 27.5 minutes per week communicating face to face without interference from TV. Communicating more effectively with one's spouse requires both increased time, as well as attending to the "how tos" of effective talking and listening.



Here are some tips that may help:

Tune out TV and media. Be intentional about creating times each day when there is no competition from media or television. This includes cell phones and computers. If you have a TV in your bedroom, consider taking it out.

Learn to be a world-class interviewer. Asking good open-ended questions demonstrates interest in one's spouse and can transform a quiet meal into a time of discovery.

Practice "drive-thru" listening. To ensure you really are tuning in to your spouse, do what the workers at McDonalds do—paraphrase what he or she has said.

Participate in recreational activities. Go for a walk. Ride bikes. Plan a camping trip. Bake some cookies. Take "field trips" to interesting places.

Create daily rituals that are neatly tucked into the fabric of time. For example, every evening you might take a cup of coffee to the front porch to talk. Or, read a Psalm as a bedtime ritual.

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

Escaping the bedlam, recovering the reason

By Tom Townsend

In old London, England, a hospital was founded in the early 1300s and named for Mary of Bethlehem. People soon shortened the name of the hospital to Bethlehem in their everyday conversations.

By the year 1400, the Bethlehem hospital had been converted into an institution that housed people suffering from mental illnesses. Any person diagnosed with a mental illness was placed in this hospital, locked up and neglected.

During this same period, the pronunciation of the hospital's name was corrupted to "Bedlam." Confusion and chaos produced by the patients within the walls of the hospital became synonymous with its corrupted name, "Bedlam."

Unfortunately, the Christmas season for many people has become a time where Mary of Bethlehem no longer is the focus because "bedlam" has replaced the original intent of the creator and architect of the celebration of Jesus.

Crowded malls and stores, panic-driven shoppers and traffic issues all collaborate to heighten our lack of focus and shorten our patience.

Now, retailers are wishing us "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas." Add to that, the Christmas gift lists, cards, parties and family responsibilities, and we are exhausted from the occasion.

Enter bedlam, exit Bethlehem. So, how do the sane deal with this insanity?

Begin with prayer. Ask the Lord to remind you of the reason for the season. It is all about Him. It is about His arrival and, ultimately, about the grace that allowed the word to become flesh and dwell among us so that we could "behold the glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

Give your time and energy. Because it is about Him, it is about us sharing that love with those around us. And, because God gave His greatest gift, His only begotten Son, the greatest gift we can give is

ourselves to the Father first and to each other.

The most memorable Christmas we will experience is the gift of time and energy to those in need. Hospitals, nursing homes and jails are good places to start. Single mothers struggling with the pressures of life and widows or widowers coping with the loss of a loved one all could use the gift of time and energy to brighten their season.

Share His love. Grief, financial stress and other crises give true believers a wonderful opportunity to share the love of Christ with people who would welcome the sanity of the gospel. Come to think of it, this is the Great Commission given to us by Jesus prior to His ascension to heaven: that we become His hands, His feet and His voice to a world caught up in the bedlam of its pursuits.

May the joy and peace given to us by the Son of God fill your Christmas season.

Tom Townsend is business manager for the Western Recorder.

Va. LifeWay store's customers find more than Bibles & books

By Carol Pipes

Danville, Va.—Jean Ellis, manager of the LifeWay Christian Store in Danville, Va., beams as she recalls story after story of how God is working through the store's sales associates to impact their community.

"Let me tell you about the girl from Subway," she said. "Oh, and then there was the time ..."

Ellis' excitement bubbles over with each anecdote. Her enthusiasm is understandable—staffers have led seven people to Christ since the store opened four years ago.

Recently, Kate*, a young woman who works at the Subway restaurant a few doors down from the LifeWay storefront, came in searching for answers. Struggling with some of life's tough issues, she thought maybe, just maybe, she might find something in the store that could help her.

Kate made her way to the Bible section

where sales associate Mitch Cifers was working. He asked Kate if she needed some assistance. She explained what she'd been going through and said, "I think a Bible might help."

Cifers realized God had opened the door to share how the Bible could help Kate. "Definitely, the Bible can help you," Cifers told her. "Do you know who the Bible is about? Let me introduce you to its author."

Cifers began to talk about Jesus with Kate. "She had no church background and was completely caught off guard that someone could love her the way that she was," the sales associate recalled.

Kate gave her life to Christ that day in the LifeWay store. Cifers then introduced her to Ellis, who was able to talk with her about the issues in her life and pray with her before she left the store.

"It's awesome to watch the Holy Spirit work through a situation like that," Cifers said. "She came in the store with such a heaviness in her life, and she left



PLACE OF HOPE
When customers at LifeWay Christian Stores are searching for answers to life's challenges, sales associates often find moments to point them to Jesus Christ. (LifeWay photo)

completely transformed. It's always amazing to see hopelessness turn to hope."

"Kate has come back to the store numerous times to pore over books as she learns more about her new life in Christ," Ellis said. "It's wonderful to see someone who gets it and is growing in her faith. She even brings friends in with her who don't know Christ."

Ellis explained that many of the people who come to the Danville store are searching for something more than a book or a Bible.

"Often we get to the heart of the matter using the Bible training we've been given," Ellis said. "We have a series of questions we ask to help people find the Bible that best fits their needs. If there is a deep spiritual need, that naturally comes out during the course of those questions."

Cifers, who also is the outreach pastor at a local church, said he's careful to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit as he

talks to people about the gospel.

He mentioned a young boy named Nicholas who came into the store with his mother who was looking for a Bible for him. Cifers began asking questions to determine what kind of Bible might be best. The questions led to a discussion of being "born again."

"I asked him if he knew what it meant to be born again," Cifers said. "Nicholas said he understood it meant being saved and asking Jesus into your heart. I asked him if he was born again. He said, 'No, but I would like to be.'"

With the mother's permission, Cifers explained how he could be born again right then. Cifers, Nicholas and his mother all knelt in the Bible aisle of the LifeWay store and prayed as Nicholas gave his life to the Lord.

"It was one of those moments in the hustle and bustle of the busy retail experience when you truly appreciate where you work and who you work for," Ellis said. (LW/BP)

Plush puppies

Continued from page 1

Parnell shared her desire to do something for hospitalized children and their families with an assistant manager, Mary Gowen, and other store employees. They decided to encourage their staff and customers to buy the store's plush bear to give to children spending Christmas at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital in Memphis, where Will had been treated.

On Christmas Eve, Parnell and a few employees went to the hospital and personally delivered 167 bears to all the patients and families on every floor.

The next year more than 200 plush animals were donated. The ministry has grown every year since. Parnell retired in 2011 after more than 24 years with LifeWay Christian Stores.

The Christmas Plush Donation, now a plush puppy, has expanded to all 160 LifeWay Christian Stores, with each location and a local ministry partnering to provide the special gifts for children in need.

Customers can purchase the Jesus Loves Me Plush Dog at LifeWay stores for \$5. They come in three different colors, with the words, "Jesus Loves Me," sewn into their red hats. The plush puppies are then donated to local hospitals, Baptist children's homes and other groups working with needy children.

"Expanding this program to the entire chain was an easy choice," said Scott Chancey, marketing director for LifeWay Christian Stores. "Every year, we've been amazed at the generosity and support of our customers."

More than 100 stores worked with nearly as many charities to provide more than 50,000 plush animals last year. Customers also may participate via LifeWay.com by purchasing a Christmas plush puppy to be donated to the Front Porch Ministry for at-risk kids in Nashville, Tenn., where the Life-

Way headquarters are located.

The Christmas Plush Donation has extended to other times of the year as store employees and customers alike suggest ministry opportunities to the company.

Mark McMillan, manager of the LifeWay Christian Store in Tallahassee, Fla., said customers donated about 500 plush toys to the local police department to give to children at crime scenes, domestic violence calls and traffic stops.

The plush toys ride along in the patrol cars ready to be given out when a child is separated from parents during a domestic dispute.

"The police give the plush animals to those kids who, at no fault of their own, are in the middle of a tough situation, ... to provide a little comfort when the kids are scared or worried," McMillan said.

"It's a great ministry and honor for us to help with these kids through the plush campaign," he said.

The employees at the Southaven, Miss., LifeWay store have watched the ministry's outreach grow daily. Opportunities to partner with churches, ministries and community organizations have "just snowballed," Mary Gowen said. "We have been blown away by the generosity of our customers."

"People driving by the Southaven store may see only a business, but its faithful customers and employees know it is truly a ministry," said Mick Houston, LifeWay's director of store operations. Whether through the Christmas Plush Donation program or other avenues of service, Houston noted, "Every day there are opportunities to share hope and encouragement to anyone who walks through the door."

"I love the people. I love serving the Lord," Gowen said. "This is my ministry. ... There's nothing more satisfying than telling someone about Jesus or helping them find their first Bible." (LW/BP)

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Troubling Christmas legend experiences renewed interest in Austria

By Marc Ira Hooks

Vienna—Twinkling lights, decorated trees, the smell of fresh-baked treats coming from the kitchen and the sound of church bells and “Silent Night” floating through the crisp winter air.

When we think of Christmas in Austria, these are all things that immediately come to mind. However, there is a darker side of Christmas and yuletide tradition that finds its home in the Alpine region of Europe.

It is the legend of the Krampus.

While Americans are familiar with the beloved character of Santa Claus, Santa's European counterparts are not always as beloved.

According to legend, St. Nicholas travels throughout Europe each year on Dec. 6, bringing good children candy and other treats. However, before Nicholas can arrive to reward the good children, the naughty children must be punished. This is the job of Krampus, the hell-bound companion of St. Nicholas.

While known by other names across Europe such as Schmutzli, Klaubauf and Black Pete, Krampus usually is depicted as a devil or demonic beast with horns, a tail and cloven hooves.

Tradition holds that children who have not been well behaved will be swatted with switches and chains, and the worst offenders will be put into a sack and dragged to the demon's fiery lair.

Krampus traditionally comes on the evening before St. Nicholas Day which is known as Krampusnacht, or Night of Krampus.

In many of the mountainous regions of Austria and other European countries, the coming of Krampus is a community celebration. Many towns stage a Krampuslauf (Krampus Run) where townspeople bring their children and line the streets to see men and women dressed as the demonic characters.

For a period of time this ancient tradition, born in the pagan roots of the Winter Solstice that are tied closely with Christmas, seemed to be fading. However, the observation of Krampusnacht is seeing a resurgence—and not just in the



LINING UP FOR GIFTS Thousands of Viennese children and their parents line up to get a bag of candy from the Nikolaus at the sixth annual Krampuslauf in the village of Hirschstetten in Vienna, Austria. (Photo by Mark Ira Hooks/IMB)

Alpine region of Austria.

This year marked the sixth anniversary of the Krampuslauf in the Hirschstetten section of Vienna, a residential portion of the city located northeast of where the Danube River flows through the city.

Organizers said the event began in Vienna after a local family became enthralled with the Krampus tradition while spending time in western Austria. Upon moving back to Vienna, they revived the tradition of the Krampuslauf in the residential community.

“This will be our biggest event yet,” Florian Koller said. “We have close to 100 participants and are expecting around 6,000 people from the community to come out for this.”

Koller explained that although there are only 15 members in the hosting group, there are Krampus groups located throughout the country that come together to participate in these events. “We have a big community of Krampuses,” he said.

In addition to Krampuses, participants dress as witches, fire breathers and other demonic characters.

Krampus costumes usually are hand made and consist of suits made of goat or sheep skin. Typically the Krampus actors will have large metal bells strapped to their belts and will carry bundles of sticks and chains to torment onlookers.

It is not uncommon for the actors to cross the barricades to swat spectators with switches or even snatch children from the arms of their parents and carry them down the parade route before returning them to their families.

Koller explained that just as American children believe in Santa Claus, Austrian children believe in St. Nicholas and the Krampus. “It's a really nice tradition,” he said. “It is good for the children to believe. It helps them to think about Nicholas before Christmas.”

Koller added that Austrian children do not believe their presents on Christmas morning are left “by a fat guy on the roof” but rather are left by the Christ Child who visits each home and leaves presents for the family. “Nobody knows how he gets into the house or where the presents come from.”

Though Koller said Austrians know the story of the Christmas child, Jesus, who was the son of Mary and Joseph, “Nowadays we believe in the parcels and the presents we get,” he said.

“I think today is going to be a party, nothing else,” he said. “This tradition ... has grown over the years and is now one of the biggest Krampus events in the country.” (IMB)

Prof: ‘Charlie Brown Christmas’ can be helpful in sharing gospel with others

Fort Worth, Texas—In the classic TV special, “A Charlie Brown Christmas,” Linus reminds the rest of the Peanuts gang of the true meaning of Christmas by reciting the story of Christ's birth from Luke 2.

Christians could do worse than to watch “A Charlie Brown Christmas” this holiday season, according to seminary professor David Mills, because it can remind them to share the gospel.

“Linus gets it,” said Mills, an assistant professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

“God gave us Jesus in Bethlehem because we need His death at Calvary,” Mills said, emphasizing the necessity of Jesus to be fully human and fully divine in order to fulfill God's plan for the redemption of sinners.

Mills suggested that Christmas be celebrated by looking forward to the second coming of Christ.

“Connect the birth of Christ with the throne of David,” he said. “The manger points toward the throne, and the first birth anticipates the second coming. The Old Testament does not miss this connection. We shouldn't either.”

Mills also shared practical ways Christians can maximize the Christmas season by proclaiming the gospel:

■ “Do what you do best in evangelism with a Christmas focus. For example, if you preach or teach, explain why the birth of Christ is essential to the gospel. As you witness one on one,

exalt the birth of Christ.”

■ “If someone interjects Santa Claus into a conversation or celebration, politely turn the conversation to the history of Nicholas, the bishop of Myra, and his generosity to the poor. The real story is far more fascinating than the myth.”

■ “Your Christmas cards, your decorations, your gifts, your prayers and your gospel tracts can all exalt Christ at Christmas.”

■ “Invite friends to your church's Christmas celebrations. These have grown in popularity in the last decade and with

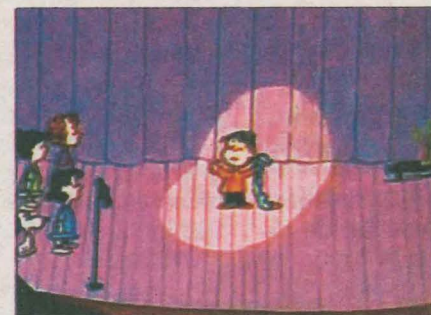
good reason. Hearts hunger for the truth when Jesus is exalted as He is in the Christmas season.”

Matt Queen, an assistant professor of evangelism at Southwestern, added other opportunities for sharing the gospel during the Christmas season:

■ “Go Christmas caroling in your neighborhood as a family, and use it as an evangelistic opportunity.”

■ “On Christmas Eve or Christmas morning, purchase a gift or meal and take it to a struggling family or neighbors and use it as an evangelistic opportunity.”

■ “If you decorate your yard with Christmas lights or decorations ... in a neighborhood where people drive through to see Christmas lights or decorations, consider setting up a table outside with hot chocolate, coffee and gospel tracts, and invite them to park for a moment and share the gospel with them.” (SWBTS/BP)



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Quentin & Mr. V

Student, houseparent have formed worthwhile, yet unusual friendship

Famous couples, dynamic duos—the world is full of them: superheroes Batman and Robin; comedy's Laurel and Hardy; cartoon's Rocky and Bullwinkle; music's Simon and Garfunkel; explorers Lewis and Clark; literature's Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson; biblical duos David and Jonathan and Paul and Silas. As long as this list is, I'm sure you could easily add many more to any and all categories.

Couples are not news at OBI. There are many "dating couples" who form, break up and re-form on a regular—sometimes daily—basis. Note: "Dating" at OBI has about four basic elements: constantly holding hands (this is almost an absolute essential and occurs even when meals are being eaten), sitting together or walking around the gym together at "free time," one member of the couple walking the other member to class, sitting together at meals or in the grill, and possibly the couple writing notes to each other or sharing a set of earbuds to listen to the same music on their mp3 players. More physical contact than holding hands attracts certain restrictions of further contact, and when you live in the proverbial middle of nowhere, the options for dating activities and venues tend to take care of themselves automatically.

Friendships at OBI are not news at all. It isn't uncommon to see our students paired up with one another moving together from one class to another or talking earnestly about their concerns. If you go to the dormitories, you'll see students studying together, playing their electronic games together or sharing noodles.

None of these duos or couples is noteworthy, because all of them consist of individuals of the same generation. Students are best friends with students. But there is one duo on campus today that is unusual: the intergenerational duo of Quentin and Mr. V.

This is Oneida



Paul Davidson

Quentin is a young high school student who has been with us for a little more than a year. He is just under 5 feet tall and generally is quick to smile. He hasn't been a perfectly behaved student or the most academically successful in his time at OBI, but he is improving in his behavior and in his academic performance. He loves movies, but if you ask Quentin who his best friend is, he will tell you, "Last year it was Randy, but this year it's Mr. V."

Mr. V is a single, first-year houseparent in his late 50s with no children of his own. He has years of experience with ministry to children and youth in the church, coupled with a compassionate heart for those who need special help. Like Quentin, Mr. V is compact in height, standing just over 5 feet tall. Also like Quentin, Mr. V likes movies.

If you go into the boys' study hall after school, don't be surprised to see Quentin and Mr. V sitting side by side with Mr. V explaining something from a book or worksheet to Quentin. It isn't his time to be on duty as a houseparent; he's just helping Quentin as Quentin's dad has asked him to do. Quentin's life is better because of Mr. V, and I think Mr. V's life at OBI is better because of Quentin. I'm glad. I think that's what a friendship is supposed to do, don't you?

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

Connected

Clear Creek's core values forever connect college & the convention

At Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, we could not (and would not) ever be disconnected from the Kentucky Baptist Convention. We take great pride in being the KBC's Bible college. But that is not the only particular tie I have in mind.

A significant part of our financial support comes to us from Kentucky Baptist churches through the Cooperative Program by way of the KBC, but even that is not the only part of our relationship. Another important factor will always tie Clear Creek to the KBC: our four core values.

We evaluate everything we do at Clear Creek by the standard of these core values, the first of which is the centrality of Christ. With Christ at the center of all we are and do, we have an unbreakable bond with the KBC—we are together in Christ. We share a mission, a definition and a reason simply by being "in Christ."

Our second core value, the trustworthiness of Scripture, is an additional strand of the unbreakable cord tying us together. Clear Creek has held high the

banner of God's word since our founding in 1926. We operate with the same instruction manual, the same marching orders and the same code of conduct that guides the KBC. We are, in effect, Bible bound.

Clear Creek Chronicle

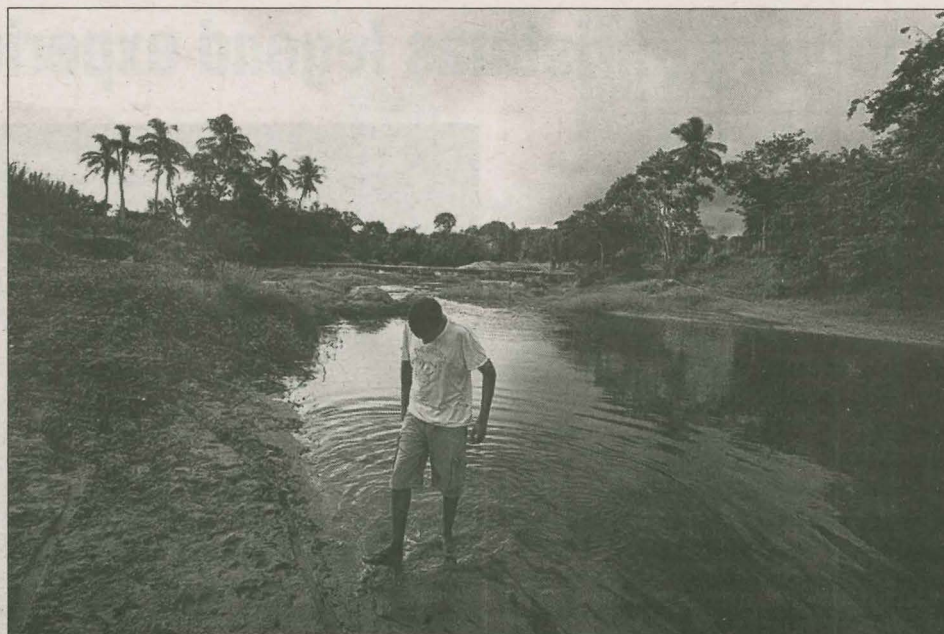


Donnie Fox

The unbreakable bond is even surer as a threefold cord. Evangelism and missions is the way we articulate our third core value at Clear Creek. On the convention level, it is phrased in terms of reaching Kentucky and the world for Christ. At Clear Creek, we both teach and practice that very task.

Our final core value gets even more focused and exact in terms of our definition as the Bible college of the KBC. That is our role of being a servant to the churches. It parallels the banner we see across all convention projects: "by churches, for churches, to help churches reach Kentucky and the world for Christ." We are proud to be Kentucky Baptist and thankful that, by definition, we always will share the Lord's work in Kentucky and around the world.

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



WHO WILL TELL THEM? A young man from an indigenous tribe in South America reflects the pride his people have in their land. It once was taken from them by European settlers and cleared for pasture, but the land now is returning to its natural state. Who will tell this unengaged, unreached people about the true Creator? (IMB photo)

Embracing the unengaged

Continued from page 1

a dam and flood the town if they didn't get it.

Land disputes between Indians and others have been fierce. Non-Indians have hired gunmen to threaten the Indians. People on both sides of the clash have died.

When Grace talks about Christianity, she speaks of a mix of indigenous, tribal religion; folk Catholicism; superstition and spiritualism; and Catholic dogma. Few from the tribe embrace it. They say they prefer to hold with their traditional faith.

Grace has met some evangelicals—her term for everyone who is not Catholic—and was not impressed.

"They have faith," she said, "but they don't have love. Faith without love isn't worth much."

A visitor tells Grace her words are straight from the Bible. "Next time you come, bring your Bible," she replies. "I want to know more about it." The visitor says he has one with him. Grace asks him to get it. For 20 minutes they talk, flipping from verse to verse as they discuss Scripture. The visitor is astonished at how much of what she says is virtually a paraphrase of the New Testament—a text she has never read.

"There have been times in my life that have been so hard," Grace said. "I've wondered if there was something else out there."

Grace and her tribe are among more than 3,000 unengaged, unreached peoples across the world. Nearly 400 of them are in South America. Isolated by

language, culture, history and, in some cases, geography, they live mostly in small clusters of fewer than 3,000 people.

Most will never have a missionary assigned to them. Yet the church is called to take the gospel to all peoples.

Gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering allow IMB personnel to identify and understand these often forgotten people. Those efforts offer Southern Baptist churches committed to embracing unengaged and unreached peoples a basis for beginning their work among them—to be His heart, His hands and His voice.

Pray that Grace's people truly will "win" and have the opportunity to hear about their Savior.

Pray that all churches will embrace the unengaged and unreached people groups that might not otherwise hear the gospel. (IMB)



■ Above: A woman recalls the religious beliefs of her indigenous people group. They have had limited contact with Christianity. She has met some evangelicals, whom she says are people of faith, "but they don't have much love. Faith without love isn't worth much." ■ Left: A medicine man walks through the forest surrounding his village, naming trees and plants and talking about their medicinal properties. Unengaged, unreached people groups are without hope unless churches and other evangelical groups accept the challenge to reach them. (IMB photo)



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Bible Crosswords

By Janet Adkins

Across

- 1 King of the Amalekites, whose life Saul spared
- 5 Sibling, familiarly
- 8 French cleric
- 12 ____ 18 (Uris novel about Warsaw Ghetto)
- 13 Unfortunate occurrence (arch.)
- 14 Father of Eliasaph (Numbers 3:24)
- 15 Contemporary
- 16 When this org. meets, there are plenty of doctors in the house
- 17 "The ____ are a people not strong" (Proverbs 30:25)
- 18 "Give thanks at the ____ of his holiness" (Psalm 97:12)
- 21 Poetic contraction
- 22 "I will ____ you out of their bondage" (Exodus 6:6)
- 23 In a line
- 26 Preposition
- 27 Tell on (colloq.)
- 30 Soft fabric
- 31 "If any man be in Christ, he is a ____ creature" (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- 32 San ____, CA
- 33 Masculine nickname
- 34 Work outside the home?
- 35 One of Japheth's sons (Genesis 10:2)
- 36 First name in Exodus, Uris novel
- 37 Mother ____
- 38 "Are they not all ____ spirits, sent forth ... for them who shall be heirs" (Hebrews 1:14)
- 43 "The Lord is my strength and ____" (Exodus 15:2)
- 44 Row
- 45 Yearn for
- 47 Rabbit relative
- 48 Mine (Ital.)
- 49 Cowboy portrayed Jack
- 50 Son of Salah (Genesis 10:24)
- 51 Church officer (abbr.)
- 52 Soaks flax

- 9 Where interest accrues, in France
- 10 ____ noire
- 11 They loop the Loop
- 19 Work unit
- 20 Broadcast on TV
- 23 Toward the stern of the ship
- 24 He surrendered at Appomattox
- 25 Not a spring chicken
- 26 "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are ____" (Luke 10:2)
- 27 "Will a man ____ God?" (Malachi 3:8)
- 28 "And ____ did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord" (1 Kings 15:11)
- 29 ____ Aviv
- 31 "There fell a ____ and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast" (Revelation 16:2)
- 32 "(Elijah) sat down under a ____ tree: and he requested ... that he might die" (1 Kings 19:4)
- 34 High-tech medical test (abbr.)
- 35 Province (abbr.)
- 36 "And the ____ of the Lord was kindled against Moses" (Exodus 4:14)
- 37 King of Judaea at Christ's birth
- 38 Ruth and Orpah's homeland
- 39 Concerning
- 40 Canine emotional barometer
- 41 River formed at Khartoum
- 42 Pesky insect
- 43 Pronoun
- 46 Printer's measures

Down

- 1 Measure of electrical power
- 2 Inedible fowl (Leviticus 11:18)
- 3 Toward the sheltered side, nautically
- 4 "And when I heard this thing, I rent my ____" (Ezra 9:3)
- 5 "The nations have heard of thy ____, and thy cry hath filled the land" (Jeremiah 46:12)
- 6 Poetic foot
- 7 "Yea, the ____ hath found an house" (Psalm 84:3)
- 8 "____ flowing with milk and honey" (2 words, Exodus 3:8)

Last puzzle's solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
A	R	T		R	A	F	S	A	R
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
S	O	U	L	A	V	A	P	L	E
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
A	B	B	A	N	E	S	A	L	E
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
W	I	T	C	H	C	R	A	F	T
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
H	A	Y	E	S	I	O	E		
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
L	O	V	E	R	B	O	W	T	H
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
O	M	E	R	T	I	N	S	H	O
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
P	E	R	S	I	T	S	H	I	N
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
T	I	M	R	A	I	S	E		
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
B	E	F	O	R	E	T	I	M	E
101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110
A	N	E	W	W	A	S	L	E	N
111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
C	O	T	E	A	R	E	D	O	E
121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130
A	S	E	R	S	O	N	S	O	Y

Discipleship deficiency

Financial stewardship is at heart of obeying God's biblical mandate

Spiritual discipline or development—that is, discipleship—is crucial to a growing faith, a maturing relationship with the living Lord, and a lifestyle of being the salt of the earth and a light to the world. Christian parents and the church have the primary responsibilities of teaching and modeling discipleship. I had the benefit of both during my formative years, and I sought to bequeath the same to our children.

Ky. Baptist Foundation



Barry Allen

In the book, "Transformational Discipleship," the authors describe a "discipleship deficiency" that is plaguing the church today. I agree with their assessment. The results of a recent survey by LifeWay Research of Protestant churchgoers also confirmed this descriptor. Among the results were:

- 19 percent read the Bible daily compared to 68 percent of pet owners who exercised their pets daily.
 - 48 percent pray daily compared to 49 percent of Americans who floss daily.
 - 55 percent had not memorized a Bible verse in the past six months.
- In his new book, "A Legacy of Faith," Eugene Enlow, pastor emeritus of Louisville's Beechmont Baptist Church, has a chapter called "Why the Church Still Matters." He characterized this discipleship deficiency as an imbalance that stems from a dearth of sound teaching, as well as church members' lack of acknowledgment of the need

for spiritual instruction. Enlow reminds us of the old six-point accountability system by which we checked whether or not we were on time and had studied the Sunday School lesson, had brought our Bible and an offering, and were attending the worship service. When that system was abandoned, nothing replaced it to instill a sense of obligation, responsibility and commitment, thus, discipleship deficiency.

Henry Blackaby stated his assessment of the discipleship deficiency this way: "The heart of the Great Commission and discipleship is to teach them to practice everything I have commanded you, ... and if we want to have a resurgence in the Great Commission, there's got to be a refocusing on the priorities of Christ for discipleship."

At the heart of discipleship is financial stewardship about which Jesus had more to say than any other discipline. The mission of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation is to teach disciples of Jesus Christ how to obey the biblical mandates of financial stewardship, particularly estate stewardship. Please give us the privilege of assisting you in discipleship sufficiency through your estate plan.

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

Giving children a 'Merry Christmas'

Some in Sunrise's care receive love, caring for first time this year

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus this week, we're reminded in song and story about His humble entry into the world. While Jesus' parents didn't have many material blessings at the time of His birth, they were able to provide their baby with love and protection. The gifts He received came from strangers—magi who had come from afar because they were drawn by a star.

insults, fighting and harsh words. They lived in homes where instead of physical affections being shown through hugs and warm embraces, they endured physical afflictions in the form of beatings and punches. Thanks to the efforts of so many across Kentucky, this Christmas will be different.

Sunrise Children's Services



Bill Smithwick

This Christmas, the children of Sunrise who have been victims of abuse and neglect also know they are loved and protected as we care for them across the state. Their faces are aglow with smiles and joy as they open up gifts brought to them by strangers who responded to Sunrise's Christmas Star program. Once again, the churches, individuals, businesses and organizations across Kentucky have stepped up to make sure the kids in our care have a Merry Christmas.

In the coming year, there will be many other opportunities you can continue to help children in crisis. Each day we care for more than 600 children, and their needs are many. Your continued prayers and financial support, donations, volunteer efforts and other assistance helps us provide them the tools and confidence needed to realize a greater potential for their lives. You are making a difference.

For many of the children we serve, this is the first real Christmas they ever will have experienced. Previously they lived in homes where there were no happy sounds of carols and laughter. Instead, their ears were filled with

On behalf of the children of Sunrise, we would like to thank you for your continued support. We ask that you partner with us as much as possible in 2013 to help even more children who need to know that others care.

Bill Smithwick is president of Sunrise Children's Services. Contact Sunrise at (502) 538-1000 or www.Sunrise.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.

February

- 1-2** Disaster Relief Chaplaincy Training—Region 3, Hardinsburg Baptist Church.
- 2** Disaster Relief Training—Region 3, Hardinsburg Baptist Church.
- 4-5** St. Louis Partnership Vision Trip, St. Louis.
- 8** Embrace the Ends of the Earth Conference, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BARDWELL**—Mississippi Church will hold a "Walk Through Bethlehem" event Dec. 21, 7 p.m.; Dec. 22-23, 6 p.m. **Mark Burnett** is pastor.

■ **CORBIN**—First Church will hold a youth lock-in Dec. 22. **Jim Hunter** is pastor.

■ **GLENDALE**—Gilead Church will hold a youth lock-in Dec. 30, 6 p.m. **Sam Hinkson** is pastor.

■ **HARRODSBURG**—Harrodsburg Church will hold a youth dodgeball tournament Dec. 19. The church also will hold a New Year's

Eve celebration service Dec. 31, 9:30 a.m., with worship, music and games. **Wayne Spivey** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Maple Grove Church will hold an old-fashioned, fifth Sunday "hymn sing" Dec. 30, 3:30 p.m. **Ray Hayes** is pastor.

Melbourne Heights Church will hold its annual Sunday School potluck breakfast and fellowship Dec. 23, 9:15 a.m. **Adam Schell** is pastor.

■ **MAYFIELD**—High Point Church will hold a Christmas event for children Dec. 19, 5:30 p.m., with food, games, crafts and a reading

of the Christmas story.

■ **OWENSBORO**—First Church will hold an end-of-the-year youth lock-in Dec. 28-29. **Paul Strahan** is pastor.

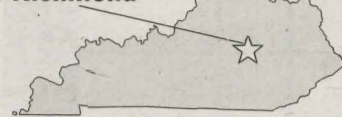
■ **SOMERSET**—First Church will hold "Quiet Christmas" Dec. 25, 4 p.m., when the church will be open to provide a place of solace and comfort. **French Harmon** is pastor.

■ **VERONA**—New Bethel Church will hold "A Journey Through Bethlehem" nativity scene, Dec. 21-22, 6:30 p.m. **George Naylor** is pastor.

■ **WILLIAMSBURG**—First Church will

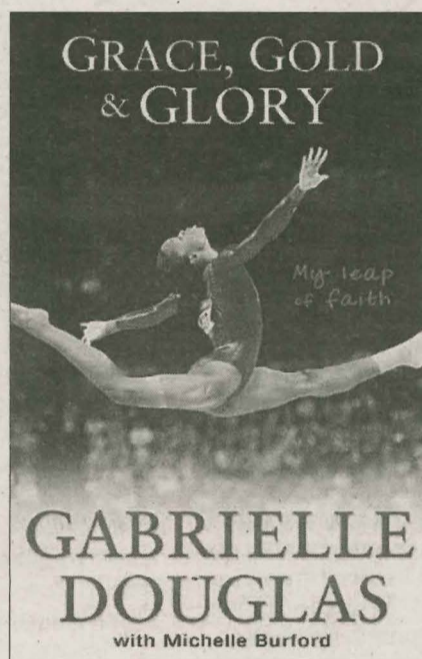
Spotlight on ...

Richmond



Hays Fork Church will honor **Vincent Carman**, who is retiring as pastor after 26 years, with a lunch Dec. 30, 11 a.m. A musical service will follow the meal.

hold a food pantry and coat giveaway Dec. 19, 6 p.m. **Ande Myers** is pastor.



Gold medalist Gabby Douglas 'always' praying

Nashville, Tenn.—Olympic gold medalist Gabrielle Douglas writes in a new book about how her faith in God and the support of her family helped her stick with gymnastics when she felt like quitting. "Grace, Gold & Glory: My Leap of Faith," tells the story of Douglas, 16, who became the first African-American gymnast to win the all-around competition when she took gold this summer in London.

In an interview with Religion News Service, Douglas talked about the role her Christian faith plays in her life.

"I don't know where I would be without it today," Douglas said. "I've always been praying for

everything. And my mom always exposed me and my siblings to being a Christian and the Bible. I was watching back and looking at the Olympics and my mouth is moving—and that's me praying."

Douglas' path to Olympic glory came with some significant trials along the way. She moved away from her Virginia home to Iowa for training almost two years before the 2012 Olympics. Being away from her family was difficult, and her homesickness almost made her give up the sport and move home. But Douglas' loved ones wouldn't let her quit.

"My mom, my coach, my sister, my host family—everyone told me

to keep fighting, that the Olympics were right around the corner," Douglas told Christianity Today. "A couple days later, I went back to the gym and was on fire. I was just determined to get back and give 100 percent."

Douglas, whose gold medal in the women's all-around competition captured the attention of the nation, also won gold in the women's team competition. Her performance was one of the biggest stories during the 2012 Olympics.

"God has given me this awesome talent to represent Him," she told Baptist Press in August. "Glory goes up to Him, and the blessings fall down on us." (BP)

New Hispanic generations topic of upcoming NAMB conference

San Antonio—Although Southern Baptists have a long history of reaching and starting churches among Hispanics, changing demographics will require a new strategy, a North American Mission Board evangelism consultant has stressed.

"The majority of the growth in the Hispanic population is coming from second and third generations," said Joshua Del Risco, evangelism coordinator for the mission board's God's Plan for Sharing nationwide outreach. "That presents a whole new set of challenges, because if there's an area that we've struggled to reach as a convention, it's second and third generations."

Del Risco is among the organizers of the National Hispanic Evangelism & Mobilization Conference, Jan. 17-19 in San Antonio, that will focus on key challenges in outreach to Hispanics.

According to a Pew Research Center report in 2009, 9 out of 10 Hispanic children had been born in the U.S.—and that number is growing. Overall, U.S. Census statistics show that Hispanics in the country grew by a rate four times faster than the U.S. population between 2000-10.

Historically, Del Risco noted, Southern Baptists have started most churches among Hispanics born outside of the United States. The number of Hispanic Southern Baptist Convention churches grew by more than 65 percent between

2000 and 2010, according to Annual Church Profile statistics.

What makes reaching second- and third-generation Hispanics a challenge is both language and culture, said Del Risco, who came to the U.S. from Cuba at age 5. Many second- and third-generation Hispanics aren't fluent in Spanish, making the gospel inaccessible in traditional Spanish-language churches.

From a cultural standpoint, many have grown up in Hispanic homes and with Hispanic culture, but identify more than their parents with broader American culture, Del Risco said.

"Many second- and third-generation Hispanics will attend Anglo congregations because of the language issue," Del Risco said. "But they don't find the cultural identity there that they're looking for. So, they'll also visit—off and on—a Spanish-speaking congregation but never plug in."

Del Risco said the National Hispanic Evangelism & Mobilization Conference will address these and other issues, noting that it will focus on helping first-generation Hispanic churches reach its members' children and grandchildren.

The conference will be held at Parkhills Baptist Church in San Antonio in coordination with the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Hispanic Baptist Convention of Texas. (NAMB/BP)

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE: Gulbransen electric organ; two manual; excellent shape. For small church or home. Must pick up, \$100. Call (502) 239-4999.

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: 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 resumé to Southern Heights Baptist Church, Attn: Pastor selection committee, 3408 Clays Mill Road, Lexington, KY 40503.

SEEKING: Emmanuel Baptist Church, a contemporary, evangelistic church in Stanton, Ky., is prayerfully searching for a full-time minister of students. This man will be married (wife actively involved), formally trained (preferred) and theologically conservative. If interested, please submit your resumé by Jan. 31, 2013 to gregwebb.ebc-stanton@yahoo.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: 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: 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 and wish to apply, send a resumé and cover letter by Jan. 11, 2013, describing why you want to be considered as a candidate to bhbcpsc@gmail.com.

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.

SEEKING: Mount Pleasant Baptist Church in Nicholasville, Ky., is prayerfully searching for a part-time youth leader. Responsibilities include Sundays and Wednesdays. Send resumé to mtpleasantbaptist@windstream.net; www.mtpleasantbaptist.net.

IMB missionary says cancer was one of God's 'greatest gifts'

By Laura Fielding

Durban, South Africa—Roger Hesch should be dead.

After stage 4 bone marrow cancer decimated his body, his recovery encountered several life-threatening setbacks, each of which should have overpowered his ravaged immune system. Doctor after doctor told him the chances of survival were next to nothing.

But God had more for Roger to do.

Saying 'yes'

Years earlier, after graduating from high school in his hometown of Little Falls, Minn., Roger spent a year in South Africa as part of an international exchange program in Johannesburg that exposed him "to the bigger world," he said.

He and his wife Meg met while attending college in Minneapolis and were married in 1980. Early on, the couple made a commitment to say "yes" to God's leading, regardless of what that meant. They said "yes" to Roger attending seminary and pastoring two Southern Baptist churches.

"In January 1986, I was speaking on the Great Commission and while I was preaching, God said, 'You can't encourage other people to do what you are not willing to do,'" Roger recalled.

It was then the couple said "yes" to serving overseas as missionaries with the International Mission Board.

"We said we'll go where other people can't or won't go," Roger said.

That led them to live in a dangerous country in sub-Saharan Africa with few missionaries—Roger was even wrongfully imprisoned for a week. But he and Meg remained obedient, seeing 70 churches multiply to 500 in about six years.

It was after a move to North Africa to pastor an international church that Roger and his family—which now included three children—would face their biggest challenge.

The cancer

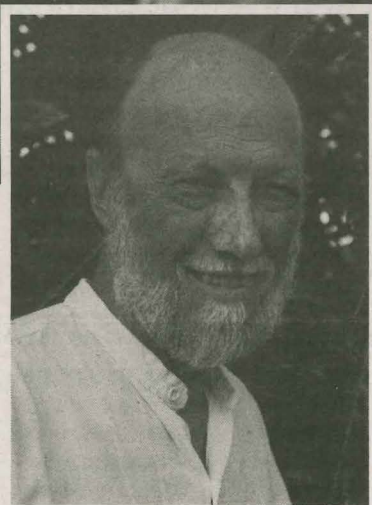
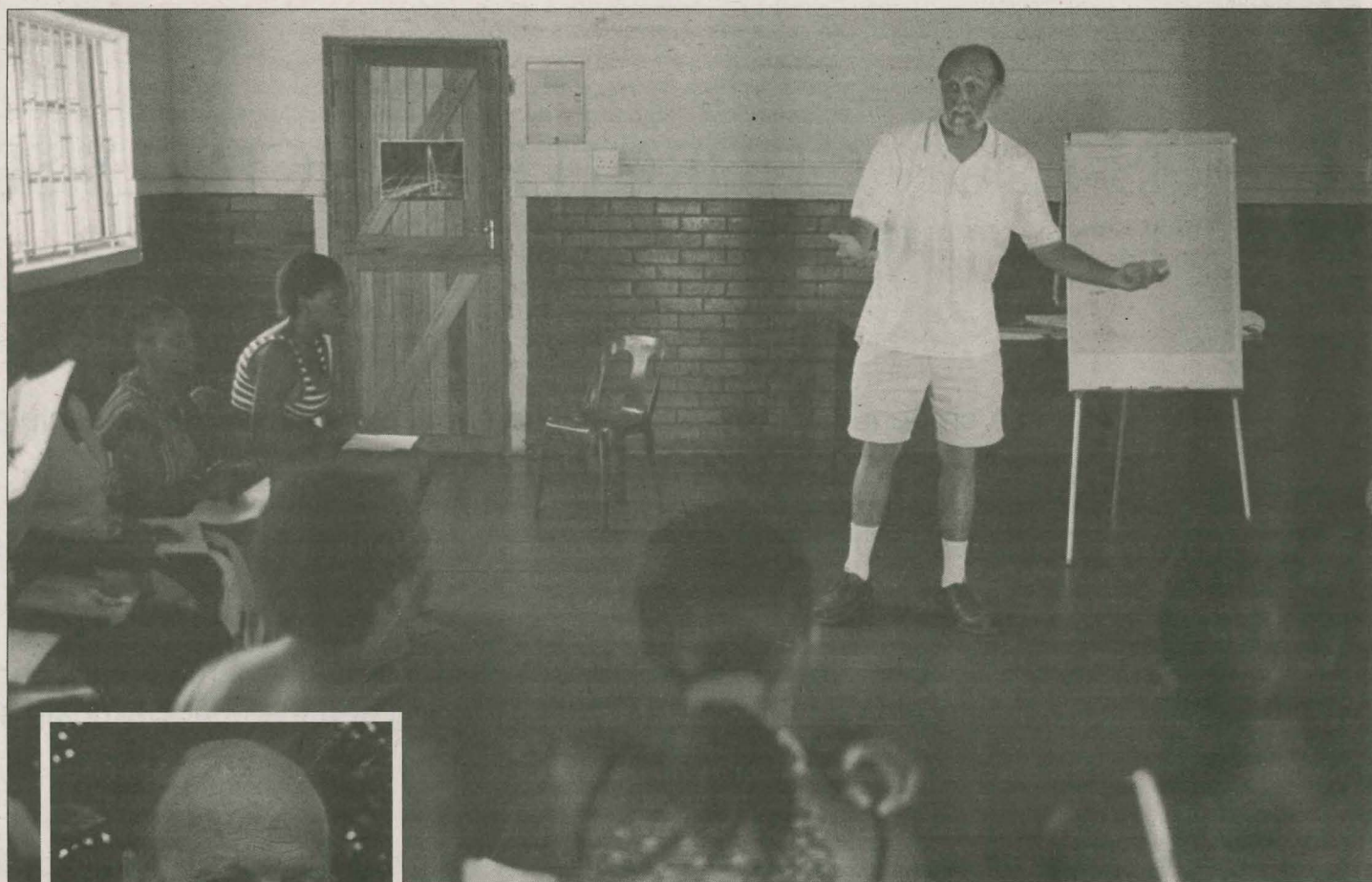
Roger was coaching his daughter's school basketball team in 1999 when he began to lose movement—first in his right arm, then his left. North African doctors couldn't diagnose the problem so they sent him to London.

Doctors there diagnosed him with stage 4 cancer, meaning it had spread to other organs and was considered incurable. Another concern was a vertebra pinching his spinal cord. Doctors worried the weakened and brittle bones in Roger's neck may collapse, snapping his spinal cord.

Within a week the Hesch family was back in Minneapolis for Roger to begin chemotherapy. He also had a metal "halo" screwed into his head to keep his neck upright.

"He was in (the halo) for four months," Meg said. "His head could never touch the pillow because it was propped up on bars; he couldn't turn his neck, and he endured it—just day by day by day—endured such hardship and such suffering."

After four months of chemo the treatment began to kill his body. His



DISCIPLING GENERATIONS Southern Baptists' financial support through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering "gave us the opportunity to come here and see not just one generation, but a generation teaching a generation teaching a generation to follow on and follow Christ's footsteps," Roger Hesch said. "To me, that's the essence of what I do as a missionary." (IMB photos)

only chance of survival was a bone marrow transplant.

God speaks

As he lay in the hospital bed following the transplant, Roger told God, "I hurt—I mean, I really hurt."

But God reminded Roger of the pain He had endured.

"His response to me was, 'I hung on a cross; you're lying in a hospital bed.... I had nails in my hands. You get ice chips when your mouth is dry; they gave Me sour vinegar.... You have doctors and nurses to care for you; I had Roman soldiers to stick spears in Me.... You've got Me to cry out to and you know I love you; and I cried out, 'My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?'"

"(God told me) 'You have a chance now to know just a small measure of the pain that I went through for you—just a small measure of what I suffered,'" Roger said.

And for the first time Roger truly understood God's grace.

"We always look at cancer and we say, 'Oh, what a terrible thing,'" Roger said. "I think it's one of the greatest gifts God has ever given me, because I learned so much about God through the experience."

Not lucky, but blessed

Roger began to recover after the bone marrow transplant, but not without complications.

"It was a long road back, physically,"

he said.

Soon after his release from the hospital, with a weak immune system, Roger contracted a septic infection, which doctors told him kills 50 percent of healthy people. His blood pressure bottomed out and he had to be airlifted to the hospital—but walked out two days later.

"One of the doctors on the team shook his head and said, '(Roger is) the luckiest man I've ever heard of,' and one of the other attending doctors said, 'No, he's not lucky, he's blessed,' (because) the first thing I said to the doctor when I went there was, 'I know you can't cure me.... There are things neither you can control nor I can control, (things) we have to leave in the hands of God.'"

As Roger continued to recover, he faced one obstacle after another: graft-vs.-host disease, shingles, the fusing of vertebra in his neck and thickening of the skin on his legs.

"(The doctors) saw over and over and over again God's hand in the way that He did things in my body," Roger said. "Just the fact that I sit here without steel rods up and down my spine... but I can move, I don't have neck pain, I can play basketball...."

"God did that. The doctors never explained it, there was no medicine that did that—God did that, and I give Him thanks for it."

Following two years of treatment and recovery—and despite physical limitations and setbacks—Roger and his family said "yes" to God once again and headed back overseas in 2001 to

Durban, South Africa.

A new chapter

In the summer of 2012, the Hesch family left South Africa to begin a three-year IMB role in California to counsel those interested in serving as overseas missionaries.

As they were preparing for the move, the family received upsetting news yet again—this time, it was Meg who was diagnosed with cancer.

Meg's heart ached as she watched her husband and children struggle with the news. In addition to facing chemotherapy treatments, she also had to deal with a transatlantic move and settling into a different culture.

"Through God's great grace and fantastic support of family and friends, I have weathered well the necessary six rounds of chemo, even in the midst of moving and adapting to our new home and ministry," Meg said. "As a Christian battling a potentially life-threatening illness, the truth is that I am absolutely in a win-win situation, though naturally my heartstrings anchor me to my precious family, friends and ministry I love."

Meg's illness is a reality with which her husband is all too familiar. But despite changes, moves, sickness and new jobs, Roger said the bottom line is knowing God.

"God is faithful and He wants us to know Him, no matter what it takes in our lives....," he said. "Our life is not about doing stuff for God but knowing God, loving God and living with Him in a relationship." (IMB)

Roger Hesch:
**"We said
 we'll go
 where other
 people can't
 or won't go."**

BRIDGING THE GAP

IS YOUR CHURCH FINANCIALLY SECURE FOR THE FUTURE?

Why are churches the most overlooked charities in estate stewardship/planned giving?

Primarily because church members are never asked to share a part of their estate with the church.

To make sure your church is financially secure in the future, it must begin **bridging the gap** between the financial challenges your church is facing and the financial challenges its members are facing.

The Legacy Giving Services of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation are effective tools for churches to utilize to help in **bridging the financial gap**.

Here are some ways the Kentucky Baptist Foundation can assist your church in **bridging the gap**:

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- Financial and Gift Acceptance Policy Development
- Stewardship Education Seminars
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