

# WESTERN Recorder

January 15, 2013

Shine Like Stars \* Philippians 2:15

Volume 187, Issue 2

## AT CROSSROADS LIFE IS THE ANSWER



Director Denise Myers and "birth mother" Missy Reigel display a makeshift sign for the Crossroads Pregnancy Resource Center in La Grange. Reigel and others planted the seed for such a facility in Oldham County more than three years ago and soon will see that dream realized when the center's doors open in the coming weeks. (Photo by Robin Cornetet Bass)

### Oldham County pregnancy center culmination of years-long journey, steadfast commitment to God's call

By Drew Nichter

La Grange—Standing in a room of mismatched, used furniture and boxes of donated supplies, Missy Reigel and Denise Myers envision a place where lives will be saved.

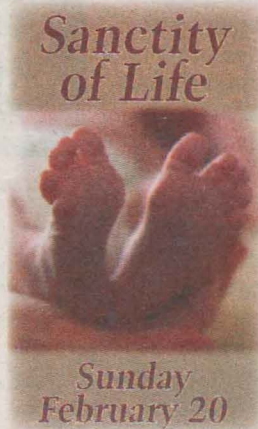
Myers points to the back corner where there will be a comfortable couch and chairs; floor lamps to offer soft lighting. The room already has a fresh coat of paint and new carpeting. The makeover will be complete once the donated furniture arrives.

The tranquil setting reinforces the name on the sign out front: Crossroads Pregnancy Resource Center. For the majority of those who enter the doors of the La Grange facility, life will be anything but serene.

"The idea is to work her through her crisis," Myers, the center's director, said of the women who will seek help there. "If she's in an unplanned pregnancy and in a crisis situation, let's slow her down enough to allow her to think through her crisis, and then offer services to help support her where her needs are."

The pregnancy center is the first of its kind in Oldham County. When it opens, likely by early March, it will be the realization of a "God-ordained" mission placed on the heart

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### Mom says 'divine aspect' at work in pro-life decision

By Ken Walker

Crestview Hills—The first time Allison Adams\* walked into Northern Kentucky's New Hope Center, she said the staff demonstrated such compassion that it instilled the confidence in her to give birth to her daughter.

"It gave me the immediate feeling of, 'You're not going to walk through this alone,'" said Adams, whose daughter recently celebrated her 5th birthday.

"That was what got to me," she said. "I was very ashamed. I was a professional, 36 years old and very humiliated."

Since the center's founding in 1989, executive director Pam Glenn said the overwhelming majority of women who have visited have chosen birth over abortion.

"Allison's decision symbolized exactly what we're after—helping and meeting the needs of hurting women, whatever those needs are," said Glenn, a longtime volunteer before becoming director in 2006.

Originally an outreach of Ashland Avenue Baptist Church in Covington, New Hope is one of 52 pregnancy care centers across Kentucky. Many are supported by Kentucky Baptist congregations.

With Sanctity of Human Life Sunday coming up Jan. 20, the Kentucky Baptist Convention is encouraging churches to promote these centers to raise awareness of their often low-key, but vital ministries.

Eric Allen, leader of the KBC's missions mobilization team, said the ministries provide numerous services—such as free tests, counseling and prenatal care—on limited budgets.

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## Q&A

### Russell Moore on adoption

#### Why it is a 'pro-life' policy for evangelicals

By Adelle Banks

Louisville—Russell Moore, dean of the School of Theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, recently talked with Religion News Service about why adoption has become his personal cause and why more evangelicals should be joining him.



Russell Moore

On the 40th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion, Moore said adoption fits evangelicals' anti-abortion values, even as he maintains adoption isn't right for every family.

#### You have written on a range of pop culture, political and social issues, so why have you made adoption—and specifically Christian adoption—your big cause?

My wife and I went through several years of infertility and miscarriages and found ourselves going through the process of adoption and we felt very much alone. So, I started to write about the issue of adoption really to address people who are in the same situation that we were, which is not understanding and seeing the meaning of that rich metaphor of adoption in Scripture, not understanding how adoption makes a real family.

#### What do you see as the biblical metaphor of adoption?

Scripture says that Christians have been adopted into the family of God, and so regardless of background, regardless of past, everyone who is in Christ is part of the family.

#### With gay marriage legislation moving ahead and not as many victories as they would like on abortion, is this a cause where evangelicals could see more success?

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Western Recorder 1-15-2013

# Q&A WITH DAVID EDMUNDS

*KBC public affairs committee chair previews Kentucky General Assembly session, what Kentucky Baptists should be following*

By Drew Nichter

Louisville—David Edmunds has spent his fair share of time in Frankfort. Before becoming adult pastor at Highview Baptist Church's main Louisville campus, he promoted pro-life and pro-family legislation as a policy analyst for the the Family Foundation of Kentucky.

So, it seems only fitting that Edmunds was named chairman of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Committee on Public Affairs, the group tasked with keeping Kentucky Baptist up to date on public policy issues in Kentucky, the United States and globally.

As Kentucky lawmakers gathered last week in Frankfort to convene the first part of the General Assembly's regular session for 2013, the Western Recorder asked Edmunds about what Kentucky Baptists expect from this 30-day legislative term. (Answers have been edited for length and clarity.)

**The issue of expanded gambling always seems to be a hot topic during each legislative session. Last year, it seemed to be closer than ever to becoming reality before ultimately losing steam. Where does expanded gambling stand in 2013?**

Kentucky Baptists can rejoice that for two decades, against all odds, the schemes of those pushing for casino-style gambling have failed. Every year there seems to be enough political power plays

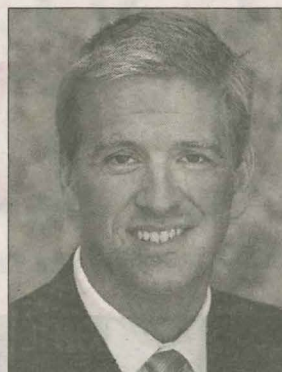
to push expanded gambling through, but seemingly by miraculous intervention, those plans are thwarted when good Kentuckians stand up against the pressure and let their voices be heard. When Baptists advocate for the poor families and children that gambling hurts, then truth wins the day.

While there doesn't seem to be an early focus on gambling this year, we can expect that some plan will come lurking out of the shadows, and we will need to be ready to respond.

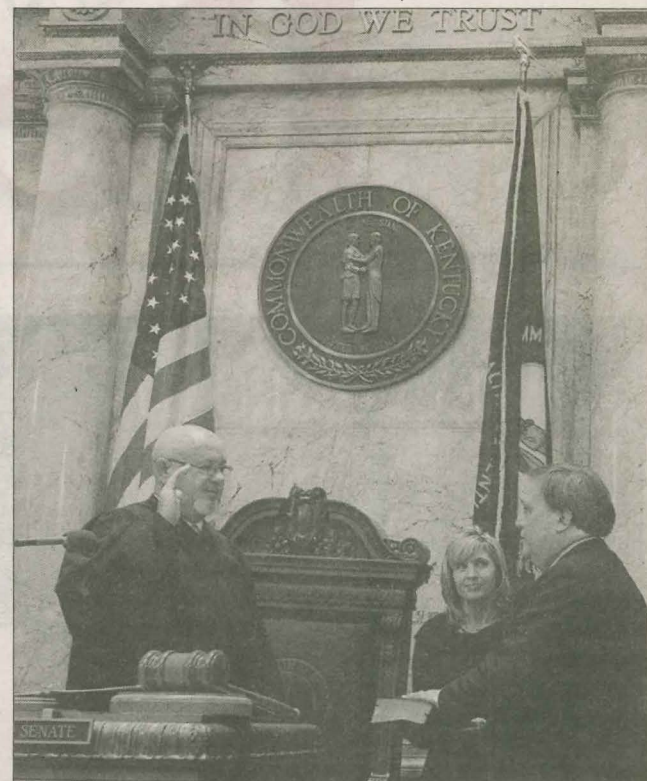
**With the changes in the state Senate, specifically David Williams resigning to become a circuit court judge, what does the future hold for the expanded gambling debate and other issues of concern to Kentucky Baptists?**

Certainly David Williams was not a perfect president of the Kentucky Senate, but when it came to the issue of expanded gambling, he should be applauded for his steadfast opposition to the political pressures of big gambling lobbyists. Year after year, he stood against those powers, and some speculate that it was the beginning of the end for his political career and gubernatorial aspirations.

Those who will likely be elected by their Republican peers to leadership of the Kentucky Senate do not hold the same convictions against expanded gambling. So, it will be interesting to see how fast a gambling bill might move with Williams gone.



■ Above: David Edmunds  
■ Right: Newly elected Senate President Robert Stivers (right), R-Manchester, is sworn in as the chamber's leader Jan. 8 by Circuit Court Judge Oscar House (left) as Stivers' wife, Regina, looks on. Stivers succeeds David Williams, who spent 12 years as Senate president before resigning the post in November to become a circuit court judge. (LRC Public Information photo)



**Do you believe a bill to require Kentucky women seeking abortions to view ultrasound images of their babies will advance or even be brought up during this General Assembly?**

I believe an ultrasound bill is the most important legislative tool that we have right now to save babies' lives and save their mothers from a lifetime of shame, guilt and regret.

Abortionists are already giving ultrasounds to determine costs of dismemberment. What we want is simply for doctors to turn the screen around and let a woman see the image if she desires and have access to her own medical records. It would be true for any other procedure. If that shouldn't be a law, then I don't know what should. If it is not brought up in this session, Kentuckians should demand it.

**What other issues of interest should Kentucky Baptists pay attention to and consider contacting their legislators about in the coming weeks?**

In addition to the ultrasound and expanded gambling legislation, Kentucky Baptists may want to pay close attention to the religious liberty legislation that is being proposed.

While some may get lost in the legal terminology, everyone has heard of the cases of pro-life-minded businesses and institutions affected by the new health care mandates. It may help to clarify some of those types of challenges if Kentucky were to pass this legislation. (WR)

Follow the work of the KBC Committee on Public Affairs through its blog, [www.KBCPublicAffairs.org](http://www.KBCPublicAffairs.org).

## LifeWay survey finds fewer Americans view homosexuality as a sin

By David Gibson

Nashville, Tenn.—Americans' acceptance of gays and lesbians is continuing to grow, with a new poll showing that just over a third of Americans view homosexuality as a sin, down from 44 percent a year earlier.

The finding from LifeWay Research was released just as the pastor who was to give the inaugural benediction for President Obama withdrew from the program over an anti-gay sermon he gave 20 years ago.

Louie Giglio went out on Jan. 10 after a liberal group discovered a sermon he preached in the 1990s in which he denounced the gay rights movement and advocated efforts to turn gays straight. In withdrawing,

Giglio did not renounce the remarks but said that battling gay rights was no longer a priority for him.

"The culture is clearly shifting on homosexuality, and this creates a whole new issue: How will America deal with a minority view, strongly held by evangelicals, Catholics, Mormons, Muslims and so many others?" Ed Stetzer, president of LifeWay Research, asked.

Stetzer said that Obama's own shift in embracing same-sex marriage and other gay rights in the past year may have played a role in the change in public opinion.

"The president's evolution on homosexuality probably impacted the evolution of cultural values—there is a real and substantive shift,

surprisingly large for a one-year time frame—though this was hardly a normal year on this issue," Stetzer pointed out.

Gay rights groups criticized Obama for inviting evangelical megachurch pastor, Rick Warren, an outspoken opponent of gay marriage, to deliver a benediction at his first inauguration, in 2009. But neither Warren nor the White House backed down.

LifeWay's survey, conducted in November, found 37 percent of respondents said they believe homosexual behavior is a sin, down from 44 percent in September 2011.

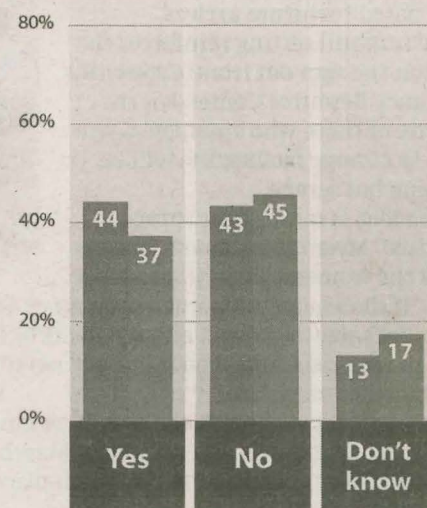
The percentage of Americans who do not believe homosexuality is a sin remained nearly the same, at 43 percent in September 2011 and 45 percent in November 2012. There was an increase in the percentage of those who said they were unsure of what they believe.

Not surprisingly, the new LifeWay survey found that those who identify as "born-again, evangelical or fundamentalist Christian" are the most likely to say homosexual behavior is a sin (73 percent). Conversely, those who never attend church are most likely to say they do not believe homosexual behavior is a sin (71 percent). (RNS)



**NOT WELCOME** Louie Giglio, seen here speaking at the 2011 Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference in Phoenix, withdrew last week from President Obama's upcoming inauguration ceremonies, where Giglio was to offer the benediction. A gay rights group discovered a sermon the pastor of Passion City Church in Atlanta preached against gay marriage in the 1990s. (Photo by Matt Miller/BP)

Among Americans:  
**Do you believe homosexual behavior is a sin?**



Results from:  
■ Sept. 2011 ■ Nov. 2012

Methodology:  
Online surveys representing the adult population of the United States.  
2,144 completed surveys Sept. 23-26, 2011 and 1,191 completed surveys Nov. 14-16, 2012.

LifeWayResearch.com

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## New Hope Center

Continued from page 1

Most operate via donations from churches, Baptist associations and individuals; some have paid directors but all depend on volunteer staffs, he said.

"Some of the centers have ultrasound machines that help convince mothers to choose life for their child rather than abortion," Allen said.

"Most importantly, they provide spiritual counsel to mothers who have found themselves in a difficult situation," he added. "It's exciting to know that not only will these centers help to save the life of an unborn child, but they also introduce mothers to new life in Christ."

Although Adams had already accepted Christ by the time she sought help, she admitted that she "coped" with a divorce by drinking and "acting out."

Not long before coming to New Hope, Jeremiah 29:11 (which talks about God wanting to give us hope) made a strong impression on Adams. The day of her visit, a counselor wrote out three scriptures for her to meditate on, including the one from Jeremiah.

"There was a divine aspect to this," Adams said. "I realize now that God was preparing me for what was to come."

Stories like this are common at New Hope. Mentor Angela Helvy recalled a young woman who recently came to see her and talked about having an abortion at a young age. After the girl said she believed in God but wasn't very religious, Helvy shared the gospel with her. With tears in her eyes, the client accepted Jesus as her Savior.

"I got a call from her a few weeks later, announcing the birth of her beautiful baby girl," said Helvy, a member of First Baptist Church of Cold Spring. "We're planning to get together soon so I can meet this precious little girl from God."

Although the majority of clients are single, that isn't always the case. Because of a financial pinch, one married mother of three has sought assistance from Two Hearts Pregnancy Center.

Becky Clere, director of center services at the Ashland-based clinic, said they provided clothing, diapers and other supplies, and helped the woman find legal advice during a sticky family situation.

"We've prayed with them and seen how God has been glorified through this," Clere said. "Just because you're married doesn't mean everything's OK. Some women just need love and support for a while."

Director Sandy Brown said during the center's 12 years of operation it has helped women ranging from ages 12 to 54.

Although various denominations help, Kentucky Baptists provide at least 25 percent of the center's financial support. In addition, during its first year, a group of Baptist Builders renovated its headquarters.

"We see God move every day here," Brown said. "If these women have nobody else, we want to be there for them."

Allen said numerous possibilities exist for KBC churches that want to help these centers. Among his suggestions: forming partnerships, sponsoring baby showers, or collecting bottles, car seats, toys and diapers for a center.

For a list of pregnancy care centers supported by Kentucky Baptists, visit [www.KyBaptist.org/PregnancyCare](http://www.KyBaptist.org/PregnancyCare).

"I'm grateful for the staff of pregnancy care centers," Allen said. "They serve as a Christian witness to mothers who have found themselves without any support or help because family and friends can't—or won't." (KBC)

## CRISIS PREGNANCIES CROSSROADS' FOCUS

Continued from page 1

of Reigel and many others to see such a ministry started in their county.

"I really see it as God laid something on my heart and then He just began to work," said Reigel, who Myers glowingly calls the "birth mother" of Crossroads.

Reigel half-heartedly deflects such a title, but whole-heartedly praises the more than three years of hard work those who walked alongside her put in to see the pregnancy center become a reality.

A member of Crestwood Baptist Church, Reigel helped initiate and lead GRACE Ministries, a series of recovery groups for women who have had abortions. The ministry has allowed a number of women, like Reigel, to break their silence and ultimately accept God's forgiveness.

At 21, Reigel experienced an unplanned pregnancy. Despite wanting to keep the baby, family and friends convinced her that she was in no shape to raise a child. That left her to believe abortion was the only option

Reigel has described the procedure as the most excruciating pain she's ever endured, "as though my very soul was being ripped out of me," she told the Western Recorder in 2010.

Three years later, sitting in what soon will be the counseling room at Crossroads, Reigel again reflects on her experience. "I was never told the truth. I didn't know what I was walking in to."

### Common experiences

A common thread runs through the lives of other women associated with Crossroads.

Cara Hill, who serves as the secretary for the center's board of directors, recalled her own visit to an abortion clinic as a teenager. A sexual assault by a complete stranger left her feeling as if she had no other choice but to end the pregnancy. "I knew that I really couldn't tell my family," she said. "There was no positive outcome that I could think of."

And because Hill thought of herself as a victim of a crime, "I really had no guilt about" the abortion, she said.

But it was her consultation at the clinic that Hill said "closed the deal." When she told a nurse how she had gotten pregnant, the nurse replied, "You can't get pregnant from a rape."

"She actually made it very, very



'BIRTH MOTHER' Missy Reigel (right) recalls the journey she and others have taken to see Crossroads Pregnancy Resource Center become a reality. Director Denise Myers refers to Reigel as the center's "birth mother." Reigel, who has helped lead a post-abortive ministry at Crestwood Baptist Church since 2007, expressed a passion for starting a pregnancy center in Oldham County more than three years ago. The center is expected to open by early March. (Photo by Robin Cornet Bass)

easy for me to move forward, because I knew how wrong she was," Hill recalled. "So, I didn't get to think about what the repercussions would be or what the risks were, ... because I wasn't advised well."

Hill now has a daughter in college, but said she regrets the decision she made to have an abortion. "I would do anything to turn that clock back—anything," she said. "I wish that somebody would have been kinder and presented other options."

### 'Conduit for services'

Kindness and love is just what those who enter Crossroads' doors can expect to receive, Myers said. The volunteers also will spend plenty of time getting to know their clients.

"We want to take that time to walk them through where they are, what they're feeling (and) what's going on," said Myers, who previously worked for a pregnancy center operated by Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas.

Answering those questions will give volunteers a better idea of how to minister to each individual, she noted.

Myers described the center as a "conduit for services" for its clients. Stressing that those who volunteer at Crossroads are not licensed counselors, she said the ministry has connected with other agencies and organizations in Oldham County for the

purpose of referring clients to them.

More importantly, Crossroads is a ministry, Myers said. During each "coaching session" the gospel will be presented. The center can offer all the free services it wants, "but if we don't offer their true hope in health and healing," Myers said, "then we're not really offering anything."

Crossroads has solicited support from many churches in both Oldham County and Louisville. Reigel and several others involved are members of Crestwood Baptist, but the effort has crossed denominational lines.

That cooperative spirit is important for the community to see, Crossroads board member Scott Pittman said. The Kentucky Baptist Convention's Acts 1:8 Partnership consultant said such a combined effort "contributes to the viability and the acceptability of the resource center in the community."

Having initiated the journey more than three years ago to bring a pregnancy center to Oldham County, Reigel said it is both surreal and humbling to see it finally become a reality.

"It is such a God thing, and it was one thing that I knew I couldn't do on my own," Reigel said. "I knew I had to wait on God, and He has brought every person in place."

"I truly have a passion for this ministry," she said. "I can't wait to volunteer and be a part of it." (WR)

## Planned Parenthood sets record for abortions in fiscal year

Washington—Planned Parenthood has set a record for the number of abortions in its clinics, according to a newly released annual report.

The country's No. 1 abortion provider said its affiliates performed 333,964 of the procedures during 2010-11, the most recent year for which statistics are available. The previous yearly record for Planned Parenthood clinics was 332,278 in 2009.

Planned Parenthood also established a record for funds received from federal, state and local governments. It collected \$542.4 million in grants and

reimbursements from the government during the latest fiscal year. Those public funds were nearly half of Planned Parenthood's \$1.2 billion in total revenue for the year.

"Planned Parenthood has spent much of the last few years demanding that taxpayers add millions more to their coffers, citing their nonprofit status and so-called focus on women's health," said Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of the pro-life Susan B. Anthony List. "What have we received for our money? While government subsidies to Planned Parenthood have

reached an all-time high, so, too, has the number of lives ended by this profit-driven abortion business."

The organization's affiliates made only 2,300 adoption referrals during the year, totaling about 145 abortions for every referral.

Rep. Diane Black (R-Tenn) introduced legislation Jan. 4 that would bar federal family planning funds from going to Planned Parenthood and other organizations that perform abortions. The House of Representatives has supported similar legislation in the past, but the Senate has not. (BP)

## Go to 'Seminary for a Day'

Coming this spring is a series of events that have me very excited. As a former seminary student and professor, I knew that much of my educational

Together  
We are the KBC

Paul Chitwood

preparation for ministry took place outside of the classroom. I was being prepared for ministry as I learned from lay leaders and pastors in my church growing up. I was being prepared for ministry by my roles in my family and in the secular jobs I held years before I began serving as a pastor. Later, the churches where I served as pastor supplied daily opportunities for ongoing training.

Yet, looking back, I also realize that some of the most valuable time of preparation for ministry was time I spent sitting under those called by God to train and equip ministers. While I was blessed to spend 11 years and earn three degrees studying for ministry, I know that many of my fellow ministers have never been afforded those opportunities. At least for one day, I'd like to change that.

So, during the month of March, in four locations across the state, we are going to change that. We are calling the events, "Seminary for a Day." The events are designed to offer practical equipping for ministers and lay leaders who could benefit from a day of formal training. Whether you never made it to college or seminary, or you just want a refresher course in a specific area of ministry, these events will help sharpen you for the work to which God has called you.

I am grateful for our educational partners in Kentucky who will be providing the professors for each event. Mark your calendar for the day and location that is the best fit for you.

The first event will take place on March 9 at First Baptist Church of Mount Washington with Southern Baptist Theological Seminary providing the training. The second event will take place on March 14 on the campus of Mid-Continent University, where the faculty there will provide training. The third event is set for March 23 at Corinth Baptist Church in London where Clear Creek Baptist Bible College and University of the Cumberland will provide training. The final event will take place on April 13 at Greenwood Baptist Church in Bowling Green with Campbellsville University providing the training.

The \$20 registration fee also will cover lunch. Full scholarships are available for any member of a Kentucky Baptist church who cannot afford the registration fee. Participants will walk away with free resources and a refreshed desire to fulfill the directive of 2 Timothy 2:15, "Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

## 'Sanctity' extends to all of life's ages and stages

Recently, I read an illustration on Baptist Press for the "Explore the Bible" curriculum about a deteriorating house. It gave me pause, for it contained a profound truth. But I also gained another insight from that which its author intended. The story went thus:

"In the middle of the subdivision sits an old house waiting to be torn down. The house was state of the art in its day, including the spiral staircase and the chute that deposited dirty clothes into the basement. That was a long time ago. It has been surrounded by new homes with all the newest amenities (like air conditioning).

"Time has caught up to that old home. The place that was once a source of security for the owner has become a liability.

"How many times have people invested their lives in things that will not last, such as a job, a piece of land or a hobby. God is not against these things but He is against things that replace Him in our lives."

The story's intent is to cause one to examine, "What do people trust for security?" It illustrates that material things can produce a false sense of security, while true and lasting security can only be found in God. Certainly, this is an appropriate, biblically based lesson, but there is another truth to be learned—one that speaks volumes to the value of human life and intersects directly with Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, which will be observed by many Kentucky Baptist congregations Jan. 20.

The phrase, "sanctity of human life," generally is associated with promoting pro-life, anti-abortion causes and stories about crisis pregnancy centers and efforts to offer biblically-minded alternatives to women, as those that appear on page 1. And, this is right, for many lives are saved.

Yet, the sanctity of human life also pertains to every stage of life, the sacredness of life from the womb to the death bed. It teaches us to respect human dignity, treasure creation itself, and appreciate the intrinsic worth of others.

Sanctity of human life extends to family adoptions and children's services, like those provided by Sunrise. It extends to legislative measures, such as provisions for those seeking abortions to view ultrasounds and for stronger gun control. It extends to issues such as immigration, racism, human trafficking and euthanasia. It extends to providing quality health care for the elderly and sick, and providing food, clothes and safe housing for the less fortunate. It extends to

entertainment choices, where "action" now connotes wanton murder, violence, brutality, explosions and destruction. It extends to the way we treat and talk to others at work, home, school and church. It extends to all of life's ages and stages.

Some might look at the deteriorating house in the illustration as an eyesore, a blight or burden on the community, something whose day is long past. They might deem it no longer desirable or wanted, seek to devalue its worth in the eyes of others, and call for it to be discarded, even dismantled. Out with the old, in with the new and the better, they cry.

Others may choose to see an opportunity, instead. They look for the good that may be hidden on the inside. They see its potential, understand its real value. And, with a little care—some carpentry work, necessary repairs, updated fixtures, fresh paint, an investment in its future—the house can become a fine home once more, perhaps even one of greater value. In the process, the builder discovers a gold mine and creates an object of beauty, a story of restoration, renewal and revitalization.

Sadly, in the workplace and even in ministry, we can dehumanize others; devalue their worth and their work; deny that they, too, are created in the image of God. We, all too often, rush to discount, discourage and dismiss another, rather than seek to inspire, encourage and invest ourselves in helping one another. It is way too easy to avoid, neglect or abandon, instead of working together for the good.

Sanctity of human life affirms the eternal worth of others in our families, workplaces, schools, churches and ministries. It insists that we see each other as children of God, as those for whom Christ lived, died and rose again. For as the prophet Isaiah wrote, "We are all the work of (His) hands."

Jesus did not discount the value of human beings based upon their past, their sinfulness, their age, their illness, their disability, or their perceived usefulness. He did not look upon their "fallenness" and condemn, but rather sought to redeem and restore. Consider, for example, the woman at the well, the woman caught in adultery, the lame man who was lowered through a roof, and Zacchaeus. Jesus saw both their needs and their potential for the kingdom. He acted with mercy, love and compassion. He worked to encourage, forgive, uplift, heal, restore. His followers should strive daily to do likewise.

After  
Thought

By Todd Deaton



## What is financial success?

By Don Spencer

A common focus in the first month of a new year is to assess and evaluate our goals and priorities. One area to be considered is how well we are doing financially. Are we on target to achieve our goals? Do we need to set new goals or adjust our goals? Are we succeeding financially? This leads to another critical question: "How do you define success?"

Do you know what success will look like when you get there? Does success for you involve a particular position in life? Does it involve accumulating a certain level of material possessions? If so, how much is enough?

Success for each person is based on his or her personal values and goals. Those things that are important to you will determine your success. Often, the tensions we feel in life come from an inner conflict between our values and

how we spend our money.

Money itself has no intrinsic value. It is only a medium of exchange. It can be used to help you reach your goals in life, but many people never get in touch with this reality.

Without a proper focus on money, you can experience many negative emotions such as anxiety, worry, guilt and fear. To gain a proper perspective on money, you must view it as a tool. If you're given a tool, you have to know what to do with it or the tool is useless.

As you set financial goals in your life, realize that every person earns a certain amount of money over a lifetime. The process of meeting short-term and long-term goals is a matter of allocation. Every dollar spent involves a choice between alternatives. You can never spend that dollar again.

So many things in life will affect how well we reach our financial goals. Remember that financial success will be different for everyone. The thing that makes it different is our values and priorities. Once we identify those values and priorities, we can achieve financial success by focusing our financial planning and spending on these objectives.

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



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## Shine Like Stars \* Philippians 2:15

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

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## Do not be someone's 'straw' in the new year

By John Loudat

This time of the year is almost always punctuated with unwelcome reminders that there are a whole lot of hurting people in our world. We were all reminded of that on that tragic day when 27 people—20 of them little children—were murdered.

And we had been reminded of it one week earlier, when it was announced that the nurse in England who took the prank call from two Australian DJs pretending to be Queen Elizabeth and Prince Charles apparently had taken her own life.

Many were, no doubt, immediately mystified by that tragic news. How could a prank phone call cause anyone to take such a drastic action to escape her pain? That joke, though it was heard around the world and was summarily judged to be in extremely poor taste, wasn't so odious that it would in itself normally have the power to elicit such an awful response. It very well could have been, however, that proverbial "straw that broke the camel's back."

Camels are well known for the amazing amount of burden they can bear and transport. However, when you add one more teeny-tiny straw to the maximum load they can bear, it doesn't matter how much they can handle, they're going down!

People are the same. Some may amaze us with what they're able to bear. But add one more itty-bitty thing to their already overflowing plates, though, and they're likely to collapse under the massive load.

Hopefully, any of us, if we knew someone had been beset by such a "last straw," would rush to tell them there is one who will not allow them to experience more than they can bear with His powerful help (1 Corinthians 10:13). We would urge them instead to trust in the Lord to enable them to endure whatever painful situations they were experiencing.

Certainly we should do exactly that whenever we suspect someone we know finds him or herself in that place. Tragically, though, many who find themselves there don't show it, and we don't know it until it's too late. Therefore, it would behoove us all to ask the Lord to enable us to see the pain and despair in others' lives before it's too late.

Second, we must watch our own behavior and do everything we can to avoid laying that last straw on anyone. For that matter, we should always do everything we can to avoid laying the first straw or any straw, so that we're never a burden but always a blessing to everyone.

(When someone is helping you carry a burden that is larger than you can bear alone, as we are commanded to do in Galatians 6:2, you are not being a burden to them, but a blessing.) I can't think of anywhere that would be needed more than in the workplaces of life, where many of us spend most of our time every week.

Envy and ambition characterize just about every workplace to some degree. Pastor James, in his letter, counseled his readers to be "wise and understanding" and avoid harboring "bitter envy and selfish ambition" in their hearts. He then explains, "But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere (James 3:17).

Sometimes it takes considerable effort to be a peacemaker, considerate of whatever God alone knows others are experiencing, yielding what we would like for what others would like, not treating people the way they deserve but good, dealing with everyone the same and not being two-faced. But it's worth it in God's eyes, and it should be in ours, as well. Because while it may cost us, it likely will be a real blessing to others. Why it could even save someone's life! That seems to me to be a good resolution to make.

John Loudat is editor of the Baptist New Mexican.

### COMMENTARY

*"Hopefully, any of us, if we knew someone had been beset by such a 'last straw,' would rush to tell them there is one who will not allow them to experience more than they can bear with His powerful help."*

## Promoting self-esteem

By Scott Wigginton

**Q: How can parents help teenagers increase their self-esteem?**

**A:** Christian parents first must be clear about how they define self-esteem. Certainly we do not want to promote a "me-first" philosophy of self-indulgence that embraces a prideful, selfish and ego-centric approach to life. In fact, self-adoration is more likely than not to lead to attitudes that demean and put others at risk. An inflated sense of self may even culminate in such things as abuse, racism or violent and aggressive behavior.

Pride or a "haughty spirit" (Proverbs 16:18) is dangerous to self and others in that it actually moves persons to live as if they do not need to turn to God (Psalm 10:4). Pride keeps persons from listening to wise counsel (Proverbs 13:10) and leads to talk that is foolish (Proverbs 14:3).

Teens need to have a clear understanding of how God views them. The Father loves His creation and the Scripture tells us that we were made in His image. Because of sin, however, we are unacceptable to God and separated from Him. Repenting and accepting Christ's sacrifice for us on the cross means that we realize there is nothing in us that is deserving of glory or honor.

In Christ, however, each person is significant (Ephesians 2:10), secure (Hebrews 13:5) and totally accepted (Ephesians 2:8-9). We realize that He has made each of us for a purpose and that is to live for Him and to bring Him honor and glory.

When our oldest daughter, Auburn, was an infant, her mother made her a beautiful blanket. She loved that blanket—to death! If you saw it now and did not understand the history, you might be tempted to toss it in the garbage. But the enormous worth of the blanket is directly tied to how much our daughter loves it. So it is with a Father who loves and redeems His wholly unholy creation.

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



## January 'Call to Prayer': Suggestions for reclaiming the primacy of prayer

By Roger Oldham

The apostle Paul charged Timothy to establish prayer as the top priority in his life and ministry (1 Timothy 2:1). If our churches are to experience spiritual renewal and our nation is to experience spiritual awakening, Southern Baptists must embrace this same priority in our churches and our personal lives.

In Scripture, spiritual awakening is always tied to the obedience of God's people. Southern Baptist Convention President Fred Luter recently reminded us that revival does not trickle down from the White House; it bubbles up from God's House. If revival is to come to America, we must earnestly beseech the Father in specific ways. Here are three:

### Pray for our leaders

In Paul's charge to Timothy, he commanded him to pray for "kings and all that are in authority." Few national and international leaders mentioned in biblical history were godly. In fact, the number of godly kings can be counted on less than two hands.

On the other hand, the number of evil kings in united Israel and the two divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah runs in the dozens. Add in the foreign kings that dominated Israel through much of its history and we see a sad collection of leaders,

few for whom we would want to pray anything positive.

It's still the same today. Each day's headlines contain another scandal, policy decision or looming crisis. It is so vital for us to pray for our leaders. How do we pray for them?

- Pray that the Lord will place godly people in the paths of our elected and appointed officials who will offer good words at opportune moments.

- Pray that our leaders' hearts will be swayed as they hear godly counsel.

- Pray that they will have dreams that give them second thoughts.

- Pray that they will fully grasp the reality that one day they will stand before the Righteous Judge to give an account for their decisions and actions.

- Pray that the principles of righteousness will find favor in their minds.

- Pray that they will make wise decisions.

- Pray for their salvation and subsequent sanctification through the Spirit.

### Pray for laborers

Our baptism ratio numbers tell a story: We have lost confidence in the gospel to save the lost. We are not engaged in personal evangelism. Soul winning devolved into sharing. Sharing became bringing them to church. Bringing them to church

eventually became "they know where the church is." And along the way the number of laborers it takes to win one new convert to faith in Christ has quadrupled.

The great need is for ordinary believers to realize we have an extraordinary gospel.

If our nation is to experience spiritual awakening, it will take a mighty army of willing witnesses telling the lost about Jesus. How do we pray for these laborers?

- Ask the Lord to use you in His harvest.

- Ask the Lord to give you a compelling "entry point" to share the gospel with the lost, whether through FAITH or the Romans Road or some other biblical gateway that fits your personality.

- Ask the Lord to guide you to fellow believers whom you can enlist to join you in telling others about Jesus Christ.

- Ask the Lord to provide willing witnesses in other places to tell your family, friends and people you'll never meet who live there about Jesus.

- Rejoice when you hear stories about conversions.

- Ask the Lord to remove any spirit of jealousy or cynicism when others' ministries are uniquely used in reaching people with the gospel.

### Pray for the lost

Paul's words in Romans 9 are deeply moving, "My heart's desire and prayer to

God for Israel is that they might be saved." How long has it been since we poured out our hearts before the Lord in intercessory prayer for the salvation of specific individuals?

Many Baptists claim they don't know any lost people. Jesus' words are especially appropriate for us: "lift up your eyes." How do we pray for the lost?

- Ask the Lord to let you really see the people you encounter on a daily basis.

- Introduce yourself; get their names; create a prayer list, writing their names in a prayer journal or on a paper you keep in your Bible.

- Repeat their names in prayer each day during your quiet time.

- Address them by name as you see them along the way, getting to know more about them each time you see them.

- Mention to them that you recently prayed for them.

- Ask how you might pray for them and continue to lift them up in prayer.

- Do not become discouraged if they do not quickly confess faith in the Jesus Christ.

- Take note: When the Lord sees your passion for the lost, He will bring others into your path who are longing to be saved. (BP)

Roger Oldham, a Kentucky native, is vice president for convention communications and relations with the SBC Executive Committee.

### FIRST PERSON

# Moore: Adoption a 'pro-life' issue, biblical

Continued from page 1

I don't really see success in terms of legislative or cultural victory. I see it more in calling evangelical Christians back to a commitment that we've always had to shelter the vulnerable.

## Are you suggesting that evangelical churches specifically or churches in general be more involved?

At the level of the common good, this is something that all people should be concerned about. But it's consistent for evangelical Christians to be pro-orphan.

## Adoption has been a growing issue for evangelical churches in the last decade. How are they doing, and how much further do they have to go to meet your goals?

What most churches want, when they start to think about this issue, is a pre-programmed initiative—a set of instructions. I don't think this issue works that way. It has to be organic. It has to be flexible. It has to create a culture within a congregation.

It will be congregational cultures that start to change with the inclusion of the families who are adopting and fostering and caring for orphans. I think that's a long-term project over a generation, not something short term.

## Could this be a form of evangelism—the idea that children adopted by evangelicals may become evangelicals themselves?

Adoption and orphan care and foster

care are not a covert means of evangelism any more than Christians having babies is a form of reproductive evangelism. It's simply Christians love children, and part of what it means to love children is to share the gospel.

## Prospective parents often think of having children that look like them and have all 10 fingers and 10 toes. But should adoption be a nondiscriminatory calling?

Absolutely. That's one of the reasons why you have many Christians who are particularly adopting special-needs children who are in all sorts of points of vulnerability, from AIDS to cleft palate to fetal alcohol syndrome. I also think that any family that's adopting needs to understand that this child is a person and not a project. Someone who believes that adoption is simply going to meet some void within that person's life is not someone who should adopt.

## Do you think the connection between the anti-abortion movement and the pro-adoption movement has grown?

I think it has grown because the pro-life movement has grown. You see that, for instance, in terms of crisis pregnancy centers, which now are expanding to minister to women in all sorts of ways, ranging from child care to job training.

## You are living this out—how many children have you and your wife adopted?

We have five children. We adopted our first two from an orphanage in Russia;

they were 1 year old at the time, and they're now 11 years old.

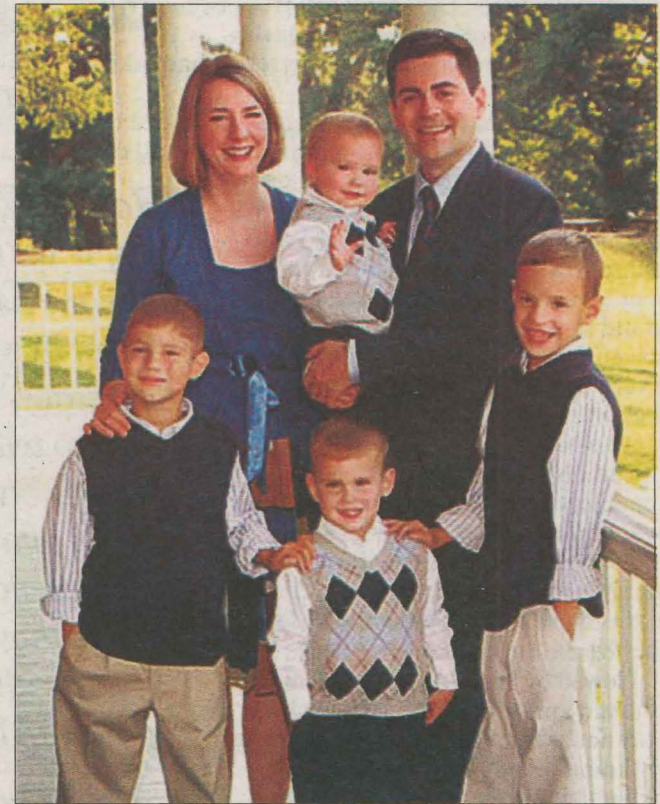
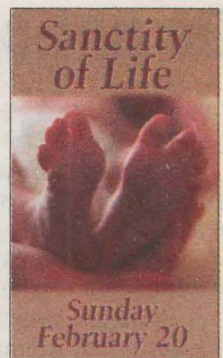
## What's the greatest benefit of being an adoptive parent?

The adopting of our two sons demonstrated to us something of the love of God for us and gave us a relationship that we never would have found on our own. We love our sons and they've brought so much to our family that we never could have planned out ahead of time.

## And the greatest challenge?

The greatest challenge is confronting the idea that there's somehow a difference between adopted children and biological children in terms of affection (and) the structure of the family, which is not true. There's no such thing as adopted children. There are only children who were adopted. In a biblical understanding, "adopted" is a past-tense verb, not an adjective. So once someone has been adopted into the family, that person is part of the family with everything that means. (RNS)

*'There's no such thing as adopted children. There are only children who were adopted.'*



**TOGETHER** The Moore family, in a 2009 photo. Russell and Maria Moore adopted Benjamin (far left) and Timothy (far right) from a Russian orphanage when the boys were 1 year old. (BP file photo)

*You created my  
inmost being; You  
knit me together in  
my mother's womb.  
I praise You because  
I am fearfully and  
wonderfully made;  
Your works are  
wonderful, I know  
that full well.  
(Psalm 139:13-14)*

*Lend a hand*  
for mothers,  
for the gift of life,  
for God's wonderfully  
made work.

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday is January 20<sup>th</sup>.

As individuals, churches and associations, Kentucky Baptists partner with these pro-life ministries. Contact the one near you and ask how you can lend a hand!



**Ashland:**  
Two Hearts Pregnancy  
Care Center

**Barbourville:**  
Barbourville Pregnancy  
Resource Center

The Center for  
Pregnancy Help  
and Abstinence

**Bardstown:**  
New Life Center

**Benton:**  
Haven of Hope

**Bowling Green:**  
Pregnancy  
Support Center

**Campbellville:**  
Central KY Pregnancy  
Support Center

**Carrollton:**  
Haven of Hope  
Pregnancy Center

**Cold Spring:**  
Care Net Pregnancy  
Services of North. KY

**Columbia:** Agape  
House Pregnancy  
Resource Center

**Corbin:** Southeast KY  
Women for Life

**Covington:**  
Care Net Pregnancy  
Services of North. KY

**Crestview Hills:**  
New Hope Center

**Crestwood:**  
Grace Ministries

Crossroads Pregnancy  
Resource Center

**Cumberland:**  
Esther's Closet

**Danville:**  
Pregnancy Resource  
Center of Central KY

**Columbia:** Agape  
House Pregnancy  
Resource Center

**Elizabethtown:**  
Clarity Solutions  
for Women

**Florence:**  
Care Net Pregnancy  
Services of North. KY

**Frankfort:**  
Avenues for Women

Unwed Mothers and  
Their Children

Opportunities for Life

**Glasgow:**  
Crossroads Pregnancy  
Center, Inc.

**Greenville:**  
Pathway of Hope

**Henderson:**  
Marsha's Place  
Pregnancy Resource  
Center

**Hopkinsville:**  
Alpha Alternative  
Pregnancy Care Center

**Latonia:**  
New Hope Center

**Lexington:**  
Assurance Pregnancy  
Help Center

**London:** Laurel  
County Life Center

**Louisville:**  
A Woman's Choice  
Resource Center

Pregnancy  
Resource Center

**Madisonville:**  
Door of Hope  
Pregnancy Center

**Manchester:**  
Heart & Soul Life Center

**Mayfield:**  
Hope for Life Pregnancy  
Resource Center

**Maysville:**  
Baptist Nursing  
Fellowship Baby  
Boot Camp

**Monticello:**  
H.E.L.P. Pregnancy  
Care Center (Hold  
Each Life Precious)

**Morehead:**  
Hope Pregnancy  
Care Center

**Morganfield:**  
Shelter of Love Crisis  
Pregnancy Center

**Murray:**  
Life House Care Center

**Owensboro:**  
Care Net Pregnancy  
Center of Owensboro

**Owenton:**  
Meeting the Needs

**Paducah:**  
Hope Unlimited Family  
Care Center

**Pikeville:**  
Appalachian  
Pregnancy Care Center

**Richmond:**  
Pregnancy Help Center

**Russell Springs:**  
ARC Pregnancy  
Support Center

**Shelbyville:**  
A Loving Choice  
Pregnancy Resource  
Center

**Shepherdsville:**  
New Hope Pregnancy  
Resource Center

**Somerset:**  
AIM Pregnancy  
Support Center

**Springfield:**  
House of Hope  
Pregnancy Center

**Vine Grove:**  
CrossWay Pregnancy  
Resource Center

**Williamstown:**  
Care Net Pregnancy  
Services of North. KY

**Winchester:**  
New Beginnings of  
Winchester

Visit [www.kybaptist.org/pregnancy](http://www.kybaptist.org/pregnancy) or call the KBC Missions Mobilization Team at (502) 489-3403 or 1-866-489-3403 (toll-free in KY).

## Africa rises, China falls on Christian persecution list

By Lauren Markoe

**Washington**—The persecution of Christians “vastly rose” in 2012 as radical Islamists consolidated power in Africa, according to Open Doors, a Christian missionary organization that publishes an annual list of offending nations.

Increasing threats to African Christians can be seen in focused attacks, such as the killings of Christians in Nigerian churches by the radical Muslim group Boko Haram, but also in the greater prevalence of radical Muslims in government, according to the California-based Open Doors.

In Mali, for example, which made the biggest leap on the “World Watch List,” from unranked in 2011 to No. 7 in 2012, a coup in the north brought fundamentalist Muslims to power.

“The situation in the north used to be a bit tense, but Christians and even missionaries could be active,” said Open Doors spokesman Jerry Dykstra.

Now, he said, Christians there are in grave danger.

North Korea topped Open Doors’ list for the 11th year in a row, and was followed by Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia. The group estimates that as many as 70,000 Christians are imprisoned in North Korea simply for being Christian, and the act of carrying a Bible can result in execution.

In neighboring China, the picture for Christians continues to improve, as

that country slid from No. 21 in 2011 to No. 37 in 2012—a stark difference from its top 10 ranking five years ago.

More than 100 Chinese Christians still languish in prison, and the government still keeps close tabs on church officials, but “house searches, and the confiscation of Bibles and Christian books no longer occur on a large scale,” according to Open Doors.

### ‘Double whammy’ in Syria

Syria, now in the throes of a bloody revolution, became a country of particular concern for the group, which pegged it at No. 11 in 2012 and No. 36 the previous year, the report’s second-biggest jump. Under President Bashar al-Assad, who now is waging a ruthless campaign against Syrian rebels, “Christians were allowed the freedom to worship but not evangelize,” according to Open Doors.

Ron Boyd-McMillan, chief strategy officer for the organization, said Syrian Christians have been hit with a “double whammy,” in that they are under pressure from rebels fighting against the regime and from radical jihadists who have entered Syria with an anti-Christian agenda.

“The good news in Syria is those Christians who are left behind are showing a great unity among different denominations,” Boyd-McMillan said. “The suffering has drawn them together.” (RNS)

## 9Marks at Southern Building Healthy Churches



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**Chuck McAlister,**  
Leader of KBC's  
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“This Hope” will lead in worship.

### Questions?

Visit [www.kybaptist.org/risk](http://www.kybaptist.org/risk)  
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or call (502) 489-3576 or  
1-866-489-3576 (toll-free in KY)



Evangelism & Church Planting Team  
P.O. Box 43433  
Louisville, KY 40253-0433

## 'Admit One'

## Worthy students enjoy first of OBI's merit-based, off-campus outings

"Admit One." That's what it said on the admission ticket. No one looking at it would have thought it represented something significant, but it did. It was a "merit badge" for outstanding all-around achievement in the classroom, the workplace and the dormitory. To be given that ticket meant the student who received it at the Johnson Central High School swim meet had qualified for the first merit-based, off-campus trip of the school year.

These trips are a new addition to the disciplinary toolbox at OBI. Many of the traditional methods of discipline focus on responding negatively to students' wrong choices and inappropriate actions, words and attitudes. Somehow, that type of response always seems to come across as angry punishment or authority's revenge.

The question the administration sought to answer was this: How can we encourage students to do their best with their studies and their behavior rather than only responding to the negative results of their poor decisions and reactions? In the discussion of how to reward the students' achievement of significant and consistently positive behavior in a timely manner, the idea of the merit-based, off-campus trip was born.

Unlike the usual class field trip or an athletic team's journey to a competition, these trips are neither compulsory nor automatic. They are earned through a combination of positive life results. The student must have had no final grade lower than a 'C' in the previous academic quarter; no current grade lower than a 'C'; no in-school or out-of-school suspensions in the previous nine

academic weeks; no disciplinary reports in the academic arena or in the dormitory in the past nine weeks; and must not be campused (grounded) for dormitory infractions on the day of the trip. To put together a personal portfolio of such exemplary character is no small thing in

## This is Oneida



Paul Davidson

our setting. In fact, there were some people who doubted it could be achieved by any student living in the dormitories.

Thankfully, results from the first and second quarters have shown that it not only is possible for a few, but it is possible for many. Some 90 students (more than one-third of the student body) qualified for the first trip, but, for a variety of reasons, only about 40 ended up taking advantage of the opportunity they had earned.

For those who followed the swim team to its meet in Paintsville, the trip amounted to this: Wearing their Mountaineer spirit T-shirts, they made the two-hour bus trip with their friends, watched and cheered on the swim team for three hours, had \$4 to spend at the concession stand for lunch, ate a sit-down dinner at a real restaurant (not a fast-food meal), and traveled home—all at the school's expense.

Was it worth it to spend all that money and time for this group of outstanding students? I think the answer is a resounding "yes." Their fine behavior during the day, their spirited cheering for our swimmers and their many unsolicited expressions of gratitude ("Thank you, Dr. D!") tell me that the administrators involved in the discussion made a good choice for the entire campus.

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

## A lifetime of preparation

## Alum follows God's call to return to campus in computer services

Our student body is filled with personal stories of how God has worked to direct paths to Clear Creek Baptist Bible College. I always enjoy hearing about how God works in very specific ways to bring people to our campus.

That truth also applies to our faculty and staff positions that are filled by God-called men and women. Shane Kahkola is our new director of computer services. He also holds the distinction of being a recent graduate.

"My family and I came from Indiana in 2006 to answer God's call to ministry," Shane said. "I was here from 2006-10 as a student. I got to work with previous director of computer services, Mike Burns, in a student workship position while I was here as a student. Mike taught me a lot about the organization of a department while I worked under him.

"When I graduated in 2010, we went back to Indiana and served in my home church for two years as a youth minister. I also worked with my dad in his computer company," Shane recalled.

"Last summer I got a call from the college asking me to consider the position of director of computer services that had opened up. We really had to pray about it. It's so easy to come back to a place where you were really loved as a student and where God really blessed us. We just wanted to be sure it was of the Lord and not something that we just wanted ourselves.

"I feel the Lord has been preparing me all my life for this ministry," Shane said. "I have worked full time in some computer-related field since I was 17. I started out with my dad who told me from the start that I needed to learn all I could about computers. I have been working ever since then in this field.

"All my life this field has been a calling for me," Shane said. "I see my administrative position here at Clear Creek as not just a job but a ministry. There are so many ways the Lord allows me to minister to folks here on campus through my computer skills."

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

## Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

## Book Reviews

Spiritual Warfare & Missions:  
The Battle for God's Glory  
Among the Nations

Authors: Jerry Rankin & Ed Stetzer  
Publisher: B&H Publishing, 2010, 309 pages  
List Price: \$10.99, hardcover

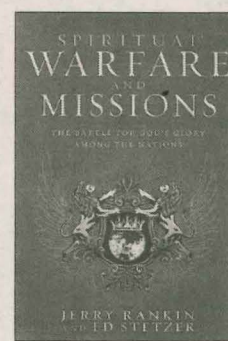
★★★★☆

If you were to take a sheet of paper and list the strengths and weaknesses of "Spiritual Warfare and Missions: The Battle for God's Glory Among the Nations" in two columns, the strengths column would be filled with observations while the weaknesses column would be practically empty.

For starters, Jerry Rankin and Ed Stetzer's opening chapters on God's purpose (to be exalted among the nations) and Satan's purpose (to oppose the kingdom) lay a strong biblical foundation for the remainder of the book.

A second notation in the strengths column would be their splendid understanding of missions history and the task we face today with a "vast diversity of ethno-linguistic people groups throughout the world." Their image of the world being a waffle and not a pancake helps the reader grasp how challenging it is to take the gospel to every people group. The good news is that progress is being made.

As we carry out the Great Commission, the reality is that we have an adversary who is on the attack. Rankin and Stetzer remind us that Satan's mission is "to keep lost people lost." Because of this, they conclude, "Global evangelism does not take place in a demilitarized zone, but on the battleground of spiritual warfare."



The authors outline several of Satan's tactics including: keep people groups hidden from our awareness; persecution of believers and the church; erode the authority of God's word; distort the call of

God; and destroy the spiritual vitality of the church. Unveiling that final tactic is key because it makes us aware that "Satan would love to keep churches self-absorbed, blind and inward focused."

Rankin served 23 years as a missionary in Asia and then became president of the International Mission Board. I anticipated hearing a great story or two from him—and he did not disappoint. Pastors will find many compelling stories to relay in their sermons. Other readers will be inspired to serve God sacrificially, pray fervently and give extravagantly.

Rankin tells the story of Gnaniah, a village evangelist in India, who was brutally attacked for sharing his faith. Undaunted by the danger, he returned to the area and started a church. He later led one of his attackers to Christ and then rejoiced when God called this transformed man to become the next pastor of the church.

Satan's strategy is to convince Christians that missions is optional. His lies must be dismissed (John 8:44). Rankin and Stetzer implore us to be like Paul who was "eager to preach the good news" (Romans 1:15).

Chris Platt is missions and ministry pastor at Crestwood Baptist Church.

## LifeWay Transformational Discipleship study

## Maturing believers exercise faith, trust

Nashville, Tenn.—Believers who are progressing in spiritual maturity are more likely to exercise their faith by trusting God even in difficult circumstances, according to a LifeWay Research survey.

"Exercising faith" is one of eight attributes of discipleship that consistently show up in the lives of maturing Christians. The attributes are part of the Transformational Discipleship study conducted by LifeWay.

Among the eight attributes of discipleship tested, churchgoers have higher scores for exercising faith than any of the others, said Ed Stetzer, president of LifeWay Research. Yet, he pointed out, only 13 percent of church members were able to give the best response to all of the questions for the attribute.

"It is easy to say God has a purpose for everything in life, but it requires faith to enjoy seeing His plan unfold in difficult times," Stetzer said.

The survey measured responses to a set of statements indicative of a person's level of faith. More than 90 percent of respondents agree with the statement: "I believe that God has a purpose for all events in my life, regardless of whether I

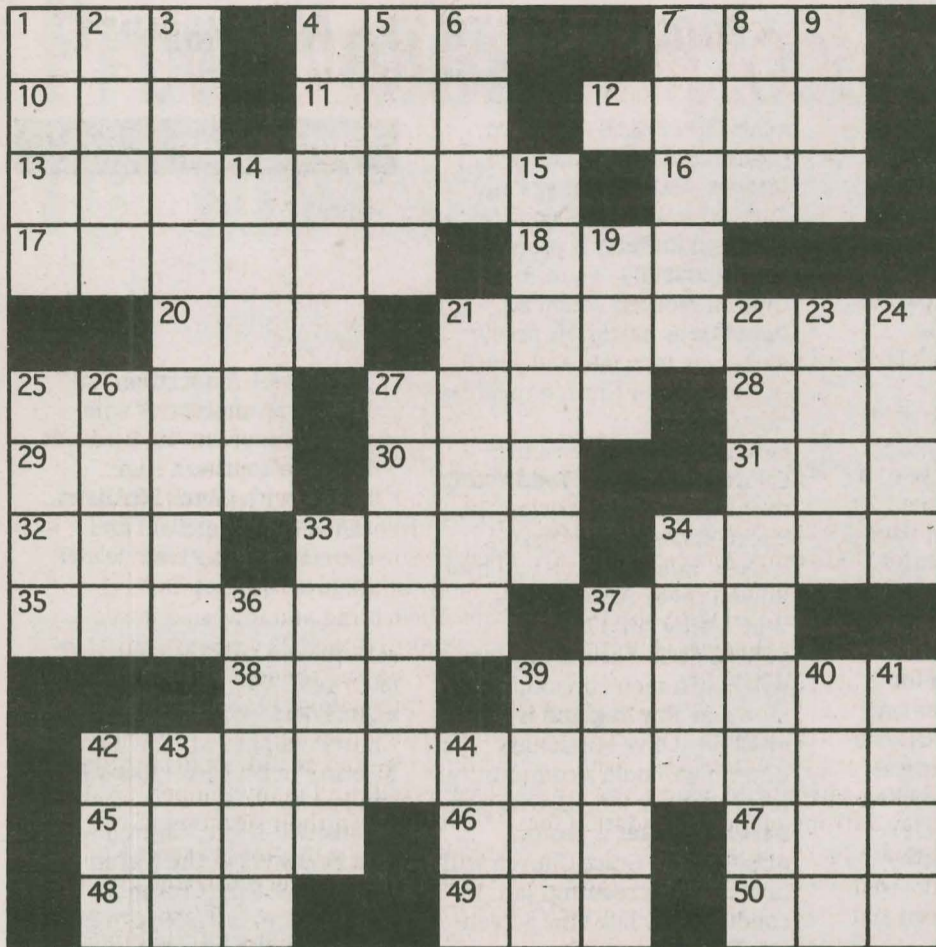
perceive each event as being good or bad." Additionally, 86 percent agree they "express praise and gratitude to God even in difficult circumstances."

The survey also shows the longer someone has trusted Christ as Lord and Savior, the better the responses are for exercising faith. Being involved in a Bible study group, praying for Christians and non-Christians, and witnessing to non-believers also make a positive impact.

Faith also is exhibited in the belief that God can change lives, the survey shows. More than 80 percent disagree with the statement: "I sometimes doubt that God can change the lives of non-Christians I know."

The survey also reveals those who are stronger in their faith are less prone to doubt God's involvement, even in unexplainable circumstances.

"Exercising Christian faith is more than believing God exists; it is believing in God's promised presence, provision and compassion for us," Stetzer pointed out. "It is exhibited in a life that depends on Jesus Christ for salvation and is filled with the expectation of His daily activity." (LW/BP)



**Bible Crosswords**

By Janet Adkins

**Across**

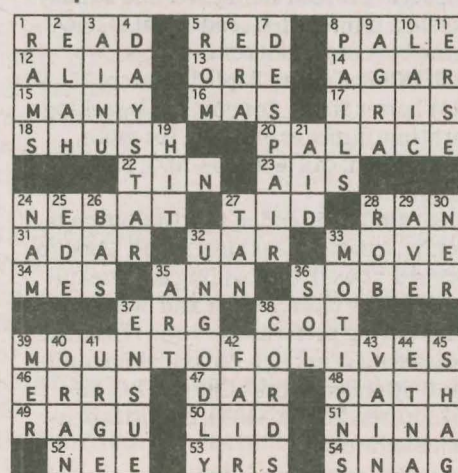
- 1 She played Nora to Powell's Nick
- 4 Balaam's bane
- 7 Father of Saul (Acts 13)
- 10 Mimic
- 11 O.T. book (abbr.)
- 12 "Through faith also \_\_\_\_\_ received strength to conceive" (Hebrews 11:11)
- 13 One quality of God
- 16 Like blustery, cold weather
- 17 First manners lesson word
- 18 Grain
- 20 Title given to Italian monk
- 21 "Blessed are they whose ... sins are \_\_\_\_\_" (Romans 4:7)
- 25 Depressed
- 27 "I \_\_\_\_\_ on the work of thy hands" (Psalm 143:5)
- 28 Christmas \_\_\_\_\_
- 29 Girl (Scot.)
- 30 Found in veins?
- 31 \_\_\_\_\_ canto, singing style
- 32 Shoshonean
- 33 \_\_\_\_\_ Scott decision, landmark legal case
- 34 Roll call answer
- 35 "who hath \_\_\_\_\_ of eyes?" (Proverbs 23:29)
- 37 Seasoning (Fr.)
- 38 Shoe width
- 39 Heats to almost boiling
- 42 "The Lord said unto him [Solomon], I have heard thy prayer and thy \_\_\_\_\_" (1 Kings 9:3)
- 45 Retirement accts.
- 46 Its members trace their ancestors to the Mayflower (abbr.)
- 47 Plain of \_\_\_\_\_ (Nehemiah 6:2)
- 48 Kin (abbr.)
- 49 Consumed
- 50 \_\_\_\_\_ Paltz, NY

- 19 Park, for one (abbr.)
- 21 "Behold, I cast out devils, and I do \_\_\_\_\_" (Luke 13:32)
- 22 "For \_\_\_\_\_ is as the sin of witchcraft" (1 Samuel 15:23)
- 23 At any time
- 24 Editor's mark
- 25 To obscure
- 26 Fashionably \_\_\_\_\_
- 27 "Let me set a \_\_\_\_\_ of bread before thee" (1 Samuel 28:22)
- 33 "Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all \_\_\_\_\_" (Psalm 148:7)
- 34 Miami pro team
- 36 Himalayan country
- 37 Give goosebumps
- 39 Scram!
- 40 Finished
- 41 "Drought and heat consume the \_\_\_\_\_ waters" (Job 24:19)
- 42 Title of respect
- 43 Actress Mary
- 44 Director Lupino

**Down**

- 1 "Thy word is a \_\_\_\_\_ unto my feet" (Psalm 119:105)
- 2 European auto maker
- 3 "Because I have called, and \_\_\_\_\_" (2 words, Proverbs 1:24)
- 4 Feminine name (var.)
- 5 Ump's call
- 6 Texas college (abbr.)
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_ blanche
- 8 Gershwin
- 9 Maxim; proverb
- 14 "Lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with ... \_\_\_\_\_ of this life" (Luke 21:34)
- 15 Let free

**Last puzzle's solution**



**Crossings' new home**

**New chapter of ministry begins in new offices at Ky. Baptist Building**

Moving day—it is a short phrase with much meaning. Perhaps it creates excitement or anxiety—likely some of both. Moving typically entails a cleaning out of old files and such that sparks many memories. At the same time, moving points us forward to new opportunities as we, in a sense, "start over." This is my last article written from what had been our office home since 2006. We now are new tenants at the Kentucky Baptist Convention building.

**Crossings Ministries**



David Melber

The restructuring that has taken place within our KBC has created the space that will allow our staff to be headquartered at the south end of the Kentucky Baptist Building. I am excited about this move as the physical closeness to the KBC staff allows a new era of partnership as we seek to serve the churches of our state.

Reflecting back, I am amazed at what God has done since 2006. The numbers we serve each year have been multiplied many times over. More importantly, the number of salvation

decisions that occur each year have grown most rapidly. The staff that God has blessed us with has grown greatly, with new faces added each year. Also, we have seen many continue on the path God has set before them. We have seen many leave the United States to serve as missionaries in other parts of the world. Other former staff members have left to serve local churches, and still others to plant churches.

It is impossible to imagine what will take place in the next six years. Each year I find myself feeling more and more blessed to be allowed to serve in this ministry that is privileged to see God work through thousands of people from all over the world.

At this key time as we have transitioned to our offices, I want to thank all those who have been our partners through prayer, volunteer work and serving on our staff. We continue to request your prayers for us that we seek God's vision and direction for this ministry.

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



## 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.
- 24-26** Southeast Conclave, Chattanooga, Tenn.

## February

- 1-2** Disaster Relief Chaplaincy Training—Region 3, Hardinsburg Baptist Church.
- 1-2** English as a Second Language Workshop, Northside Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.
- 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.
- 8-9** Imagine Preschool and Children's Ministry Conference, Parkway Baptist Church, Bardstown.

## Thomas, retired missionary to Europe, Asia, dies at 77

Cadiz—Ruth Thomas, a Southern Baptist missionary and past president of the Woman's Missionary Union of the European Baptist Convention, died Nov. 16, 2012. She was 77.

Thomas, a native of Paducah, was appointed as a missionary with the then-Foreign Mission Board in 1963 and served abroad with her husband, Bill Clark Thomas, until returning to the United States in 1995.

The couple raised their five children while ministering in such countries as France, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and West Germany. While in Malaysia, Thomas worked as a professor of church music at the Malaysia-Singapore Baptist Theological Seminary in Penang and at the Thailand Baptist Theological Seminary in Bangkok where she taught piano, and led vocal and handbell choirs.

"Early on she determined that serving the Lord was the highest calling and surrendered her life publicly to be a missionary," said Jeff Wallace, Thomas' son-in-law who is part of the pastoral staff at Paducah's Lone Oak First Baptist Church.



Ruth Thomas

Thomas made a decision for Christ at age 8, and by her junior year of high school became church organist at Lone Oak. She met her husband when he led a youth revival at the church in 1952. "They shared the same zeal, enthusiasm and dedication for missionary service," Wallace said.

More can be read about the couple in the J.H. Spencer Historical Society's "Twentieth Century Kentucky Baptist Biographies."

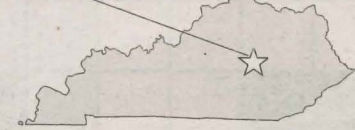
Thomas died after a lengthy battle with cancer. She is survived by her husband, four children and 15 grandchildren. (WR)

## MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

### Spotlight on ...

#### Berea



Tates Creek Association will hold its annual men's wild game dinner Jan. 19, 5 p.m., at Madison Southern High School with **Chuck McAlister**, the KBC's evangelism and church planting team leader, as guest speaker.

- **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Elk Horn Church ordained **Tommy Hughes, Mark Kessinger** and **Gary Reynolds** as deacons Dec. 30. **Brian Rafferty** is pastor.
- **FLEMINGSBURG**—Flemingsburg Church recently called **B.J. Donahue** as pastor. He previously was associate and youth pastor at Piner Church in Morning View.
- **GREENSBURG**—Greensburg Church will ordain **Todd Young** to the gospel ministry Jan. 20, 3 p.m. **Blake Jessie** is pastor.
- New Salem Church will host Russell Creek Association's WMU Rally Jan. 17, 6 p.m.
- **GREENVILLE**—Second Church will hold a men's breakfast Jan. 19, 8 a.m. **Ray England** is pastor.
- **HARDIN**—Olive Missionary Church will hold a community prayer service Jan. 22, 6:30 p.m. **David Whitaker** is pastor.
- **LEXINGTON**—Grace Church will host health screenings Jan. 17 conducted by Life Line Screening. For more information or to

schedule an appointment, call (800) 449-2350.

- **LOUISVILLE**—Walnut Street Church will hold a "Town Hall Meeting" with Pastor **Rusty Ellison** Jan. 16, 7 p.m.
- **RICHMOND**—Unity Church will host **Followers of the Way** in concert Jan. 19, 6 p.m. For more information, call (859) 624-9464. **Dennis Brewer** is pastor.

## Campbellsville Univ. to hold MLK memorial service Jan. 23

Campbellsville—Campbellsville University will hold its annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Service Jan. 23 at 7 p.m.

This year's keynote speaker is C.B. Akins, senior pastor at Lexington's First Baptist Church of Bracktown.

"Dr. Akins is an outstanding preacher and speaker and exemplifies the spirit of Dr. King's call to serve others and to bring people together," said John Chowning, CU's vice president for

church and external relations.

The school holds the memorial service each year as a reminder to all who attend of the work and sacrifice of the late civil rights leader.

"Our goal is to inspire people to go from the worship setting with a strong commitment to Christian servant leadership and to resolve to continue the work of Dr. King and others who sacrificed so that all people will be 'judged by the content of their

character and not by the color of their skin,'" Chowning said.

In the ministry since 1977, Akins served in Paducah before being called to First Baptist, Bracktown, in 1983. During his pastorate there, the church has grown from just 65 people to more than 1,000 active members.

In addition to serving his church, Akins is a member of the board of trustees for Simmons College of Kentucky in Louisville; is first vice moderator for the

General Association of Baptists in Kentucky; and he recently was appointed by Gov. Steve Beshear as a trustee for the University of Kentucky.

United to Praise, a Campbellsville University student gospel group, will provide special music for the service.

For more information about the upcoming event, contact Chowning by phone at (270) 789-5520 or by e-mail at jechowning@campbellsville.edu. (CU)

## Boyce College professor tapped to lead council on gender roles

Louisville—The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, an organization opposed to women's ordination and other trends attributed to feminism in the evangelical church, has a new leader.

Owen Strachan, 31, assistant professor of Christian theology and church history at Boyce College in Louisville, succeeds Randy Stinson as executive director of the organization based on the campus of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Stinson, dean of Southern's school of church ministries, held the post seven years.

The council was organized in 1987 by a group of scholars for the stated purpose of "upholding both equality and differences between men and women in marriage and the church." They produced a set of core beliefs that came to be known as "complementarianism," a counterargument to the egalitarian

view that men and women are equally equipped for leadership roles.

Over time the council has broadened its focus to include "gender confusion" in the home and church, acceptance of homosexuality and gender-neutral language in Bible translations.



Owen Strachan

"These are critical times for our public square, and CBMW needs to have a voice in these discussions, both for the sake of our Christian witness and for the equipping of pastors, churches and individual Christians who face a culture shift-

ing from traditional mores," Strachan wrote on his blog.

Strachan has written numerous articles on men's and women's gender roles. Last fall he drew media attention with an article labeling stay-at-home dads "man-fails," arguing that God's design is for men to be breadwinners and women homemakers. (ABP)

## CLASSIFIED ADS

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

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

**SEEKING:** Calvary Baptist Church, 111 N. McWhorter Street, London, Ky., is seeking a part-time minister of youth. For more information, call (606) 864-7071; Pastor Harlan Avera.

**SEEKING:** Crittenden Baptist Church is seeking a part-time pianist for all worship services, as well as providing accompaniment for the church choir and other musicians during performances and rehearsals. Please send resumé to Personnel Committee, Crittenden Baptist Church, P.O. Box 132, Crittenden, KY 41030, or crittendenbaptist@fuse.net.

### 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:** Burlington Baptist Church, a contemporary, vibrant and growing church in Burlington, Ky., is seeking a part-time young adult pastor. Responsibilities include working with college-age and young adults, ages 18-25. Please refer inquiries to gttoole@yahoo.com by Jan. 31.

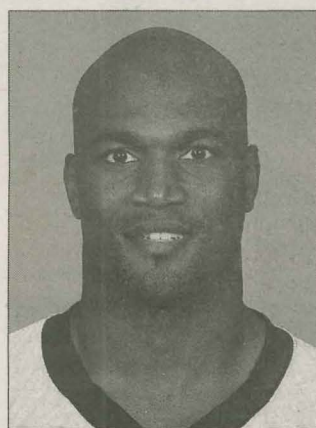
**SEEKING:** Part-time coordinator of music and family ministries; Sunnyside Baptist Church in Shepherdsville is seeking a part-time staff member to coordinate ministries to youth and children and to assist with music and worship development. Seminary students encouraged to apply; house and utilities provided, 10 hours per week time commitment. Please e-mail resumé and direct inquiries to Bruce Truman, pastor, at bruce@sunnysidebc.com.

# From 'mess' to 'message'

Texans' linebacker Bradie James places God first in his life

By Tim Ellsworth

Houston—Whenever Bradie James steps onto the field for the Houston Texans, plenty of his teammates and opponents are playing for themselves.



Bradie James

James knows, because he used to be one of them.

"Playing football, everything is all about who becomes a champion," James said. "In my game sometimes, it's all about who has the biggest ego, who has the biggest car or the house and this and that. I was living a worldly life. I was living for myself."

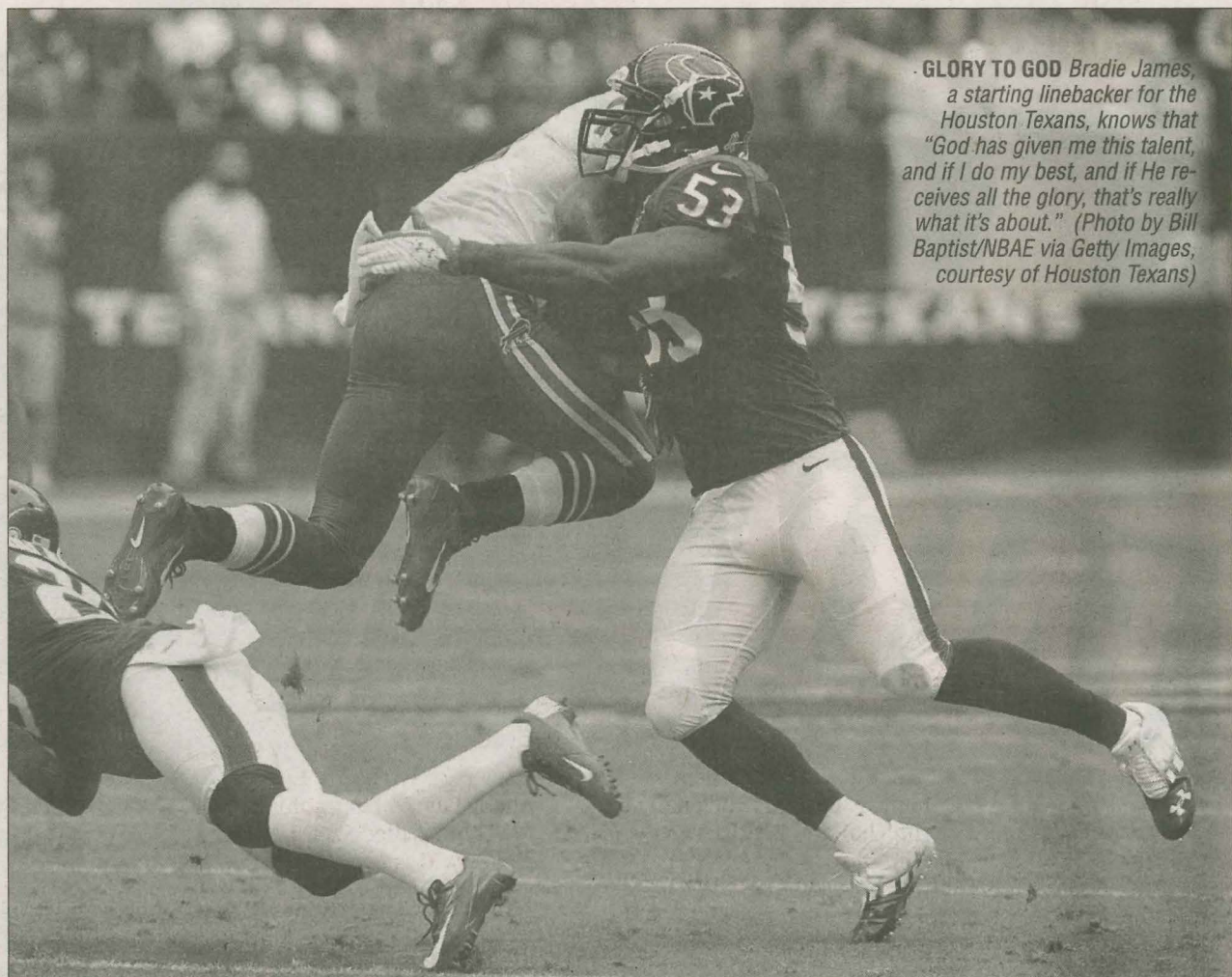
A starting linebacker for the Texans, James eventually came to a crisis of faith as he began to

question why he played football. He started going to church and trying to understand where he placed his faith. He picked up a Bible and started reading.

James shares his testimony in a video on the "I am Second" website. "I am Second" is a movement that tells the stories of actors, athletes, musicians, business leaders and others who have seen the Lord transform their lives.

The Bible verse that changed James' life, he said, was Romans 12:2.

"I'll never forget it," James said in the video. "That



**GLORY TO GOD** Bradie James, a starting linebacker for the Houston Texans, knows that "God has given me this talent, and if I do my best, and if He receives all the glory, that's really what it's about." (Photo by Bill Baptist/NBAE via Getty Images, courtesy of Houston Texans)

verse said, 'Do not conform to the things of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.' For some reason, something clicked. I have to renew my mind. If I renew my mind, then my actions will definitely follow.

"God has given me this talent, and if I do my best, and if He receives all the glory, that's really what it's about."

James said his decision to follow Christ caused him to lose some friends when they started noticing that he wasn't doing the things he used to do. But his conversion also has given him many opportunities to talk to teammates about the Lord.

"I've had a lot of guys ask me what's going on with me," James said. "I like it when they ask me that because it's my chance to disciple or tell them the Good News. I give them food for thought and then help bring them back to their spirituality."

Rather than playing for selfish reasons and trying to measure up to someone else's expectations—which James acknowledged he'd never meet—James said he now plays for a bigger purpose and for God's approval, no matter whether he wins or loses.

"We all have a story and we all have a platform," he said. "It's funny how God can take what we think is a mess and turn it into a message." (BP)

# Through the ups and downs Gabby Douglas learns to 'trust Him'

By Tim Ellsworth

Nashville, Tenn.—Only a few weeks before the 2012 Olympics gymnastics trials, Gabrielle Douglas was ready to walk away from the sport that had been her passion for a decade.

She had moved to Iowa from her home in Virginia for training, and she was homesick. She announced to her mother her intentions to quit gymnastics, move back home and work at Chick-fil-A. Though her mom tried to convince her not to, it was a conversation Douglas had with her brother John that ultimately strengthened her resolve.

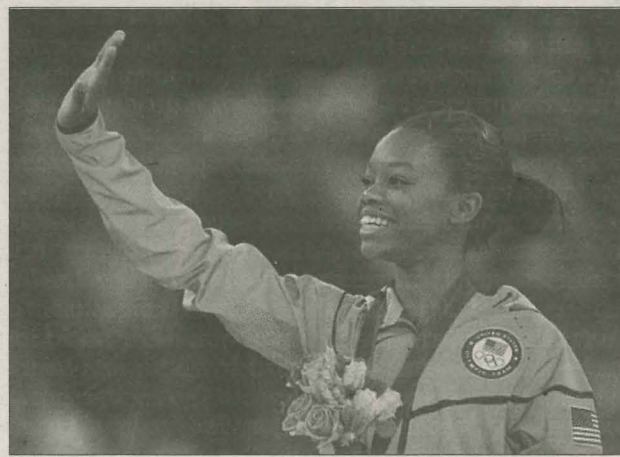
"We've always been two peas in a pod," Douglas told Baptist Press about her brother. "He just told me to keep fighting. He would tell me motivational quotes. It really clicked in my head."

Douglas tells that story and many others in her new book, "Grace, Gold and Glory: My Leap of Faith," published by Zondervan. Months after resolving that conflict with gymnastics, Douglas went on to win two gold medals in the London Olympics, where she became the first African American to win the all-around competition.

"That conversation was my turning point—the wake-up call that pulled me back from my foolish reckoning," Douglas writes in the book. "John has always been my best friend. On that evening, he also became one of the heroes of my Olympic journey."

"I'm so glad I made that decision to stick with it," Douglas said. "I would have so much regret."

Douglas, who just turned 17, spent most of her childhood in a single-parent home. Her mother, Natalie



**ATHLETE & AUTHOR** Gold medalist Gabby Douglas said she wrote a book because she "... wanted everyone to know that though you may be going through hardships, you can still achieve your dreams." (Photo by Thomas Coex/AFP/Getty Images)

Hawkins, helped to instill a strong work ethic in Douglas and a love for the Lord and for Scripture.

"By now, you've probably caught on to something: my mother is always standing by with just the right Scripture or inspirational saying to get me through any tough situation," Douglas writes.

Douglas said she became a Christian when she was about 10 years old. She prays at every competition before she competes, and said that after returning home from the Olympics she watched a recording of her events. She noticed her lips moving and said she knew that's when she was praying.

Her gymnastics career began when she was 6. At age 14, she moved to Iowa to train with famed gymnastics coach Liang Chow, staying with a host family—Travis and Missy Parton and their four daughters.

She's been at home in Virginia Beach since the Olympics but plans to return to Iowa this spring to resume her training.

Though that move away from her mother and siblings was difficult, Douglas said it served to make her stronger and more mature.

Along her path to the Olympics, Douglas also had to deal with injuries in 2011 that threatened to derail her career. One night, Douglas sat in her bed and asked God why she was going through the ordeal.

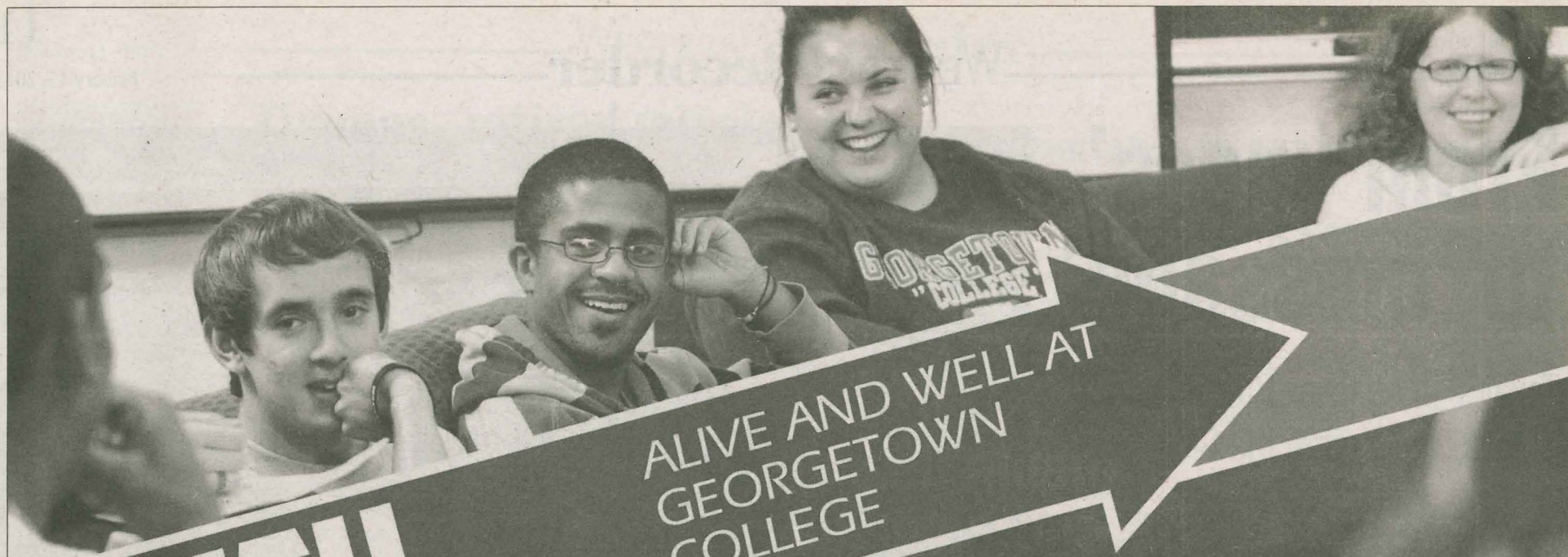
"In the space of a response, there was deafening silence," Douglas writes. "Until one Sunday morning when I went to church with the Partons. That's when I heard a sermon that seemed directed at me."

The pastor preached from Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a home and a future."

"In other words, God already knew how this would turn out—and that thought really touched me," Douglas writes. "As Mom had reminded me so many times, I just had to trust Him."

Douglas said the book, written with Michelle Burford, was designed to be inspirational in nature—for young girls, boys and anyone who might be interested in her story.

"I wanted everyone to know that though you may be going through hardships, you can still achieve your dreams," she said. (BP)



ALIVE AND WELL AT  
GEORGETOWN  
COLLEGE

# FAITH

**Campus Ministry at Georgetown College** is open to students of all faith backgrounds. Our mission is to love people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

This year, 115 first year students have voluntarily chosen to participate in a Freshmen Family Group. In this discipleship small group ministry, students pray together, study the Bible together, encourage one another, and grow deeper in God together.

Each of ten groups is led by an upper class male and female student under the leadership and guidance of the campus minister in the Office of Religious Life.

Learn more about GC's ministry to students online:  
[www.georgetowncollege.edu/campusministry](http://www.georgetowncollege.edu/campusministry)



**Freshman Family Groups** are one of the easiest and most common ways for freshmen or new students to get involved in campus life.

