

WESTERN Recorder

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Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

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MEDICAL MISSIONS: ALIVE & WELL

Mission board's shift in medical missions has led to broader influence

By Tess Rivers

Richmond, Va.—“Medical missions is dead.” “The International Mission Board no longer appoints medical personnel.” “Transitions of IMB-funded hospitals to local leadership are a failure.”

These are just some of the myths circulating about Southern Baptist medical missions, according to Charles Fielding*, a physician with more than 15 years of experience with the IMB.

“We have more medical workers on the field now than ever before,” Fielding said. Today, more than 300 health-qualified personnel serve overseas.

The myths originated nearly 30 years ago when the Foreign (now-International) Mission Board began transitioning away from medical institutions, explained Rebekah Naylor, an emeritus missionary surgeon who served for 35 years at Bangalore Baptist Hospital in India.

“The reasons for the transition were both financial and philosophical,” Naylor said. “Financially, institutions are expensive to maintain. Philosophically, the leadership of the (IMB) believed that institutions were not the best and



Margaret Bricker (name changed for security reasons), a health care provider in southeast Asia, uses mobile clinics as a way to help people in rural communities who have little or no access to health care. Many women, especially the poor, do not have enough power—socially or financially—to receive needed care. (IMB photo)

strongest way to accomplish evangelism and church planting.”

Consequently, in the mid-1980s, the IMB began handing over control of its more than 30 hospitals and medical and dental clinics to local partners. A 1997 IMB report—the last publication identifying international institutions with Baptist ties—lists 17 hospitals, 10 medical clinics, six dental clinics and one school

in locations such as Brazil, Indonesia, Japan and Yemen. Today, the IMB maintains only one—the Baptist Medical Centre in Nalerigu, Ghana.

Van Williams, an emeritus missionary physician and medical consultant for the IMB, said he believes the success of each transition was dependent primarily on the strength of the local partner.

□ See Medical missions ... Page 7



Send: St. Louis

Church plant's mission fueled by small groups

By Tobin Perry

St. Louis—Murders had become too frequent in the south St. Louis neighborhood where August Gate church meets.

Neighbors were fed up, including a few August Gate members who were leading a small group in the church's Tower Grove East neighborhood. When they called to ask the 3-year-old Southern Baptist church plant for help, August Gate community pastor Todd Genteman urged the young adults to get involved.

“You're the ‘Gospel Community’ in the neighborhood,” Genteman said, referring to the name by which the small group is known. “You should do something.”

So they did. The Gospel

□ See Send: St. Louis ... Page 3

‘Embrace’ conference starts new missions mindset for Ky. Baptist churches

By Ken Walker

Louisville—After a life-changing experience at an “Embrace the Ends of the Earth” conference 16 months ago, Kyle Noffsinger wouldn't dream of missing the Feb. 8 event in Louisville.

Keynote speaker Tom Elliff, president of the International Mission Board, and other Embrace speakers will discuss presenting the gospel to unreached people groups. The meeting runs from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention has been helping the IMB promote the Louisville event. Registration closes Feb. 1.

“The conference in Georgia changed me,” said Noffsinger, who was part of a group from Caldwell-Lyon Baptist Association. “It has changed our church's

approach to missions.”

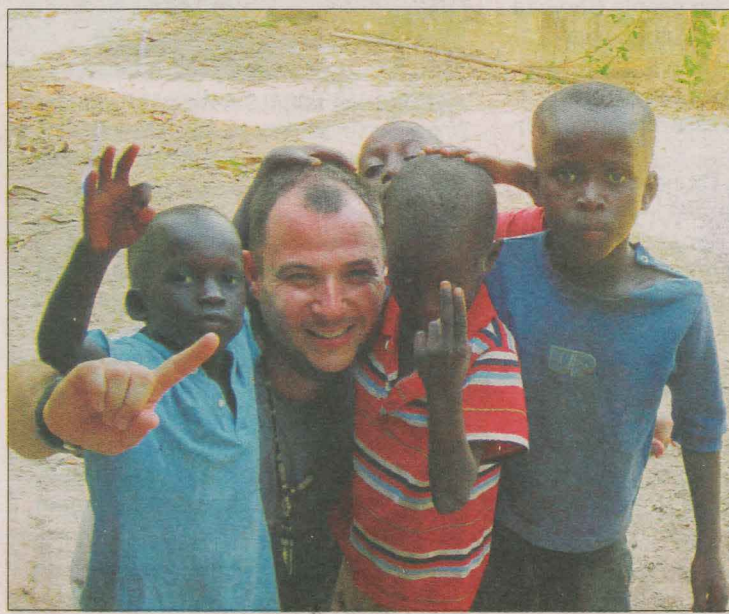
The pastor of First Baptist Church of Fredonia, Noffsinger said attendees develop an appreciation for the vast number of people who need to hear about Jesus. They also learn how any size church can participate.

“Adopting an unreached people group is not for the megachurch or for a hierarchy,” said Noffsinger, whose church averages 140 people in weekly attendance. “It's something anybody can do.”

Although his association has a partnership with churches in Mexico and central America, Noffsinger said he never felt drawn to that region.

So, during breakout sessions at last year's Atlanta event, he attended a workshop led by Dave and Cheryl Johnson, missionaries to Sub-Saharan Africa.

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NEW FRIENDS
Kyle Noffsinger, pastor at First Baptist Church of Fredonia, shares a laugh with village kids during a mission trip to west Africa last November. Noffsinger's involvement in the trip came about as a result of attending the first “Embrace the Ends of the Earth” conference in Atlanta in 2011.

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West Kentucky pastor vows church will rebuild following fire

By Robin Cornetet Bass

Hickman—West Hickman Baptist Church rallied once before from a devastating fire, Pastor Jason Sipes said—and will do so again. The west Kentucky church was destroyed for a second time in its history when an early morning fire swept through the 74-year-old structure Jan. 23, resulting in the collapse of the sanctuary roof and walls.

"It is a total loss; completely gutted," Sipes said.

As he looked out from the parsonage last Thursday morning, Sipes said the sight of several church members gathering near the charred remains "hugging and talking" moved him. "It's been very emotional," the pastor said.

Somewhere among the broken glass and crumbled bricks is what is left of nearly eight decades of Baptist life for West Hickman Baptist members. Perhaps there is one unblemished Bible or a communion plate that may be salvaged. But gone is the site of countless weddings, baptisms and baby dedications.

Sipes, who is West Hickman's only full-time staff member, said his office was completely destroyed by the fire. He lost a library of precious books and every handwritten sermon since he began preaching at the church. But the loss of his personal journals, Sipes noted, is the most difficult to accept.

"My personal journals, from the time I was in college to present day describing my walk with the Lord, are gone. That's probably the hardest thing for me. I wanted to leave those to my children," Sipes said.



CHURCH FIRE Flames engulf the sanctuary at West Hickman Baptist Church as firefighters work to put out the Jan. 23 blaze. Pastor Jason Sipes said the building was "completely gutted" and a total loss. Investigation into what caused the blaze has not yet been completed. (Photo by Sarah Choate)

Instead of regular Wednesday night services, more than 40 members of West Hickman gathered Jan. 23 at the nearby First Methodist Church Life Enrichment Center for a prayer vigil. With no hymnals, West Hickman members sang the songs they could remember. They also took turns recounting stories from the past and speaking words of unity for the future. The two congregations then shared a meal prepared by First Methodist members.

"There are a lot of broken hearts, but ultimately it will strengthen us," Sipes said. "This will be a challenge for us, but

we will thrive, not just survive."

The pastor said part of his certainty for the future is because "we serve a great God." The other reason is because of the community's generous spirit. Within 24 hours of the fire, Sipes said all 12 Southern Baptist churches in Fulton County had contacted him offering assistance.

"We live in a great community," Sipes commended. "Before the day was over, we had 15 different places that we could meet on Sunday. There's been a real outpouring of community help. We're grateful for that."

Sipes selected the Fulton County High School gymnasium as the site for the Jan. 27 service. He said deacons would meet to make more consistent arrangements for the near future.

1939 fire destroyed original building

West Hickman Baptist had been established for nearly three decades when it was first destroyed by a fire in 1939. A passerby noticed the blaze during a Sunday morning service and rushed in to alert the worshippers. Sipes said the wood stove used to heat the building was blamed in that blaze.

Church members rushed to save what they could. The men took down chandeliers and carried wooden pews into the yard. The women and children grabbed what they could, including a silver communion set that was a gift from another church.

Normally, the pews would have been bolted to the floor and likely lost in the fire, Sipes said, but were never re-secured after the 1937 flood. The pastor explained that the church sits at a much higher elevation than surrounding residences and members had unbolted the pews to make room for their belongings.

The rescued pews and chandeliers were reinstalled when West Hickman Baptist Church was rebuilt later that same year—and up until last week, the chandeliers and silver communion set were still in use.

"We lost those chandeliers in the fire," Sipes said, adding that the communion set was in the sanctuary. "Perhaps we might be able to find sentimental things like that, but the Lord is enough." (WR)

'Embrace' conference

Continued from page 1

Soon after the meetings, his childhood pastor—Tim Adock of New Paradise Baptist Church in Greenville—called to ask him to visit Senegal to help the Johnsons. Last May, they visited a village there where most residents are Muslims.

Noffsinger said he came home with a stronger desire to reach people who had never heard the gospel. And, he persuaded his friend, Carlton Binkley (who also attended the Atlanta conference), to accompany him on a return visit to Senegal in November.

"On that first trip I bonded quickly with a young man named Moustapha," Noffsinger said. "He would come to our camp at night and listen as we shared the gospel. One night, he accepted Christ as his Savior."

Once back home, the Fredonia pastor prayed that Moustapha's faith would grow and bear spiritual fruit.

Noffsinger saw an answer to that prayer in November. During the day, he and Binkley shared Bible stories and invited listeners to come to their camp that evening to learn more.

As many as 10 people gathered nightly while the Kentucky pastors were there. The two men who prayed to receive Jesus as their Savior were Moustapha's friends.

Moustapha "doing an (Apostle) Andrew thing was the highlight of the trip for me," Noffsinger said.

The pastor of New Bethel Baptist Church in Eddyville, Binkley said what



MEETING THE LOCALS A West African woman greets Carlton Binkley, pastor of New Bethel Baptist Church in Eddyville, during a mission trip last November.

impressed him was that some of the villagers, who had never heard the gospel before, still understood that they needed a Savior.

"One leader of some boys looked at me and said, 'I know what you're saying is true,'" Binkley recalled. "He said, 'No matter how good a Muslim we try to be, we still want to drink and run around with girls. (Our religion) never changes our hearts.'"

Although not sure his schedule will allow him to be in Louisville on Feb. 8, Binkley said the Embrace conference will help anyone with a desire to be mission minded.

"What affected me was when Tom Elliff and others spoke about the need for the gospel, and (when we were) praying for unreached people," Binkley said. "These are people that nobody is plan-

ning to reach, ... nobody is taking Bibles."

Binkley credited God with not only increasing his awareness, but providing the funds for his trip. An adjunct professor at Mid-Continent University in Mayfield, he hesitated because going would mean losing income in addition to travel expenses.

However, after God impressed on him he should go, Binkley said within a few weeks various sources had donated funds to replace those earnings and cover travel expenses.

"It was one of the most amazing experiences of my life," he said. "I believe God wants us to reach that village because it will be the catalyst to reach others in Senegal."

While still formulating plans, both pastors say they hope to inspire several groups a year to make trips to the western Africa nation.

Since November, half a dozen members of First Baptist, Fredonia, have approached Noffsinger to express interest in going.

Additionally, after his trips the church initiated a weekly visitation program and saw its 2012 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions increase by \$2,000 over 2011.

"When you get active in missions and a missions mindset gets into you, it will change you in amazing ways," Noffsinger said. "If you adopt an unreached people group and visit them, you will never say, 'I wish I hadn't gone.'"

For details, visit www.KyBaptist.org/Embrace or Call2Embrace.org The conference is \$20 per person. (KBC)

U.S. abortions top 55 million in last 40 years

Washington—At some point in the past year, the United States experienced its 55 millionth legal abortion—a number that far exceeds the combined U.S. death count of every American war since the nation's founding.

The total spans 40 years, beginning with the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion. The abortion count is based on data compiled by the Guttmacher Institute, which supports abortion rights. National Right to Life releases an annual tally using the Guttmacher data.

"That's 55 million creative minds, 55 million people that could be working, 55 million that could be contributing to society," said Randall O'Bannon, National Right to Life's director of education and research. "It's hard to fathom all the different ways in which any person has the potential to impact the community and impact our country. The loss is staggering."

To put the total in perspective, the combined number of military deaths in all American wars is 1.2 million.

A 2004 Guttmacher study found that 86 percent of abortions are done for convenience. Rape and incest each were cited by less than half a percent of women who had abortions. (BP)

Imagine Conference sparks unique outreach opportunity

By David Roach

Simpsonville—For Shari Thompson and Simpsonville Baptist Church, the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Imagine Preschool and Children's Ministry Conference has yielded eternal dividends.

At the first conference two years ago, Thompson, minister of children and families at Simpsonville Baptist, met Animal Tales—a group that presents animal education programs in schools and shares the gospel through animal programs in churches. Animal Tales' naturalists use live animals in their presentations.

After the conference, Thompson partnered with two elementary schools in Shelby County, where the church is located, to present Animal Tales to students.

At the assemblies, the presenter invited students and their families to the church that night for another presentation that included the gospel. As a result, dozens of visitors heard about the love of Christ, and several families began attending the church.

The Imagine Conference "sparks ideas," Thompson said. "You never know what little idea that you see, hear or pick up is going to do something. Just (Animal Tales) alone has opened up Shelby County schools to us for us to be able to go in and partner with them."

This year's Imagine Conference is scheduled for Feb. 8-9 at Parkway Baptist Church in Bardstown. Registration is \$25 per person before Feb. 6 and \$35 after. Among the breakout sessions are:

- Using amazing science experiments to teach God's word.
- Blending church and unchurched kids.
- Hosting a father/daughter ball.
- Managing behavior in the classroom.
- Small church children's ministry.

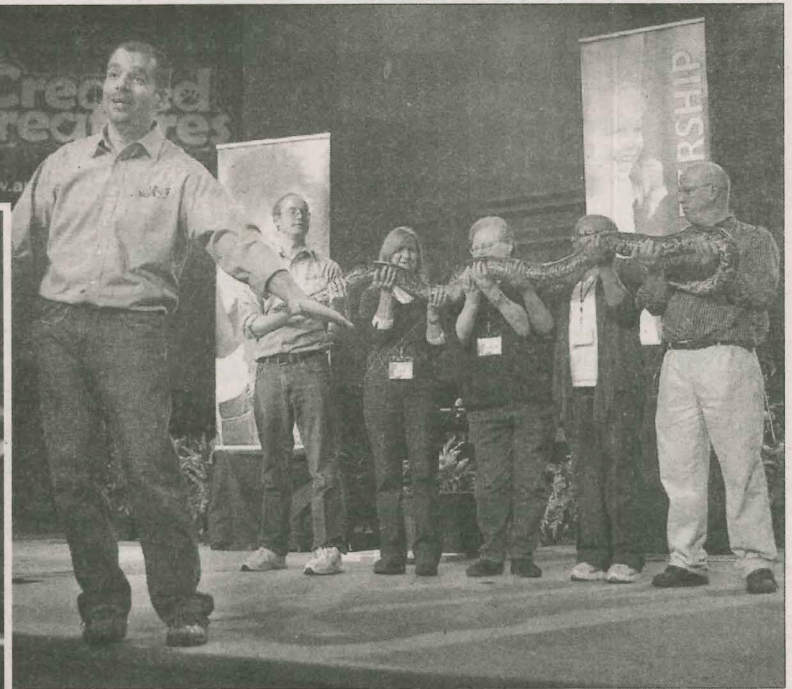
Based in Mayfield, Animal Tales was an ideal ministry partner for Simpsonville Baptist because the church had been searching for a way to reach teachers, students and parents at local schools. The schools wanted animal education, but it was not in their budgets. So, Simpsonville Baptist paid for assemblies at Simpsonville Elementary School and Painted Stone Elementary School in the spring of 2012. Thompson said principals selected the specific Animal Tales' presentation for their schools.

The only thing Simpsonville Baptist asked the schools was to hold the assemblies on a Wednesday and announce another Animal Tales program at the church that night.

"When you want to be in the elementary schools, you need to become their friend," Thompson explained, "somebody that they trust, not just somebody who's always coming and looking for something from them."

Students had the opportunity to see a boa constrictor and a tarantula, along with other animals, and learn about their habitats.

That night at the church, the Animal Tales naturalist showed more animals, and he explained that God created each one of them and cares for all His creatures. That led to a discussion of God's



ALL GOD'S CREATURES A group of volunteers helps naturalist Jared Baker of Animal Tales show off a 15-foot python and a tortoise (left) at last year's Imagine Preschool and Children's Ministry Conference in Bardstown. The Kentucky Baptist Convention-sponsored event has drawn hundreds of participants in its first two years. The third annual event will be held Feb. 8-9 at Parkway Baptist Church in Bardstown. (Photos by Robin Cornet Bass)

love for humans—a special love that offers salvation through faith in Christ.

Animal Tales "opened up our community to coming to our church," Thompson said. "It's a chance for us to make first-time contacts with a lot of families."

The experience strengthened the relationship between the schools and the church, she noted.

After the school assemblies, students wrote notes to Simpsonville Baptist Church sharing what they learned and thanking the church for bringing Animal Tales to them.

"I just pasted those all over the wall outside my office so that people could see the impact we had on the schools," Thompson said. "So when I went back (to the church) this year, (people said), 'Oh yeah, we want to do that again.'"

And the ministry impact went even further than the assemblies. In the months that followed, Simpsonville

Baptist developed a relationship with the schools that opened doors for additional ministry. Thompson said she plans to start an after-school Bible club in one school, and a principal has asked her to start a morning Bible study for teachers as well.

The initial animal program "opened that door and it's kept that door open for us," Thompson said. "The schools now see us as somebody who's trying to partner with them and help them. We're very fortunate to have principals that are ... open to having us partner with them and help them."

The church plans to sponsor assemblies at the same two schools again this year. "If we had the funds, we would love to do all six elementary schools in our county," Thompson said.

Learn more about Animal Tales at www.AnimalEdZoocation.com.

Register for the Imagine Conference at www.KyBaptist.org/Imagine. (KBC)

Send: St. Louis

Continued from page 1

Community group organized a pancake breakfast at the church, bringing in community and business leaders and residents to start a conversation about change. Organizers thought 10 to 20 people might show up, but more than 100 did.

The outreach echoed what the church plant's lead pastor, Noah Oldham, has been teaching to the church which draws its name—figuratively meaning "harvest the city"—from the 10th chapter of the Gospel of Luke. For August Gate members, Gospel Community groups play a critical role in living out the teaching that every member is a missionary. These neighborhood-based small groups commit to learning the Bible, being a family and living on mission together.

"We want the vast majority of our congregation to be living on mission," said Oldham, who also serves as the North American Mission Board city coordinator for Send North America: St. Louis. "God calls us to be missionaries in particular places."

Oldham is part of a team of church planters in St. Louis with a passion for penetrating lostness through Send North America: St. Louis. The city has just one Southern Baptist church for every 7,880 people.

August Gate is one of several churches that has received Kentucky Baptist support through the city's missions partnership with the Kentucky Baptist Convention. The KBC is leading a "vision trip" to the Gateway City next week for participants to explore missions opportunities with church plants and established congregations.

Called to plant a church

Oldham first began to sense God's call to plant a church as a college student in southern Illinois. Seeing students his age walk away from church without ever engaging the gospel concerned him for his generation. Even as he served as a student minister—a ministry he loved—after graduation, he couldn't escape where God was moving him.

"As my wife and I began to pray about this burden, He called us to move to the city to reach the unchurched and de-churched people in their 20s and 30s,"

the church planter said

Oldham talked and prayed with two friends nearby who had a similar passion. Together the three men and their families formed the team that eventually would become August Gate.

After spending a year as an intern at a young church plant in St. Charles, Mo., Oldham and his family moved to inner-city St. Louis. Eventually, the other team members joined them, as they focused on the city's Tower Grove East community.

"We really took the angle that seminaries and Bible colleges often take when teaching foreign missionaries," Oldham said. "We went in as learners."

A Lutheran church allowed Oldham to use an abandoned elementary school it owned for the church—called August Gate. In time, the Lutheran school could no longer hold the young church.

At first Oldham and the other church leaders struggled to find another affordable meeting place—until their local Southern Baptist association pointed them to a nearby building that needed extensive repair. A leaky roof, inoperable boilers and a flooded basement were just the start.

But Southern Baptists throughout North America came to St. Louis to help August Gate in the summer of 2012. The young church provided the parts needed for the repairs. Volunteers brought their time and expertise.

"It's what the Cooperative Program is all about," Oldham said. "Churches that wanted to help us get the gospel to our city came to serve St. Louis, fix our building and help us become a better hub for ministry."

Both because of the upgraded facilities and the leadership that was catching a vision for missional living, the church began to grow. On Easter of 2011, the church had about 100 in attendance. That number had tripled by Easter 2012. Additionally, August Gate was able to plant its first church across the Mississippi River in Illinois last year. That church now has about 80 in attendance on a typical Sunday.

All this happened because August Gate became a hub for the community and beyond, Oldham said. "Every time we held a work project at the church and in the community we met our neighbors" and learned how to serve them and relay the Gospel. (NAMB/BP)

Share the light with soldiers

This week's column is written by Chuck McAlister, the Kentucky Baptist Convention's evangelism and church planting team leader.

Together
We are the KBC

Paul Chitwood

I had just finished speaking at a duck hunting seminar at the Bass Pro Shop in Tulsa, Okla. As we frequently do, we had a Bible table set up with waterproof Bibles that we were giving away to any active-duty service members present.

One man walked up and lifted the display Bible that was submerged in a vase of water. I immediately noticed the tears in his eyes and asked him if he was active-duty military. He stated that he was.

When I asked him if we could give him one of the Bibles he responded, "No, thank you. I was one of the first soldiers to enter Afghanistan. I was an Army Ranger. I received one of these Bibles and a care package my first night in country. I carried that Bible with me through seven deployments. It was in my pocket the three times I was shot, and it will be with me when I am medically retired from the service in March."

Tears were flowing down his cheeks—and mine. He continued, "The words in this book have not only kept me alive, they have taught me how to live."

On Feb. 25, at our RISK (Reaching into the State of Kentucky) Conference, we will launch our "Share the Light" campaign. We have formed a partnership with Operation Soldier Care out of First Baptist Church of Naples, Fla., to distribute waterproof Bibles to our soldiers currently serving on the frontlines.

For \$25, you can purchase a Bible for a soldier. Tables will be provided for each person purchasing a Bible to write a letter to the soldier to whom the Bible will be sent. The Kentucky Baptist Convention will then mail the letter and the Bible to Operation Soldier Care, which will put together a customized care package to send with the Bible and your letter to a soldier.

We hope that a pen-pal relationship will develop and the gospel can be presented to the soldier. Our goal is to send 500 of these Bibles to soldiers this year from Kentucky Baptists.

If you are interested in adopting this project in your church to help us get as many Bibles as possible in the hands of our soldiers, please get in touch with us so that we can assist you in "sharing the light" with our military personnel. I am convinced that the more we can place God's word in the hands of our service members, the more hope we can give them.

Join us Feb. 25 at RISK as we help our soldiers—and Kentucky—encounter Jesus.

Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Mission moments: Looking back on trip to India

A recent mission trip to Mumbai, India, (formerly Bombay) was an experience for all the senses. Mumbai, with a population of 18 to 22 million people, is a city of contrasts.

This home of Bollywood movie productions hosts the wealthiest neighborhoods in India with the highest property rates in the world. Yet, it also has the unfortunate stigma of having Asia's second largest slum.

As in any mission endeavor anywhere in the world, one must look beyond the distractions and attractions of the region and focus on the purpose of the mission—to bring people into a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ or to draw them closer to Him in their walks of discipleship.

Whether in Mumbai or our other area of ministry, Aurangabad, we were greeted with smiles and open hearts from people whose faith radiated from within. Worship always was a time of spirited celebration and joy in the Lord.

I taught 20 pastors for their annual conference while Mary Bironas taught their wives on the subject of God's love and our response. These pastors came from Buddhist, Hindu and pagan backgrounds before becoming Christ followers. Before becoming a Christian, one of the pastors even beat his wife so badly for her faith in Jesus that she lost the sight in one eye—but she continued to lift her husband up to the Lord until he, too, believed.

The other team members, Bob Nevins, Kris and Carol Krake and Dan Love (an ophthalmologist from Cincinnati), conducted eye clinics in several different villages and dispensed eyeglasses donated by the Lions Club International. What a joy to be able to restore the sight to people who haven't seen clearly in a long time.

One particular story involved a 95-year-old man who had not been able to see after his cataract surgery. But after being examined and fitted for glasses, as Dr. Love stated, the scales fell off his eyes and he was able to see again.

We also dedicated a church building financed by Crestwood Baptist Church that saw more than 200 people crowd into the building and spill out into the area around the church where they stood outside the windows to participate. This land was donated by a Muslim man who saw the Christians meeting under a tarp and gave them their permanency and credibility in the community.

We also participated in Bible distributions and were humbled to see how the people who received the Bibles were so grateful that they clutched them to their hearts and thanked us profusely.

We finished our week by serving at an orphanage where the young and beautiful children sang until our hearts were filled with joy.

The psalmist stated: "May God be gracious to us and bless us and make His face shine upon us, that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations." (Psalm 67:1-2). The purpose for our salvation is to proclaim the Lord to the world so that they might know Him and receive His bountiful blessings. It is no sacrifice to use the resources with which the Lord has given us to be faithful to the Great Commission and take this good news to the ends of the earth. As Henry Blackaby has written, whenever God invites you to join Him in His activity, we are blessed for the invitation to be extended to us, and it is incumbent on us to accept the offer.

Looking back on the time in India, I am fully aware of the many blessings I would have missed had I not accepted the Lord's invitation to join Him—but my life is so much richer for the things I received. I always feel as though I leave a part of myself with the people I serve, but I receive so much more in the process. Having never really desired to minister in India, I am so very glad that I did not refuse God's invitation and joined Him in His activity—and what an experience!

I believe that every Christian should have an active passport so that we are ready to respond to the Lord's invitation to join Him in the effort, wherever that invitation leads. Are you praying toward that end? Have you eliminated the excuse not to go by obtaining a valid passport? Your Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria awaits, but the real thrill just might be in the uttermost parts of the earth!

"I believe that every Christian should have an active passport so that we are ready to respond to the Lord's invitation to join Him in the effort, wherever that invitation leads."

Guest
Viewpoint

By Tom Townsend

Show love with affirmation

By David Garrard

When he was younger and living at home, my son, Tyler, would sometimes accompany me to a show or perhaps be in the audience when I performed locally. Almost without exception, Tyler would come up to me after the show and say, "Good show, Dad!"

I cannot begin to tell you how good those three little words made me feel. Lots of other folks would tell me what a great job I had done, but Tyler's words always meant more to me than all the others combined.

As February approaches, our thoughts shift to love and how we can express love to those who mean the most to us.

My friend and children's ministry colleague, Allen Bishop, recently reminded me of the part affirmation can play in that. Words of affirmation, appreciation and encouragement are a great way to show love—especially within a family.

Try this: Sit down as a family, or one on one with your child, and take turns completing this sentence: "You are great at ..." Go first, but be sure to give your child an opportunity to affirm you as well. Parents may want to follow

up with this one: "One day, I see that you could ..."

Chances are, you and your children receive words of praise from others—teachers, co-workers, coaches, teammates, etc. However, like me, I think you will find that these words mean much more when they come from those you love most. You may find, too, that speaking words of affirmation can be fun—as meaningful to you as to others.

Ephesians 4:29 reminds us that our words have the power to build up others. Put that into practice this February by intentionally using words of affirmation to show love.

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

WESTERN
RecorderBox 43969
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What are your regrets? 'If only I had done ...'

By Erich Bridges

Woulda, coulda, shoulda.

Regret is a painful thing. We look back on the foolish things we have done and the good things we have left undone. We lament wasted years, wrong attitudes, hurts inflicted on others, missed opportunities, etc.

Bronnie Ware, an Australian nurse, spent years caring for patients in their last days. She identified the most common regrets they expressed about their lives in an article, and later a book, titled "The Top Five Regrets of the Dying." They are:

■ "I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me."

"This was the most common regret of all," Ware writes. "When people realize that their life is almost over and look back clearly on it, it is easy to see how many dreams have gone unfulfilled. Most people had not honored even half of their dreams and had to die knowing that it was due to choices they had made or not made."

■ "I wish I hadn't worked so hard."

"This came from every male patient that I nursed," Ware reports. "They missed their children's youth and their partner's companionship. Women also spoke of this regret. But as most were from an older generation, many of the female patients had not been breadwinners. All of the men I nursed deeply regretted spending so much of their lives on the treadmill of a work existence."

■ "I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings."

Many people regretted staying silent or living dishonest lives just to "keep the peace" with others. They often developed illnesses from bitterness and resentment.

■ "I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends."

Ware: "Many had become so caught up in their own lives that they had let golden friendships slip by over the years... It all comes down to love and relationships in the end"—not money, things or accomplishments.

■ "I wish that I had let myself be happier."

Many people failed to realize until it was nearly too late that happiness is a choice, Ware discovered. They willingly remained in the bondage of patterns and habits that were familiar, yet brought little contentment.

I will add a few more regrets that I have experienced. Perhaps you have some, too:

■ I wish I had spent more time glorifying God and less time cursing the darkness.

The world stinks. People are evil. Terrible things happen all the time. This is not exactly news. Constantly bemoaning it is a waste of time. Praising the Lord, His greatness, His grace and mercy and His salvation is time better spent—both now and in preparation for eternity in

His presence. It's also a better way to eliminate darkness. Jesus said, "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself" (John 12:32).

■ I wish I had spent more time serving God and people and less time serving myself.

God created you and me to love Him, not to squander our brief time on earth loving ourselves only. The Westminster Shorter Catechism of 1647 is a far better guide in this regard than all the pop psychologists and phony priests of self-worship: "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever."

■ I wish I had told a lot more people about Jesus—and helped other believers to do so.

If Jesus meant the words He uttered in Matthew 28:19-20, when He told His followers to make disciples among all nations (peoples), this is our agenda. Nothing else comes higher on the priority list. And we have more resources to do it on a truly global scale than any previous generation of believers.

What are your regrets? If you're still alive and alert enough to read this, you can change the habits and patterns that caused them.

"People grow a lot when they are faced with their own mortality," Ware says of her experiences with the dying. "I learned never to underestimate someone's capacity for growth. Some changes were phenomenal."

We are all dying. Some of us have a few days left; some of us have many years. Make every day count. (BP)

Erich Bridges is a global correspondent for the International Mission Board.

Worldview



Erich Bridges



From the edge of the 'cliff'

By Jeremy White

If you are like me, you are probably tired of hearing about the "fiscal cliff"?

This metaphor was first described by Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke. He was trying to describe what it might look like for the U.S. economy when tax rates were increased and spending cuts decreased on Jan. 1, 2013.

Congress and the president addressed one part of this fiscal challenge by enacting a new tax act called the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012. (A rather curious name because taxpayers paying more taxes than before may not feel such "relief.") The spending side of the fiscal challenges will be addressed at a later date.

Overall, many of the well-known and popular provisions remain in the tax code. The following represents a few general highlights that likely would interest most readers. Keep in mind, many of these benefits may be phased out at certain income levels. For specific details and more in-depth analysis of the tax act, see your tax advisor.

■ Charitable contributions remain deductible as an itemized deduction.

■ The adoption credit remains available to families adopting.

■ For wage earners, your take-home pay is decreasing by 2 percent because of the Social Security and Medicare payroll tax reverting to its rate from two years ago.

■ The estate tax exemption will remain at approximately \$5 million per person. Most estates will not be subject to federal estate taxes.

■ The income tax rates remain the same for taxpayers with taxable incomes below \$450,000 for a married couple and \$400,000 for single persons.

■ Favorable (i.e., lower) tax rates continue to apply for dividends and capital gains for taxpayers below \$450,000 for married and \$400,000 for single.

■ Marriage penalty relief continues, meaning there is no tax disadvantage to marrying compared to living together.

■ Child tax credits of \$1,000 per child age 17 and under continue.

■ College education credits and deductions continue.

An already complicated tax code became even moreso. But the act was not as bad as it could have been based on the political campaign rhetoric.

Jeremy White is a certified public accountant with BlytheWhite in Paducah.

Having the heart of Paul: Would you give up your eternal salvation?

By Marc Webb

Each morning, I love to get on the Internet and check the daily news. I know it usually is negative, but being a former journalist, I like to read about the daily information of our world. Earlier this week, I was browsing through CNN's website. On the homepage, there was an interesting headline that caught my eye.

The opinion article was called, "Why I Raise My Children Without God." The author was a young mother who simply wanted to list all the reasons why she didn't believe in God. Even though I completely disagreed with her, the article was still very professional, and it was a thought-provoking piece of journalism.

As I was reading through her opinions, I was not mad. I wasn't angry. My blood wasn't boiling at the thought of her disagreeing with my religious beliefs. I didn't yell and scream at her

numerous misinterpretations of God and Scripture.

But, the more I read, the more I found myself becoming sad. I couldn't put my finger on it, but I was almost overwhelmed with sorrow.

This mother has never known the love of God. Her children may never feel the comfort of my Savior. She has never experienced a personal and intimate relationship with a God that passionately cares for her. This opinion article broke my heart.

Paul, one of the great founders of the early church, was filled with a zeal for Christ. He spoke passionately to the Jews and Gentiles about the reality and truth of God. Paul was never ashamed of what he believed. But, even more than that, Paul had a genuine compassion for the lost. This is what Paul said in Romans 9:1-3, "I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my

conscience is testifying to me with the Holy Spirit, that I have intense sorrow and continual anguish in my heart. For I could almost wish to be cursed and cut off from the Messiah, for the benefit of my brothers, my own flesh and blood."



Marc Webb

In Romans, Paul spoke about the intense anguish in his heart. Paul was not angry because the Jews disagreed with him. He was not filled with sorrow because he repeatedly faced death. Paul simply had a heart for unbelievers.

Paul even said that he would give up his salvation. He would give up his opportunity to enjoy eternity forever, just so his brothers and sisters could have a taste of the grace of Christ. Wow! Paul was heartbroken for the lost.

Through our desires to reach people, we should have that same heart. We should not strive to beat people in

arguments or debates. We should not strive to attack the lies and misconceptions of our Savior. We should not strive to defeat a Muslim or Hindu in an intellectual battle. Instead, our focus should be solely pointed to the reality of God's grace and love.

God exists. Period. He doesn't need me to win arguments for Him. He doesn't need me to yell and scream at the unbelief of an atheist. God simply calls me to love people and be genuinely burdened by those who don't know Him. In your life, show someone the love of Christ. Have a heart for the unbelievers around you.

Paul said, "I would give up my very relationship with the Messiah for the benefit of my brothers." I pray that all of us would have the heart of Paul; in which, we would give up our very salvation, just so someone else might experience the love of our Savior.

Marc Webb is pastor of Victory Baptist Church in Shelbyville.

Southern Baptist ethnic congregations up 66 percent since 1998

By Tobin Perry

Alpharetta, Ga.—The number of non-Anglo congregations in the Southern Baptist Convention has jumped by more than 66 percent since 1998, according to the North American Mission Board's Center for Missional Research.

A little more than 10,000 churches (10,049) of the 50,768 congregations in the SBC identified themselves by an ethnicity other than Anglo in 2011, the most recent year for which detailed data on ethnicity is available from LifeWay Christian Resources' Annual Church Profile database.

In 1998, non-Anglo congregations totaled 6,044.

"It's clear that Southern Baptists have been multi-ethnic and are becoming an even more multi-ethnic convention of churches," said Joseph Lee, senior pastor of Connexion Church in Lawrenceville, Ga., a mostly Southern Baptist congregation. "The trend is gaining speed week by week. For example, the ethnic churches grew from zero to more than half of the total number of churches in our county in the past 10 years."

The diversification of the convention comes at a time when the United States as a whole is growing more diverse. USA Today, for example, has reported that the number of all-white communities in the country has plummeted since 1980, according to an analysis of census data by Penn State University's Population Research Institute. Less than a third of U.S. counties are 90 percent Caucasian.

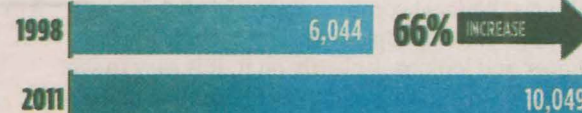
The largest jump in non-Anglo congregations within the SBC from 1998 to 2011 has primarily come from an 82.7 percent increase in the number of African-American congregations.

For Fred Luter, pastor of Franklin



UPWARD SWING Worshippers sing praises during services at Atlanta's Blueprint Church. The congregation is representative of the growing trend of non-Anglo churches within the Southern Baptist Convention. (Photo by Susan Whitley/NAMB)

Number of Non-Anglo SBC Congregations



Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans and the first-ever African-American president of the SBC, the diversification of Southern Baptists has become very personal.

"I remember at one time I was the only (African-American pastor) in my city who was Southern Baptist," Luter said. "I caught a lot of flack as a result of that. Thank God I'm able to see some of the fruit of my labor—not only at my particular church, but in the associations and conventions across the country."

Hispanic congregations also have seen a significant increase over the same time span—nearly 63 percent. The number of Asian congregations affiliated with the SBC has grown by 55 percent.

Because of the nature of ACP statistics, it is impossible to know the diversity of individuals within the SBC—only the diversity of congregations, said Richie Stanley, director of NAMB's Center for Missional Research.

"We are only able to categorize

congregations by ethnicities—not members—because the ACP only asks the predominant ethnicity of congregations, not individuals," he noted.

'Open to all peoples'

Non-Anglo congregations now account for nearly 20 percent of the SBC, compared to 13.4 percent in 1998. In 1990, about 5 percent of Southern Baptist Convention congregations were primarily non-Anglo.

"We are grateful to God for this diversity," said Ken Weathersby, NAMB's presidential ambassador for ethnic church relations. "It is saying that the Southern Baptist Convention is no longer monolithic. The Southern Baptist Convention is very diversified. It is open to all peoples, regardless of ethnicity and race."

Despite the SBC's growing diversity, there still are a variety of ethnic groups in North America with no Southern

Baptist presence among them. Mark Hobafcovich, NAMB's national coordinator for church mobilization, points to the Albanian people as an example. There are more than 500,000 Albanians in the U.S. but no SBC congregations and only one evangelical church among them, he noted.

"As Southern Baptists partner together to plant new evangelistic churches, Albanians and other people in North America can hear the gospel in their heart language, come to faith in Christ and be discipled so they, in turn, can make other disciples and plant churches here at home and throughout the Albanian diaspora around the world," Hobafcovich said. "Only by a movement of God can we see biblical multiplication and the kingdom of God exponentially expanded." (NAMB/BP)

Luter awarded Iowa college's Carver Medal for faithful ministry

By Diana Chandler

Indianola, Iowa—Southern Baptist Convention President Fred Luter has been awarded the Carver Medal of Simpson College. The Iowa school hailed Luter as exemplifying the commitment and service of the late agricultural scientist, inventor and Christian, George Washington Carver.

John Byrd, president of the United Methodist Church-affiliated college in Indianola, Iowa, recognized Luter as courageous and committed to faith in Christ in the face of challenging obstacles.

"I believe George Washington Carver would have recognized some of his own experiences in the life of Rev. Fred Luter," Byrd said. Carver "knew about facing challenges and never giving up. He was also a man of unwavering faith."

"Courage and commitment have remained the twin themes in the remarkable life" of Luter, Byrd said.

Byrd recognized Luter's achievements not only as the first African-American elected as president of the SBC, but also as pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans, having grown

the congregation from 50 members to more than 8,500 over 25 years and sparking the church's restoration after Hurricane Katrina.

"The storm destroyed Luter's home, damaged the church and scattered the members of his congregation," Byrd said. "But the Rev. Luter did not lose faith. He held worship services in New Orleans, Baton Rouge and Houston, and eventually his church was rebuilt."

Luter humbly accepted the medal.

"When I see the list of incredible individuals who have received the George Washington Carver medal in the past, I cannot help but ask the question, 'Why me, Lord?'" Luter said before delivering the Carver Lecture.

Simpson College created the Carver Medal in 2008 to honor individuals who have distinguished themselves through service, leadership, conviction and a dedication to humanitarian issues, while advancing the fields of science, education, the arts or religion. The medal pays tribute to Carver's legacy at Simpson College, which he attended for one year in 1890, and to the college's commitment to diversity throughout its history.



LUTER HONORED Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa, honored Southern Baptist Convention President Fred Luter with the Carver Medal, named in honor of the late George Washington Carver. Luter (second from right) is shown with (from left) Simpson College President John Byrd, Simpson senior Elijah Knox and Carolyn Dallinger, Simpson associate professor of social work and criminal justice. (Photo by Luke Behaunek)

In delivering the Carver Lecture, Luter encouraged the college to remain faithful to God.

"I promise you, if you continue to be faithful to God, God will continue to be faithful to you," he urged. "You will be amazed what can happen in your life if you're faithful to God."

Former Carver Medal recipients

include Johnnetta Cole, the first African-American woman president of Spelman College and the current director of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African Art; Simon Estes, an internationally renowned bass-baritone; and Iowa members of the Tuskegee Airmen, the first African-American combat pilots in the U.S. Army Air Corps. (BP)

Church persecuted: Mali Christians challenged by Islamist attacks

Bamako, Mali—Most International Mission Board missionaries assigned to the west African nation of Mali have left the country due to the continuing conflict between Islamist rebels and Malian military supported by French forces.

"Right now, we have our personnel spread over a variety of countries because of the situation. All but one family has left the country," said John Grayson, an IMB strategy leader in west Africa.

Early last year, Islamist rebels used widespread instability created by warring factions in the north to impose Shariah law in areas where they gained control. They reportedly destroyed church buildings and sought to eliminate any hint of Christianity.

"Our personnel are concerned for the Malians who are unable to evacuate," Grayson said, particularly "those who are stuck behind in areas controlled by the rebels."

Anna Farmer*, a missionary to Mali who plans to return after a meeting in a neighboring country, reported that "believers are being targeted and persecuted."

World Watch Monitor reports that

rebel groups controlled more than half of Mali from April of last year until the recent intervention by France, which has helped the Malian military push the rebels back north.

According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, about 230,000 Malians have been internally displaced and another 150,000 people left Mali seeking help in surrounding countries.

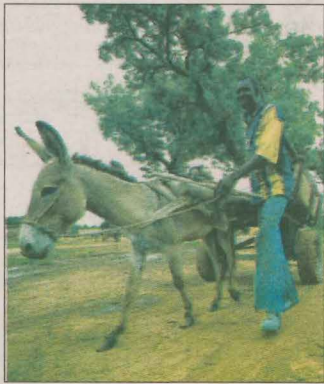
Grayson said IMB personnel "are concerned for believers who have been forced to leave their homes and villages. They are hoping and praying that they can do as much as they can to reach out to their peoples in these surrounding countries

where they have now been evacuated."

The situation looks grim, but "we must trust God through it all," Grayson said. "My prayer is that there would be a quick resolution to this situation. I pray that it would be done peaceably."

Grayson added: "Pray for those behind the rebel lines, that they would be faithful and a strong witness for Christ, which also means that they may lose their lives as they remain faithful to Christ."

*Names changed for security reasons



DISPLACED PEOPLES Around 230,000 Malians have been internally displaced and another 150,000 people left Mali seeking help in surrounding countries. (IMB photo)



MEDICAL MISSIONS PIONEER Rebekah Naylor (left) speaks with Prem Leela (right), a chaplain at Bangalore Baptist Hospital in India, during a visit to the hospital. Naylor served in various roles and founded a nursing school at the hospital during her more than 35 years as a medical missionary with the International Mission Board. (IMB photo)

Medical missions

Continued from page 1

"We've done it in different ways around the world," Williams said. "Sometimes it worked. Sometimes it didn't."

Now national conventions, private boards or government organizations operate about half of the health care facilities included on the 1997 list, and in several instances, IMB personnel continue to have some level of involvement.

For the remainder, factors such as remote location, poor management or weak partnerships resulted in closure of the facilities. In each successful transition, however, "the hospital found a partner with the right strengths," Williams said. He cited three examples of "phenomenal transitions"—Wallace Memorial Baptist Hospital in Pusan, South Korea; Bangalore Baptist Hospital; and the Baptist Medical Center in Asunción, Paraguay.

For the hospital in Bangalore, the "right partner" was the Christian Medical College of Vellore, India. The college had an excellent teaching program that allowed it to expand the services offered in Bangalore.

Under a management agreement with the medical college, the Bangalore hospital offers medical care to more than 200,000 patients a year. It also boasts a nursing school and provides training in allied health, X-ray and medical records management. The college manages the hospital through a board of directors; the IMB retains one seat on the board and funds the pastoral care department.

In Paraguay and South Korea, national Baptist conventions in each country established private boards consisting of directors from missions, business and medical backgrounds. Under these arrangements, medical facilities broadened their influence within their communities while maintaining a Christ-centered mission.

Overall, Williams and Naylor agree that the shift from institutions to local leadership was beneficial because it empowered local leaders to grow beyond what the IMB could provide.

"When I first arrived in Bangalore, we were struggling to get patients. Now, the hospital treats 1,000 patients a day," Williams said. "When I arrived, there were three missionary physicians, a nurse and six to eight Indian doctors.

As institutional transitions played out, the IMB's commitment to medical

missions never wavered, Naylor said. Instead, the methodology shifted to incorporate health strategies into evangelism and church planting. "Preach and heal"—utilizing health strategies to share the gospel—was born.

Access to the world's hardest-to-reach areas is one of the primary benefits of this holistic approach to health care and gospel ministry, said Fielding, author of the book, "Preach and Heal: A Biblical Model for Missions."

In 1985, Fielding was a 24-year-old college graduate when God called him to go to places "where missionaries can't go."

"I'd never considered missions and never met a missionary," Fielding said. "But I realized it might be hard for missionaries to go to places like east Asia, central Asia or the Middle East. That day God told me to go to medical school so I could serve Him in hard-to-reach places."

Ten years later, Fielding was serving as a physician in a remote area of central Asia. During his first three years, Fielding treated thousands of patients and saw 300 people come to faith in Jesus Christ.

"We had been told it would take 15 years for a person in this area to come to Christ," Fielding said. "We saw people come to faith in less than a week."

By giving up institutional control, the IMB broadened its influence and multiplied its effectiveness, Fielding, Naylor and Williams agree. The transition empowered medical institutions to expand their services and allowed IMB health care workers to reach into the world's most impoverished areas.

"The majority of the poor are in restricted-access places," Naylor said. "The majority of the lost are also in restricted-access areas. As we moved into public health and primary care, we gained sustained access to hundreds and hundreds of these people groups."

In the past 15 years, Fielding said he cannot recall a single time when this holistic approach to gospel ministry was unsuccessful in bringing people to faith in Jesus. The reason for the success is the "right to be heard" that health care workers gain by taking time with patients.

"Healing touches a felt need of the individual," he said. "When you sit with people and meet their felt needs, you gain their respect and trust. ... They begin to say, 'You are different from other doctors,' and we say, 'Yes. We are different because of the love of Jesus Christ.'" (IMB/BP)

*Names changed for security reasons

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Parental perspectives, part 2

Parents offer encouragement with kind words through e-mails, visits

Carrying on in the same vein as last week's column, here is more feedback from our students' families. First, three e-mails; then I'll report on a family visit.

E-mail No. 1: "Greetings in the powerful name of Jesus Christ. I am Abraham's mother. I understand that you are very busy, yet I just want to say thank you for everything. I asked Abraham, 'How is your school going?' He replied, 'That is the best thing that ever happened in my life.' This explains your leadership and the impact you are making in my son's life. I have no words to explain but I just want to say we are immensely grateful for your concern and help. You are in our prayers." (Just a short comment here: Abraham is a new international student who had the sad experience of seeing two of his closest friends expelled this past quarter. He is a Christian and has joined the church across the street from the campus. He recently helped a new roommate cope with a relationship problem with another student.)

E-mail No. 2: "What a glorious Christmas Eve service we had as Woody was baptized at our home church." (Comment: Woody is a first-year student whose family are war refugees from West Africa. Woody has a younger brother, Marvin, who is with us at OBI and four more siblings are at home with their mother. With her permission, their home church took the initiative to enroll them in OBI since the older boys were starting to run with the wrong crowd and become too much for their mother to control. Woody has shown real concern for Marvin's behavior and academic

progress, because Marvin has trouble getting to first period on time.)

E-mail No. 3 (from one of our ministry team members): "I went to the doctor today, and she told me she came here when we played her children's school. Her daughter is a cheerleader,

though they did not cheer that night. She was very impressed with our students being polite to them. Some girls engaged her daughter in a conversation at the concession stand. Boys held the door for them. She said that does not happen at their school. She said everyone was so nice and courteous. She was very impressed." (Comment: If you've ever raised children and had

someone surprisingly report back to you how well behaved they were while you struggle to get them to act the way you want them to when they're at home with you, you know how I felt when I read that e-mail. Prayers are being answered.)

The family visit: When it was time for Kevin to go home for Christmas, his grandpa and mom came together to get him. Mom had brought Kevin when he first came, sometime shortly before Thanksgiving. Grandpa had not come, but I had had the opportunity to talk with him on the phone when Kevin had a problem shortly after arriving. I had arranged with grandpa to spend some time talking with him, since he serves as a chaplain in a non-Christian boarding school. Both grandpa and mom agreed: There is something special about OBI's campus. They had both felt it when they arrived and made sure to tell me so before they left.

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

This is Oneida



Paul Davidson

Going where the action is

Find where God is working in lives of others and join Him in His work

This week's column is written by Gary Miller of Outdoor Truths Ministries.

I recently traveled from Missouri to Kentucky trying to time my arrival at each place so that deer season was either in prime rut or just before. Even though one can be pretty certain as to when these times come, the weather and other conditions affect how productive these times actually are. Much like the weather itself, though, it's not a perfect science and definitely not a sure thing. There are, however, occasions when everything lines up, and that's when it's really fun.

Recently my timing was not only pretty good away from home, but I also found a way to be back home just when things were getting good. I guess one could say that when this happens, hunters are simply trying to chase the rut; to be where it is happening. It's not much different than my friends who fish for stripers. They know pretty much from day to day where these fish have moved and they simply move to where the fish are—they go where the action is.

In Henry Blackaby's best-selling book, "Experiencing God," he gives some simple advice: Find where God's at work and join Him. In deer-hunting terms, we might say, "Find where the deer are rutting and hunt there." In fishing terms we might say, "Find where the fish have moved and fish there."

Oftentimes in our spiritual lives, we spend too much time asking God what He wants us to do, where He wants us to go, where we are to invest our resources, and just why He isn't doing something in our lives. What Blackaby tells us is to look around and see what God is doing in other places and with other people. When we discover that, it is our invitation to be involved. Find where God's at work and join Him.

Do you think God is at work in our world? If you do, ask Him to show you where He wants you involved. Remember, when He reveals it to you, it will be His invitation to you to join Him where the action is.

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

Campbellsville women share love of Christ behind bars

By Diana Derringer

Campbellsville—The Bible study began like most as the women entered the room and found their seats. Of course there were some notable exceptions, such as the drab uniformity of their clothing and the cameras that monitored their every movement.

Some began chatting about their children or the obstacles they faced that week while being incarcerated at the Taylor County jail. Others kept to themselves. Frowns were plastered on the faces of a few, and one woman appeared to be on the brink of tears.

For the members of the women's ministry team from Campbellsville Baptist Church, the scene has become routine, as is the strict security measures imposed on them every week. The team passes a sign prohibiting weapons beyond a certain point. They enter two locked doors and must leave their car keys at the control center. A jail employee escorts them to and from the worship service.

Campbellsville Baptist's women's ministry team knows the routine well. They spend every Thursday night at the Taylor County jail. Two teams of four to five women alternate weeks leading the ministry. Church members, Sunday School classes and various groups within the church provide funds for the seemingly never-ending request for Bibles from the inmates. Recovery Bibles are the most popular—perhaps because a large percentage of the women incarcerated suffer from some form of addiction.

The average number of women attending the services is 12, but as many as 20 have participated since the ministry began five years ago. The church established prison ministries for both women and men prior to the opening of the jail in 2008. The average attendance at the men's services is roughly a quarter of the total number of men incarcerated in the jail.

Being in jail offers unique opportunities for the women to focus on Jesus due to their limited choices of activities. The ministry teams capitalize on this by centering studies on eternal truths. During each service, the team shares the steps necessary for a saving faith in Jesus. For Christian inmates that have turned away from Christ, the team encourages them to hold fast to their Christian commitments.

Sometimes the women's prison ministry takes place outside of the barbed-wire fences. Phyllis Patton, a team leader, helped a recently released inmate with transportation home. Another time the team bought a fan for an inmate's family who had no way to cool their home. Team members bought and delivered story books one Christmas with recordings of the inmates reading to their children. The team also has purchased medication, provided meals and offered assis-

tance to dying family members.

"So many leave here with no job, no place to go, no medical care and often no one to help them," said Jeannie Seaborne, one of the team members.

She said she envisions a transitional community program that offers women a boost for their first few months of freedom. In addition to temporary housing, Seaborne said such a program would include mandatory participation in recovery groups, Bible study and finding a job.

Through all of the successes and disappointments, ministry organizer Cindy Perkins said, "We get the blessing. These women are not made to come; they come by choice. So many church members say they can't do it. They are afraid. But we enjoy it. It's a blessing."

Perkins said she still sees so much more the ministry could be doing to make a positive impact on the lives of incarcerated women. Her request is for Kentucky Baptists to pray for the following:

- Follow-up support to reduce recidivism rate.
- More Thursday night workers.
- Children of inmates.
- More resources and workers as needs arise.
- The Holy Spirit's battle over evil during weekly services.
- Ministry remains unhindered by government.
- GED program for female inmates.
- Reintroduction of life-skills classes for female inmates. (WR)



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Bible Crosswords

By Janet Adkins

Across

- 1 Dr. Zhivago heroine
- 5 Metric land measure (abbr.)
- 8 Bone or breaker
- 11 Ancient Hebrew dry measure
- 12 Feminine name
- 14 N.A. country
- 15 "Avenge not yourselves, but rather _____ unto wrath" (2 words, Romans 12:19)
- 17 Knight's form of address
- 18 Actress Ullmann
- 19 "_____ hath desired to have you, that he may sift you" (Luke 22:31)
- 21 "Shall seven years of _____ come unto ... thy land?" (2 Samuel 24:13)
- 24 Indian princess
- 25 Southern state (abbr.)
- 26 Turmoil
- 28 "Give not that which is holy unto the _____" (Matthew 7:6)
- 30 Shoe width
- 31 Bog
- 33 Provide the means
- 35 Compass dir.
- 36 Thing on a list
- 37 "And your children shall _____ in the wilderness forty years" (Numbers 14:33)
- 40 Like an ump
- 42 Circular _____ (junk mail repository?)
- 43 Formerly Clāy
- 44 "Dearly beloved, _____ yourselves ... I will repay" (2 words, Romans 12:19)
- 49 "But as the days of _____ were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matthew 24:37)
- 50 Telephoned
- 51 "For a good man some would even _____ to die" (Romans 5:7)
- 52 Acted
- 53 At loose _____
- 54 "We have seen his _____ in the east" (Matthew 2:2)

Down

- 1 Ship's record
- 2 Boyfriend for Babette?
- 3 N.T. book
- 4 Son of Gad (Genesis 46:16)
- 5 Share equally
- 6 In the manner of
- 7 "Render therefore unto _____" (Matthew 22:21)
- 8 "And by him all that believe are _____ from all things, from which ye could not be ... by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:39)

- 9 Continent
- 10 Sound an alarm
- 13 Akin to a ringmaster (abbr.)
- 16 Individual number, for ATMs and credit cards
- 20 City in southern Judah (Joshua 15:50)
- 21 Bell bottoms or hula-hoops
- 22 Healing plant
- 23 "And let thy name be _____ for ever" (2 Samuel 7:26)
- 24 Hwy.
- 26 "Stand still, and _____ the salvation of the Lord" (Exodus 14:13)
- 27 Sea eagle
- 29 Formed a lap
- 30 Small town street name
- 32 Poetic contraction
- 34 "Take heed, _____ of the leaven of the Pharisees" (Mark 8:15)
- 37 "Oh that I had _____ like a dove!" (Psalm 55:6)
- 38 Required H.S. math
- 39 Obligations
- 40 Author Ayn
- 41 "_____, lama sabachthani?" (Mark 15:34)
- 42 Ward off
- 45 Actor Johnson
- 46 Masculine nickname
- 47 Mouth (pl.)
- 48 Like a patio (abbr.)

Last puzzle's solution

1	I	D	A		C	L	A	P		S	T	S				
11	R	E	B		D	E	V	I	L		Y	E	A			
14	A	R	I		U	N	I		E	A	R	L	Y			
			18	L	E	N	T		20	L	A	N	I			
			21	L	E	V			22	D	I	S	T	A	N	T
25	C	O	N	E		N	A	V	E	S		O	H			
28	A	W	E		A	R	E			R	O	E				
31	N	E		32	L	A	B	A	N		34	D	E	N	Y	
35	A	R	T	E	M	A	S			37	O	N	E			
			38	H	E	A	L		39	B	A	R	E			
41	A	M	I	S	S		C	I	S		44	W	A	N		
47	W	I	N		48	A	H	I	R	A		50	E	N	E	
51	L	O	G		52	S	A	I	D		53	D	E	W		

Prayer requests

With summer quickly approaching, Crossings' work needs much prayer

Summer is coming soon—perhaps not as quick as you would like given our recent temperatures, but it will not be long. Our schedule always gets a new sense of urgency once the new year begins, and this year is more pronounced than ever.

We are preparing again for another record year in attendance for Crossings 2013 camps. Currently we have more than 12,500 people registered for our upcoming programmed events.

And we need your help. The main way you can be a part of Crossings is to pray for us. Specifically, you can pray for the following:

- Pray for the safety of all campers and our staff.
- Pray that we clearly and accurately communicate the gospel through our words and actions.
- Pray that even now God will begin working in the hearts of those who will attend camp this year.

Along with your prayers, we also can use your assistance with various projects at both Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek. Please contact our office for more details on how you can be involved with these needs.

Crossings Ministries



David Melber

Finally, I want to thank you on behalf of all our staff and guests for your continued support through the Cooperative Program. I realize it is difficult to feel personally connected to all the ministry in Baptist life that happens with CP support, but these camps are an extension of your churches.

Just 15 years ago, the very existence of these properties was in question. Now by God's grace, He is doing amazing works in the lives of thousands of people each year. Please pray that we will faithfully seek Him in all things and that these camps will be known for passionately proclaiming the gospel in all that we do.

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

New Year's resolutions

In 2013, resolve to help Sunrise rescue Kentucky's children in need

A new year means a new start for people who will begin 2013 with a list of resolutions and goals. A new year also will mark a new beginning for many of the children who arrive at Sunrise Children's Services over the next 12 months. Most of these children will be leaving a world of unspeakable abuse and neglect. Our task is to give them a safe refuge, show them someone cares, and equip them to embrace new opportunities for a brighter future.

More than 2,000 children in Kentucky received that opportunity in 2012 from Sunrise, and our success is due in great part to the continued backing from supporters and donors like you. Together, Sunrise improves the lives and the futures of young people from every county of the state through our network of foster homes, residential programs and community-based services. We are making a difference, and you help make it possible.

With a new year, Sunrise resolves to continue our efforts to help children in

crisis. Too many Kentucky children are suffering from physical, sexual and emotional abuse. We now are in our 144th year of opening our doors to wipe away tears, mend wounds and improve lives. We have been witness to countless success stories and lives that

Sunrise Children's Services



Bill Smithwick

have been rescued, redeemed and repaired. Our goal in 2013 is the same as it was when we began in 1869—simply to care for children in need.

As we enter 2013, there are children in your county and maybe even in your neighborhood who are hurting. You may be frustrated by your belief that you can't make a difference—but you can. By partnering with Sunrise, we can rescue these children from their abusive and neglectful situations. Won't you resolve in 2013 to help?

If you'd like more information about becoming a foster parent, or simply want to know how you can help Sunrise change children's lives, visit www.sunrise.org.

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

Your church newsletter

Mailed to every church family for about the price of a postcard! For more information, call (866) 489-3535.





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.
- 12** Kentucky Baptist Men's Chorale and Wind Orchestra, University of the Cumberlands, Williamsburg.

Pop star's mom promotes film to help fund pregnancy centers

By Angela Lu

Washington—Mega pop star Justin Bieber's mom hopes to raise \$10 million for crisis pregnancy centers around the world with a new pro-life short film, "Crescendo."

Pattie Mallette, an outspoken Christian, said the cause was personal to her because a crisis pregnancy center helped her when she got pregnant with Bieber at 17.

Mallette has partnered with Movie to Movement to promote "Crescendo," a short film based in the 18th century that deals with abortion. They hope to host 1,000 screenings of the film starting Feb. 28, with Mallette, one of the film's executive producers, sharing her story at some. Eduardo Verastegui, who starred in and produced the 2006 pro-life film "Bella," is the other executive producer.

Mallette grew up in a broken home in Stratford, Ontario, according to her 2012 autobiography, "Nowhere But Up." Her alcoholic father left when she was 2, and she was sexually abused from age 3 to 14. She said abandonment issues and abuse led her to drugs, theft and depression in her teens. At 17, she tried to commit suicide by throwing herself in front of a bus, and was sent to a mental ward, where she became a Christian.

Afterward, she returned to her

past life and soon found herself pregnant. Many friends told her to abort the baby, but she kept him because of her faith. "I knew that I had to do what it took," she wrote. "I just couldn't abort him."

Mallette's parents kicked her out of the house and she stayed at a home for pregnant women. She gave birth to Bieber in 1994, and lived off welfare and part-time jobs. She finished high school and went to college.

At the same time, Bieber earned money singing on the streets and playing drums and guitar. When he was 13, Hollywood came calling when his YouTube videos went viral. Bieber now is the third-most powerful celebrity in the world, according to Forbes Magazine.

Mallette's pro-life stance also has influenced her son. Bieber caused controversy in 2011 when he said in a Rolling Stone interview, "I really don't believe in abortion. I think (an embryo) is a human. It's like killing a baby."

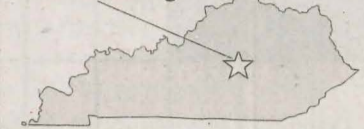
Mallette said she hopes the fundraising for pregnancy centers will "encourage young women all over the world, just like me, to let them know that there is a place to go, people who will take care of you and a safe home to live in if you are pregnant and think you have nowhere else to turn." (World on Campus/BP)

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

Spotlight on ...

Harrodsburg



Harrodsburg Church will hold Life Action Prayer Revival services Feb. 4-6, 6:30 p.m. **Wayne Spivey** is pastor.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Campbells-ville Church will hold a 3-on-3 basketball tournament Feb. 1, 7 p.m. For more information, call (270) 465-8115.

■ **FRANKFORT**—Crestwood Church will hold a youth lock-in event Feb. 1. **Michael Hail** is pastor.

■ **HUSTONVILLE**—Moreland First Church recently ordained **Randy Southerland** as a deacon. **Eric Douglas** is pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Calvary Church will host Elkhorn Association's "Souper Bowl Party" Feb. 3 for homeless and low-income families. Food, clothing and blankets will be given away. **Robert Baker** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Parkland Church will host **Wade Rowatt**, director of clinical pastoral education, as guest speaker Feb. 3. **Tom Curry** is pastor.

St. Matthews Church will hold an "Upward Sunday" service Feb. 3, 11 a.m., with **Brian Kiser**, former University of Louisville basketball player, as guest speaker. **Greg Barr** is pastor.

■ **SOMERSET**—First Church will hold its annual men's "Chili Cook-off for the Golden Ladle" Feb. 3, 7 p.m. **French Harmon** is pastor.

■ **WILMORE**—Longtime Kentucky Baptist pastor **Donald White**

died Dec. 8. He was 88. During his 52-year ministry, White was pastor of several churches, most notably Hillcrest Church in Lexington, which he led for 34 years. He also served as pastor of Burgin Church and Hillsboro Church in Versailles. White's service extended to the associational and state convention levels, having been elected moderator for Elkhorn Association and serving terms on the KBC's Executive (now Mission) Board and a trustee for Clear Creek Bible College. A native of Frankfort, White graduated from Georgetown College and Southern Seminary. He is survived by his wife of 70 years, Anna, four children, 10 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Funeral services were held Dec. 11 at Hillcrest Church.

Passion conference propels Tomlin to top of charts

New York—Chris Tomlin has become the fourth Christian music artist ever to garner the No. 1 position on the Billboard 200 chart.

Tomlin's "Burning Lights" sold 73,000 copies in its opening week, fueled in large part by Passion 2013 in Atlanta.

The conference for college-aged Christians, where the singer-songwriter led worship, was attended by 60,000 people and had more than 100,000 online viewers.

According to Billboard, 40 percent of the figures tracked by the music trade magazine were sales related to Passion or churches.

Tomlin's album, topping the Jan. 26 chart, follows tobyMac, who last September became the first Christian artist in 15 years to take the top position with his latest album, "Eye on It."

"Burning Lights" also was Tomlin's fourth album to sit atop Billboard's Christian Albums chart.

The debut was the largest ever for Tomlin and the largest sales week for any Christian album since Casting Crowns' "Come to the Well" in 2011.

Tomlin currently is touring in support of the chart-topping album. The "Burning Lights Tour" will make one stop in Kentucky. Tomlin will perform April 11 at the Bank of Kentucky Center in Highland Heights.

For more information, visit www.ChrisTomlin.com (BP)

CHRIS TOMLIN

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CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR RENT: Two condos for rent in Destin, Fla.; two bedrooms and two bathrooms, fully furnished; 10 percent discount on all one-week bookings made before March 1; lbrammer@charter.net, (423) 309-4422.

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: 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: Kento-Boo Baptist Church, Florence, Ky., is seeking a part-time worship leader. Responsibilities would be to work with choir and lead worship on Sunday mornings. If interested, please contact Stan Cole, e-mail: stanc@insightbb.com, or call (859) 308-7605.

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 resumés and direct inquiries to Bruce Truman, pastor, at bruce@sunnysidebc.com.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music and worship for Yellow Creek Baptist Church, Owensboro, Ky.; seminary and previous experience preferred. E-mail resumé to tony.rodgers@omhs.org or by mail to Tony Rodgers, 2667 Chatham Lane, Owensboro, KY 42303.

SEEKING: FBC Marshfield, Mo., seeking full-time discipleship pastor to lead Sunday School, discipleship, missions. Resumés may be submitted to staffopenings@marshfieldfirst.org or P.O. Box 746, Marshfield, MO 65706. Details at www.marshfieldfirst.org/#/connect/staff-openings.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Williamsburg, Ky., is seeking a full-time associate pastor for students and families to provide dynamic leadership; accredited seminary degree optimum. Send resumé to familyministrysearch@gmail.com.

SEEKING: Full-time worship minister for First Baptist Church of Franklin. Please submit resumé by Feb. 14 to jgifford@franklinfbc.org.

SEEKING: Mackville Baptist Church in Mackville, Ky., is seeking a full-time pastor; some pastoral experience required. E-mail resumés to nathancochran@bellsouth.net.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor; congregation of approximately 150 people. If interested, please mail resumé to: Liberty Point Baptist Church, 187 Old Dover Road, Cadiz, KY 42211, Attn: Chad Ahart.

SEEKING: Parkland Baptist Church is seeking a full-time minister of music to lead worship, age-graded music programs, choirs and orchestra. Resumés can be sent to the personnel committee, 7206 Shepherdsville Road, Louisville, KY 40219.

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: Monterey Baptist Church of Owen County, Ky., is seeking a full-time pastor to lead its small, rural congregation. Applicants should have strong desire to focus on youth/children's ministries and be willing to reside in community area. Church on-site housing is an option. Send resumés or questions to matt576@aol.com, or mail resumés to MBC, 44 High Street, Monterey, KY 40359.

SEEKING: Seeking an individual/couple for part-time youth leader; music a plus. Send resumé to Thomas, 1610 Rice Lane, Taylorsville, KY 40071.

Looking for what's next

Sherwood Pictures' Kendrick brothers take breather from movies, focused on new book

By Joe Westbury

Albany, Ga.—For almost a decade, Alex and Stephen Kendrick have wooed theatergoers with faith-based films that garnered the attention of Hollywood and were viewed by audiences around the world.

The string of hits kept their fans thirsting for more, beginning with “Flywheel: The Movie” in 2003, and progressing to “Facing the Giants” in 2006, “Fireproof” in 2008, and “Courageous” in 2011. Rarely resting between the release of one hit and the writing and filming of the next, the brothers have decided to break with tradition and step away from filmmaking for a season.

Their next venture? A book.

“Love Dare for Parents,” a spinoff from the popular “Love Dare” from the “Fireproof” movie, will be “a 40-day journey of dares to help parents communicate Christ’s love to their children,” Stephen Kendrick explained.

“We want to help parents win the hearts of their children so they can win their ears,” he said.

Ever since the original book, which focused on strengthening marriages, was featured in the 2008 movie, parents have requested a similar book to help them influence their children for Christ. B&H Publishing, a division of LifeWay Christian Resources, expects to release it this summer.

“It’s not easy to make a movie, but for us it’s much easier to work with film than with print,” Stephen Kendrick said. “Writing a book is like writing 15 term papers, one after the other. It’s tedious, grueling work.”

Each of their movies was accompanied by a novel, but those were co-written with professional authors. All of those eventually made it onto a New York

Times bestseller list.

The brothers also wrote three books from scratch—“The Love Dare,” “The Love Dare Day by Day” devotional for couples, and “The Resolution for Men.”

What comes next for the duo remains unknown. What is known is that they want to take time to follow God’s direction before assuming there will be another movie.

“We have not taken it for granted that we’ll always be making movies. We always go back to square one and seek the Lord’s direction before proceeding,” Alex Kendrick said. “Making a movie takes a year or two out of your life, time away from your family and friends; why would we want to do that if the Lord isn’t in it?”

His younger brother readily agrees.

“Movies don’t want to be made,” Stephen Kendrick said. “They take years of planning, writing, shooting. ... There are so many potential problems to stop the production timeline. It’s like walking through a minefield with cast problems, budgeting problems, script problems, marketing and distribution problems.”

But the rewards are immense.

“Fireproof” was released on DVD in 75 countries and “Courageous” in 76 countries. In March 2012, nearly 1,000 police officers accepted Christ in a South American nation after watching the movie.

“You get these reports from all around the world and say to yourself, ‘Is this for real?’ That’s when you know it’s worth all the blood, sweat and tears,” Stephen Kendrick said.

In addition to their filmmaking responsibilities the brothers are staff members at Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, Ga., where Stephen, 39, serves as senior associate pastor of preaching and Alex, 42, is associate pastor. They speak



TAKING A BREAK Stephen (left) and Alex Kendrick relax for a few moments in the casting studio at Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, Ga. The brothers, who serve as the brain trust behind the stream of faith-based movies flowing out of the church, are writing a book and taking a break from movie making. (Photo by Joe Westbury/Georgia Christian Index)

highly of the support they have received from Pastor Michael Catt and his vision to reach the world from southwestern Georgia.

“Michael has been a selfless pastor, demonstrating Christ-like leadership and equipping his staff for success. This is the most loving and praying church I have ever been in,” Stephen Kendrick said.

Reaching the world is exactly what has occurred through the movies and books that have rolled out of Sherwood Pictures based at the church. A good bit of the proceeds from the movies have been spent around the world to impact nations for Christ.

For example:

- Funds were used to purchase motorbikes for pastors in the Sudan so the men, informally known now as “mobile missionaries,” don’t have to walk and can cover greater distances.

- The church has partnered with the International Mission Board on numerous projects. In 2011, it gave a \$100,000 donation to the mission agency.

- The church’s newest international vision is partnering with the IMB to adopt an unreached people group—Dutch speakers in Germany.

- Locally, it gave generously toward the purchase of an 82-acre evangelistic sports park in Albany in which the church already was involved but which helped speed along the process.

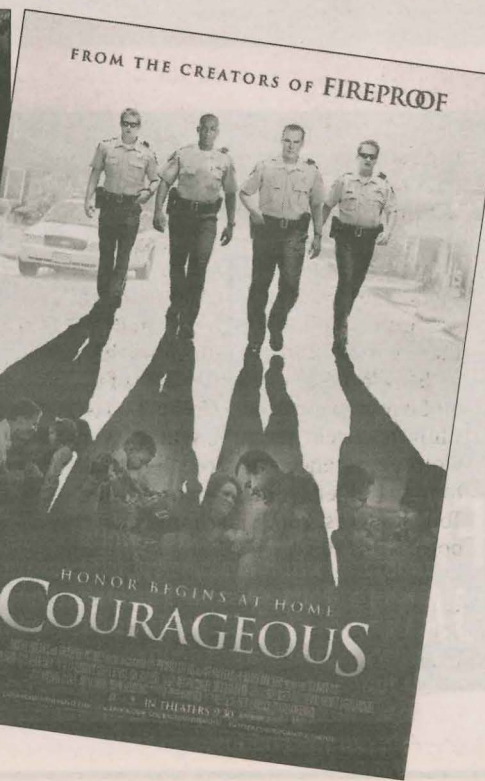
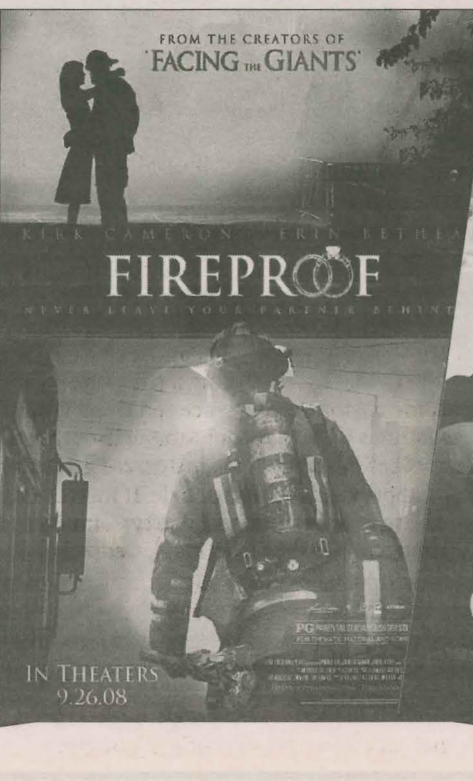
- It has started churches in San Francisco and Baltimore.

Alex and Stephen have their eyes on the future, though, in ways other than making movies. They want to help the next generation learn from their mistakes and benefit from their insight.

“We are very burdened with a desire to pour ourselves into the next generation of Christian filmmakers,” Stephen Kendrick said. “They may know how to use the Red Camera and Final Cut Pro editing software but they may not know how to fear the Lord and seek Him in their production decisions.

“Even though Alex and I never went to film school, we long to help those individuals seek first the kingdom of God and not be preoccupied with just making a cool movie.

“Every generation needs to think about those who will follow it and set them up for success. Michael (Catt) reminds us that whoever wants the next generation the most will get them ... and we want them.” (Georgia Christian Index/BP)





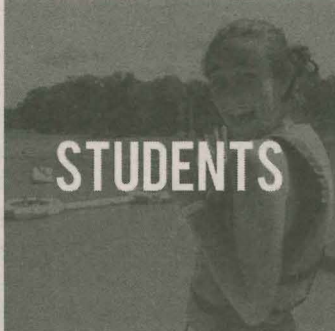
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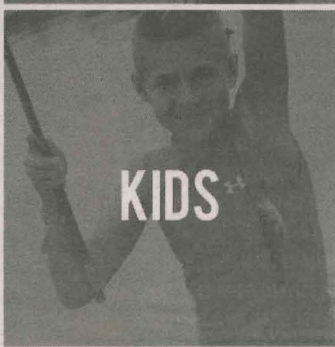
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