

WESTERN Recorder

March 12, 2013

Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

Volume 187, Issue 10

WEST LIBERTY: FIRST ANNIVERSARY

Ky Baptists build homes for tornado survivors

By Todd Deaton

West Liberty—A year now has passed since a tornado obliterated the town of West Liberty, nearly sweeping it off the map, but Kentucky Baptists have not forgotten the tremendous recovery needs of its resilient residents. Disaster relief crews from Kentucky Baptist churches and associations have flocked to the small mountain community to assist survivors, and during the last two weeks, approximately 165 volunteers have helped

build homes for four families.

Working through Habitat for Humanity, the volunteer effort during the two weeks surrounding the anniversary date of the tornado was spearheaded by Steve Howard, the Morgan County Long Term Recovery team coordinator, with assistance from Keith Stinson, a member of First Baptist Church of Richmond.

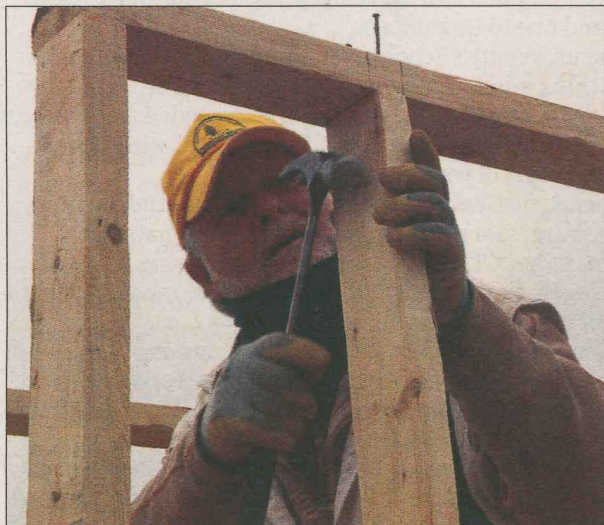
A call for mission teams to participate in the rebuild project went out through the Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief network. Howard, a member of New Hope Baptist

Church, and Stinson, who was born in West Liberty and grew up in a neighboring county, were pleased not only with the turn out, but also with the work accomplished.

Although the weather didn't exactly cooperate—rain, snow, mud and freezing temperatures—by the end of first week, the volunteers had completed walls and trusses for three houses. A fourth had a floor and walls ready, Howard reported.

The work began with about 30 volunteers on Monday, but the

□ See West Liberty ... Page 2



Edie Osburn, of Salem Baptist Church, works on the frame of a house in West Liberty. (Photo by Larry Brannin/KBC)

WHATEVER IT TAKES REACHING THE ONE

Chicago church planters 'fully following Jesus'

North American Mission Board Week of Prayer missionary Scott Venable and his wife, Ashley, moved to Chicago—where only 10 percent of the population is evangelical—to plant Mosaic Chicago. (Photo by Dale Stroud/NAMB)

By Tobin Perry

Look around Chicago's Wicker Park and you'll find just about every kind of person you can imagine. You may meet 44-year-old Maurice Burr, the one-time high school football star who spends his days in a wheelchair because of gang violence.

You may meet Charlie the drifter, the homeless man who wanders through the neighborhood warning people of government conspiracies. You could run into

the young highly educated, well-dressed couple who come to the park to walk their dog and let their young son play. There's also the senior citizen couple that sit at the park to get some fresh air before heading back to the nearby assisted living center.

And thanks to the generosity of Southern Baptists, there's a North American Mission Board church planter there, too.

"It's the most eclectic place you can imagine," says NAMB church planter

Scott Venable. "It has drug dealers and businesspeople. When we prayer-walked as we were looking for a place to start the church and we got to Wicker Park, we just knew it was it."

Wicker Park is both a large park off of Chicago's North Damen Ave. and one of the most famous neighborhoods in the Windy City. Called by Forbes the fourth coolest neighborhood in the United States, it's the kind of place where million dollar homes

□ See Reaching the one ... Page 6

NAMB sending evangelistic New Testaments to SBC churches

By Tobin Perry

Alpharetta, Ga.—Every Southern Baptist and Canadian National Baptist church in North America will receive a case of New Testaments from the North American Mission Board by early April.

The Find It Here New Testaments are part of NAMB's God's Plan for Sharing: GPS initiative to encourage "Every Believer Sharing, Every Person Hearing" by 2020.

"If your church hasn't been out in your community sharing Christ in awhile, we think these Bibles are a great tool for outreach," NAMB president Kevin Ezell said. "And if you are already active in reaching your community, this is one more tool we think everyone will want to use."

Churches began receiving the shipments in mid-February. Because of the large number being shipped, it will take six weeks for every church to receive its New Testaments. Each case contains 48 New Testaments and a card that tells pastors why the New Testaments were sent to them and how they can order more. Churches are asked to use the New Testaments as part of their evangelistic efforts.

Each New Testament has specific verses marked to guide evangelistic

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Western Recorder 3-12-2013

'The Story Lives On' WMU annual meeting in Hopkinsville

Louisville—The 110th Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union Annual Meeting will be held at First Baptist Church of Hopkinsville, April 5-6, and will celebrate the 125th birthday of WMU, the 100th birthday of Girls in Action, and the 100th anniversary of the Eliza Broadus Offering for state missions.

"From start to finish, we will focus on how 'The Story Lives On' through WMU and as we share Christ around the world," said Joy Bolton, executive director-treasurer of Kentucky WMU. "Everyone who cares about missions will want to be at our meeting in Hopkinsville."

Missions focus

"Come hear missionaries, attend conferences, visit displays, and participate in our WMU birthday celebration," she urged. "You will enjoy the fellowship, music, and missions inspiration."

Rosalie Hunt, recording secretary for National WMU, will provide theme interpretations. Hunt is a former missionary and author of "Bless God and Take Courage."

Last Frontier missionaries in Southeast Asia will speak on Friday morning. In addition, "Nik Ripken," author of "The Insanity of God," and his wife "Ruth" will share the challenges which face believers around the world. The meeting begins at 9 a.m., and a boxed lunch will be served.

The work of Kentucky WMU will be featured on Friday afternoon, including the role of the Eliza Broadus Offering in state missions. Officers and executive board members for 2013-14 will be elected during the business session.

A 125th Birthday Celebration and Heritage Fund Banquet follows in the Christian Life Center. Tickets are \$20, which includes a donation to the Kentucky WMU Heritage Fund. Participants are invited to come early for the banquet and share their WMU story during the WMU Time Line Activity.

The Cooperative Program will be highlighted in the evening session. Curtis Woods, associate executive director for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, will share the importance of the Cooperative Program in funding Southern Baptist missions. The Kentucky Missionary of the Year award will also be

presented during the session.

On Saturday morning, conferences and other activities will begin at 9 a.m. Nurses are encouraged to attend the Baptist Nursing Fellowship meeting on Saturday.

Jason Stewart, KBC music consultant, will lead the music, and Emory Riley, minister of music at First Baptist, will be the pianist.

Ministry opportunities

Children are invited to participate on Saturday. The session begins at 10 a.m. and includes a celebration of the 100th birthday of Girls in Action. Participants are invited to wear their missions badges and outfits. Children are encouraged to bring a "birthday in a bag" to help low income families provide a birthday celebration for their children.

A special disaster relief lunch will be served by the Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief Feeding Unit. Participants can experience a typical meal and see the unit in operation. Suggested donation is \$5.

The 2013 annual meeting includes a collection project to bring toiletry items for Impact Ministry of Hopkinsville and FamilyFEST, a ministry of WMU that will take place in the Paducah and Henderson areas this summer. Requested items include toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, combs, razors, and deodorant (full sizes preferred).

An offering for Kentucky WMU ministries to missionaries and missionary kids also will be received. Kentucky WMU provides Christmas gifts to Kentucky-born international missionaries, as well as a fall and spring gift to Kentucky MKs who are attending college in-state. The Kentucky Missionary Parents Fellowship, another facet of Kentucky WMU ministries to missionaries, will meet during the DR lunch.

A special tour of Hopkinsville area ministries will be offered at 1 p.m. on Saturday. Preregistration is required, with a limit of 100 participants.

Contact Kentucky WMU for registration information or download an informational brochure from the Kentucky WMU website: www.KyWMU.org/annualmeeting. Pre-registration is required for meals and preschool child care. (KBC)

CU students serve in Haiti, Guatemala, 2 states

By Christina Kern

Campbellsville—Campbellsville University students, staff and faculty members served on six mission trips during their spring break, March 4-8.

Trips included two to Haiti, two to Florida, one to New York and one to Guatemala.

The university's School of Nursing traveled to Haiti for their third mission trip, March 1-7. Fourteen students, two nursing faculty and two missionaries provided free medical clinics, visited orphanages and fed a village, while spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Mackenzie Gentry, a sophomore nursing student from Greensburg, said nursing and mission work have been dreams of hers. The opportunity to use nursing and missions together, she said, "are being given to me as the beginning of my life's work."

A second team, led by Dustin Ford, a nursing alumnus of Campbellsville, went to Nelly, Haiti. They worked with an orphanage which takes care of disabled children and finds families within the village.

Ford, who has been to Haiti twice, said, "When I found out we would be working with disabled children, I couldn't turn down the opportunity. I love Haiti and have a passion for the people there."

Members of the football team traveled to Florida for a softball prison ministry. They went to several correctional facilities and seven professions of faith were reported.

Cameron Looper, a junior from Paducah, said what motivated him to go is "seeing their faces, knowing they now know Christ actually cares for them in their hard times."

A group of CU students also went to Panama City Beach, but not for the parties. Instead, they ministered to the parties through a ministry called "Beach Reach." Students from across the country met to minister to 100,000 students on spring break. Pancake breakfasts were served each morning, and rides were given at night.

The team going to Guatemala worked in Prince of Peace, an orphanage for girls in Guatemala City. Prince of Peace is directed by Jon and Elaina Barron, who moved there last June, after serving for 10 years in campus ministry at Eastern Kentucky University. The team did light construction and repairs around the facility and led worship services.

Another team went on a mission trip to New York, working with Urban Impact by teaching lessons at learning centers and assisting with after-school programs. (CU)

West Liberty

Continued from page 1

numbers grew steadily to near 100 workers by Saturday, Howard said.

In all, 109 volunteers worked at four Habitat sites during the first week. As of last Thursday, 65 were serving, with more expected. Almost all were Kentucky Baptists, according to Howard.

Among some of the larger Baptist groups to assist were Pulaski, Ohio River and Northern Kentucky associations and First churches of Richmond, Cynthiana and Shelbyville, he said.

Plum Creek Baptist Church in Taylorsville has been assisting churches in Morgan County for about four years with outreach block parties. So, when church members heard about the building blitz planned for West Liberty, they sent 19 people to work Thursday through Saturday of the first week.

At a memorial service on March 2—the anniversary of the tornado—Plum Creek presented the flag that had flown over the courthouse in West Liberty back to the people of Morgan County. Tommy Lyon, a volunteer from Plum Creek who had found it in the rubble while helping with clean-up, and Pastor Jon Rohr presented the framed flag.

"You don't have to look far in West



Volunteers from several Kentucky Baptist churches recently worked together to build new houses for victims of the tornado that struck West Liberty last year. (Photo by Larry Brannin/KBC)

Liberty to see the scars. Many of the businesses are just gone; many homes are still in shambles," said Rohr. "A year later and there is still much to do."

Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington provided a crew, led by Alan Owens, to cook for volunteers the first week. A second feeding team arrived from Burgin Baptist Church in Mercer County. Index Community Church in West Liberty provided its kitchen, while volunteers were housed at New Hope.

New Hope has hosted hundreds of volunteers since the first Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief crews arrived with chainsaws, hot meals, building materials and a shower unit. Since June, Howard estimates the volunteers housed there have logged more than 18,000 work hours.

Howard, a long-time resident of West Liberty, was there the day the massive tornado caused extensive damage to its downtown area, and he recalls the horrifying aftermath, as survivors crawled

out from leveled buildings and searched for family members and neighbors.

"After a year, many families are still trying to get back into their houses," he said. More than 200 families still have unmet, long-term recovery needs, he noted, and while much has been accomplished, "there's still a long way to go."

The displaced families whom the volunteers are helping are very appreciative, Stinson said.

"To help them rebuild their future is a big blessing," Howard added, noting that some have been staying with family and friends. "They just can't believe it is finally getting done," he said.

The original grant from Habitat for Humanity was for constructing 10 houses. Before the recent effort, only three had been completed, but Howard and Stinson hope the rest will be built soon. Many more volunteers are needed, Howard said, adding that there are still at least 17 homes on a waiting list.

Howard said it is very satisfying to help the people of his community. "It's a lot of work," he agreed, "but it's rewarding to see people back in a home again—to help them get some closure, ... find a new normal."

Speaking of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Howard said, "I'm very grateful to belong to an association of Christians who help others in this way." (WR)

Robertson gives 3 reasons why God's salvation is so great

By Chip Hutcheson

Princeton—How many people see the “service engine” light illuminate on their car dashboard, but do nothing because the car still runs?

That is the way many people respond to God's warnings, Larry Robertson, senior pastor at Hilldale Baptist Church in Clarksville, Tenn., explained at the 26th annual Western Kentucky Evangelism Conference March 4 at Southside Baptist Church in Princeton. The event is sponsored by the Caldwell/Lyon Baptist Association.

“Surveys tell us about 50 percent of the people ignore the ‘service engine’ light,” Robertson noted. “As long as it continues to run, they’ll keep driving it,” he said.

“And there are some who hear the warning of the gospel, but they say their life is not falling apart, that life is still OK, so they’ll just keep on keeping on,” Robertson said. “God gives us warnings—how easy it is for some to neglect so great a salvation.”

Robertson, speaking in the third and final session of the conference, listed three reasons “God’s salvation is so great.”

■ It is a “whoever” salvation.

“It doesn’t matter where you have been or what you have done—it is for anybody and everybody who is willing

“(T)here are some who hear the warning of the gospel. but they say their life is not falling apart, that life is still OK, so they’ll just keep on keeping on.”

Larry Robertson

to believe.”

■ It is a “whatever” salvation.

“Whatever someone has done, God’s grace can cover it. Your sin is what you do—it’s not who you are.”

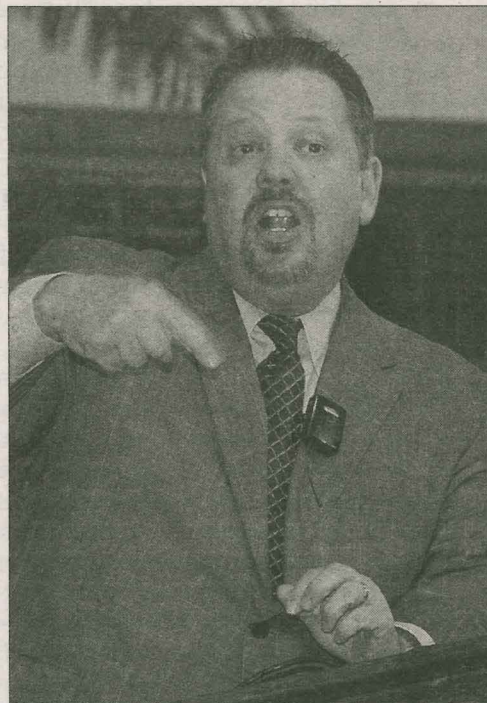
■ It is a “forever” salvation.

Quoting 1 John 5:13, which Robertson said is one of the most revealing passages in Scripture, he said salvation is not something one knows in theory, but knows “because you are experiencing it right now.”

He went on to say it is not a “however” salvation, that someone cannot be saved however they choose. “You come to God on God’s terms or you don’t come at all.”

Robertson added that salvation is “Lordship.” He said it is more than just a repetition of words in a prayer. “It is the faith and surrender inherent in those words.”

And Robertson cautioned that salvation “is in Christ alone.” He told of a church in Denmark that found itself in controversy when, while looking for a pastor, it gave a requirement that the



GOD IS GREAT Larry Robertson, senior pastor at Hilldale Baptist Church in Clarksville, Tenn., speaks at the 26th annual Western Kentucky Evangelism Conference March 4, at Southside Baptist Church in Princeton. (Photo by Chip Hutcheson)

person “must believe in God.” As further proof that some churches have abandoned Christ in their theology, he told of a church in Washington, D.C., which had a room for atheists who had no intention of believing

in God, but liked the ambiance of a room with stained-glass windows.

Also, Robertson said salvation is not a “whenever” decision. He said some people say they will wait until the last moment of life for salvation. “But many don’t have the luxury of seeing death coming. And if they do see death coming, they may say they just don’t feel the need.”

Others speaking during the conference were Adam Greenway, senior associate dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions and Evangelism and assistant professor of evangelism and applied apologetics at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Ronnie Stinson, pastor at Trace Creek Baptist Church in Mayfield for four decades.

Bill Allen of Kuttawa First Baptist Church led the music.

An offering is typically not taken during the conference, but the association and attendees combined to collect \$3,500 to aid evangelist Sam Wolfe, of Huntsville, Ala., who experienced car trouble traveling to Princeton and was unable to participate in the conference. Also, a person at the conference volunteered to repair Wolfe’s car. (WR)

Chip Hutcheson is editor of the Times Leader in Princeton.

Cumberland’s Mountain Outreach spends spring break serving in Letcher County

By Jennifer Wake-Floyd

Williamsburg—Last Saturday, the University of the Cumberlands’ Mountain Outreach team traveled to Letcher County to be examples of God’s love to a community in need of their assistance.

The 26 Cumberlands students are volunteering their time during spring break to help others. Three university staff members joined the students, along with four other adults who serve as a cooking crew for the Mountain Outreach team. They will spend nearly a week in Letcher County providing numerous acts of kindness and doing needed construction projects.

During Mountain Outreach’s trip, the students will construct two handicap access ramps, one ramp modification, and one roof repair. As with most construction projects, they can often times be unpredictable due to weather, access to materials, and time. The students plan to complete as many projects as they can before departing on March 14.

Mountain Outreach Director Marc Hensley said, “I hope that we show folks in Letcher County that someone is concerned about them, and at the same time arouse a sense of servant leadership within our students.”

This trip is the only time during the year in which the university’s Mountain Outreach program journeys outside its usual area.

The trip has a dual purpose—other than helping people in need of assistance: It is a recruiting tool that Mountain Outreach uses to discover students who might be good candidates for the summer team staff, and it gives students an opportunity to get away from the campus into a different atmosphere and see Mountain Outreach’s ministry.

The trip benefits everyone involved and helps spread God’s love to those in need of a blessing, according to Hensley. “It’s God’s grace and concern in action,” he explained. “We hope to be the hands and feet, attitudes and face of Jesus though our work.” (UC)

Mission team leaders need more than passports

Louisville—Leading a team of short-term servants to the international mission field requires more than a valid passport. That is why the Kentucky Baptist Convention is offering free training to anyone leading, or interested in leading, a trip.

Team Leader Training for International Missions will be April 12-13 at the Kentucky Baptist Building in Louisville.

Topics covered range from the practicalities of travel to developing leadership

skills, building a team and preparing spiritually to serve overseas. Participants will learn the best way to serve alongside career missionaries of the International Mission Board so the gospel work is expanded in that particular country.

The opening session is Friday at 6:30 p.m.

Register for the training at www.KyBaptist.org/tlt. For additional details, call (502) 489-3420 or 1-866-489-3420 (toll-free in Kentucky). (KBC)

Chávez death prompts prayer



LOOKING FOR A LEADER A graffiti mural of Hugo Chávez, Che Guevara and Jesus Christ is plastered on the wall of a Caracas neighborhood. Since the March 5 death of Chávez—Venezuela’s president for 14 years—the country’s political future is uncertain. (BP)

By Laura Fielding

Caracas, Venezuela—With the death of Hugo Chávez, Venezuelans face an uncertain future after his 14-year presidency. The nation’s evangelical community is urging Christians around the world to be in prayer for their country.

Chávez, 58, died March 5 after battling cancer. The country declared seven days of mourning.

Consejo Evangélico de Venezuela (The Evangelical Council of Venezuela), a Venezuelan organization of evangelicals including the National Baptist Convention of Venezuela, recently issued a statement offering condolences to the president’s family and all Venezuelans, and calling for Christians to pray for peace and unity in their nation.

Alluding to political divisions and

tensions that have plagued Venezuela during the Chávez administration, the statement encouraged Venezuelans to “live together in the midst of differences” and to “maintain a heart free of bad feelings so that we may see the hand of God acting in our country.”

Citing several verses from Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount from Matthew 5-7, the statement also challenged Venezuelans to be peacemakers—to “be a country that constructs peace and rejects confrontation.”

“The capital, Caracas, is one of the least evangelized cities in Latin America,” said a Christian worker in the Venezuela. “Christians (should) pray not only for the peace, ... but that its citizens will ... reflect upon the frailty of life and seek eternal security in ... Jesus Christ.” (BP)

Laura Fielding is an IMB writer.

Our mission statement

Developing and utilizing a mission statement is a common practice for churches, businesses, and most any type of organization. A well-written mission

Together We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

statement clearly states the organization's purpose and serves as a guidepost to help the organization remain true to that purpose.

Thus, the mission statement of the Kentucky Baptist Convention states the primary purpose of the KBC and ensures the ministry of our staff members remains true to that purpose. Our mission

statement reads, "The Kentucky Baptist Convention: Created by churches, for churches, to help churches reach Kentucky and the world for Christ."

Why has the KBC chosen to elevate the role of helping churches as its primary purpose? Scripture, the foundation of our faith and practice, holds the answers. In Ephesians 5, Paul writes, "Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless" (v 25-27).

The KBC mission statement elevates the church because Scripture elevates the church. Ephesians 5 pictures the church as the bride of Christ, as does Revelation 19 and 21. Paul tells us Jesus died for the church to redeem, wash, and present her as radiant, without stain, wrinkle, or blemish, but holy and blameless.

Our mission statement also elevates the church because living for Jesus means living within His church. New Testament Christianity cannot be divorced from the local church. From Acts 2 onward, followers of Jesus are always seen investing their lives in a local church. Paul, in the Ephesians 5 passage, uses the relationship between a husband and wife to emphasize the intimacy, not between an individual and the Lord, but between the church and the Lord. Simply put, we cannot experience true intimacy with Christ if we choose not to connect ourselves to his bride.

Finally, our mission statement elevates the church because, in eternity future, only the Church remains. Jesus taught that we are not married at the resurrection (Matthew 22:30). Yet, the resurrection is pictured as a wedding: "For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.... Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb" (Revelation 19:7-9). An earthly marriage is "until death do us part" but, for those of us who are part of the church, our marriage to Christ is forever.

The Lord Jesus plans to bless His church. My prayer is that He continues to use the KBC—one of His means—to do so.

Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

'Seminary for a Day' reenergizes ministers, revitalizes churches

About 60 church leaders attended the first-of-its-kind "Seminary for a Day" event at Mt. Washington's First Baptist Church March 9. Jointly sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Lifeway Christian Resources and the North American Mission Board, these training events are a great opportunity for Kentucky Baptist ministers to be refreshed, refocused, redirected and retooled for more effective ministry in their church settings and communities. And, for those who couldn't make it to the first Seminary for a Day, three more opportunities are right around the corner.

In the opening session, Timothy Beougher, associate dean of evangelism and church growth at Southern Seminary, set a course for experiencing revitalization in the local church, sharing "a few tentative suggestions from a fellow struggler." Church revitalization is Kingdom work, begins with personal revitalization, demands hard work and perseverance, and requires God's blessing—not man's vision, he explained.

"Christ loves all churches," Beougher affirmed, adding, "What strikes me is that Christ doesn't just love healthy, growing, dynamic churches; He also loves small, struggling churches." Beougher, who also serves as pastor of West Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville, challenged fellow ministers: "Christ loves your church, and you should love it, too." Emphasizing that Jesus is the Great Shepherd, he noted, "Christ reminds us where real value is found: It's in people; it's in His church." And, while our culture tells us, "Bigger is better," Christ says, "Faithful is better."

Be faithful to love people, Beougher urged. "Follow in the footsteps of the Great Shepherd, and be to your people a leader of hope. Believe in a God of resurrections, a God of new beginnings."

Ultimately, church revitalization is people revitalization, he observed. "We are called to love the sheep—even when they stink," he quipped, but quickly reminded everyone that "all of us stink from time to time." While there's no magic bullet or secret to church revitalization, Beougher did offer three essential, reliable keys: prayer, preaching the Word, and teaching people how to share the gospel.

Others facilitators from Southern Seminary's faculty were Michael Wilder, Timothy Paul Jones, Troy Temple and

Joseph Crider. They offered plenty of helpful insights for improving family and youth ministries, leading worship, and guiding a congregation through change.

Make plans now to attend the upcoming Seminary for a Day event in your area. "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," wrote KBC Executive Director Paul Chitwood in a recent column. Three more opportunities remain—two in March and one in April.

After Thought

By Todd Deaton



The next event takes place March 14 on the campus of Mid-Continent University in Mayfield, with faculty members Chad Davidson, Justin Carrico, Mike Baker, Don Embry and Stephen Williams leading

classes in worship leadership, discipling youth, sermon preparation, biblical interpretation and pastoral leadership.

The following weekend, the event will be held in London at Corinth Baptist Church, with faculty members from Clear Creek Baptist Bible College and the University of the Cumberlands. Teaching classes on March 23 will be John Ditty and Bill Helton of Clear Creek, who will lead sessions on the Old Testament, from the patriarchs to the prophets, and on sermon preparation. Bob Dunston and Keith Goforth, representing Cumberlands, will lead classes on New Testament times and ministering to families in crises.

The last Seminary for a Day is slated for April 13 at Greenwood Baptist Church in Bowling Green, led by Campbellsville University faculty members. Shane Garrison and Scott Wigginton will lead sessions on sermon preparation and pastoral ministry in crisis situations, while John Hurtgen and David Johnson will offer classes on preaching Jesus in the Old Testament and worship leadership. Steve Ayers, pastor of Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green, will lead a class on evangelism in the local community.

Our outstanding academic institutions are to be commended for working together to equip ministers and laypersons to better serve their churches and communities. And, every Kentucky Baptist pastor should not only take advantage of the "mini-seminaries" being conveniently offered across the state, but also make a point to encourage other staff members and church leaders to attend. They will be reenergized!

Will your kids mention your faith when talking about you?

By David Garrard

Last October, my daughter, Claire, got married to a young man named John. As I began to get to know John, I discovered that Claire had talked at length with him about me, and about our family. On several occasions, I mentioned special things that Claire and I had done together or liked to do together—traditions of a sort—and John would say, "Claire told me about that."

John's comment made me realize that these things Claire and I did together (and sometimes still do) had

become a part of Claire's life. It made me feel good to know that they were as special to her as they were to me. I also found myself wanting to ask, "What else did she say about me?" I wanted equal time!

In John 11, we find the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. In the story, we find these interesting words: "I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me (v. 42, italics mine)." The implication is that Jesus said what He said deliberately within the hearing of those around Him, and He did it with the express purpose of strengthening their belief in God.

When my kids were young, it was not

unusual for them to come downstairs in the morning and find me sitting in a chair, reading my Bible. I wasn't doing this to be seen by them, ... but I'm glad they saw me.

How would your kids finish this sentence: My dad or my mom What do they tell others about you? How do they talk about you? Beyond the fun things, like secret hugs or special songs that you might share, what attitudes, actions, commitments, words and passions characterize you? How long would they talk about you and describe you before mentioning your faith in God? Would it even come up?

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



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Box 43969
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DR. TODD DEATON
Editor

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THOMAS C. TOWNSEND
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Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

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Does the North American Mission Board still do evangelism?

By Al Gilbert

Does the North American Mission Board still do evangelism? That's a question I get from time to time, and the answer is, absolutely, "yes."

In fact, I hope that any time NAMB is mentioned that the phrase "penetrate lostness" comes to mind, because this is our mission.

Doing what God has called us to and what Southern Baptists have charged us with would be impossible without concerted evangelistic efforts throughout North America.

We long to see every believer sharing Christ. That is why we still produce dozens of resources for churches and individuals to use as they share Christ. You can find them at our God's Plan for Sharing (GPS) website: gps2020.net/resources.

Here are other ways NAMB is involved in evangelism:

- Through LoveLoud we are assisting churches in developing ministry evangelism movements.

- Disaster relief volunteers are sharing help and the hope of Christ in times of crisis.

- Chaplaincy ministries throughout United States Armed Forces, law enforcement and other institutions are extending the gospel reach on the front lines of war and life.

- Collegiate ministries are making Christ known on college campuses.

- We are currently distributing free Find it Here New Testaments to every SBC church in North America. Each includes the plan of salvation and a guide through the "Romans Road."

- Church revitalization efforts are aimed at strengthening churches so they can reach their communities with the gospel.

- In non-Southern states, NAMB pays between 80 and 95 percent of the salaries for our state Baptist conventions to have a director of evangelism for their state.

- Every state convention outside the South receives NAMB funds specifically set aside for evangelism efforts.

Since 2010, our spending on specific evangelism efforts has gone from 12 percent of total expenses to 13 percent of total expenses.

In addition to all of these efforts focused specifically on evangelism, each one of the churches we help Southern Baptists start each year is created to have an evangelistic DNA. Our very definition of a church plant hinges on the fact that it must be evangelistic.

Everything we do at NAMB is for the purpose of mobilizing Southern Baptists to penetrate lostness in North America—whether a church planter is establishing a new work in an unreached urban area or a pastor is leading his church through a GPS outreach effort. This is why NAMB exists. (BP)

Al Gilbert serves as vice president of evangelism and executive director of LoveLoud ministries for the North American Mission Board.

How can your church speak the five 'love languages' of pastors?

By Thom Rainer

With apologies to Gary Chapman for playing on his well-known "Five Love Languages" theme, I asked 24 pastors how a church member might speak to each pastor in his own love language. And though 24 persons do not constitute a massive survey, I was amazed at the consistency of the responses.

To fit the theme of five, I determined at the onset that I would only report the top five responses. To my surprise, there was an obvious break between the fifth and sixth most-frequent responses. The five love languages thus were a natural fit.

So how can you speak a love language to your pastor? Here are the pastors' top five responses in order of frequency. I offer a representative response for each.

Books. "I have a limited family budget, so I can't just go out and buy a bunch of books. But I sure do love books. One year a deacon gave me a \$200 gift card to a Christian bookstore. I was ecstatic! Now the church gives me a \$300 book allowance each year. I know it's not much for the type of books I get, but I sure am grateful."

Encouraging notes. "I treasure every word of affirmation I get. It helps to soothe the pain of the criticisms. I keep all of my notes of encouragement in a box, and I sometimes read many of them at one time just to remind myself how blessed I am. I particularly appreciate handwritten notes. I know the church member took some time to write that to me."

Time guardians. "My most encouraging church members are those that try to help me protect my time. They do everything they can to make sure I have enough time to prepare sermons and to spend time with my family. They are able to speak to other members about my time constraints in a way that I'm not able to."

Compliments about children. "There are times that I really feel sorry for my three kids ... They live in a glass house, and any wrong move they make usually gets the attention of a church member. But I have a few church members who go out of their way to tell me something good about my children. One sincere compliment about one of my kids will make my day."

Defenders. "You know, I deal with critics, and I realize that in any leadership position, you will have critics. My greatest hurt takes place when my supporters remain silent in the face of intense criticism toward me. They are more afraid of rocking the boat than speaking the truth. But I have one guy in the church who will always speak a defending word for me unless he thinks I'm wrong. Then he speaks to me privately. I could use a dozen church members like that." (BP)

Thom Rainer is president of LifeWay Christian Resources.

Lessons in short quotes

By Don Spencer

Life can be so complicated. Understanding many financial concepts can be so complicated. We all enjoy those little short quotes that cut through the complexities of life and remind us how applying some simple principles make life less complicated. The same is true in finances.



There are many quotes that provide profound insights in a few words. Here are a few:

"Every man ought to have money on his mind. No man ought to have money on his heart."

"If you give while you live, you also know where it goes."

"Money is what you'd get along beautifully without if only other people weren't so crazy about it."

"If you can't pay as you go, you're going too fast"

"More people should learn to tell their dollars where to go instead of asking where they went."

"You should have two financial goals in life: to make a little money first, and then to make a little money last."

"An investor's worst enemy is not the stock market—but oneself."

"Economists have correctly predicted nine out of the last five recessions."

"A dirty penny can hide the brightest star if it is held too close to one's eyes."

"Money can't buy love, health, happiness ... or what it did last year."

"People want economy, and they will pay any price for it."

"It's daring and challenging to be young and poor, but never old and poor. Whatever resources of good health, character, and fortitude you bring to retirement, remember to bring money."

"How to handle money: Use common sense. The simplest choices are often the best ones. Impulse is your enemy, time your friend."

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

An all too familiar prayer: 'Lord, please bless the missionaries'

By Erich Bridges

It's a familiar prayer. Too familiar, some say, to mean much.

"Lord, bless the missionaries."

Mission leaders who've heard this prayer uttered countless times sometimes criticize it as perfunctory, meaningless or ritualistic. Which missionaries?

Where? Bless them how? A quick "Lord, bless the missionaries" gives people an excuse to check praying for missions off their to-do list, like dropping a buck or two in the offering plate takes care of supporting missions.

Effective praying for missionaries and their ministries needs to be a bit more specific.

"Prayer is not simply a way to bless the strategies and methods of our missionaries," said Jerry Rankin, retired International Mission Board president. "It is the foundation of the strategy.

Missionaries go to tell the story and to reap the harvest, but if the doors are to be opened, if the barriers are to crumble, if hearts are to be softened, it's our responsibility to pray them into the Kingdom."

Wanda Lee, Woman's Missionary

Union executive director-treasurer, made a similar observation years ago: "Pray-

ing 'God bless the missionaries' once you are informed is not specific enough to open these dark places to the light of Jesus Christ. It will take informed, inspired praying to reach our world with the message of salvation."

There are many ways to become informed about the needs of missionaries. A good place to start is www.imb.org/compassionnet, IMB's main prayer network, which offers a variety of ways to pray strategically for missionaries, mission teams and people groups. You and your church might become part of one of

those teams as you discover God's heart for making disciples among all nations.

Storming the gates of darkness requires informed, committed spiritual warriors willing to pray big prayers—and "small" ones. God cares about little things, because they aren't so little in the grand scheme of His work.

"It's been another challenging week for us," a missionary wrote recently. "My husband's back suddenly started to spasm on Wednesday and by Thursday he was in real pain. Our crate arrived Thursday, which was a great encouragement. It's been a little slow trying to get everything in place by myself, but I've done pretty well and things are shaping up. Did I forget to mention that my husband also slashed his finger pretty badly Wednesday afternoon? We just washed it, put a dab of super glue on it and banded it.

"These are some of the more minor things we face," she said. "Pray for us to

persevere through all circumstances and to rejoice in all things. In this way, we honor the Lord and bring glory to His name. And that is what will draw the nations to Him."

Are back spasms and a cut finger too trivial to pray about when the world is falling apart? Not if you're the one experiencing them. Not if they prevent you from focusing on the work of God. If you're jailed, at least you can share Jesus with fellow inmates.

Lord, bless that missionary. But let's get more specific: Heal his back, if you are willing, or teach him to rejoice in weakness and trust Your grace completely. Help him and his wife to persevere day by day. Give them joy. Give them strength and energy. Help them be Your light in the dark place. And show us how we can do our part—through prayer first, but also through action. (IMB/BP)

Erich Bridges is IMB global correspondent.

Reaching the one

Continued from page 1

are just a few blocks down from government housing.

It's also a place that needs churches. Chicagoland—the 10 Illinois counties that surround the city—has one Southern Baptist church for every 31,791 people. Evangelicals make up just 10 percent of the population. The Wicker Park neighborhood itself had just four small evangelical churches for about 23,000 people before Venable's arrival.

And it was just the right place for him. The inner city had long been within his sights. He remembers serving in the Dallas inner city as a young person—and feeling a kinship to the culture, music and speed of urban life.

With a vision for starting a church that would change its city, Venable and his then fiancé, Ashley, began praying about where God might want to use them before they even married.

When the couple visited Chicago around Easter 2009, God spoke clearly to both of them. Before the two said "I do" that May, they decided Chicago would be their new home.



FRIDAY NIGHTS Community outreach is a cornerstone for Mosaic Chicago. Church planter Scott Venable (right) connected with a Wicker Park school, leading the church to start Kidz Club and Friday Night Live as alternative activities for children and students in the area. Venable is a North American Mission Board Week of Prayer missionary. (Photo by Dale Stroud/NAMB)



STORYTIME Ashley Venable leads Kidz Club at Mosaic Chicago, the church her husband pastors in the Chicago neighborhood of Wicker Park. (Photo by Dale Stroud/NAMB)

After arriving in Chicago, the Venables went first to a local school in the Wicker Park area and offered to serve. The offer first took the principal by surprise. She was accustomed to having church plants want to use their facility to host church services—not offer free help.

"We're a new church here and really small," Venable told the principal. "We want to help this school become what you want it to be. We want to invest in the community. I like your vision. I like your dream. We want to help pour into the life of these kids."

The flabbergasted principal took him up on the offer. Every day in the beginning, Venable showed up at the school to help—everything from tutoring to coaching sports to providing playground patrol.

Through its engagement with the school, Venable started a "Kidz Club" and "Friday Night Live" for children and youth on Friday evenings. Instead of roaming the streets, teens come for free food, basketball and a short Bible story. On average 50 youth and 20 elementary students attend.

And the community has taken notice. A local reporter discovered the young

church plant was cleaning the toilets of businesses near Wicker Park. Soon Mosaic Chicago became known as "the toilet-cleaning church"—a nickname welcomed by Venable because it demonstrates the community involvement and ministry he desires.

"Our measurement—instead of asking how is our church doing—is how is our city doing?" Venable said.

Yet most important, Venable wants to see people come to faith in Christ. He points to one particular local grandma as an example. Venable first met her grandson—one of the most troublesome kids in school—in the principal's office. The boy started coming to Mosaic Chicago's Friday evening Kidz Club after seeing Venable carrying a stack of pizzas out of a carryout restaurant the day of the event. Through her grandson's involvement, the grandmother began attending regularly and has even gotten involved in a small group and mission projects through the church.

"That's what we want to see in all these people's lives—to go from not knowing Jesus to fully following Jesus and carrying out the kingdom-disciple-society DNA in their lives," Venable says.

Venable realizes that kind of ministry

has only happened because of Southern Baptists' faithful giving through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions.

"During these first three years of our church plant, Annie has been the biggest part of our support," Venable says. "It's allowed me to live here and support my family. Without NAMB and Annie, we wouldn't be here."

The annual Week of Prayer for North

American Missions, March 3-10, 2013, and the AAEO, provide support for Venable and other missionaries like him who serve on behalf of Southern Baptists in North America. With a goal of \$70 million, this year's offering theme is "Whatever It Takes—Reaching the One." (NAMB)

Tobin Perry writes for the North American Mission Board.

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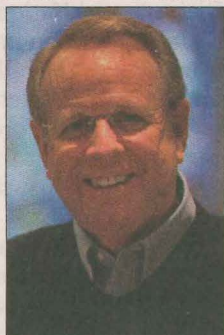
Elliff, on missions urgency, poses 5 questions for Southern Baptists

By Don Graham

Las Vegas—Call down God's fire or shuffle into irrelevancy—that's the warning Tom Elliff gave trustees of the International Mission Board during their February meeting in Las Vegas.

Speaking from 1 Kings 18 (Elijah and the prophets of Baal), IMB's president challenged trustees to ask God to show His power among the nations much like He did when Elijah beckoned fire from heaven, turning Israel's heart back to the Lord.

Elliff outlined five questions trustees must ask themselves if they are serious about fulfilling the Great Commission. But the questions aren't just for trustees or missionaries, Elliff added. They are for every Southern Baptist.



Tom Elliff

Elliff's five questions:

■ If not now, when?

Southern Baptists can no longer afford to delay, Elliff told trustees. They must choose now to live their lives in a way that demonstrates total devotion to the plan and purpose that Christ has for every believer—specifically, making disciples of every tribe, tongue and nation.

■ If not me, then who?

"We live in a generation that tries to shuck responsibility," Elliff said. "We don't want to be responsible for anything. But we are responsible, whether we think so or not. ...

Elijah thought he was the only prophet left in Israel, and even though he wasn't, what strikes me is that he was willing to do something about it."

■ If not here, then where?

Noting IMB's role as the collaborative point for Southern Baptists' international missions efforts, Elliff urged greater support from SBC churches. He said it is "appalling" to think that Southern Baptists are not sending out thousands more missionaries, but emphasized that IMB can deploy only the number of people Southern Baptists are willing to support.

■ If not for God, then why?

Elliff asked Southern Baptists to question their motives for missions, evangelism and church planting, cautioning against false pride and self-serving interests. "If we don't do everything we do for God, ... then why do we have a heart for the lost? It's because He has a heart for the lost."

■ If not by prayer, then how?

Touching on the essential role of prayer in calling down God's power, Elliff emphasized the role of IMB's

"School of Prayer for the Nations." Though still under development, Elliff envisions the school as a tool to help train and focus Southern Baptists' prayer for global gospel advance.

Elliff announced plans for five key commitments he's going to ask of every Southern Baptist in June at the SBC's annual meeting in Houston. The challenge will include daily, weekly, monthly and annual commitments from both individuals and churches, including prayer, giving and connecting with Southern Baptist missionaries overseas—as well as going to the mission field.

"I believe that if you and I get honest, the fire of God will fall on us," Elliff said. "(If not), we'll shuffle off down a long, dark hallway of irrelevancy and become just one more of those old denominations people talk about." (BP)

Don Graham is an IMB senior writer.

Kits for kids VBS and church groups collect 30,000 kits for children around the world

By Susie Rain

Southeast Asia—Khin San* can't wait to rip into the Kits for Kids package some International Mission Board missionaries brought to their migrant camp in Southeast Asia.

He dumps the bag onto his lap. Notebooks, pens, pencils, a ruler, scissors and everything else a child needs for school tumbles out.

"Wow!" Khin exclaims. He holds up three notebooks and a fist full of pencils and asks IMB missionary Pamela O'Dell, if she's sure everything is for him. "It's so much," he says. "I can pick just one."

O'Dell's heart catches in her throat.

She knows this is more than migrant children like Khin have ever had in their lifetime. Their families fled their home country to escape violent conflicts, and they now survive by working low-paying jobs no one wants. There is no way they could afford even a few items in the packet.

"It's all yours," O'Dell says. "Some

children in America sent these gifts just for you."

Khin looked at her surprised, then bolted out the door to tell anyone the good news.

"It's an answer to prayer," O'Dell explains.

Just a few weeks earlier, O'Dell, from Mississippi, sat with other team members planning parties in migrant camps. For years, this ministry plugged along at a slow pace as workers came and went, migrating from one place to another. This year, things changed as a few of the migrants embraced Jesus Christ and left their Buddhist beliefs.

The ministry team wanted to celebrate this milestone by doing something special, but had no budget for gifts. So, they wrote down a "wish list" of what they wanted to give—notebooks, pencils and pens—and prayed.

Even though the total cost for one of the packets is just \$10 in the U.S., that's still far beyond the means of many children living in poverty in Southeast Asia



ALL FOR ME? Bourey Win* (right) and Khin San* rummage through new school supplies sent through a "Kits for Kids" project organized by the Baptist Global Response relief organization. BGR challenged Southern Baptist churches to aid in the children's education. (Photo by Susie Rain/BP)

and elsewhere around the world. Money for educational needs is often last priority in migrant families' fight for survival. So, Baptist Global Response challenged Southern Baptists to help equip children with tools needed for an education. Churches and VBS ministries put together 30,000 of the school supply kits and shipped them to 30 countries.

O'Dell said that the packets benefit

more than just the children. She motions to 40 adults sitting on mats and listening to a Bible story.

"You might think you gave to a child, but you really gave to an entire village. By giving this gift, we can share Christ," O'Dell said. (BP)

*Names changed. Susie Rain is a writer living in Southeast Asia.

Are you ready to go the distance?

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Highview Baptist Church, East Campus, Louisville
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HOPE

New Testaments

Continued from page 1
conversations. On the back of each New Testament, those looking for spiritual help are given the findithere.com Web address and a phone number where they can find spiritual counseling. The English New Testaments being shipped to churches use the Holman Christian Standard version of the text. Spanish-speaking churches will receive a Spanish-language translation.

"As we encourage every believer to share, we see this as a tool they can use to talk to people about Christ," said Al Gilbert, NAMB's vice president for evangelism. "Then the person hearing about Christ will have the opportunity to find out more on findithere.com."

Gilbert says the Find It Here campaign undergirds the God's Plan for Sharing: GPS evangelistic initiative.

Churches can purchase additional cases of New Testaments at gps2020.net. (NAMB)

Not just another Sunday

A church visit by the OBI choir yields a life changed for Christ

It seemed like just another Sunday outing for our choir. There was the usual bus trip to a supporting church, donning choir robes and vocal warm-ups. Then came the worship service followed by the gathering of friendly people, an official pastoral welcome, a few announcements, an opening prayer, a hymn, the morning offering, and finally the OBI-led portion of the worship.

As usual, I expressed our thanks for the opportunity to be with the church and stressed we were gathered together to worship the God who is at work, changing the lives of students at OBI. After reading a Psalm celebrating God's greatness and encouraging the congregation to join in the choir-led worship, I sat down to also worship under the leadership of our talented musicians.

As is their habit, the choir beautifully sang the praises of our creating and saving God with the contemporary praise song, "How Great Is Our God," incorporating multiple OBI languages. This was followed by the lively, anthem-like "Sing Praise to the Lord Above," then the contemporary, echoing, worship song "You Are Holy," and a simple-yet-profound chorus, "The Gospel Song," with the words, "Holy God in love became / Perfect Man to bear my shame / On the cross He took my sin / By His death I enter in." As usual, the more-experienced ensemble closed this musical portion of the service with a gentle, close-harmony, sometimes-a cappella presentation of "Give Me Jesus."

Next, four of our students presented their usual skit, consisting of an

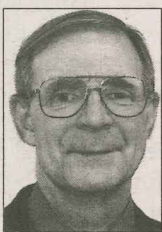
imaginary conversation featuring an international student of no religious identity, an academically-struggling student from Louisville, an Oneida-community student whose parents had also attended OBI, and an out-of-state, non-Baptist student whose parents were seeking a safer place for their child's education. The skit's message? We have a culturally- and religiously-diverse student body at OBI where all are welcomed and all are told about Jesus.

I then proceeded, as usual, to preach about the God who is changing teenagers' lives at OBI. Starting from Jesus' parable of the wedding feast in Matthew 22 in which the King seeks out, welcomes, and provides appropriate clothing for the good and the bad, just as they are. I pointed out how we seek to do the same at OBI. I further noted that our Savior's story also points out that to brush aside or take lightly the invitation of the King will ultimately have dire consequences, and then gave a gospel invitation to salvation, after which the choir and I sang the modernized version of "Just As I Am."

As we were singing "I come broken to be mended / I come wounded to be healed / I come desperate to be rescued / I come empty to be filled / I come guilty to be pardoned / By the blood of Christ the Lamb / And I'm welcomed with open arms, praise God / Just as I am," a man from the congregation came forward to accept Christ—and nothing was "usual" anymore! Our great God is changing lives, at OBI and elsewhere. He can change yours.

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

This is Oneida



Paul Davidson

A different route

Graduate's call different than he first imagined

"I can't believe I have made it this far!" said Ian Watkins, a soon-to-be graduate.

We hear those words quite frequently from our students as the reality of graduation gets closer for them.

"God has really blessed me in my life," Watkins said. "I did not grow up in a Christian home. We were only in church around Christmas and Easter. When I was 21, I heard the gospel and cried out to God to save me. He made a radical change in my life that day. He has really blessed me to be able to attend Clear Creek to prepare for a call to ministry."

"My degree will be in missions and evangelism," Watkins continued. "Throughout my time here as a student I have been to Japan twice, Africa, and Haiti. When I first came to Clear Creek, I thought the Lord was calling me to go to Japan full time as a missionary. That's why I have been there multiple times. I even lived there as a child. I really have a heart for the people there. I just wanted to be faithful in going to

share the gospel with them."

"Over time, I came to realize that God was not calling me to Japan so much as a full time missionary," Watkins said. "I know God is calling me to a ministry of teaching to use as a platform for church planting all over the United States and the world. This will allow me to be a Christian witness wherever God places me to serve Him, whether it's in a high school or college. Missions is still a part of my heart; the fiber of my being. I'm not giving that up, it's just taking a different route than I imagined."

"I am so thankful for my time here at Clear Creek," Watkins said. "It has been amazing to see all the times God has faithfully provided for our needs while we have been here. God has really taught me and my family to live by faith while we have been here. I have learned that God will stretch you and make you totally dependent on Him so that you have to live by faith and in obedience to Him."

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

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

New House bill targets abortion mandate

Washington—A House bill with 50 co-sponsors was introduced March 5 that would exempt organizations and businesses from the Obama administration's abortion/contraceptive mandate.

Sponsored by Republican Reps. Diane Black (Tenn.), Jeff Fortenberry (Neb.) and John Fleming (La.), the bill would provide a full exemption to any organization or business whose religious beliefs are violated by the mandate, which requires organizations and businesses to carry employee insurance covering abortion-causing drugs and contraceptives. The abortion-causing drugs come under brand names such as Plan B and ella.

"Non-compliance to the administration's mandate is forcing many Americans to choose between respecting their religious convictions or following the law," Black said.

At least 218 votes are needed to pass a bill in the 435-member House. But even if it passes there, it faces an uphill climb in the Democrat-controlled Senate and a likely veto by President Obama.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, said "we would have some Democratic senators who would support the bill if it got on the floor" of the Senate.

Land supports bill

"This is a question of conscience, not contraception. It's a question of religious freedom, not reproductive freedom," Land said during a press conference at the National Religious Broadcasters convention in Nashville March 5.

The bill—the Health Care Conscience Rights Act—also would provide conscience protection to individuals and health care entities that refuse to provide, pay for or refer patients to abortion doctors.

The mandate was announced by the Department of Health and Human Services in August 2011 as part of the new health care law. Although the Supreme Court upheld the health care law last June, the justices' ruling did not deal with the religious liberty issues surrounding the mandate.

A total of 48 lawsuits have been filed against the mandate, and so far, opponents of the mandate are winning. Of the 17 court rulings involving businesses, opponents have won 12 times and lost five. The latest victory by opponents of the mandate came Feb. 28 when a federal court granted a temporary injunction to a Missouri-based plumbing products manufacturer, protecting the business from the mandate. (BP)

NATIONAL NOTES

Arkansas enacts abortion ban

The Arkansas legislature has overridden a veto to enact the earliest ban on abortion in the United States.

The state House of Representatives voted 56-33 March 6 to override Gov. Mike Beebe's veto, thereby providing final approval to a measure that bans abortion of unborn babies whose heartbeat has been detected by ultrasound at 12 weeks or later. The Senate had voted 20-14 the day before for the veto override, which requires only a majority in Arkansas.

The law marks a new front in the effort by states to regulate abortion, and it remains to be seen if it will survive a challenge in court.

Before Arkansas' heartbeat law, a ban at 18 to 20 weeks after fertilization had been the earliest enacted by a state. A federal judge in Idaho struck down that state's 20-week prohibition—which is based on evidence a baby in the womb experiences pain by that point—on the same day Arkansas enacted its 12-week ban.

The ACLU of Arkansas quickly promised a lawsuit asking a federal court to strike down the heartbeat ban.

Methodists oppose BSA change

The General Commission on United Methodist Men has joined conservative voices urging the Boys Scouts of America not to open its membership to homosexuals.

GCUMM has sent a letter to Wayne Brock, Boy Scouts of America chief Scout executive, urging the group not to implement proposals being considered at the BSA's annual meeting in May to open Scouting leadership and membership to homosexuals. The Methodist organization also is calling on Scouting to

revitalize its relationship with the faith community.

"More time is needed for the 50 United Methodist Annual Conferences and the thousands of United Methodist churches to research in a thoughtful and prayerful manner exactly what this change might mean," the letter reads. "We would further ask that this be the beginning of a new relationship between BSA and the faith communities that provide over 70 percent of the units and 62 percent of the membership in BSA."

More than 40 other faith denominations and conservative groups have voiced similar concerns. The SBC Executive Committee in February adopted a resolution urging BSA leadership to stand on moral ground and reject the change to the BSA's admission policy.

Ministers tax guide available

The 2013 edition of the ministers' annual tax guide from GuideStone Financial Resources is now available.

The Tax Return Preparation and Federal Reporting Guide provides both active and retired ministers step-by-step help in understanding the latest tax laws along with sample tax forms to assist in preparing 2012 federal tax returns. The tax guide also includes a special section detailing federal reporting requirements for churches.

The material is edited by GuideStone to ensure that it addresses, in detail, tax issues directly affecting Southern Baptist pastors.

The guide can be obtained in PDF format at GuideStone.org/TaxGuide. GuideStone participants can order a free printed copy by calling 1-888-984-8433.

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Bible Crosswords

By Evelyn Boyington

Across

- 1 Collected prose or poetry of a particular time per. (abbr.)
- 4 TV newsman Seavareid
- 8 Egg ____ soup, Chinese classic
- 12 Epoch
- 13 Beginning of refreshing brand name that "spells" summer to kids
- 14 Land measure
- 15 Ancient musical instrument, mentioned in Isaiah 5:12
- 17 "The Lord God will come with a strong hand, and his ____ shall rule" (Isaiah 40:10)
- 19 Where Sherman marched (abbr.)
- 20 "There is a ____ here, which hath five barley loaves" (John 6:9)
- 21 El ____
- 22 Deface
- 23 "Children, ____ your parents in the Lord" (Eph. 6:1)
- 25 Sports venue
- 26 Prohibits
- 27 "Cast the ____ on the right side of the ship" (John 21:6)
- 28 Total
- 29 ____ Auerbach, famed NBA coach
- 30 Masculine nickname
- 31 "Praise him with the ____ and dance" (Psalm 150:4)
- 33 Continent (abbr.)
- 35 "Take, ____: this is my body" (1 Cor. 11:24)
- 36 Fare poorly
- 37 Possessed
- 38 "I will sing a new ____ unto thee, O God" (Ps. 144:9)
- 40 Popular street name
- 41 "All things were ____ by him" (John 1:3)
- 42 "I am too ____ to have an husband" (Ruth 1:12)
- 43 "The word ____ God" (John 1:1)
- 44 Chum
- 45 Atlantic state (abbr.)
- 46 Broadcast
- 47 "One jot or one ____ shall in no wise pass from the law" (Matthew 5:18)
- 50 At any time
- 52 "For ____ Christ pleased not himself" (Rom. 15:3)
- 54 Corn serving
- 55 "We shall all stand before the judgment ____ of Christ" (Romans 14:10)
- 56 Feast fashionably
- 57 Hair to ____ for (salon slogan)

- 8 Hoover, for one
- 9 Cola brand name
- 10 Liver or lung, for example
- 11 Bosc and Anjou
- 16 Oz scarecrow Bolger
- 18 Byway (abbr.)
- 21 "They lifted up their voice with the trumpets and ____" (2 Chronicles 5:13)
- 22 Insane
- 23 United
- 24 "Rise, take up thy ____, and walk" (John 5:8)
- 25 Adhesive
- 26 ____ canto, singing style
- 28 Make a lap
- 29 Kin (abbr.)
- 31 Game where someone is "it"
- 32 "Over the ____" (goal of hoopsters)
- 33 "When ye fast, be not ... of a ____ countenance" (Matt. 6:16)
- 34 Fruit drink
- 35 "The ____ of all things is at hand" (1 Peter 4:7)
- 37 Brought to a stop
- 38 "There was a certain beggar named Lazarus ... full of ____" (Luke 16:20)
- 39 Item found in groves
- 40 Dog-____ (like the pages of a book)
- 41 Tatami, commonly
- 43 Midwest state (abbr.)
- 44 Yearn for
- 46 "____ thou the Christ?" (Luke 22:67)
- 47 Perfect score, to some
- 48 "I will both ____ me down in peace, and sleep" (Ps. 4:8)
- 49 Poetic contraction
- 51 Apiece (abbr.)
- 53 Caribbean island group (abbr.)

Last puzzle's solution

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|----|---|----|----|----|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | | |
| S | U | P | | H | O | L | E | S | | S | O | N | |
| T | R | A | | E | V | E | N | T | | T | W | O | |
| E | N | T | E | R | E | D | | A | M | E | N | D | |
| | | | 19 | | | | 20 | | | | | | |
| S | H | E | R | D | | J | O | U | R | N | E | Y | |
| H | E | N | S | | H | O | O | E | Y | | R | E | |
| E | A | T | | C | O | I | N | S | | E | R | A | |
| M | R | | 33 | | V | A | I | N | | A | V | E | R |
| | | 35 | 36 | | | | 37 | | | | | | |
| | | T | H | I | R | S | T | | S | H | E | D | S |
| | | | 38 | | | | 39 | | | | | | |
| | | | A | B | E | T | | B | E | A | N | | |
| 40 | 41 | | | | 42 | | | | 43 | 44 | | | |
| T | H | I | E | F | | G | R | A | Z | I | N | G | |
| 45 | | | 46 | 47 | | | | | 48 | | | | |
| O | A | R | | U | R | I | E | L | | N | E | E | |
| 49 | | | 50 | | | | | | 51 | | | | |
| P | L | Y | | L | A | N | D | S | | G | O | T | |

Down

- 1 Tennis call
- 2 Gershwin
- 3 Pill, perhaps
- 4 Got by, barely, with "out"
- 5 Go bad
- 6 Vowel duo
- 7 ____ check

Without Mission:Dignity couple would be 'IN BIG TROUBLE'

TRULY GRATEFUL Dewey Seale, a retired minister of music, and his wife, Eloise. (BP photo)

By Judy Bates

Dallas—Dewey Seale, with his wife Eloise at his side, served as a minister of music for 50 years during a time when full time music positions were scarce.

While salaries for most pastors were low in the mid-20th century, they were even lower for full time music ministers. Yet Dewey never failed to answer God's call.

"I said, 'Lord, if You will lead me, I will go anywhere You want me to go,'" he recounted.

Like many others called into God's service, it was not a desire to stop working that caused Dewey to retire, but a health problem that made it too difficult to continue serving full time.

For the first few years of his retirement, Dewey qualified for a small disability benefit through his retirement plan with GuideStone Financial Resources. But when that benefit ended, Dewey and Eloise were looking at subsisting on Social Security and a small amount of savings.

While talking to a GuideStone customer service representative shortly before his disability benefit ended, Dewey learned about the Mission:Dignity ministry.

The representative sent him an application, and trustees for the ministry approved his application a short time later. Later that month, Dewey received his first \$265 monthly check from Mission:Dignity.

Because of his many years of service in Louisiana, he also began receiving a check for \$65 provided by the Louisiana Shepherd's Fund that is administered by the staff at Mission:Dignity.

Southern Baptists who know a retired minister or minister's widow in need can refer them to the Mission:Dignity program. Contact Mission:Dignity by calling GuideStone toll-free at 1-888-98-GUIDE (1-888-984-8433) for more information.

"The help that we get from Mission:Dignity is so important to us. I don't know how we'd make it," Dewey said. "Without your financial help, we would be in big trouble. We sincerely know the Lord made your service possible for our existence. Please let any and all donors know we praise the Lord for their support." (GS/BP)

Judy Bates is department head in financial assistance at GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. For more information, go to Mission:Dignity on the Web.

Guided by the 'triangle'

Celebrating the past and pressing on toward the future

Each time I am at Cedarmore or Jonathan Creek, I see tangible items that remind me of the history of these properties.

For over 50 years, countless people have contributed in numerous ways to the development of these properties and respective programs that in combination were used for eternal purposes. If the walls could talk in some of these buildings, we would hear many stories of how God has used the temporary settings of camps and retreats to forever change thousands of lives.

The tension between remembering the past and pressing on to the future is healthy for us to consider each day. We are reminded that, regardless of buildings and programs, certain aspects of this ministry must remain constant.

We use the symbol of a triangle to teach our staff of our purposes while serving with Crossings. The triangle has three sides and corresponds to three truths. These truths are to:

- Love God,
- Love people, and
- Be a servant.

These are timeless because they are based from biblical truths.

Each year, we evaluate our efforts basically day by day. We look at everything we do—the programs we develop, the buildings we build, and the staff we hire—with this triangle in mind. It serves as our compass in decisions, and

it gives us a specific set of parameters for how we move forward.

Our history is something for which we are thankful. Without the sacrifices of those who have gone before, we would not be here. Our history is full of the stories of lives that have been changed.

As we look to the future, no doubt people will come and go, buildings will literally rise and fall, programs will begin and

end, but I pray that the core truths represented by the triangle will last and guide all that takes place in the ministry we call "Crossings." The three truths of the triangle are timeless and applicable to us all as they provide clarity of our purpose in life.

Even at home raising six children, they see and know what the triangle stands for—perhaps you may use it as well?

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

Crossings Ministries



David Melber



March

- 14 Seminary for a Day, Mid-Continent University, Mayfield.
- 15 Servant Leadership: A Night of Encouragement for Bivocational Pastors, Southside Baptist Church, Bowling Green.
- 16 RAMCON 2013, Elkton Baptist Church, Elkton.
- 16 Vacation Bible School Clinic, First Baptist Church, Richmond.
- 19 Get Acquainted Day, KBC Building, Louisville.
- 21 Pastor/Staff Forum, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.
- 23 Seminary for a Day, Corinth Baptist Church, London.
- 23 Affinity Evangelism, Grapevine Baptist Church, Madisonville.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **ARLINGTON**—Shiloh Church recently ordained **David Willis** as deacon. Willis is the grandson of former pastor **Lester Willis**. **Gaylon Bruer** is pastor.

■ **BARDSTOWN**—Wickland Church recently called **Dennis King** as pastor.

■ **BREMEN**—Mount Pisgah Church will hold a revival March 17, 11 a.m., and March 18-20, 7 p.m., with **Bob Morrison** as guest speaker. The **Muhlenberg County Association Community Choir** will be in concert March 19. For more information, call (270) 525-6120. **Bill Burszytnski** is pastor.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Campbellsville Church will host the Hope Pregnancy Center baby shower March 17, 6 p.m.

■ **DEXTER**—Dexter Church will host Blood River Association's Children's Pinewood Derby March 16, 9 a.m. **David Little** is pastor.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Severns Valley Church will present a children's Easter musical, "Happy Day," March 20, 6 p.m. **Bill Langley** is pastor.

■ **FREDONIA**—White Sulphur Church recently held an ordina-

tion service for **Shane Board**.

■ **HIEDRICK**—Highland Park Church will host a pastors conference March 16, 8 a.m., with Knox Association.

■ **HOPKINSVILLE**—First Church will host "Live Different" lead by Alpha Alternative March 15-16. The youth series discusses God's plan for purity.

■ **KUTTAWA**—Suwanee Furnace Church recently called **Shane Board** as pastor.

■ **LONDON**—Providence Church will host **Billy Hodges** in concert March 17. For more information call (606) 864-7063. **David Thompson** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Melbourne Heights will host a reception in honor of **Bill Rogers'** 90th birthday April 7, 2 p.m. In lieu of gifts, send donations to The William H. Rogers Scholarship Fund, Clear Creek College, 300 Pine Creek Rd., Pineville, KY 40977. **Adam Schell** is pastor.

Parkland Church will hold a GA lock-in March 15, 7 p.m. **Tom Curry** is pastor.

■ **MORGANFIELD**—First Church will hold Spring Fling Banquet with members' versions of "America's

Funniest Home Videos" and "America's Got Talent" March 15, 6 p.m.

■ **MURRAY**—First Church will host speakers **George and Cathy Chinn** with Mississippi River Ministries March 17, 4 p.m. **Sam Rainer** is pastor.

■ **OWENSBORO**—First Church will host **Kentucky Youth Chorale** in concert March 17, 6 p.m. For more information call (270) 683-3505. **Paul Strahan** is pastor.

■ **POWDERLY**—Woodson Church will host Muhlenburg County Association VBS training March 16, 10 a.m. Lunch will be provided. **Travis Fox** is pastor.

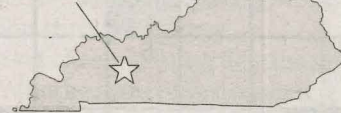
■ **PRINCETON**—Eddy Creek Church recently celebrated its 170th anniversary with **Ken Cummins** as guest speaker. Music was provided by **The Hamptons**. **Leslie Joyce** is pastor.

■ **RICHMOND**—First Church will host Youth Connect 2013 March 10-13, 7 p.m., with **Daniel Lucas**, pastor of Crosspoint Church, Morehead, as guest speaker and **The Birdsongs** in concert. For more information, call (859) 623-4028. **Bill Fort** is pastor.

■ **RUSSELLVILLE**—First Church will

Spotlight on ...

Greenville



Second Church will host a youth event called, "3:16," March 16, featuring **Fireflight** in concert. For more information, call (270) 338-6160. **Ray England** is pastor.

hold a revival March 17, 10:45 a.m., and March 18-20, 7 p.m., with **Jason Williams** a guest speaker. **Buddy Crabtree** is pastor.

■ **SOMERSET**—First Church will host a women's DIY Spring Projects night March 18, 6 p.m., with a garden craft, entertaining and table décor tips, and refreshments. **French Harmon** is pastor.

■ **WEST PADUCAH**—Mount Zion Church will hold a revival March 17, 10 a.m. & 6 p.m., and March 18-20, 6:30 p.m. **Tim Smith** is pastor.

■ **WINSTON**—Providence Church will hold a revival March 17, 11 a.m., and March 18-19, 7 p.m., with **Don Whitt** as guest speaker. **Bill Meece** is pastor.

West Kentucky pastor and WWII veteran, Guy Deane, dies

Owensboro—Guy Deane, a native of Owensboro who served as pastor of numerous Kentucky Baptist churches, with several Kentucky Baptist associations, and fought during World War II, passed away Feb. 28. He was 88.

Deane served in the ministry for more than 60 years. Among the churches he led were Seventh Street Mission (now Ridgewood Baptist

Church, Owensboro), First Baptist Church of Martin, Campton Baptist Church (Campton), First Baptist Church of Jenkins, Buck Creek Baptist Church, Fordsville Baptist Church (Fordsville), Emmanuel Baptist Church (Marion), and Central Baptist Church (Hawesville).

He also served for five years on the Kentucky Baptist Convention Committee on Nominations, and was an



Guy Deane

officer for several associations.

During WWII, Deane was a second class petty officer in the U.S. Navy and took part in the invasion of France.

Deane attended Georgetown College, and was past president of the Kentucky Alumni Association for Cumberland College.

Deane is survived by his wife, Eulah May Wells, two children, six grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Former Recorder staffer dies

Owensboro—Florence Thornton, a former bookkeeper for the Western Recorder and native of Jefferson County, died March 4. She was 101.

Thornton retired from the state Baptist newspaper Dec. 31, 1976, after 13 years of service, and was a member of Bellevue Baptist Church in Owensboro.

She is survived by her son, Donald Thornton. Thornton was preceded in death by her husband, Earl Thonton, in 1993.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR RENT: Condos for rent in Destin, Fla.; two bedrooms, two bathrooms, sofa bed; lbrammer@charter.net, (423) 309-4422.

FOR SALE: Peavey sound mixer for sale. Purchased new and was too much for what we needed. \$1,500. Call (270) 783-1229.

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: Part-time music minister needed in Bagdad, Ky.; musician & leader for contemporary & traditional worship music; will oversee church music activities; piano/choral skills & worship leader experience a plus. Send resumé to veronicab22@shelbywireless.net.

SEEKING: A full-time minister of worship and students or a part-time minister of worship. Candidate should have a bachelor's degree or be working toward one. Send resumé to First Baptist Church of Mason, 735 Reading Road, Mason, OH 45040, Attn: Personnel Committee, or send via email to pastorbill@bcmason.com.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 321, West Liberty, Ky. 41472, is seeking a full-time or bivocational pastor. Send resumé to address above.

SEEKING: Congregation seeking a pastor for a full-time position; strong in church planning; mission minded; evangelistic; community oriented. Located in Paris, Ky. For more information, visit www.cbcparis.org. Please email resumé to searchcbc@bellsouth.net or mail to Pastor Search, 107 Greystone Court, Paris, KY 40361.

SEEKING: Cedar Creek Baptist Church, Louisville, is seeking to fill the position of a part-time worship leader who is also capable of leading a choir and small band. Church musical style is "blended." Experience preferred. Send resumé to: CCBC, 7709 Bardstown Rd., Louisville, KY 40291, Attn: Music Search Committee, or email: cedarcreekbc@gmail.com. Deadline for submission is April 5.

SEEKING: DeHaven Baptist Church in La Grange, Ky., is seeking a full-time pastor. Interested applicants are invited to submit resumé either by email to: dehavensearch@gmail.com, or by regular mail to: Pastor Search Committee, c/o David Fendley, 3100 Rock Creek Dr., Louisville, KY 40207.

SEEKING: Forest Park Baptist Church is seeking a pastor. Please submit resumé to Forest Park Baptist Church, 520 Old Morgantown Rd., Bowling Green, KY 42101, Attn: Search Committee. We will accept resumé until April 30.

SEEKING: Tunnel Hill Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, Ky., seeks an experienced pastor who ascribes to the Southern Baptist Faith and Message. Resumé must be postmarked by April 25, 2013. Pastor Search Committee, 799 Franklin Street, Radcliff, KY 40160.

SEEKING: Children's Ministry director for work with ages 4 to fifth grade in children's church, Sunday School and Wednesday evening services. Experience with leading VBS, recruiting volunteers and budget. Must be a professed Christian and have experience working in a church setting. 20 hours/wk. Send resumé to DeHaven Baptist Church, P.O. Box 349, La Grange, KY 40031.

SEEKING: Springfield Baptist Church in Springfield, Tenn. is seeking a full-time leader of music and worship. The worship leader will be responsible for planning and conducting worship services, directing various choirs, praise team and instrumentalists. Our worship services are a blend of traditional and contemporary music. A bachelor's degree in music is required. A master's degree is preferred. Please send all resumé to Springfield Baptist Church, Music Search Committee, 400 North Main Street, Springfield, TN 37172. Please include a recent worship service DVD. Emails may be sent to: bethbohler05@gmail.com.

To place an advertisement:

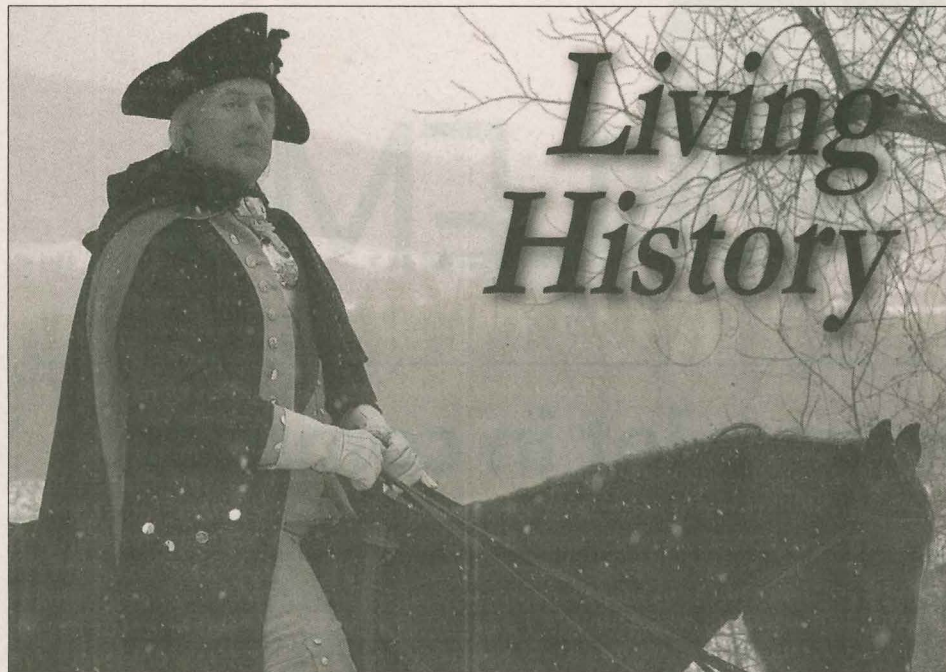
Rates are available upon request. Call (502) 489-3428; or visit WesternRecorder.org. Claims made by advertisers are not necessarily those of the Western Recorder's staff or directors.



SEEKING: Sunnyside Baptist Church in Shepherdsville is seeking a part-time music and youth minister. Responsibilities include outreach and program development for youth, expansion of music ministry, and transition to blended style of worship. Time requirement: 10-15 hours/week. Compensation: House (new), all utilities, plus stipend. Email resumé to Pastor Bruce Truman at bruce@sunnysidebc.com, or send to: 2722 Knob Creek Rd., Shepherdsville, KY 40165.

SEEKING: Bivocational children/youth minister for Pigeon Fork Baptist Church, 5090 Hickory Ridge Rd., Waddy, KY 40076. No specific education required. Email resumé to hollylyn.gordon@gmail.com.

SEEKING: Blue River Island Baptist Church, Battletown, Ky., seeks God's man to serve as pastor. Send testimony, resumé and place you are currently serving to office@OneChurchAllPeople.org.



Texas pastor Mark Collins' likeness to George Washington has gotten him speaking engagements, movie roles, and a worldwide platform to share the gospel through the story of the president's Christian faith.

George Washington is Texas pastor's alter ego

By David Roach

Yorktown, Texas—When he agreed to play the part of George Washington for a July 4 worship service 11 years ago, Texas pastor Mark Collins didn't know that his life was about to change forever.

He looked so much like Washington during his inaugural portrayal of America's first president at First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs, where he was then associate pastor, that it catapulted him into a career of Washington reenactments.

Today his resume includes appearances in the movie "National Treasure 2," a 13-part History Channel miniseries and other television and movie roles. He has also performed live at the National

Cathedral, Mt. Vernon, Colonial Williamsburg, the Republican National Convention and many political gatherings.

Best of all, he has seen hundreds of people worldwide come to faith in Christ as a result of his portrayals of Washington's faith.

"It's been such an amazing thing to see how the Lord has used it," Collins said. "He's allowed me to get into doors that as Pastor Mark Collins I could never get open."

First Baptist Church of Yorktown, where Collins is pastor, regards the Washington portrayals as a ministry and allows its pastor up to 12 Sundays away each year. The results of the ministry can only be attributed to God.

While speaking at Nassau Bay Baptist Church in the Houston area, Collins met two men from Kenya. They told him their nation was writing a new constitution and needed to hear his presentation about the U.S. Constitution's basis in Judeo-Christian values.

Not realizing the men were serious about his coming, Collins casually agreed to visit Africa.

Two months later, Collins portrayed Washington to Kenyan and Zimbabwean government leaders. Zimbabwe's Council of Education was so impressed with his presentation that it asked for copies of the "New England Primer"—a Bible-based reading textbook used in colonial America—and planned to use material from it in Zimbabwean schools.

While in Africa, Collins spoke as Washington in evangelistic settings and

showed the Jesus Film. As a result, hundreds came to faith in Christ during the three-week trip.

"They wanted George Washington," Collins said. "I brought George with us, but the churches wanted George."

His presentations have borne evangelistic fruit in America, too. After a presentation at Roma High School, a student asked Collins why he held Washington's faith in such esteem. Collins directed her to a local pastor, who led her to Christ. Collins explicitly brings the gospel into his presentation at churches and has seen many people saved.

"National Treasure 2" was perhaps Collins' most prominent Washington reenactment. He appeared in only one scene, as a fictional Washington reenactor at a U.S. president's birthday party. But the role opened many doors.

Collins has also portrayed Washington at Gov. Rick Perry's Prayer Breakfast, the Focus on the Family National Day of Prayer chapel service in Colorado, a Washington celebration in Mexico and in programs on the Discovery Channel and Spike TV.

Through it all, Collins says his mission is to teach people how important Christianity was to Washington and call them to a similar faith in Jesus.

"It's wonderful to see God use what you would think would be more of a political message," Collins said. (BP)

David Roach is a writer in Shelbyville, Ky. This article first appeared in the Southern Baptist TEXAN. More on Collins can be found at www.beholdapalehorse.tv.

The Constitution and its benefits to Christians in America

By Stephen Douglas Wilson

The United States Constitution, which protects our liberties as Christians, rarely mentions faith or faith issues.

In fact, the 224-year-old document only acknowledges the Deity once—in Article VII, when the original Constitutional Convention gave the unanimous consent of the states present on the date—"the seventeenth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty seven."

There are two other direct faith allusions in the original document of 1787 and the subsequent Bill of Rights of 1791. In Article VI the Constitution states that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." In the First Amendment, the document reads, "Congress shall pass no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

No Bible verses and/or expressions from historic Christian works are contained in the document.

Enlightened framers

Instead, the major influences on the men who drafted both the Constitution

and the Bill of Rights originated from the writings of the enlightenment philosophers of the 17th and 18th centuries who, for the most part, believed that faith could be expressed purely by use of reason and intellect, and that God's intervention in the process was not a necessary element—hardly a Christian concept.

First Person



Stephen Wilson

For instance, Englishman Thomas Hobbes argued that government should be a contract between those that govern and the people.

John Locke, in his work, "Two Treatises of Government," promoted the rights of "life, liberty, and estate" (or property) for all citizens.

While drafting the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson slightly revised Locke and instead wrote that the people had a right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Locke's phrase, however, does show up in the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution that states citizens cannot "be deprived of 'life, liberty, or property' without due process."

Baron Montesquieu in "The Spirit of the Laws" proposed that government should be divided into branches thereby limiting the power of each branch.

Enlightenment philosophers, like Voltaire (in the "Treatise on Tolerance") and others, ironically agreed with the Baptists and argued against the tyranny of state-supported churches. Voltaire instead advocated that all faiths should be allowed to worship without state interference.

Not Christ-centered, but beneficial

While the constitutional convention operated in a society heavily influenced by a Christian worldview, the U.S. Constitution itself was a product of enlightenment thinking, and the United States became the first modern nation to base itself on enlightenment principles.

Nevertheless, the Christian community in the United States gained important benefits from the document. First and foremost, Christians in the U.S. are not forced to belong to state-mandated religious bodies, and in fact, such bodies are forbidden by the First Amendment. Furthermore, the same amendment allows Christians to worship free from state interference.

Other benefits:

■ Article VI states that Christians do not have to meet criteria from another faith to be an office-holder.

■ The First Amendment provides Christians, like all Americans, freedom

of speech, the right to assemble for worship, to write and publish works about their faith without government interference, and also petition the government to redress grievances.

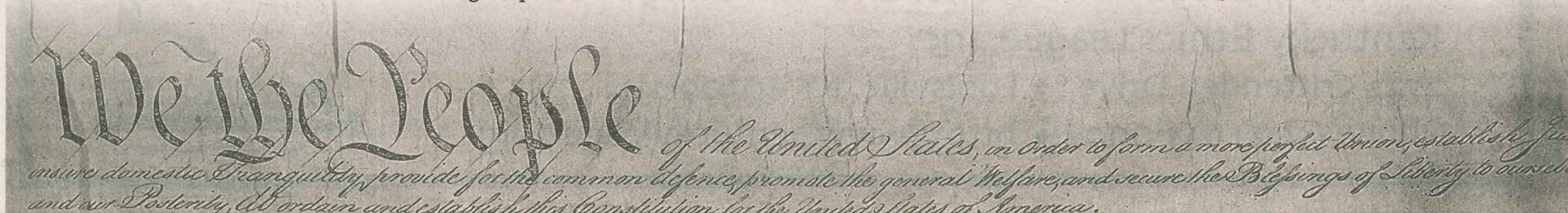
■ The Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Amendments give us due process in legal proceedings, a fair trial, the right to be heard by a jury, and the right against self-incrimination.

■ American citizens of all faiths are protected against "cruel and unusual punishments" by the Eighth Amendment.

While American Christians enjoy these benefits, many Christians in other parts of the world do not possess these guarantees. Christians endure nearly unspeakable persecution in many parts of the world. They have no legal protection, are not allowed to assemble, and many are tortured and killed.

We have the blessing and protection of the U.S. Constitution, and these guarantees of religious liberty for the Christian community should never be taken lightly. Christians should involve themselves in the public affairs of the nation and maintain exemplary citizenship.

Stephen Douglas Wilson is dean emeritus and chair of the history department of Mid-Continent University in Mayfield, and a member of the SBC Exec. Committee.



Alcohol & Gambling

TWO BIG PROBLEMS

Alcohol and Gambling have a lot in common.

Both the alcohol industry and the gambling industry exploit people for a profit. Both exploit human weakness and cause deep-rooted addictions. Both ruin marriages, cause family strife, and destroy lives. Both lead to spouse abuse and child neglect. Both increase crime and corruption. Both lead to financial problems and bankruptcy for individuals and businesses. Both are precipitating factors for a variety of health problems, and are among the leading causes of suicide.



- ◆ Excessive drinking cost the U.S. \$223.5 billion in 2006.
- ◆ Nearly 15 million Americans abuse alcohol, or are alcoholics.
- ◆ Alcoholism is the 3rd leading lifestyle-related cause of death in the U.S.
- ◆ 40% of U.S. hospital beds are being used to treat alcohol-related conditions.
- ◆ In 2010, 10,228 people were killed in alcohol-impaired driving crashes.
- ◆ Alcohol is a factor in 40% of all violent crimes.
- ◆ Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders is the leading preventable cause of birth defects in the U.S., affecting about 40,000 babies each year.
- ◆ Alcohol is the number one drug of choice among America's youth. People aged 12 to 20 drink 11% of all alcohol consumed in the U.S.
- ◆ A 2009 study revealed that of 19,255 suicides from 17 states, about 1/4 of the victims were legally drunk, and 1/3 had some level of alcohol in their bloodstream.

- ◆ 20 years ago, only 2 states had legal gambling. Today, 48 states have some form of legalized gambling.
- ◆ Over 75% of U.S. adults gambled in the last 12 months; 15-20% gamble weekly.
- ◆ A study of 400 Gamblers Anonymous members revealed that 28% were either separated or divorced as a direct result of their gambling.
- ◆ Indiana Gaming Commission records show that 72 children were found abandoned on casino premises during a 14 month period.
- ◆ In Detroit, gambling-related bankruptcies increased 40-fold within an year and a half of the opening of a casino just across the river.
- ◆ Three years after casinos were legalized in Deadwood, South Dakota, felony crimes increased by 40%, child abuse increased 42%, and domestic violence and assaults rose by 80%.
- ◆ One in five pathological gamblers will attempt suicide, while one in ten of their spouses will attempt suicide.



What Can You Do?

Educate Yourself - Learn about the negative effects of alcohol and gambling and keep up to date on news about these issues.

Spread the Word - Share the information you have about alcohol and gambling with family, friends, and neighbors.

Take a Stand - Tell your legislators that you oppose any legislation that would expand alcohol or gambling.

Take Action - Vote "No" on any proposal to increase alcohol sales or availability and "No" to proposals to increase gambling.

Provide Support - Make a donation to fund the work and ministry of the Kentucky League.

Kentucky League on Alcohol and Gambling Problems
Kentucky Ethics League, Inc.

2722 Crittenden Drive ♦ Louisville, KY 40209-1114

Phone (502) 635-0002 ♦ <http://www.kentuckyleague.org>

