

WESTERN Recorder

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Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

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A&I advisory group details \$700,000 CP shift over 2 years

By Todd Deaton

Louisville—More than \$700,000 in Cooperative Program funding will shift from Kentucky Baptist Convention agencies and institutions to support international missions and other Southern Baptist Convention causes, if recommendations from a special advisory workgroup are approved when the Mission Board convenes May 6-7 in Louisville.

The special advisory team to KBC Executive Director Paul Chitwood—tasked with studying the convention's relationship with its 10 agencies and institutions—presented their recommendations for adjusting the Cooperative

Program allocations for each KBC entity to the Mission Board's administrative committee. With its approval, the recommendations now advance for consideration by the Mission Board.

Overall, the advisory workgroup provided details for reducing CP funding for KBC agencies and institutions over a two-year period by \$706,911—from \$5,181,911 in the state convention's 2012-13 budget to \$4,475,000 in 2014-15.

The recent round of CP adjustments come as a second step in the KBC's move toward a 50/50 split between KBC and SBC causes, taking into account a reduction in the Cooperative Program Resourcing (CPR) portion from 10 per-

cent to 7 percent. The first step entailed a reorganization of the Mission Board and the trimming of personnel by about one third, for a net loss of 41 positions over the past decade.

A third step involves another advisory group currently strategizing for the future of the state's Baptist campus ministry program.

"As I came to my role as executive director," Chitwood said, "there was no question in my mind, nor in the search committee's minds, that we were at a very critical and challenging place as a convention. With Cooperative Program giving continuing to be in decline and with us being staffed for a different era

"With Cooperative Program giving ... in decline ... we needed to make some adjustments."

Paul Chitwood



of ministry, we knew we need to make some adjustments.

"We also knew we needed to make adjustments to meet the KBC Great

□ See CP shift ... Page 3

PRAYERS FOR BOSTON

So. Baptists reach out amid bomb confusion

By Erin Roach

Boston—A day after two bombs exploded near the finish line of the iconic Boston Marathon April 15, pastors and other leaders were urging people to pray for Boston as the city grapples with the questions that arise from tragedy.

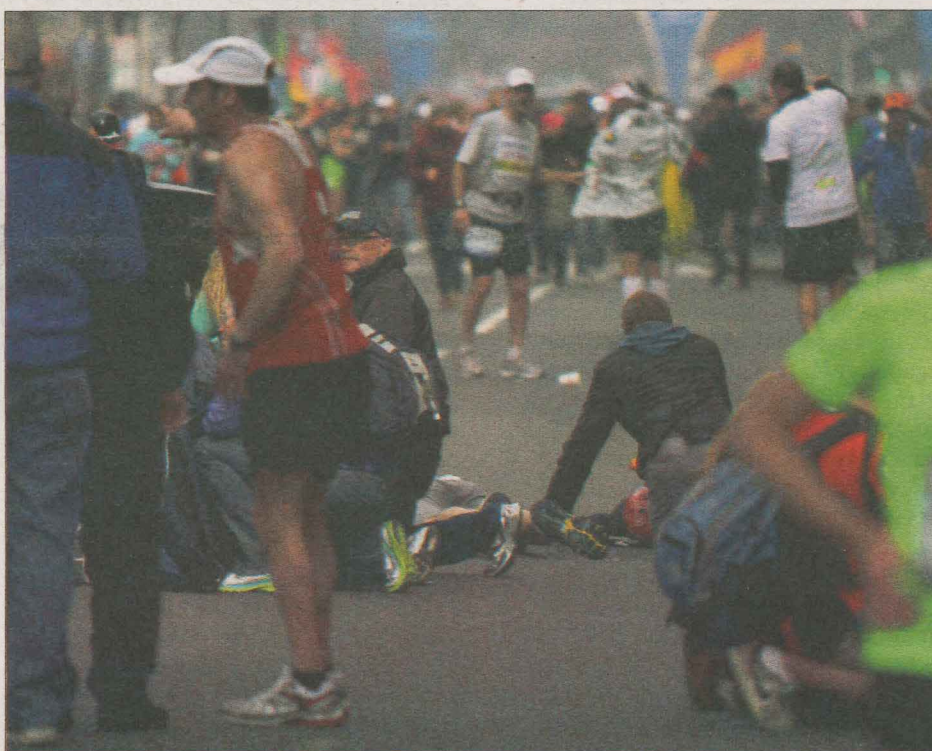
Three people were killed and more than 170 were injured. Metal fragments found in marathon-goers led investigators to believe the bombs were loaded with pellets or nails intended to harm as many people as possible.

Just days after the bombing, the FBI identified two suspects and during an apprehension attempt, one of the suspects died. On Friday, the second suspect was caught hiding in a boat.

'Huge shock'

"I would say first of all to just pray for Boston. This was a huge shock," Jim Wideman, executive director of the Baptist Convention of New England, said. "Patriot's Day is a state holiday and a day that the Boston Marathon is always run. It's an exciting day for Boston. It's a day that everybody looks forward to, and this action was calculated, I believe, to cause as much confusion as possible. It has left the city in shock," Wideman said.

Amid that shock, a group of young



DEADLY BLAST The bombings that occurred at the Boston Marathon have "left the city in shock," said Jim Wideman, executive director of the Baptist Convention of New England. (BP)

adults from the Dallas-area Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, Texas, were making themselves available to talk with and pray for passersby on the streets near the site of the bombings.

The group had been in town since Thursday, working with Hope Fellowship Church, a Southern Baptist congregation about three miles away in Cambridge.

On Monday, the Prestonwood mission team handed out gum and invitations to Hope Fellowship to people who were watching the marathon.

"Some of our people actually walked down toward the finish line," Josh Steckel of Prestonwood said.

Less than half an hour before the blasts went off, the group started heading back to the church.

"Some people said they heard something that sounded like gunshots," Steckel said. "We were away from the city when it happened, on our way back from the marathon already."

That night Hope Fellowship opened its doors for people to stop in and pray. Though residents of Boston were encouraged to stay home following what is being investigated as a terrorist attack, a few people from the neighborhood who aren't normally part of the church showed up to pray and to be prayed for.

□ See Boston bombing ... Page 7

KBC leaders seek 'open dialogue' at Campbellsville

By Todd Deaton

Louisville—A group of Kentucky Baptist leaders will meet with President Michael Carter and representatives of Campbellsville University April 29 for "open and honest dialogue" in response to recent accusations concerning the teaching of its theology and science faculty, according to Paul Chitwood, executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

"The purpose of this undertaking is to better understand the theological convictions that chart CU's course and whether or not those convictions are still compatible with the mission our Lord has given the churches of the Kentucky Baptist Convention," Chitwood wrote in his April 20 blog.

Concerns regarding professors who allegedly reject biblical authority and biblical inerrancy have surfaced in e-mails, tweets and blogs of current and former students decrying the university's recent decision not to grant tenure to a popular New Testament and Greek professor, who graduated from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

"For most Kentucky Baptists, a personnel matter at one of our nine agencies or institutions is a matter that should be handled privately by the administration without interference by the public," Chitwood acknowl-

□ See Campbellsville ... Page 2

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Campbellsville

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edged. "Claims, however, that CU retains other professors in the school of theology who reject biblical authority and professors in other disciplines who affirm evolution, are difficult for many Kentucky Baptists to swallow," he said.

In response to calls made by some detractors on social media to withhold Cooperative Program support unless the KBC takes action, Chitwood counseled, "I understand the concerns but am equally concerned that we do not rush to judgment."

"I earnestly pray that accusations regarding one institution will not be used to undermine all that Kentucky Baptists support, including the education of 16,000 Southern Baptist Convention seminary students and more than 10,000 missionaries and church planters taking the gospel to Kentucky, North America, and the ends of the earth," he wrote.

Stating that he is "genuinely troubled by the testimonies of some current and former CU students," Chitwood added, "(I)f academic freedom is no longer afforded to those who hold to 'the faith once delivered to the saints' (Jude 1:3) and teach a high view of Scripture (2 Tim 3:16), the time for church support has clearly passed."

But Chitwood also advocated a need to exercise prudence, citing Proverbs 18:17, "The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him." He counseled, "Let us not rush to judgment on this matter for 'one who is wise is cautious' (Proverbs 14:16). Instead, let us walk with prudence, seeking knowledge that will lead to understanding (Psalm 119:66)."

In concluding his blog, Chitwood reiterated that the group's intent was not to delve into "inherently private personnel matters" of the university.

Campbellsville University officials were contacted by the Western Recorder, but as of press time had not yet commented.

Representing the KBC at the April 29 dialogue will be Hershael York, Frankfort; Bill Henard, Lexington; Dan Summerlin, Paducah; Paul Badgett, Pikeville; Charles Barnes, Louisville; Adam Greenway, Mt. Washington; Daryl Cornett, Hazard; and Curtis Woods, KBC associate executive director.

In addition to President Carter, representatives for Campbellsville are current and former trustees and administrators, including Joe Owens, David Morris, Larry Noe, Frank Cheatham and John Chowning.

All but two of the names, Chitwood said, were suggested by Carter and approved. The exceptions are Greenway and Cornett, whom Chitwood added, with Carter's consent, because he felt they would be helpful as chairmen of the Mission Board's administrative committee and agencies and institutions committee.

Chitwood's full blog may be read at www.paulchitwood.com. (WR)

Gosnell trial shows abortion's 'coarsening' impact

By Tom Strode

Washington—The Philadelphia murder trial of Kermit Gosnell reveals the debasing effect of abortion on humanity and American society, Southern Baptist ethicists say.

A jury of a Philadelphia Common Pleas Court will decide if Gosnell is guilty of seven counts of first-degree murder in the deaths of viable children who were killed after delivery and a count of third-degree murder in the death of a Virginia woman during a 2009 abortion.

Those seven babies were only some of hundreds at least six months into gestation who were killed outside the womb after induced delivery at Gosnell's West Philadelphia clinic, a grand jury reported in 2011. After delivery, Gosnell or another staff member would jab scissors into the back of a baby's neck and cut the spinal cord, according to the grand jury. Gosnell called the killing of these children "snipping."

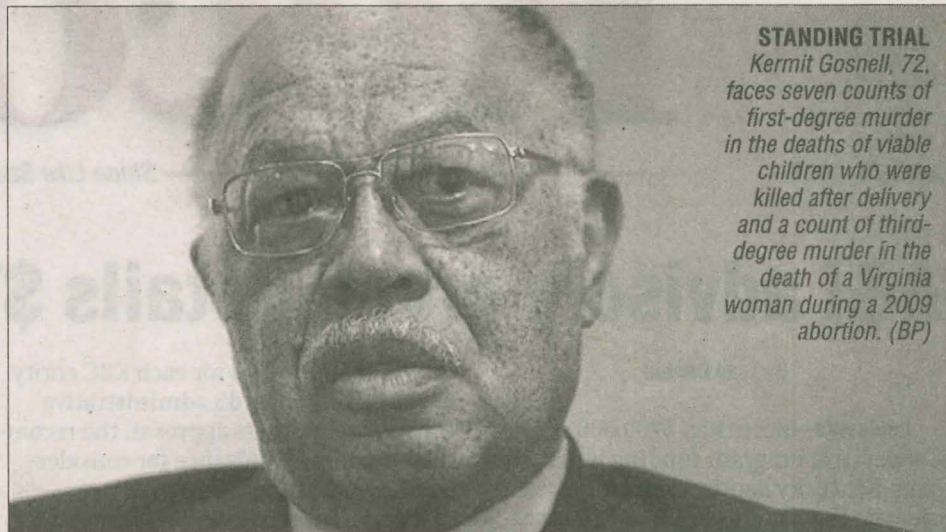
After four weeks of a trial that may last as long as eight weeks, Baptist Press asked several Southern Baptist ethicists to respond to this question: "What is the lesson that should be learned from Kermit Gosnell's abortion practice and his trial?"

Richard Land, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC):

"There are several lessons. First is the Gosnell trial exposes the murderous, ugly face of the killing of viable babies. While this doctor is on trial for murder, it should be noted that legally the only reason he is on trial is he was killing babies who were already born as opposed to fully viable babies who had not yet escaped their mothers' wombs. There is no moral distinction between what he did and what is being done in abortion clinics across America every day.

"A second lesson is that this shows the more one falls into the brutalization of human life, the more insensitive to that brutalization one becomes.

"The third lesson is the outrageous bias of the American media, which refused to cover the story until shamed into doing so by Fox News and Kirsten Powers' column on the subject. They refused to cover a story of national consequence because it presented the



STANDING TRIAL
Kermit Gosnell, 72, faces seven counts of first-degree murder in the deaths of viable children who were killed after delivery and a count of third-degree murder in the death of a Virginia woman during a 2009 abortion. (BP)

pro-choice position that most of them espouse in such a horrible light."

Russell Moore, president-elect of the ERLC and currently dean of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary School of Theology, as well as an ethics professor:

"The Gosnell trial demonstrates the uneasy American conscience on the question of abortion. The ambient culture is fine to talk of 'choices' and 'procedures' and 'pregnancies,' but averts its eyes when it comes to the reality of blood and bones and screams. What people want to ask in the face of such horror is the ancient question, 'Am I my brother's keeper?'"

C. Ben Mitchell, professor of moral philosophy at Union University and biomedical and life issues consultant for the ERLC:

"The Gosnell case reveals in gruesome detail that abortion on demand creates calloused consciences, not just among abortion providers but even in the wider culture. Once a culture permits the killing of its most vulnerable members, devolution into barbarism is not far behind. His clinic was a house of horrors, and the media silence in this case is an egregious symptom of the chilling of human compassion in the name of political ideology."

Steve Lemke, provost and professor of philosophy and ethics at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary:

"The lessons that I hope we learn from this tragedy regard the need to counterbalance the power in our culture that the for-profit abortion industry

wields in covering up such atrocities as were going on in Gosnell's clinic. First of all, the Pennsylvania governmental and medical authorities who are charged with regulating the abortion industry overlooked these atrocities despite numerous and repeated reports alerting them to the problem.

"Second, the strange silence of the mainstream media about this trial and the unthinkable barbarity practiced daily in Gosnell's clinic—a silence so deafening that it smacks of an intentional cover-up—should lead us to doubt the objectivity in their reporting."

Craig Mitchell, associate professor of ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and director of the Richard Land Center for Cultural Engagement:

"We can always count on the fact that when something immoral is made legal that we will eventually find unimaginable evil carried out. The fact that most of the media has not even reported on this situation shows the coarsening of the media and society as a whole. Such evil must be stopped, or the judgment of God will soon be upon us. The church is at least partially to blame for this state of affairs. We are to be salt and light to the world. That means that we must call sin, sin. It also means that we must tell people about the bad news before we give them the good news. Hell is a real place, and those who do not repent are sure to go there. We must remind lost people that Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven. If we truly have Him, then we will live like it." (BP)

Ky. Baptists give \$1.72M to CP in March

Louisville—Kentucky Baptists gave more than \$1.72 million to missions and ministries through the Cooperative Program in March.

The \$1,720,172 total was \$113,161 below the monthly budgeted goal for CP giving of \$1,833,333.

March's CP giving was up from February's total of \$1,654,018.

Total Cooperative Program giving thus far for the fiscal year is \$451,596 behind the annual budget goal of \$22 million passed by messengers to the 2011 Kentucky Baptist Convention Annual Meeting.

"This spring hundreds of Kentucky Baptists have participated in special events and training opportunities funded completely through the Cooperative Program," KBC Executive Director-Treasurer Paul Chitwood said. "We are so thankful for those resources, in addition

to the CP funds that are helping support missions internationally and in North America."

Other services provided to Kentucky Baptist churches through Cooperative Program funding include ministry consultations.

"Our five regional consultants are former pastors with a wealth of knowledge and experience about all aspects of ministry," Chitwood said. "They are located across the state so they are never very far away from the churches they serve."

Another team of consultants are equipped in specific ministry areas, such as: preschool and children; worship, music and prayer; women; senior adults; Sunday School and discipleship; church financial benefits; ministers in transition, and conflict resolution.

To learn more, go to KyBaptist.org and click under Church Revitalization. (KBC)

Children's choir in concert April 28 in two cities

Louisville—The Kentucky Baptist All-State Children's Choir will be in concert April 28 in Louisville and Owensboro.

The free performances cap off the choir's two-day retreat at Cedarmore Baptist Camp and Conference Center in Bagdad where boys and girls practice the songs together for the first time.

This year's choir numbers 111 boys and girls and represents 34 churches across the commonwealth.

In Louisville, the group will sing at Valley View Church at 10:45 a.m. Valley View is located at 8911 Third Street Road.

The Owensboro performance will be at Macedonia Baptist Church at 3 p.m. The church is located at 4839 Millers Mill Road. (KBC)

A&I leaders express appreciation for support, concern for ministries

By Todd Deaton

Louisville—Following the release of recommendations from the Agencies and Institutions advisory workgroup last week, the Western Recorder contacted the heads of each of Kentucky Baptists' entities for a response.

While they, as a group, expressed deep appreciation for the support the agencies and institutions receive from Kentucky Baptists churches through the Cooperative Program, some also expressed concerns for how reductions will affect their ministries and shared potential strategies for dealing with losses in funding.

Sunrise—“Sunrise Children’s Services began as a Baptist organization in 1869, and through the years and several name changes has remained a ministry supported, in varying degrees, by Baptists,” President Bill Smithwick told the Western Recorder.



Bill Smithwick

“Further reductions in Cooperative Program, or any other financial gifts, mean we must make up the loss somewhere else,” he noted. “As a mission driven ministry to Kentucky’s victimized, abused, and neglected children of all ages, we have faith that Baptist churches and individuals will assist us in our ongoing, Christ-centered ministry to this special population of children.”



David Melber

Crossings—David Melber, president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies, said: “We are certainly supportive of the shifts (in CP support) being

made, and we understand why they are being made: to send more resources to the mission field.

“Our strategy for CP replacement will entail 80 percent growth in receipts from operations and 20 percent by soliciting private contributions,” Melber projected.

Western Recorder—Editor Todd Deaton said, “While we understand and support the priority and high commitment the KBC places on global evangelization, we also recognize this requires a sacrifice of Kentucky Baptists’ agencies and institutions, which are dependent upon and deeply grateful for the financial support of their ministries through Cooperative Program gifts.”



Todd Deaton

Deaton noted that anticipated CP reductions already have meant a loss of two staff positions and likely will necessitate exploring other revenue-recovery strategies.

Kentucky Baptist Foundation—Barry Allen, executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, expressed appreciation for the CP budget subsidy, which, he noted, makes it possible for the KBF to deliver its stewardship services to churches and church members without charge or at a significant discount.



Barry Allen

“The KBF is committed to working with the Mission Board staff to explore all avenues for increasing Kentucky Baptists’ financial support through legacy giving for the cooperative mission work of Kentucky Baptists

and Southern Baptists,” he added.

Among specific recommendations, the advisory committee encouraged the foundation to position itself as the development agency for local churches, the Cooperative Program, and other Kentucky Baptist causes, including associations, in that order. “As pastors come to understand that KBF exists first and foremost to undergird the financial future of the local church,” they reasoned, “we believe they will be more enthusiastic about inviting KBF to join with them in their ministry.”

Woman’s Missionary Union—Joy Bolton, executive director of Kentucky Woman’s Missionary Union, said the missions organization will absorb its CP reduction by looking for savings in other areas.



Joy Bolton

“We are committed to continuing our ministry to the churches and to providing quality missions education training, resources, and events,” Bolton said. “God has provided for Kentucky WMU and will continue to do so.”

Campbellsville University—Michael Carter, president of Campbellsville University, told the Western Recorder that his trustee board had not yet had an opportunity to discuss the recommendations, but would do so soon.



Michael Carter

“We are deeply appreciative for the support from our Kentucky Baptist churches and we are grateful for the Cooperative Program,” Carter said. “We remain committed to the Great Commission and to providing a Christ-centered educational experience

for our students at Campbellsville.”

University of the Cumberland—Jim Taylor, president of the University of the Cumberland, said his school provides more than \$46 million in financial aid to students, a portion of which comes through KBC allocations.



Jim Taylor

“While it is difficult to give up a portion of the funds we receive from (CP), our board felt we could do worse by trying to do better,” Taylor said. “We accepted the decrease in allocation, adjusted our budget and look forward to continuing to work with our Kentucky Baptists.”

Clear Creek Baptist Bible College—President Donnie Fox said, “We are very thankful that the proposed reduction ... will not result in any program reductions for our students, nor any reductions in faculty and staff.



Donnie Fox

“We are thankful to Kentucky Baptists for their gifts through the Cooperative Program, which enables us to fulfill the mission God has given us,” Fox added.

Oneida Baptist Institute—President Paul Davidson said Oneida was “thankful for all of the support that comes from KBC and its churches—whether it is in the form of finances, prayers, or invitations to share about what the Lord is doing at Oneida.



Paul Davidson

“The Lord is good and will provide for the needs of His children,” he added. (WR)

CP shift

Continued from page 1

Commission Task Force’s goals,” Chitwood added. The GCTF report called for a transfer of CP funds to send more to the international mission field, in response to the International Mission Board’s recent reduction of its missions force by more than 700 missionaries.

Though the goals, as adopted by the state convention in 2010, set a 10-year timetable for achieving the objective, Chitwood said he and Mission Board leaders felt that the KBC needed to move forward with the transition because of difficulties in budgeting year-to-year adjustments.

The workgroup’s recommendations are broken into two-parts: specific CP recommendations for each agency or institution, and three general recommendations for all KBC entities.

Chitwood has contacted each of the agency and institution leaders and offered to speak with their trustee boards to further explain the proposed CP adjustments.

“No one is excited about their funding being reduced,” he said. “These are difficult days for all of us, and this will require sacrifice of each agency and institution.

“But my impression also has been that each agency and institution is committed to being a good partner with the

	FY 2012-13	FY 2013-14	1ST YR CHG	FY 2014-15	2ND YR CHG	2 YR TOT CHG \$
BAPTIST HEALTH	\$5,617	\$5,309	(\$309)	\$5,000	(\$309)	(\$617)
SUNRISE CH SRVS	\$311,708	\$305,854	(\$5,854)	\$300,000	(\$5,854)	(\$11,708)
KBA/CROSSINGS	\$339,752	\$334,876	(\$4,876)	\$330,000	(\$4,876)	(\$9,752)
WESTERN RECRDR	\$341,079	\$308,040	(\$33,040)	\$275,000	(\$33,040)	(\$66,079)
KY BAPT FNDATN	\$296,146	\$265,573	(\$30,573)	\$235,000	(\$30,573)	(\$61,146)
WOM MS UNION	\$447,551	\$443,776	(\$3,776)	\$440,000	(\$3,776)	(\$7,551)
CAMPBELLVILLE	\$1,269,760	\$1,134,880	(\$134,880)	\$1,000,000	(\$134,880)	(\$269,760)
CUMBERLAND	\$1,269,760	\$1,134,880	(\$134,880)	\$1,000,000	(\$134,880)	(\$269,760)
CLEAR CREEK	\$540,323	\$537,662	(\$2,662)	\$535,000	(\$2,662)	(\$5,323)
ONEIDA BAPTIST	\$360,215	\$357,608	(\$2,608)	\$355,000	(\$2,608)	(\$5,215)
TOT AG/INST CP	\$5,181,911	\$4,828,456	(\$353,456)	\$4,475,000	(\$353,456)	(\$706,911)

KBC,” Chitwood noted, “and they are grateful for every penny that comes through the sacrificial giving of our churches.”

Specific recommendations

Specific reductions in CP allotments proposed for each KBC agency and institution, accompanied by brief commendations and explanatory remarks in the document sent to the Mission Board, are:

Baptist Healthcare System—from \$5,617 to \$5,000, a decrease of \$617.

Sunrise Children’s Services—from \$311,708 to \$300,000, a decrease of \$11,708.

Kentucky Baptist Assemblies/Crossings—from \$339,752 to \$330,000, a decrease of \$9,752.

Western Recorder—from \$342,079 to

\$275,000, a decrease of \$66,079.

Kentucky Baptist Foundation—from \$296,146 to \$235,000, a decrease of \$61,146.

Woman’s Missionary Union—from \$447,551 to \$440,000, a decrease of \$7,551.
Campbellsville University and University of the Cumberland—from \$1,269,760 to \$1,000,000 each, a decrease of \$269,760 each.

Clear Creek Baptist Bible College—from \$540,323 to \$535,000, a decrease of \$5,323.

Oneida Baptist Institute—from \$360,215 to \$355,000, a decrease of \$5,215.

General recommendations

In addition to proposed CP adjustments, general recommendations for all KBC entities include:

- Expecting authentic Cooperative Program promotion, including administrators, trustees and employees modeling CP loyalty in their church memberships.

- Inviting the executive director-treasurer to join their respective governing boards as an ex-officio member.

- Striving to create an atmosphere that reflects the identity of KBC churches: high view of Scripture, doctrine consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message, and commitment to the Great Commission and cooperation.

Need for action

“I know it is going to be challenging for the agencies and institutions to make the adjustments they have to make to the CP allocation reductions,” Chitwood acknowledged.

Reemphasizing a mandate to take the gospel to the nations, Chitwood said, “I hope that Kentucky Baptists will be able to celebrate their obedience to the Great Commission, in knowing that this transition of funds is out of our conviction that we must make sacrifices at home to get the gospel to the ends of the earth.

“My hope and prayer,” he added, “is that in knowing the sacrifices that our agencies and institutions, our mission boards, and all of the cooperative work that Kentucky Baptists and Southern Baptist are doing, Kentucky Baptists will be inspired to make a greater investment through the Cooperative Program.” (WR)

Missions and BF&M

Editor's note: Guest column by Scott Pittman, the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Acts 1:8 Partnership Consultant.

Check the glove compartment of most any car and you'll find the owner's manual. We know it's important, so we keep it there in case we need it. However, we seldom look at it or even think about it.

Together
We are the KBC

Paul Chitwood

Like a vehicle's owner's manual, The Baptist Faith and Message (BF&M) can be found in most Southern Baptist churches, but it is seldom consulted.

The Baptist Faith and Message has served to anchor generations of Baptists to what Herschel Hobbs called our "theological moorings." In its eighteen articles, the Baptist Faith and Message declares our basic beliefs.

Recently, I was reading Article 11 on Evangelism and Missions and I was intrigued:

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ.

Wow, did you catch that? It is the duty of every follower and every church to make disciples of all nations! I think we often defer our individual responsibilities to someone else by rationalizing that we support our missionaries and through them we are doing our share. In the book *Spiritual Warfare and Missions* the authors warn that Satan's "backup plan" is to work among God's people to create indifference to the urgency of missions, convincing Christians that mission involvement is optional or "the responsibility of only an elite few who have a special mystical call to serve as missionaries."

Lottie Moon wrote concerning the involvement of others in mission causes, "Should we not press it home upon our consciences that the sole object of our conversion was not the salvation of our own souls, but that we might become co-workers with our Lord and Master in the conversion of the world?"

We cannot ignore our individual obligations to our Lord to reach the nations. What can you do? Here are some ideas:

- Begin by praying for God to give you a heart for the nations.
- Study the book of Acts.
- Begin to read missionary biographies and other missions books.
- Attend missions conferences.
- Learn about the needs of the world on websites like www.imb.org.
- Pray for missionaries and support mission causes through sacrificial giving.
- Pray for your church to send out missionaries each year.
- Pray about God's will concerning a call to go.
- Adopt an unreached people group in prayer.
- Research opportunities to reach international students and residents in your own community.

Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Boston: Making some sense of senseless violence

It has happened yet again. Violence has encroached upon our serene shores, shocking our sensitivities with its blood-stained brutality, horrifying us with its blackened heart, and stupefying us with its brazen affront of inhumanity.

The senselessness of the Boston Marathon bombing demands a response, but what type? We are understandably conflicted by our emotions.

Outrage: at the loss of innocent life, particularly that of an innocent 8-year-old boy—there only to watch the finish of a race.

Compassion: for the 170-plus who were seriously injured by shrapnel from the blasts; for those who lost limbs and now face months, perhaps years, of painful rehabilitation.

Justice: in wanting law enforcement to relentlessly hunt down those responsible for this heinous, cowardly act and levy punishment.

Admiration: for unnamed heroic medical workers, first responders and others who courageously rushed, without apparent hesitation, to render aid to the suffering.

Fear: leading to a growing wariness of our own vulnerability to acts of terrorism and dismay at the wickedness wrought by depraved and mentally unstable persons.

Prudence: undertaking appropriate cautionary measures to safeguard ourselves, our children, our loved ones, our communities.

Confusion: contemplating why evil exists, from where it originates, and if and how it can be circumvented.

Faith: by understanding the sinful mind of man and his need for salvation, and in reaffirming our steadfast reliance upon God's goodness and sustaining grace.

Forgiveness: as difficult as it sounds, through recognizing that all have sinned and no one—absolutely no one—is beyond the grace of God.

Assurance: of knowing our loving God hears our tear-soaked prayers, and ever reminds us through the merciful deeds of others in our times of suffering that "blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

Try as we might, I'm not sure anyone can make sense of something so senseless as violence. It arises out of an evil heart and defies sane reasoning. Still, through our brokenness and despair, we are drawn nearer to the heart of God and, in turn, are able to point others to His healing love through acts of Christian compassion and concern. And, if we are to make any sense of disconcerting times at all, it comes only through finding our solace in Him.

After
Thought

By Todd Deaton



America the resolute in the wake of another violent act

By Barrett Duke

Washington—Another act of violence shook our nation this week. This time, the perpetrator used bombs hidden in bags. To intensify the effect of his hatred, he loaded his bombs with ball bearings and other metal objects. The effect was devastating. Lives were lost, including an 8-year-old boy. More than a hundred people were injured, many maimed. It was a cowardly, gruesome act.

The response of others at the Boston Marathon tells another story, however. Reports are still coming out of those who rushed to help. I have heard stories of people who finished the grueling marathon and yet immediately went about the task of caring for others. There are pictures of complete strangers stooping over injured people, trying to do whatever they can to stop bleeding and render comfort.

The police and first-responders acted with a calm professionalism that should instill a true sense of pride in our nation even in the most cynical of people. They weren't anticipating any problems that day, but they were ready. In a matter of minutes order was restored.

My heart aches for those who died and for those whose lives have been forever changed through this horrific act. I pray that God will bring comfort and peace to everyone. I pray that those who

feel they can never recover will find the peace and spiritual strength through Jesus Christ that will not only sustain them but lift them up. I pray those who did this will be convicted by God of

their horrific sin, repent, turn themselves in, and accept the penalty for their acts. One way or another, I pray that law enforcement will bring them to justice.

Yes, I want justice, healing and peace. I also want Americans to see themselves for who they really are. Immediately after the bombings, there was a national shudder in

response. Social media was filled with expressions of grief, sadness and prayer. We have witnessed too much violence recently, yet we remain resolute in our commitment to each other.

Scripture reminds us that there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. Such a friend, it also reminds us, is hard to find. Our nation has once again proven that when our fellow citizens are in danger, the decency and compassion that flows through our national veins will compel us to come to their aid.

Perhaps today you feel abandoned and desperate. There is help. Start with

God. He has proven His love for you by sending His only Son, Jesus Christ, to die for you so you can have peace and the forgiveness of your sins. Call on Him. He is there. I also encourage you to turn to someone for help. There are good, well-meaning people all around you in this nation of compassionate people. If you don't know where to start, find a Southern Baptist church in the phone book. Call them. They won't judge you, and they very likely will be able to help.

My friends, all is not lost. There is a God in heaven, and this is a nation full of kind-hearted people. Flawed, sinful,

yes, but ready to drop everything and rush into harm's way. A nation that demonstrated once again its resolve to care for its own can rise above any danger.

May God help us bring that same resolve to every pocket of poverty, brokenness, despair, sorrow and desperation. May He help us band together and forge our way forward through all of our current problems to a higher ground for His glory and for our better

future together. With God's help, we can. May God bless America. (BP) Barrett Duke is vice president for public policy and research of the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

Guest
Viewpoint

Barrett Duke

WESTERN
RecorderBox 43969
Louisville, KY 40253DR. TODD DEATON
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Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

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Boston bombing: A theological perspective

By Timothy Marsee

On April 15, the media outlets were running rife with images of distressed Americans and various theories as to what could possibly have caused the horrific events to take place at the Boston Marathon.

American camaraderie in the face of opposition and trial is nothing new, as anyone who has lived through any number of our national catastrophes can attest. Our common bond as Americans was strengthened and put on display once again.

As the events and investigations in Boston continue to unfold, many more stories of altruistic fortitude will come to light. We as Christians believe and know that we live in a fallen world. But despite its fallenness and our hopeless state before a holy God, humans have been endowed with the image of God.

As such, we put Him on display, no matter what we do, in that we exhibit characteristics of God's own character in miniature: humility, courage, love for fellow man, etc.

Yet despite the fact that we bear the image of God, we are indeed fallen and display God's image in horrific ways. God, as creator of the universe, has put a similar ability to create things into us. We see this in countless ways, from our technological advancements, to the miraculous ability of my wife to make our house look not only lived in, but also very much like our character.

And the attacker in Boston has certainly shown the warped form of this creative ability in using their creative instincts to destroy, rather than to build up. Why is this?

The world is fallen

Although good things do happen all the time, we must remember that these things are unique to our fallen state. People are evil. Romans 3:23 states clearly, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Any good things we do are according to God's grace. Genesis 8:21 says, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth."

If we are "evil from (our) youth," then why is it that we are still capable of good things?

Although we certainly are fallen, we are still enabled

"God is sustaining the world, despite the terrible things that happen."

by God to live somewhat harmoniously in our fallen state. In Matthew 5:45, God "makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust" (ESV).

God is sustaining the world, despite the terrible things that happen.

Why does God sustain it at all? Why does He not just end it?

In answer to this, we must observe our sin. When we sin, we attempt to usurp God's rightful authority. God gave us this world in order to magnify our joy, which was intended to be passed back to Him in praise. But we have used the world and everything in it in direct opposition to Him. We have spurned the love of God, and for that, there must be justice if God is to remain just.

And justice has been served. Because a holy sacrifice had to be made in order to appease the holiness of God who had been offended, God sent His Son in human form to be the perfect sacrifice for us. What Jesus endured is what we deserved. It is only through faith and trust in Him that we can escape the just judgment of God.

That all should reach repentance

2 Peter 3:9 says, "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."

God is patient toward our sinfulness, "not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance." God is providing ample opportunity for the fullness of the harvest.

As we watch events unfold in Boston, we have every right to grieve. But we must, as Christians, share the mind of God, in desiring that "all should reach repentance," while we simultaneously look forward to the coming of His righteous kingdom, where all such evil will be eradicated.

We mustn't neglect to give God glory and praise for the good things that we do see coming out of such situations, such as the heroism and fortitude of those Americans who put their fellow citizens before themselves. They are shining examples of the goodness of God on a fallen humanity. Do not neglect the fact that we are still capable of good things, fallen though we are.

Let us look forward to the kingdom where Jesus Christ will reign in righteousness and justice.

Timothy Marsee is a member of Immanuel Baptist Church in Louisville and a doctoral student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Myths and truths of budgeting

By Jeremy White

Many people think the most important goal of managing money is to keep a budget. That's the first myth we'll discuss.



The goal is to spend less than you earn. Some people can do that without a budget through self-control and discipline. The truth is that the budget is a very effective tool to help you spend less than you earn and manage the financial

resources God gives you.

Other common myths and truths of budgeting:

Myth: We have tried a budget once before and it didn't work.

Truth: We don't perfect new skills on the first try. Did you ride a bike the first try? If you have tried budgeting previously, you are in the best position to succeed by learning from your previous experience.

Myth: We live on a variable income and, therefore, cannot budget.

Truth: More than anyone, people on a variable income should budget. Although your income varies, a budget helps you monitor expenses to not exceed your average variable income.

Myth: It is impossible to budget for contingencies and unplanned expenses.

Truth: Although you don't know exactly what will happen, you know that some doctor visits and car repairs will happen. Use an estimate.

Myth: We are not the "financial" types.

Truth: You do not need an accounting degree to start a budget. Simply keep track of the money coming in and going out.

Myth: We don't earn enough income to budget.

Truth: The smaller your income, the greater your need for a budget. When you budget, you limit excess spending.

Myth: We earn too much income to worry about a budget.

Truth: Although you may be blessed with an above-average income, a budget can help you be a good steward with your surplus. As incomes rise in many families, expenses often rise at the same or greater rate.

Myth: We don't have time to keep track of a budget.

Truth: It takes far more time to handle a financial mess than it does to keep your finances in order.

Jeremy White is a CPA with BlytheWhite in Paducah.

Ministry transitions: Knowing when it's time to go and how to leave

By Joe Ball

It is part of who we are and what we do, yet it is one of the aspects of ministry that we talk about the least. If you stay in ministry long enough it will happen to you, probably multiple times. Knowing when it is time to move to a new ministry assignment and how to do so with dignity and grace can be a gut-wrenching time for a minister.

Let's begin by looking at how to know when it is time to go:

You are asked to leave.

Maybe it is failed expectations, new senior leadership, or a moral failure—but the people you have ministered with, to and alongside of have asked you to move on.

Any of these may leave you with feelings of incompleteness, failure, anger or countless other emotions. We all would like to leave following the call of God to a new place of service, but not all of us will get the luxury of that every time. Make sure you keep your emotions in check and leave in a way that is pleasing to God.

You are called to leave.

You sense you have done what you were called there to do or that new leadership is needed to take the ministry to a new level. This one is tough. Things are going well, events, Bible studies, volunteers are running

themselves and you are enjoying things running smoothly, but you have that nagging sense in your soul that it is time to move on. Or, your spouse senses that it is time to see what God may have in store for you next. Careful time of prayer and discernment must precede

any move. It is natural for an uneasiness to set in when things are going well or when you have been serving somewhere for a few years.

You are presented an opportunity.

You are approached with a new ministry opportunity. It could be out of the blue, or you may have been sending resumes and networking with friends and colleagues about other ministry possibilities, but you now are faced with the possibilities that you have to deal with on your ministry assignment. Care must be taken here to protect the ministry where you are (in case the new one doesn't work out) and to discern when and how to proceed.

Family issues.

This could be a spouse's job transfer, spouse indifference to where you are serving, or a need to get closer to extended family. Marriage is a partnership and sometimes the needs of our spouses have to take precedent over our own, and that could mean it is time to do something else. We may not be ready or want to move

on, but if we are to be true to our first calling to our family then we must pay special attention in this area.

It is time to go. Now what?

■ Leave with dignity. We should leave in such a way (even if we are let go) that we could return to work there and that people will be glad to see us when we come back to visit. This isn't the time to bash the leadership. Transitions are tough on churches, and we need to do all we can to ease the pain of transition.

■ Decide when, where and how you are going to tell your students. They deserve to hear it from you that you are leaving. They will have tough questions, be emotional and confused and may not understand.

■ Have a transition plan. Work within the churches structure and policies to develop a short term plan for transition. Who is going to take over the weekly meetings? Who is planning retreats? Where have you signed up for camp next summer? Who will be in charge of all the administrative stuff? Have a plan in place and make sure that parents, students, youth volunteers and the pastoral staff know what that plan is.

Leave.

It may seem strange to put this here, but when you go, you're gone. Your job is to refer students who contact you after you leave to the adults in their church and to the new youth leader that comes behind you.

Youth Ministry Corner



Joe Ball

Shea, voice of Billy Graham crusades, dies at 104

By Adelle Banks

Montreat, N.C.—George Beverly Shea, whose signature baritone voice was a standard feature of Billy Graham crusades for more than half a century, died April 16 at age 104.

He died after a brief illness, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association announced.

Shea, who was 10 years older than Graham, met the famous evangelist seven decades ago when he was working at Chicago's WMBI, a Moody Bible Institute radio station. The evangelist heard him singing on the program "Hymns from the Chapel" and asked Shea to sing on his new radio program.

"I've been listening to Bev Shea sing for more than 70 years, and I would still rather hear him sing than anyone else I know," the ailing Graham said in a statement. "I have lost one of the best friends I have ever had, but he and I look forward to seeing each other in Heaven relatively soon."

Shea, who lived about a mile from Graham in Montreat, N.C., sang before Graham preached as they traveled the globe, often "I'd Rather Have Jesus" or "Victory in Jesus."

In 1955, Shea made a couple of wording adjustments to the classic hymn "How Great Thou Art"—one of Graham's favorites—that have endured. He changed "consider all the works thy hands have made" to "consider all the worlds thy hands have made" and modified "I hear the mighty thunder" to "I hear the rolling thunder."

Graham spokesman Larry Ross said Shea—who was the oldest living recipient



BIG VOICE George Shea recorded more than 70 albums of hymns during his career and received numerous accolades for his musical talents.

of a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award—sang "How Great Thou Art" during each crusade.

"He had his albums but he was primarily known for singing one song at each Billy Graham service," said Graham biographer William Martin. "That endeared him to everybody who went to his services or who saw them on the broadcasts for all those years."

Shea, who won his first Grammy in 1965 and was a 10-time nominee, recorded more than 70 albums of hymns. He was inducted into the Religious Broadcasting Hall of Fame in 1996, and the "Hall of Faith" of the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists in 2008.

Born in Winchester, Ontario, Shea

was raised on church music, with his mother singing it as he awoke on school days. He took the bass line around the dinner table when his family sang the Doxology—beginning with the words "Praise God from whom all blessing flow"—in harmony. As his father preached in their Houghton, N.Y., church, he would flip through the pages of the church hymnal.

At age 23, he wrote the song "I'd Rather Have Jesus," which became another staple of Graham crusades. A few years later, the song's message inspired him to decline an offer to sing with a secular singing group.

Franklin Graham, who succeeded his father as the president of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, recalled how "unassuming" the musician was.

"Even though Bev was 10 years older than my father, he never acted his age," said Franklin Graham. "He was absolute fun to be with."

In 2004, when he was sidelined by a heart attack, Shea had to miss Graham's evangelistic event in Kansas City, Mo. It was the first time in 57 years that he had missed a crusade.

One of his last public appearances with Graham was in 2010, when the ministry celebrated its 60th anniversary.

Even in his later years, Shea awed listeners with his continuing ability to sing his signature songs. Martin heard him sing in Dallas in 2002, when he would have been 93.

"I commented on how remarkable it was," Martin recalled, "and he said, 'I think I sounded better when I was 90.'" (RNS)

Kevin Eckstrom contributed to this report.

Summerall, Christian sportscaster, dies at 82

DALLAS—Pat Summerall, the famed NFL broadcaster, died April 16 in Dallas of cardiac arrest at age 82. He had been in a Dallas hospital following surgery for a broken hip.

After 10 years in the NFL as a kicker, Summerall spent more than 40 years calling NFL games for CBS and FOX, first with analyst Tom Brookshier and then most notably with analyst John Madden.

Much of Summerall's early career was characterized by alcoholism and abandonment of his family.

After a family intervention in 1992, Summerall entered rehab at the Betty Ford Clinic. At the clinic, Summerall not only found freedom from alcohol, he also encountered the grace of God.

"My thirst for alcohol was being replaced by a thirst for knowledge about faith and God," Summerall wrote in his autobiography. "I began reading the Bible regularly ... and the more I read, the more I felt a void in my life that needed to be filled."

He was later baptized at First Baptist Church in Euless, Texas. Summerall described emerging from the water as if resurfacing to a new world.

"(F)or the first time in my life, I knew what people meant about being 'born again,'" Summerall wrote. "I had already accepted that Jesus Christ was the Son of God who died for our sins. Now, I felt I was truly part of his family. I felt ecstatic, invigorated, happier, and freer. It felt as though my soul had been washed clean." (BP)

Pastors doubt global warming is manmade, but still recycle

By Russ Rankin

Nashville, Tenn.—While many churches are acting "green," the majority of pastors disagree that global warming is real and manmade. The percentage of skeptics has dropped since 2010, but the percentage is still higher than in 2008, according to a survey by LifeWay Research.

The October 2012 survey of Protestant pastors' views of environmental issues shows Protestant pastors in the Northeast, older pastors, and pastors self-identifying as Democrats tend to be more environmentally active compared to younger pastors, Republicans, and counterparts in other regions of the country.

Consistent in the LifeWay Research findings of 2012, 2010 and 2008 is that about a quarter of pastors say they speak on the environment to their churches "several times a year." The percentage of pastors who say they rarely speak on the environment decreased in 2012 to 34 percent. Fifteen percent of pastors say they never speak on the environment.

Global warming

When asked to respond to the statement: "I believe global warming is real and man made," 43 percent of pastors affirm the statement (up from 36 percent in 2010 but lower than the 47 percent in 2008), while 54 percent disagree. The percentage disagreeing is higher than in 2008 (48 percent), but lower than 2010,

when 60 percent disagreed global warming is real and man made.

The views of pastors also parallel the opinion trend among Americans. According to the Pew Research Center, the percentage of Americans who say the earth is warming because of human activity has rebounded from the low of 34 percent in 2010 to 42 percent in October 2012 and March 2013, which is still lower than the 2008 total of 47 percent.

"Pastor opinions on global warming reflect their own political beliefs," said Scott McConnell, director of LifeWay Research. "The pendulum of public and pastor opinions on man-made global warming is swinging back toward agreement but still lacks a majority. For some, the terminology has shifted, and environmentalists now speak of 'climate change.'"

The survey also reveals pastors age 65 or older put more stock in the validity of global warming over their younger counterparts. This group is more likely (32 percent) than pastors age 45-54 (20 percent) and 18-44 (19 percent) to strongly agree with the statement: "I believe global warming is real and man-made."

Recycling

According to the LifeWay Research survey, less than half (45 percent) of pastors agree their church has taken tangible steps to reduce their carbon footprint.

Similar to other responses, efforts in

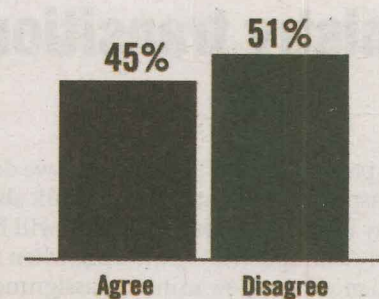
reducing carbon footprints are highest among Democrats and those large cities. Pastors who identify as Democrat are more likely than pastors who identify as Republican to strongly agree (34 percent vs. 8 percent). Pastors in large cities are also more likely (22 percent) to strongly agree compared to those in small cities (12 percent) and rural areas (11 percent).

Recycling programs—one of the main ways individuals and organizations attempt to reduce their carbon footprint—is well-established among churches. More than 60 percent of Protestant pastors say their church has an active recycling program in place at their church building while a third (34 percent) do not.

"Saving the world" may mean different things to an environmentalist than to a pastor," McConnell noted. "Yet many churches are actively engaged in proclaiming spiritual salvation at the same

Survey of 1,000 Protestant Pastors

Our church has taken tangible steps to reduce our carbon footprint.



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time they are being environmentally conscious and engaged in creation care."

The survey was conducted in the fall 2012 by phone interview with 1,000 pastors. (LifeWay/BP)

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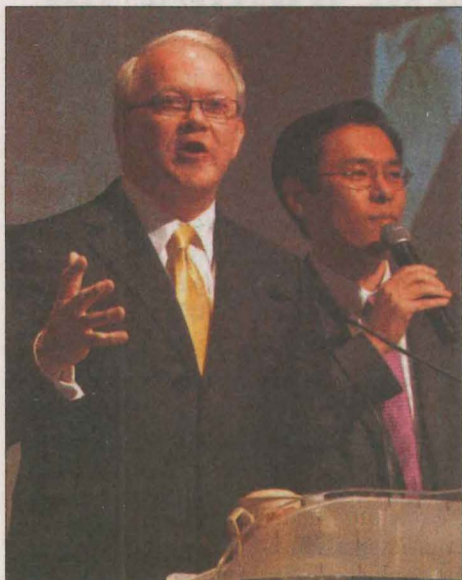
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Page: SBC making 'headway' electing more ethnic leaders



DIVERSITY Frank Page, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee, preaches during the April 8-10 Korean Global Mission Conference, with Sung Choe, pastor of First Baptist Church in Tacoma, Wash., serving as translator. (BP/Jim Burton)

By Jim Burton

Suwanee, Ga.—Fred Luter's election as the first African American president of the Southern Baptist Convention was more than symbolic. For Frank Page, president of the SBC's Executive Committee, it represents the future.

"I want our leadership to look like our convention," Page said.

In meeting with Korean-American Southern Baptist pastors at the April 8-10

Korean Global Mission Conference, Page said his commitment to broader leadership has deepened.

"I think we're making headway," Page added. "With every breath I have I'm going to encourage that."

Page recently learned from the SBC Committee on Nominations that Southern Baptists will have the largest number of Native Americans ever nominated to serve on SBC boards and key committees.

Of the approximately 45,000-plus Southern Baptist churches and church-type missions, about 10,000 are ethnic congregations. Percentage-wise, non-Anglo churches represent the fastest-growing segments within the SBC.

Dennis Kim, senior pastor of Global Mission Church of Greater Washington, D.C., welcomes Page's overtures.

"As I've observed for a long period of time, it's changing," Kim noted concerning the involvement of ethnic leaders. "I feel we are connected to the mainstream of the SBC."

Kim represents the expanded leadership involvement that Page welcomes. Global Mission Church has started multiple churches in North America, plus one in South Korea that has up to 35,000 attendees each Sunday.

For Kim's generation of Korean-American pastors, there is a strong sense of history that connects them to the SBC. Besides Southern Baptist missionaries who took the gospel to South Korea, Kim noted how Anglo churches gave or rented space to Korean church plants.

"We are indebted to American leaders

and churches for their support for our own churches in America," Kim said.

Sung Ho Kim, chairman of the Council of Korean Southern Baptist Churches, also welcomes closer bonds to the SBC.

"We are trying to be closer to each other," said Kim, pastor of Livingston Baptist Church in Dallas. "That's what I want myself. Most of our Korean Baptist churches are very appreciative of the SBC."

Page recognizes the need for intentional progress, and that progress may not be easy. Cross-cultural relations often results in misunderstandings. That's why he is increasing opportunities for dialogue.

Already, Page has formed advisory councils among African American and Hispanic leaders. Working with Kevin Ezell and the North American Mission Board he leads, Page announced the appointment of an Asian Advisory Council in February, which held its first meeting April 11.

Page sees relationships as the key to growing a diverse leadership base. Rather than some type of quota system, Page prefers to "chart a course of deepening involvement."

"I've asked our leaders to look for qualified ethnic brothers and sisters," Page said. "Please be intentional to enlist those dear ones."

Ethnic churches typically have not embraced the Cooperative Program at the same level as many Anglo churches. CP is Southern Baptists' channel of support for state, national and international

missions, education and other ministries. Instead, ethnic churches in the SBC often have directed the larger portion of their missions giving through their respective ethnic fellowships. However, Page found Korean-American pastors open to the CP challenge.

Pastors like Kim have seen the benefit of investing in the Cooperative Program. Southern Baptists' International Mission Board has appointed more than 51 individuals from Global Mission Church. CP and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering help support those families. (BP)

'1Cross' app spreads gospel via multiple-language testimonies

Grapevine, Texas—The "1Cross" app, which debuted March 5, is a free mobile device download that provides access three-minute gospel testimonies in video form using native speakers of 40 languages.

Developer Nathan Lorick, of Malakoff, Texas, said he hopes to have 100 language testimonies uploaded by year's end. So far, the app has been downloaded about 2,500 times with very little promotion.

Lorick said he is praying the tool will be used to share the gospel not only in Texas, but worldwide.

The app is available for iPhone and Android devices. To download, visit 1Cross.com. (BP)

Boston bombing

Continued from page 1

the church's pastor, Curtis Cook, said.

Steckel's team from Prestonwood was back out on the streets the day after the bombings, handing out granola bars, this time with signs on their bags that said, "Need prayer? We are available." That simple invitation afforded several opportunities to pray with people and share the hope of Jesus, Steckel said.

'God's grace'

Josh Wyatt, pastor of Charles River Church in Boston, landed at Boston's Logan Airport just half an hour after the bombings and expected his wife and three children to be at the finish line to support one of their friends who was running. He was going to meet them there.

"By God's grace, church members talked my wife out of going because the crowds would be too challenging to navigate by herself with three young kids. Instead, she picked me up at the airport, we prayed with our children and began supporting victims and their loved ones and hurting Boston residents," Wyatt said.

Wideman said the convention has reached out to crisis incident management officials and others who would need trained chaplains and pastors to help people process the bombings.

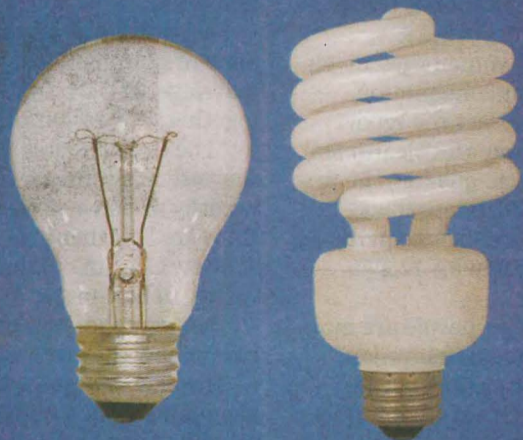
"We are always looking for ways to build bridges to people who may not know Christ," Wideman said. "It's brought up a lot of questions and I know that our church planters and our pastors and other lay people will have the opportunity to visit with neighbors and with friends."

Already, the convention's WMU president has been able to counsel a neighbor who came to her with questions after the bombings, he said. "We just want to be sensitive when the opportunity arises to speak a word of hope because of Jesus into the lives of people who have been affected," Wideman said.

There are about 100 churches that cooperate with the Greater Boston Baptist Association, Wideman said. (BP)

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It's good to be a Kentucky Baptist

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It is good to be a Christian. It is good to be a Baptist. It is good to be a Southern Baptist. It is good to be a Kentucky Baptist. Let me share how and why it is good for us at Oneida Baptist Institute.

- It is good to share a faith in our God and Savior Jesus Christ, to be fed and taught by His holy, infallible word, and to share in the work of the Lord under the enabling and leading of His Spirit.

- It is good to share a divine commission to preach the gospel and make disciples, which reaches not just across the commonwealth or across the country, but includes every nation, every people, every kindred and every tongue.

- It is good to be welcomed by the entire Kentucky Baptist Convention, missions committee, various associations and individual churches, and to share those things that the Lord is doing in our midst with those who prayerfully and financially support our ministry.

- It is good to deposit the KBC Cooperative Program funds into our OBI bank account so that the school fees of our students can be minimized in order to remove financial barriers that might keep away students who need the Lord's ministry through OBI.

- It is good when students who are in a situation of critical personal need, but who are far away from us, are able to contact nearby pastors and find them willing to minister the love and comfort of Christ to those about whom we inform them.

- It is good when other Southern Baptist Convention or KBC institutions share with us information about possible sources of funding.

- It is good to be able to share locally in the celebration of the worldwide scope of the Savior's work as we, Lord willing, plan to do in May by participating in the Woman's Missionary Union's 125th Anniversary celebration and parade in London, Ky.

- It is good to be contacted by a sister institution and to be able to accept their offer of ministry to our students as happened recently when the Boyce College Choir visited our campus to lead in chapel worship

and to present a powerful assembly program of scripture and song.

- It is good when our related churches send their volunteer teams to assist us in some of the crucial behind-the-scenes work that forms the foundation and the framework within which the more obvious aspects of our ministry to our students occur.

- It is good to open the envelopes containing financial contributions from generous, supporting individuals and churches which supply the physical needs of the ministry, and to write "thank you" letters in return.

- It is good because you and others read the Western Recorder and then pray and participate in the ministry as the Lord leads you.

- It is good, because the Lord is good!

This is Oneida



Paul Davidson

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

Happy birthday, Brother Bill

Celebrating William Rogers' 90th year of life

I recently was privileged to attend a birthday celebration for William Rogers who turned 90 years old. Brother Bill, as he is known to many, has been a great friend to Clear Creek Baptist Bible College over the years.

I have been privileged to know Brother Bill for about 10 years through my service with the school. I have always enjoyed spending time with him whenever I had a chance to visit. It doesn't take long to realize that he has lived a life dedicated to his Lord, his family, and the call God placed on his heart.

During the birthday celebration Brother Bill shared a brief testimony of how the Lord has worked and blessed him throughout his life. He told how supportive his family was of his call to the ministry and how God had blessed him while pastor to several churches.

In 1971, Brother Bill said God moved him from the pastorate to the Kentucky Baptist Convention in 1971, where he worked in racial reconciliation. Brother Bill retired from KBC in 1990.

Brother Bill's impact through his ministry was evident as I watched and listened to the large crowd that had

gathered to honor him on his birthday.

When Brother Bill retired, the Clear Creek Baptist Bible College Board of Trustees established the William H. Rogers Scholarship in honor of his outstanding service to Kentucky Baptists, especially in the work of racial reconciliation. Over the years, this scholarship has helped many of our ethnic students fulfill the ministry calling God has placed on their lives. These students are very appreciative of the funds they receive from this scholarship.

Brother Bill's commitment to Christian higher education is evident in his own life as he has continuously contributed to this

scholarship. He always encourages his ministry friends and extended families to remember this scholarship fund, as he did during his recent 90th birthday celebration. The impact of his ministry is evident once again as we are continuously receiving gifts for this scholarship.

Thank you, Brother Bill for your commitment to Kentucky Baptists and Clear Creek Baptist Bible College.

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

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

What women really want: 'Christian men worth waiting for'

By Thomas Hardesty

Asheville, N.C.—The four Christian women are all pretty and socially active. But they're all single. With college graduation not too far away, these unattached women joke about adopting 50 cats from the shelter to ensure they won't die alone.

Behind the jokes lies a serious situation many Christian women face today. They must either lower their standards for a mate so they can settle down now or hold to their faith as they pine for what is becoming an endangered species: Christian men worth waiting for.

In 1991, the average marrying age for women was 24. Today, it's 26.5. Evangelical leaders say the trend is not much different among young Christians. Some of the blame for delaying marriage falls on women, with many wanting to spend time working and living a life of independence before settling down. But Christian women who want to marry young say men stuck in perpetual adolescence are a bigger part of the problem.

What do these four women want most? A man with a close relationship with God and a life that shows it.

Mark Gallagher, senior campus minister at Indiana State University's Christian Student Fellowship since 1978, sees fewer students pairing up in college than when he first started in student ministry. Gallagher says only a handful are in serious relationships.

While part of the lack of marriage-ready graduates can be attributed to

social changes, Gallagher said it's not exactly an even playing field for singles. Women are at a disadvantage because they simply outnumber men in ministry. Regular attendance, volunteer events and small groups all serve as testimony to the overwhelmingly female majority in ministry, Gallagher said.

Greg Belcher, singles pastor at Hope Community Church in Raleigh, N.C., said the church could do more to meet young men where they are and encourage them to step out of perpetual adolescence. Belcher said the slow economy and lack of job prospects has left many recent college graduates unable to fulfill the role of provider. Until their financial situation stabilizes, "these guys know they're just playing a game until they get there. It's unfortunate, too," Belcher said.

"They have to see the church as an institution that doesn't emasculate them but rather as a movement of God that emboldens them," Belcher says.

The mindset of "all the good Christian men are taken," no matter how accurate, can become a self-fulfilling prophecy, Belcher said. Christian women who are exasperated with the lack of eligible men risk becoming so self-reliant they scare men off. And being single for years can leave women jaded, prompting decrying everything related to men.

Knowledge of a future relationship, a promised answer to prayer is real, but hard to see and hard to hold on to, the women said. (BP)

Adapted from a story by WORLD News Service.

Cohabitation becoming more common

By Sharon Jayson

Unmarried couples who live together are staying together longer than in the past—and more of them are having children, according to new federal data that details just how cohabitation is transforming families across the U.S.

For almost half of women ages 15-44, their "first union" was cohabitation rather than marriage, says the report from the National Center for Health Statistics. For less than one-quarter, the first union was marriage. The report was based on in-person interviews conducted between 2006 and 2010 with 12,279 women ages 15-44.

"Instead of marriage, people are moving into cohabitation as a first union," said demographer Casey Copen, the report's lead author. "It's kind of a ubiquitous phenomenon now."

Although cohabitation and fertility have been reviewed previously, Copen said this report is the first analyzing the relationship between the two, and the first from the federal government to give detailed data on how long cohabiting relationships last. Among the findings:

- As a first union, 48 percent of women cohabited with their male partner, up from 43 percent in 2002 and 34 percent in 1995.

- 23 percent of first unions were marriages, down from 30 percent in 2002 and 39 percent in 1995. The percentage of women who cohabited as a first union increased for all races and ethnic groups,

except Asian women.

- 22 months is the median duration of first cohabitation, up from 20 months in 2002 and 13 months in 1995.

- One in five women (19 percent) became pregnant in the first year of a first premarital cohabitation.

- Within three years of cohabiting, 40 percent of women had transitioned to marriage; 32 percent remained living together; 27 percent had broken up.

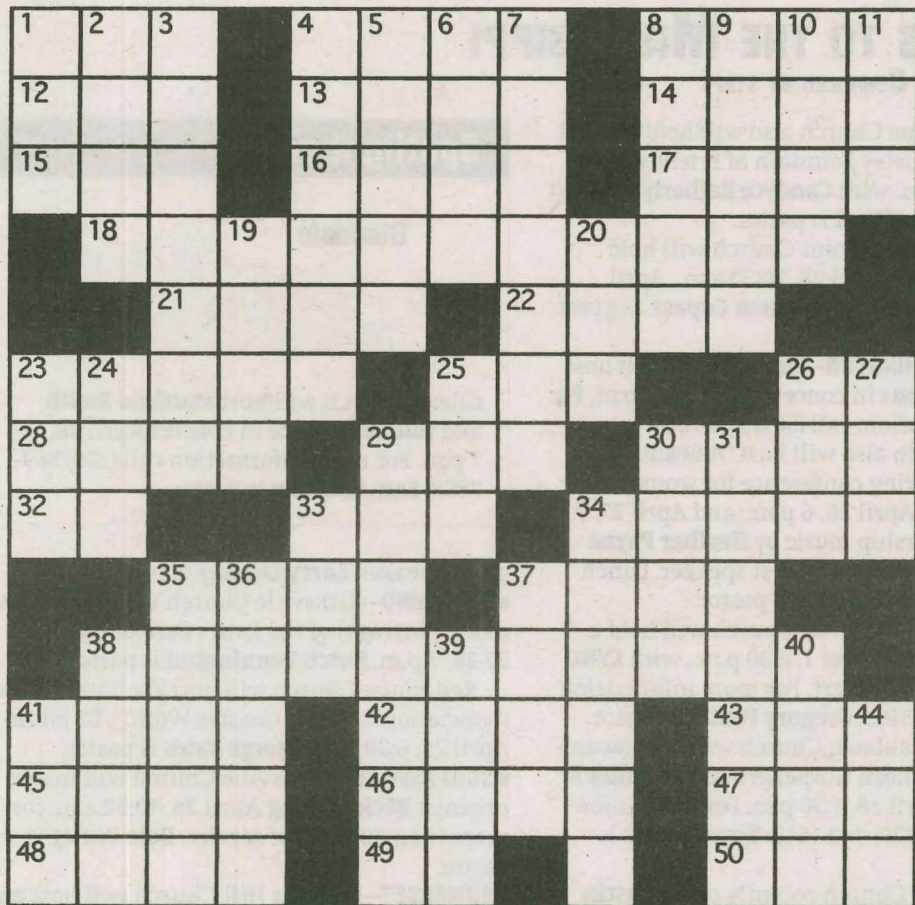
"The United States has long had the shortest cohabiting relationships of any wealthy nation and now these relationships are lengthening," said sociologist Andrew Cherlin of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.

Demographers say education plays a role in how these relationships play out.

The new data show 70 percent of women without a high school diploma cohabited as a first union, compared with 47 percent of those with a bachelor's degree or higher. Among women ages 22-44 with higher education, their cohabitations were more likely to transition to marriage within three years (53 percent), compared with 30 percent for those who didn't graduate high school.

"What we're seeing here is the emergence of children within cohabiting unions among the working class and the poor," Cherlin said. "They have high standards for marriage and they don't think they can meet them for now, but increasingly, it's not stopping them from having a child." (RNS)

Sharon Jayson writes for USA Today.



#158

Bible Crosswords

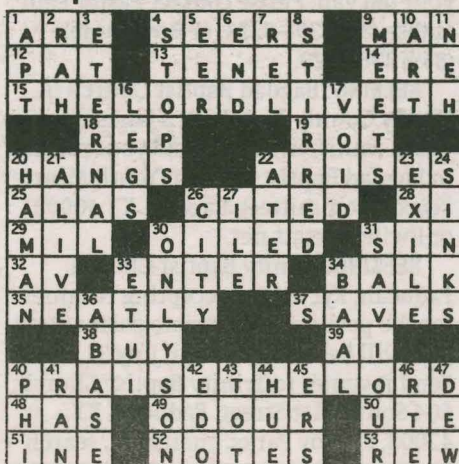
By Evelyn Boyington

Across

- 1 Insect indicated in Deuteronomy 1:44
- 4 Clothes
- 8 Book division
- 12 Son of Abijam and good king of Judah
- 13 Medicinal plant
- 14 One of David's valiant men: _____ the Ahohite (1 Chronicles 11:29)
- 15 Affirmative
- 16 Blue or White
- 17 Sets goals
- 18 "For he is Lord of lords, and _____ (3 words)" (Revelation 17:14)
- 21 Members of conger family
- 22 "His bones are like bars of _____" (Job 40:18)
- 23 Debris
- 25 African antelope
- 26 Apiece (abbr.)
- 28 "The _____ are a people not strong" (Proverbs 30:25)
- 29 Child's play
- 30 Fine-feathered filler
- 32 Empire state (abbr.)
- 33 Reporter's question
- 34 Pulled along
- 35 "The day dawn, and the day _____ arise in your hearts" (2 Peter 1:19)
- 37 Horse or brake
- 38 Powerful acclamation of Jesus (3 words) (1 Timothy 6)
- 41 Add to the payroll
- 42 Father of Amos (Luke 3:25)
- 43 Shanty
- 45 Before (prefix)
- 46 Priest who "brought the law" (Nehemiah 8)
- 47 Wrath
- 48 Postparty scene
- 49 Quadrant of D.C.
- 50 "Be strong, and quit yourselves like _____" (1 Samuel 4:9)

- 9 Straighten, as a column
- 10 Drives into
- 11 Poetic contraction
- 19 New Jersey pros
- 20 Son of Caleb (1 Chronicles 4:15)
- 23 Pale
- 24 "If _____ of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God" (James 1:5)
- 25 Enola _____
- 26 Nathan told David the story of the _____ lamb
- 27 Conjunction
- 29 "By him were all things created ... whether they be _____, or dominions" (Colossians 1:16)
- 30 "Behold, the judge standeth before the _____" (James 5:9)
- 31 "One was brought unto him, which _____ (2 words) ten thousand talents" (Matthew 18:24)
- 33 Lump sum
- 34 Doubting disciple
- 35 Sifts, like socks
- 36 Ash, and others
- 37 Disparaging remark
- 38 "Their _____ is gone out through all the earth" (Psalm 19:4)
- 39 Bother
- 40 "Be ye _____ of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you" (Luke 10:11)
- 41 Son of Noah
- 44 "Your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages _____ times" (Genesis 31:7)

Last puzzle's solution #157



Down

- 1 Hudson, for one
- 2 "He called the name of the well _____; because they strove with him" (Genesis 26:20)
- 3 Most direct, as a route
- 4 To make a knot
- 5 Medleys
- 6 Volkswagen vehicle
- 7 "I come _____ fruit on this fig tree, and find none" (Luke 13:7)
- 8 _____ forte

'Biggest' summer yet

Gearing up for another summer of bringing people closer to Christ

It is a busy time of year for Crossings as we get ready for camp at Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek properties, and another season with Kentucky Changers and Crossings in Haiti. We are gearing up for one of our biggest summers yet. We could not be more grateful for the opportunity to partner with churches to make disciples and equip leaders from all across our nation and around the world.

We firmly believe that God still uses the ministry of camp to reach students for Christ. We have seen a number of students each year give their hearts to Christ and many times are able to see those same students return year after year and grow in their faith. While it's not the blob, bazooka ball or messy games that are the most important part of camp, we intentionally use these to break down barriers in an effort to share the most important aspect of our camps: The gospel.

We want to create an environment where our guests can come to know Christ or more fully experience Him.

Through powerful teaching, in-depth Bible study, small group times with low student-to-leader ratios, zip lines and other activities, we are able to communicate the gospel over and over each day to students and adults.

We do not take this mission lightly. Each summer we know it is through Christ alone we are able to serve and proclaim the gospel that has changed our lives and those He brings our way. As believers, we are called to share the good news and to be the fragrance of Christ (2 Cor. 2:15) and that is what drives every aspect of this ministry.

For as long as the Lord allows us to share the gospel and build relationships through the context of camp ministry, we will do so and have fun doing it. We have our hands to the plow and we will not let up. We will not back down until we hear Him say, "Well done."

Please pray for us as we continue to prepare for those we will see and serve this summer. We cannot wait.

Crossings Ministries



David Melber

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

Miles of Pennies

Campaign benefits both the children who give and receive

One of the obligations we have as parents is to pass along our faith to the children and young people in our lives. That includes teaching children how to give generously to others in need.

Sunrise Children's Services has created a fun way for families, Sunday School classes and youth groups to learn the importance and joy of giving. Our Miles of Pennies campaign raises funds for the thousands of abused and neglected children we care for each year.

A new campaign launched in April through a partnership with Republic Bank, which has agreed to match the donations of change collected in jars located at their branches across Kentucky. We also set a goal to enlist the help of at least 100 additional churches or groups to take part in our Miles of Pennies campaign in 2013.

It takes 84,840 pennies laid end to end to stretch a mile. Kids will enjoy the thrill of watching their donations add up. Of course, bringing in those

nickels, dimes and quarters will allow them to reach their goal more quickly, and some friendly competition with other classes or churches can make the event even more fun.

Sunrise has enlisted the help of our animated friend Penny Miles to lead the way in this campaign. Log onto www.pennymiles.org to view a very creative animated feature starring Penny as she challenges kids to join her in helping Kentucky's children.

This website also will tell you all you need to know about the Miles of Pennies campaign and how to participate. Or, you can contact Sunrise's Carmen Gibson at (502) 538-1046 for more details or email directly at cgibson@sunrise.org.

Proceeds from this campaign benefit the children we care for each day at Sunrise, but the children in your church will benefit from learning to share their faith and their blessings with others less fortunate. The life lessons learned by their participation will stretch much more than a mile.

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

Sunrise Children's Services



Bill Smithwick

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MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF



April

- 24 Senior Living Celebration, Zion Baptist Church, Henderson.
- 26 Sub-Sahara Disaster Relief and Community Development Training, Highview Baptist Church-East Campus, Louisville.
- 26 English as a Second Language Training, Oak Grove Baptist Church, Monticello.
- 27 Children's State Bible Drill, New Hope Baptist Church, Cadiz.
- 27 Children's State Bible Drill, Calvary Baptist Church, Lexington.

May

- 4 Children's State Bible Drill, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

- **CADIZ**—New Hope Church will host the State Children's Bible Drill April 27, 9 a.m. **Mark Thweatt** is pastor.
- **DANVILLE**—Junction City First Church has called **David Sergeant** as pastor.
- **EDDYVILLE**—Bethany Church will hold revival services April 28-May 1 with **Don Moore** as guest speaker. **John Mitchell** is pastor.
- **EKRON**—Buck Grove Church will hold revival services April 21-24, 7 p.m. with **Jammie Vance** as guest speaker. **Dave Campbell** is pastor.
- **GARRETT**—First Church will hold revival services April 26-28 with **Dave Hammond** as guest speaker. **Randy Osborne** is pastor.
- **GREENVILLE**—Second Church will hold 30-Hour Famine April 26-27.

Second Church also will present **Priscilla Shirer Live Simulcast** April 27, 8 a.m. Admission cost includes lunch. For more information, call (270) 338-6160. **Ray England** is pastor.

■ **LONDON**—First Church will host the Laurel River Association Colossal Coaster World VBS clinic April 27, 9 a.m. **Terry Lester** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Green Acres Church will hold an oil change for single moms April 27, 1 p.m. **Phil Ellis** is pastor.

Hurstbourne Church will hold a Kentucky Derby Half/Full Marathon Free Community Pasta Dinner April 26, 7 p.m. with goodie bags, massages and a guest speaker.

Hurstbourne Church also will hold annual Women's Ministry Fountain of Friendships April 26, 7 p.m. with **Candyce Eatherly** as guest speaker. **Mike O'Neal** is pastor.

■ **MAYFIELD**—High Point Church will hold revival services April 28, 10:30 a.m., April 27-May 1, 6 p.m., with **Wyman Copass** as guest speaker.

■ **MOUNT WASHINGTON**—First Church will host **The Inspirations** in concert April 25, 7 p.m. For more information, call (502) 538-7361.

First Church also will host "A Beautiful Exchange" spring conference for women and young adults April 26, 6 p.m., and April 27, 9 a.m., with worship music by **Heather Payne** and **Christine Gates** as guest speaker. Lunch provided. **Billy Compton** is pastor.

■ **OWENSBORO**—Bellevue Church will hold a Teen Prayer Rally May 1, 6:30 p.m., with **LYNC Praise Band** in concert. For more information call (270) 685-5103. **Gregory Faulis** is pastor.

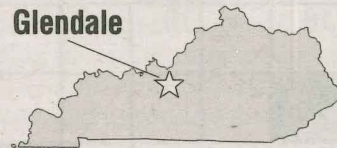
■ **PADUCAH**—Oaklawn Church will host award-winning Southern Gospel group **The Talley's** in concert April 28, 1:30 p.m. For more information, call (270) 442-1513. **Royce Dukes** is pastor.

Rosebower Church recently called **Justin Mason** as pastor.

West End Church will hold revival services April 23-24, 6 p.m., with **Kenneth Puckett** as

Spotlight on ...

Glendale



Gilead Church will host **Matthew Smith** and **Indelible Grace** in concert April 28, 7 p.m. For more information call (270) 369-7868. **Sam Hinkson** is pastor.

guest speaker. **Larry Lindsey** is pastor.

■ **RICHMOND**—Kirksville Church will hold a dramatic portrayal of the Lord's Supper April 27-28, 7 p.m. **Butch Pennington** is pastor.

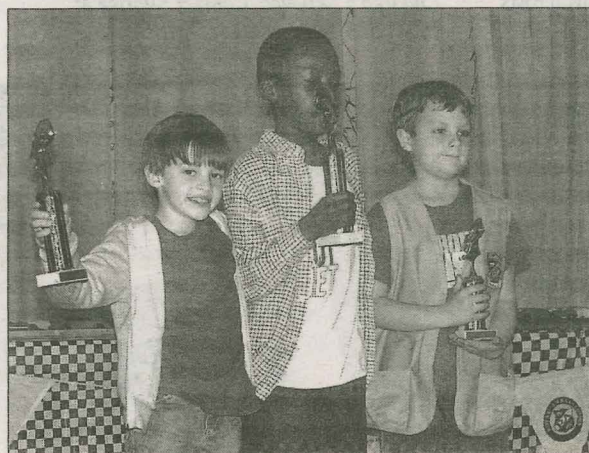
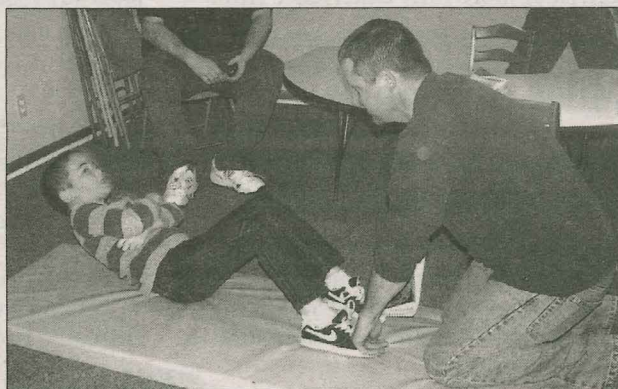
Red House Church will host the Tates Creek Association Colossal Coaster World VBS clinic April 25, 6:30 p.m. **George Yates** is pastor.

■ **SCOTTSVILLE**—Scottsville Church will honor organist **Becky Boling** April 28, 10:50 a.m. for more than 40 years of service. **Dale Darley** is pastor.

■ **SOMERSET**—Pleasant Hill Church will host an appreciation dinner in honor of **C.E. Jacobs**, Pulaski Association interim Director of Missions, April 26, 7 p.m. **Paul Hines** is pastor.

RAMCON 2013

RAMCON, which stands for Royal Ambassador Missions Congress, drew Lads and Crusaders from across the state for a one-day event at Elkton Baptist Church, in Elkton.



RAMCON featured Royal Racer competitions, missionary speakers, a Missions Fitness Challenge, and the opportunity to participate in a missions project. Speakers were **Mark Hobson**, an International Mission Board Catalytic Connector, who facilitates church planting in the urban centers of Colombia and **Ron Leonard**, who serves with his wife, **Marilyn**, as military missionaries with the North American Mission Board at Fort Campbell. (Photos provided by **Jon Auten**)

Hockensmith, former SBC Exec. Board member, dies

Lexington—Hoge Hockensmith, former Southern Baptist Convention Executive Board member who helped draft the Baptist Faith and Message, died April 10. He was 87.

Hockensmith served on the SBC Executive Board in 1963. Ten years later he accepted the pastorate at Broadway Baptist Church in Lexington and remained until his retirement in 1991. He was known for "Joy In the Morning," which aired on local radio for 15 years.

He is survived by his wife, **Nora Lee**,

three children, five grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Polk, Elkhorn DOM, dies

Lexington—Harold Polk, director of missions of Elkhorn Baptist Association, died March 22. He was 91.

Polk served with association for 22 years. He was a member and former pastor of Gardenside Baptist Church in Lexington and was previously pastor of Dry Run Baptist Church in Georgetown and Revelation Missionary Baptist Church in Vine Grove.

He is survived by his wife, **Dorothy**, a son and two grandchildren.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR RENT: Two condos for rent in Destin, Fla. Two bedrooms, two bathrooms and sofa bed. Available all year. May special is \$495 for a full week. lbrammer@charter.net. (423) 309-4422.

FOR RENT: Get-away condo in Myrtle Beach, S.C. Beautiful, two bedrooms, two bathrooms, sofa bed. Go to www.MBVacationCondo.com, or call (803) 566-0214.

NEEDED: Jeffersonville Baptist Church, Jeffersonville, Ky., is in need of a van, 15-passenger, no CDL, or a bus style van. Would be interested in either. If your church has a van you are no longer using or are updating, we may be interested in your old van. Please contact Pastor Paul Hubbs (859) 398-8231, or Roy Trimble (859) 398-8829.

SEEKING: Bagdad Baptist Church in Shelby County is seeking a part-time youth minister. Please send your resumé to Bagdad Baptist Church (Youth Minister Search Committee), Bagdad, KY 40003, or kwiley83@att.net.

SEEKING: Trinity Baptist Church, Paducah, Ky., is now accepting resumé for the position of associate pastor. Resumé will be accepted until July 31, 2013. Send resumé to Trinity Baptist Church, 604 South 21st Street, Paducah, KY 42003, c/o Roy Parks, chairman, search team.

To place an advertisement in the Western Recorder:

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: Parkland Baptist Church is seeking a full-time minister of music to lead worship, age/graded music programs, choirs and orchestra. Resumé can be sent to Personnel Committee, 7206 Shepherdsville Road, Louisville, KY 40219.

SEEKING: Pleasant Grove Baptist Church is Shepherdsville, Ky., is accepting resumé for the following position: Part-time young adult minister (targeting college and career ages). Send resumé to youngadultmin@pgbc.net. Deadline is April 26.

SEEKING: Kentucky Southern Baptist church, approximately 200 active members, is seeking a full-time Southern Baptist pastor. Send resumé and DVD to M.J. Schopp, P.O. Box 18378, Erlanger, KY 41018, or 1tim3.2013@gmail.com.

5 Ways to make the most of retirement

By Steve Silver

Naples, Fla.—I recently saw the movie “Quartet.” This directorial debut by Dustin Hoffman caught me off guard. I expected a pleasant afternoon edifying dialogue wrapped in a

story about a retirement home for gifted musicians. I got that and more—an acceptance of my own future. Let me explain.

At 65, I’m very aware of the phase of life I’ve entered. But I’m still fragmented. Wasn’t it just a few years ago that a young Steve saw a young Dustin star in his first major role? How could the young Dustin now be 75 and directing a movie about old people? How could I be 65 and watching his movie? Impossible!

Quartet’s central character is Jean Horton, portrayed by 78-year-old Maggie Smith. Jean is an aging opera diva who resents moving to Beecham House. The movie chronicles Jean’s gradual acceptance and even love for her new “old” family.

Accepting my age reality and learning how to live forward and make the most of my “retirement years” on emotional and spiritual levels is a matter of attitude adjustments. Maybe you’re stuck betwixt and between, too. So, I’m directing these “Five Ways” to both of us.

1

“Cross over.”

We need to realize when we’ve come into the sunset phase of our life and embrace that with positive anticipation. The rest of our life can be the best of our life. Everything in our culture shouts “youth is good, old age is bad.” So, we try to hold on to youth (in more ways than can be catalogued here) long after it’s left us. We do this not because we prefer youth, but because we fear and resent aging.

And what is it that bothers us? Sure, the inconvenience of physical ailments and restricted lifestyles are real to be sure. However, I believe the core problem with the old age “brand” is the morbidity of deterioration and death associated with it. So, we buy into the “young is good, old is bad” lie. I contend “young is good, old is better.”

2

Live in eternity’s sunrise.

The English poet William Blake (1757-1827) wrote, “He who binds to himself a joy does the winged life destroy; But he who kisses the joy as it flies lives in eternity’s sunrise.” If Blake was commenting in this article, he might advise us to look forward to eternal life and not grasp too firmly the joys we’ve known here. Hard to do if your memories are fond, tender, precious ones of loved ones past and present. Memories should not, however, be the primary fuel that propels us forward. Their proper place is the beautiful scenery on our journey, not the destination.

This attitude, of course, can only apply if we believe that eternal life with Christ is better than this earthly one. As aging Christians you and I have the assurance that the love and joy we’ve known here is a mere foretaste of what

3

Love the one you’re with.

If you’ve been married a long time, you’ll probably be together until one of you dies. You know things about each other that no one else does and care more about each other than anyone else does. But it’s a double-edged sword. Familiarity can breed contempt. It’s easy to take each other for granted and allow behavior we wouldn’t tolerate from or impose on others. We must guard against rude, presumptuous behavior toward our life partner. We take our spouse for granted at our own peril.

Give this person you married with such youthful enthusiasm the very best attention and tender care, all the time and without exception or excuse. If you can’t be consistent, quickly acknowledge your error and ask him or her for

forgiveness. Even when your youth and middle years are behind you, it’s never too late to change. Make this covenant together. You’ll both be surprised by the transforming power of this simple principle.

4

Love others closest to you.

Maybe you’ve noticed that often the older you get, the smaller is the circle of those with whom you’d prefer to spend a lot of time. There’s your spouse and family, but there are other people in your life. Quickly make a list of them. Your family members come easily, but they aren’t necessarily the ones with whom you are now spending most of your time. Pay attention to whom you’re putting on that list and begin (if you don’t already) loving those people more.

Put aside silly irritations, forgive past and present offenses, think on their finer qualities. Pray for them and their needs. Bring up your faith with them. Most will appreciate your concerns and interest. Put aside sarcasm and competitively-

charged behaviors when you’re with them. Ask God to give you the capacity to love them as He does and to see them as He does. You’ll be amazed at the change in their lives—and yours.

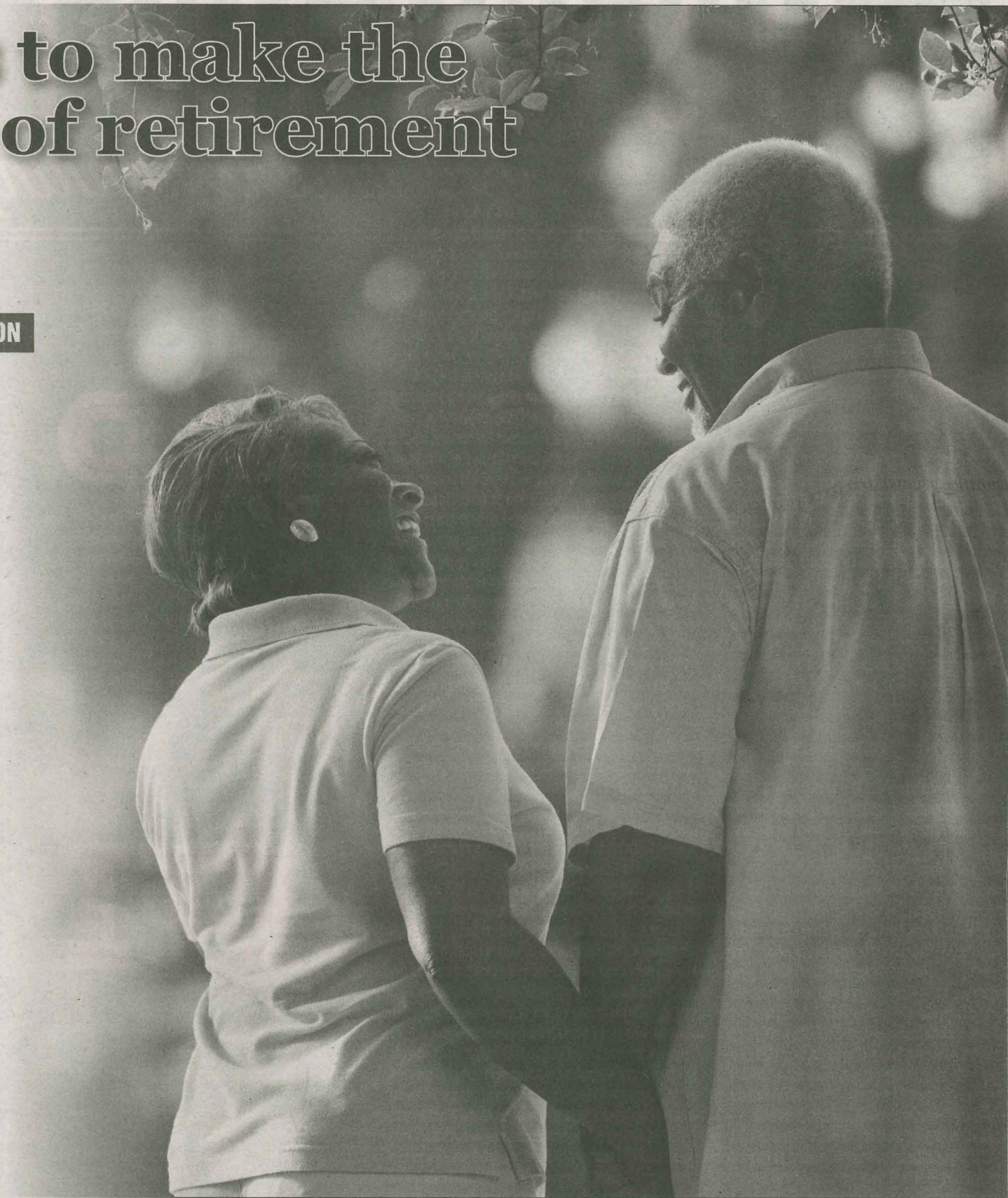
5

Be prepared.

You are going to die. Your spouse is going to die. Your friends are going to die. You know this, they know it, and it will happen sooner than expected—maybe even for you. If you’ve successfully adopted the attitudes prescribed above, you’ll look upon death as a joyful conclusion to a life of relationships cultivated for and with the Lord.

We should have been living our entire lives like this—as if each day was our last day on earth. Not many of us have done that, but it’s not too late to start. Each day is a blank sheet of paper. Make this the very best day you’ve ever lived. Be prepared. This isn’t all there is.

Steve Silver is a semi-retired management consultant, Founder of Men’s Golf Fellowship and author of “New Man Journey.”



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