

# WESTERN Recorder

May 14, 2013

Shine Like Stars \* Philippians 2:15

Volume 187, Issue 19

## Mission Board takes another step toward 50/50 CP Split

By Dannah Prather

**Louisville**—The Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board has approved details of the 2013-14 budget that places Kentucky Baptists one step closer to the finish line in equally dividing Cooperative Program dollars between Kentucky Baptist and Southern Baptist causes.

The vote on the \$22.5 million budget proposal was without discussion or opposition from board members attending the May 6-7 meeting at the Kentucky Baptist Building in Louisville.

In 2010, when Kentucky Baptists passed recommendations from the Kentucky Great Commission Task Force, the goal was to reach the 50/50, minus Cooperative Program Resourcing (CPR) funds, in the next decade. CPR dollars are set aside to educate Kentucky Baptists on CP missions and to promote the unified giving approach among the state convention's 2,400 congregations.

The budget passed last Monday enables Kentucky Baptists to reach the mark seven years ahead of the schedule set by the Kentucky Great Commission Task Force.

The leap forward is made possible by last year's restructuring of the KBC Mission Board staff and changes in CP allocations to 10 Kentucky Baptist affiliated agencies and institutions. Those

□ See 50/50 split ... Page 2



### KBC on 'parallel tracks' Church planting & revitalization

By Dannah Prather

**Louisville**—Members of the Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board heard reports on the importance of church planting, church revitalization, social outreach and the Cooperative Program at the board's May meeting in Louisville.

In his report to the board, KBC Executive Director-Treasurer Paul Chitwood said that, moving forward, the mission board staff will focus on two parallel tracks to

□ See 'Parallel tracks' ... Page 2

Paul Chitwood, executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, addresses the Mission Board May 6-7 in Louisville about recommendations by the Kentucky Great Commission Task Force and reaching a 50/50 split of Cooperative Program receipts from Kentucky Baptist churches, minus Cooperative Program Resourcing Funds. (Photo by Robin Cornetet Bass)

## Survey: 'Loving' parents valued more than 'convictions'

By Russ Rankin

**Nashville, Tenn.**—Most Americans believe good mothers and fathers must be loving, supportive and protecting, but fewer see the necessity of parents having a commitment to Christianity or religion, according to a LifeWay Research survey released May 7.

The survey, conducted in March, gauged opinions of the expected roles of parents at a time when Americans typically begin giving thought to Mother's Day and Father's Day.

According to the survey, "Loving" is the No. 1 characteristic deemed mandatory for mothers (85 percent) and fathers (79 percent). After "loving," four of the next five characteristics are shared, including "supporting," "protecting," "encouraging" and "involved."

"The consistency of what Americans expect of fathers and mothers is a sharp

□ See Survey... Page 3



## Ky. volunteer to make 5th trip to help Sandy victims

By John Shindlebower

**London**—When Hurricane Sandy slammed the east coast last October, she devastated homes and entire communities in a matter of hours. In the weeks and months that have followed, teams of faith-based volunteers have arrived to help victims pick up the pieces and slowly but surely, houses, neighborhoods and families are being repaired and restored.

David Hampton is one of hundreds of volunteers from the commonwealth who have ventured up north to lend a helping hand. In fact, Hampton just recently returned from his fourth trip to the storm-ravaged area and said he is planning on returning for two more weeks in July.

Two trips ago, Hampton and a crew representing churches from Whitley,



Knox and Laurel counties met a Jewish family on Long Island whose home had sustained extensive storm damage. They spent much of that trip in February

□ See Sandy volunteer ... Page 3

**ABOVE** Abraham Levin (left) talks with Ky. Disaster Relief volunteer Dave Hampton. (Photo provided by Dave Hampton)

Ditch the cord.

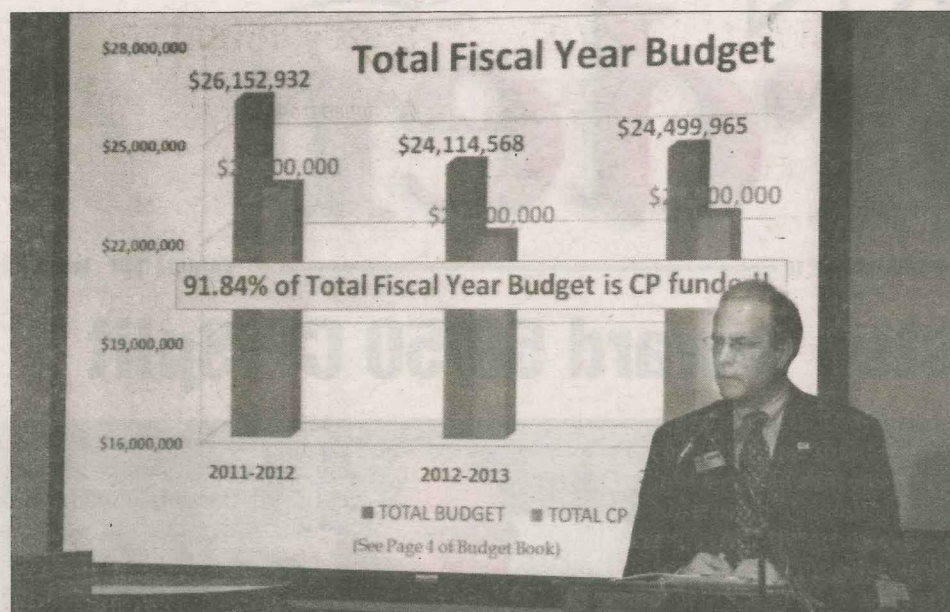
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Western Recorder 5-14-2013



Lowell Ashby, Kentucky Baptist Convention Finance and Business Services Team Leader, presents the budget to the Mission Board last week. (Photo by Todd Deaton)

## 50/50 split

Continued from page 1

changes were approved as part of the new budget, and over two years will shift approximately \$700,000 in CP funds to the International Mission Board, North American Mission Board and other SBC causes.

The funding changes were developed by a 14-member study group formed last year of Kentucky Baptist pastors, church members and other leaders charged with assessing the relationship between the KBC and its affiliated agencies and institutions. The KBC administrative committee accepted the group's recommendations in March.

Changes in CP allocation over the next two years for each Kentucky Baptist affiliated agency/institution are as follows:

- Baptist Health from \$5,617 to \$5,000
- Sunrise Children's Services from \$311,708 to \$300,000
- Crossings Ministries (Kentucky Baptist Assemblies) from \$339,752 to \$300,000
- Western Recorder from \$341,079 to \$275,000
- Kentucky Baptist Foundation from \$296,146 to \$235,000
- Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union from \$447,551 to \$440,000
- Campbellsville University from \$1,269,760 to \$1 million
- University of the Cumberlands from \$1,269,760 to \$1 million
- Clear Creek Baptist Bible College from \$540,323 to \$535,000
- Oneida Baptist Institute from \$360,215 to \$355,000

In his report to the mission board, Daryl Cornett, chairman of the agencies and institutions committee and pastor of First Baptist Church of Hazard, noted that the organizations "are in a time of great transition."

Cornett added that the agencies are accepting the changes in CP giving "with a great deal of grace" in order for Kentucky Baptists, as a convention, to reach the goal of an equal distribution of CP dollars between KBC and SBC causes.

In addition to the proposed CP adjustments, the Mission Board approved



Daryl Cornett

three general recommendations for all KBC entities and specific recommendations for each agency or institution.

General recommendations include:

- Expecting authentic Cooperative Program promotion, including administrators, trustees and employees modeling CP loyalty.
- Inviting the executive director-treasurer to join their trustee boards as an

ex-officio member.

■ Striving to perpetuate an atmosphere that reflects a high view of scripture, doctrine consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message, and commitment to the Great Commission and cooperation.

Adam Greenway, chairman of the board's administrative committee, said the recommendations to the agencies and institutions are non-binding. They are suggestions compiled by the study group formed last year to re-evaluate the relationship between the KBC and its 10 affiliated entities.

### In other action

Mission Board members approved the appointment of Brian Combs as KBC's collegiate evangelism strategist. Combs, former campus minister at Northern Kentucky University in Highland Heights, has served as interim strategist for six months.

Greenway reported to the board that the administrative committee had approved transitioning two campus ministers from interim to permanent status. They are Brian Hinton, who serves at Kentucky State University in Frankfort,



Brian Combs



Church planter TJ Francis of New City Church in Louisville presented KBC Executive Director Paul Chitwood with the congregation's first Cooperative Program check. (Photo by Robin Cornet Bass)

## 'Parallel tracks'

Continued from page 1

assist Kentucky Baptist churches to share Christ at home and abroad: church revitalization and church planting.

As an example, he reported that Zion Baptist Church in Henderson "is taking on the challenge to relaunch Ambassador Baptist Church," also in Henderson. "But they aren't doing it alone," he said, explaining that the KBC and the North American Mission Board are assisting Zion Baptist.

On the church planting side, Chitwood introduced TJ Francis, former pastor of First Baptist Church of Walton and immediate past first vice president

of the convention, who is now a church planter.

As pastor of New City Church in Louisville, Francis presented the KBC with the congregation's first check from its inaugural bank account, earmarked to support missions through the Cooperative Program, the unified giving approach Kentucky Baptists adopted in 1925.

With the check, Francis said, is a commitment to contribute 10 percent of the congregation's undesignated offerings for use through CP.

As he presented the gift from the church, Francis noted that funding through the Cooperative Program has supported his personal ministry journey for several years, and continues to do so as he serves as a church planter.

Francis noted that one of his first calls as a planter was to a KBC staff person for technical assistance in setting up audio/video resources for New City's worship site.

Speaking of the restructured KBC Mission Board staff, Chitwood said, "God has positioned us to be a vital part of spreading the gospel."

Chitwood also had praise for Kentucky Baptists' ongoing efforts to send more CP dollars to the International Mission Board and other Southern Baptist Convention causes.

Because of the shift in CP priorities that began in 2010, Kentucky now sends a higher percentage of CP to SBC causes, which includes the IMB, than any convention other than the Southern Baptist Convention of Texas.

Kentucky Baptists' percentage of undesignated receipts used for missions and ministries through the Cooperative Program has taken a slight

uptick from last year to 6.75 percent.

Chitwood noted that an increase in undesignated giving benefits the local congregation, first and foremost.

**Campbellsville dialogue**  
Chitwood also reported on a recent meeting of several Kentucky Baptist leaders, including key supporters of Campbellsville University, to discuss the university's commitment to Christian values and biblical integrity.

He said he was pleased that after the discussion, Campbellsville University issued a clear statement that "those who believe the literal truthfulness of every word of the Bible are welcomed as students and as faculty members."

**Missions focus**  
LoveLoud Missionary Sandra Williams, recently named Kentucky Baptist Missionary of the Year, told board members how the gospel is being shared through the benevolence ministries of Elkhorn Baptist Association churches.

Among several efforts, Williams organizes a weekly giveaway of 2,000 sack lunches to the needy. She said some people come not only for the food, but also for the opportunity to share a prayer request with people they know will listen and care.

"We can do so much more together," Williams said. "That's what the Cooperative Program is all about."

In other news, board members approved the appointment of Hugh "Eddie" Duke, pastor of Panther Creek Baptist Church in Owensboro, to complete an unexpired term on the mission board. Duke was appointed to the church consulting & revitalization committee. (KBC)



Sandra Williams

## NEWS BRIEFS

**Sunrise settlement proceeds**

A federal judge ruled May 2 that a Baptist child-care agency at the center of a 13-year legal dispute between Kentucky lawmakers and citizens represented by the ACLU and Americans United for Separation of Church and State cannot block a settlement of the lawsuit agreed upon by the involved parties March 12.

Sunrise Children's Services, formerly known as Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, claimed settlement of the lawsuit over taxpayer funding of religious organizations would burden the Kentucky Baptist Convention agency with requirements not placed on other providers of social services that contract with the state.

A portion of the settlement that requires monitoring of Sunrise for compliance is something that would be voluntarily assumed if the agency chooses to enter into future contracts with the state, the judge said.

Sunrise says losing access to state funding would drastically curtail services it provides to nearly 2,000 children each year.

**Georgetown renews search**

Two candidates for president of Georgetown College, Jim Newberry and Jason Rogers, have withdrawn from further consideration for personal and professional reasons.

The search committee agreed to renew the search immediately with a second round of confidential interviews with leading existing applicants and, hopefully, schedule future campus visits as soon as possible, a news release from the college stated.

The news release does not include information about the third finalist, Cheryl Kimberling.

**Survey**

Continued from page 1

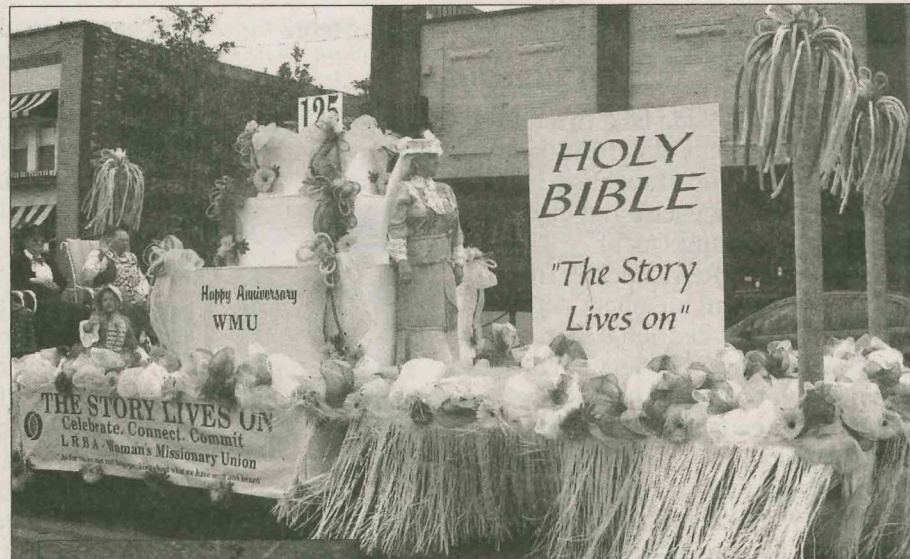
contrast to many of the popular storylines in films and books," said Scott McConnell, director of LifeWay Research, pointing out the characteristic "fun" garnered consideration from just 57 and 54 percent for mothers and fathers, respectively.

"While a little more than half of Americans say mothers and fathers must be 'fun,' more people expect parents to be loving, supporting, encouraging and understanding," McConnell said.

What Americans don't necessarily see as mandatory traits of good mothers and fathers are religious convictions, including being a committed Christian.

For mothers (35 percent) and fathers (31 percent), being "Religious" garnered a slightly higher return than being a "Committed Christian" (26 percent for both mothers and fathers) on the survey of desired traits.

"Clearly Americans who are not Christians themselves would not be expected to value a Christian commitment among parents today," McConnell noted. "However, 3 out of 4 Americans indicate their religious preference is Christian, Catholic or Protestant. This means only a third

**London parade celebrates WMU's 125th**

**ABOVE** Laurel River Baptist Association Woman's Missionary Union celebrated the 125th anniversary of WMU with a parade in London May 4. The group's float featured a large birthday "cake" and members dressed in turn of the century clothing. (Photo by Nita Johnson/The Sentinel-Echo)

**AT LEFT** Joy Bolton, executive director of Kentucky WMU, rides like a princess during the parade with her crown, cape and scepter. (Photo provided by KyWMU)



Oneida Baptist Institute students and staff showed God's love to all nations and all nationalities by bearing flags from different nations as they walked the parade route in downtown London. (Photo by Nita Johnson/The Sentinel-Echo)

of these people appear to value parents modeling a commitment to Jesus Christ to their children.

"For many who indicate a Christian type religion, this preference simply reflects something they were born with rather than something they feel they must nurture in the next generation," McConnell explained.

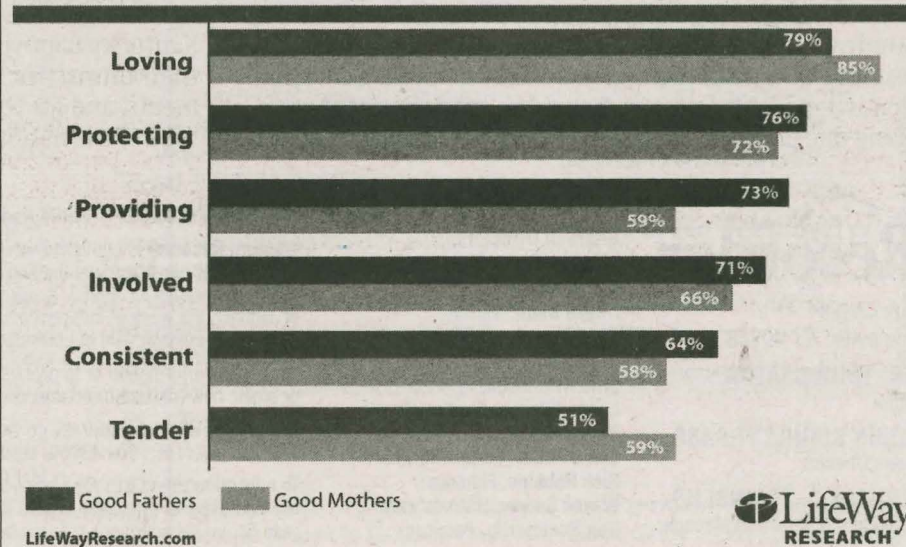
According to the survey, Americans

who self-identify as born-again, evangelical, fundamental Christians are less likely to select "Involved" (60 percent vs. 68 percent) and "Generous" (44 percent vs. 51 percent) and more likely to select "Religious" (56 percent vs. 26 percent) as mandatory traits to be a good mother.

LifeWay Research conducted the online survey of 1,054 adult Americans on March 25. (LifeWay/BP)

**Top differences in parental characteristics**

American adults who consider these characteristics mandatory to be "good" mothers and fathers

**Sandy volunteer**

Continued from page 1

gutting the home, tearing out drywall, flooring, tiles and other materials that had been water-damaged.

On his most recent trip, Hampton joined a crew from the Henderson area and returned to that same family, where they began putting in new drywall and giving that family their home back.

Hampton's involvement in Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief is not just about repairing property, but about repairing lives, and he does that by sharing Jesus.

"I get the satisfaction of seeing people come to Jesus and I like to witness. I'm

**"I get joy out of seeing people rejoice when we help them."**

David Hampton

an outgoing person and I get joy out of seeing people rejoice when we help them," said Hampton, who retired from the U.S. Air Force and had a second

career as an investigator for the Inspector General's office in Frankfort.

He said he was able to talk to the Jewish family about Jesus, including the father, an elderly 86-year-old man in poor health. Hampton said the man is very orthodox in his faith, but he asked questions and was curious about what it means for him if Jesus really is the Messiah. "We're making progress," Hampton said.

While the goal of disaster relief is to meet immediate physical needs in time of disaster, the ministry also is about souls. Bill Johnson, a native of Carter County who is disaster relief coordinator for the Sandy effort, said the ministry is about building a long-term relationship with the people they serve, including the possibility of planting churches.

"We get to deal with a lot of people one-on-one, but this also is about affecting neighborhoods for the long-term," Johnson said.

Hammond said the people impacted by Sandy were at first a little skeptical of outside help, but over time have grown appreciative and trusting of the faith-based groups. Johnson said local government officials have also embraced the ministry groups.

Johnson and his wife, Donna, got involved in disaster relief while living in Texas a few years ago, but they increased their involvement when they returned to Kentucky about three years ago. Last spring, when a tornado devastated West Liberty in eastern Kentucky, they were on the scene in two hours.

Hammond and his wife, Susan, have been involved with disaster relief for about three years.

The Johnsons have committed to staying on the Sandy effort for a year. They ran kitchens for victims and volunteers for more than a month and now stay busy coordinating projects for teams of volunteers who arrive on the scene.

Johnson said Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers go all over the nation to help out in times of need, and the work to recover from Sandy will require many more months and many more volunteers.

To learn more about volunteer opportunities and the national Southern Baptist Disaster Relief efforts, visit [www.namb.net/sandy](http://www.namb.net/sandy). (WR)

John Shindlebower is an associate director of communications at Sunrise Children's Services.

## Doing the math

With lostness growing in our state and Kentucky Baptist Convention agencies and institutions always in need of additional funds, are we investing too much in mission work overseas? Let's consider the math.

### Together We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

The average KBC church gives 6.75 percent of undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program. That means the average church spends 93.25 percent of their offerings on ministry and outreach in their community, or at least most of it. Some churches do invest budget funds in overseas work in addition to CP but usually those funds are not a significant percentage of their budget.

Outside of the budget, most KBC churches receive the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering to support overseas mission work through the International Mission Board. The LMCO makes up nearly half of the IMB's annual budget and buttresses support for nearly 5,000 missionaries in 180 countries. Even this offering, however, is a typically a very small amount compared to a church's overall undesignated receipts.

Back to CP's 6.75 percent of undesignated receipts: if the KBC spends half of CP funds on Kentucky mission work, and churches spend most or all of the other 93.25 percent on ministry in their community, then almost 97 percent of the offerings our churches collect are spent in Kentucky.

In terms of real dollars, consider this: our CP budget next year is \$22.5 million. If we meet budget, and that \$22.5 million represents 6.75 percent of undesignated receipts of our churches, then KBC churches will collect over \$333 million total in undesignated receipts. Of that \$333 million, just over \$5 million will go to mission work overseas.

So, are we sending too much to the cause of Christ among the nations? Too much to see that the 1.7 billion people who have virtually no access to the gospel get a chance to hear about Jesus? Leading the way in the Great Commission Resurgence, Kentucky Baptists don't think so.

Let me encourage those of us who are rightly concerned about the shrinking investment in Kentucky mission work to challenge all of our churches to strive for giving at least a tithe of their undesignated receipts through CP. If every church in the KBC gives at least 10 percent through CP, we will have a \$33 million CP budget rather than \$22.5 million. That extra \$10 million will go a long way toward reaching Kentucky and the world for Christ.

I was pleased recently to receive the first check ever written by KBC's newest church plant, New City Church of Louisville. Pastor TJ Francis presented the check, representing 10 percent of New City's undesignated receipts, to CP. What a statement! If a new church plant, struggling to launch, can afford to tithe to get the gospel to the nations, can't every church?

Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

## Wanted: Champions for our agencies and institutions

I'm sure it was meant only as a joke—nothing more than a humorous remark.

After hearing rousing reports about those being reached on the mission field through the outreach efforts of the KBC's missions mobilization team and through its church planting and evangelism team, by comparison, a report about our agencies and institutions would seem ... boring. Ouch!

The comment drew chuckles from some Mission Board members. Although the slight was unintentional, it may speak volumes. A troubling undercurrent seems to be quietly eroding away the very foundations of the cooperative ministries begun by our churches—to help reach Kentucky and the world for Christ.

Boring? Nothing could be further from the truth! The ministries of our agencies and institutions on behalf of Kentucky Baptists and their churches are anything but boring. They are, in fact, life changing. Life changing for our children. Life changing for our youth. Life changing for our college students. Life changing for our new ministers. Life changing for our congregations. Life changing for communities across our commonwealth. Here are a few highlights:

**Sunrise Children's Services:** "Sunrise cares for 2,000 abused and neglected children every year. This life-saving and life-changing work—started by Kentucky Baptists 144 years ago—cannot continue without the continued partnership with and support of congregations across the state," said President Bill Smithwick. "We have to prioritize caring for Kentucky's children and do all we can to recruit and support more foster families willing to open their homes and hearts to a child in need."

**Crossings Ministries:** "Most people think of us as Cedar-moore and Jonathan Creek; in reality our focus is what the power of the gospel is doing in the lives of people when they leave our properties," President David Melber said. "The impact of these changed and Spirit-empowered people has touched lives in over 25 states and proclaimed the gospel in nine different countries."

**Oneida Baptist Institute:** "OBI offers Kentucky Baptists—and potentially the entire world—a place where the academic, behavioral, relational and spiritual needs of adolescents are positively and transformationally addressed in a context that offers consistent structure, personal guidance and individual nurture within an atmosphere of active, genuine, Christian love and compassion founded on and permeated by the gospel," said President Paul Davidson. "Our greatest joy and highest priority is to see Christ change the lives of teenagers for His glory."

**Clear Creek Baptist Bible College:** "Your Cooperative Program gifts are the means by which ministry training is available and affordable for students," said President Donnie Fox. "Your gifts through the Cooperative Program amount to one sixth of our operating budget. We could not do what we do without the support of our Kentucky Baptist Convention churches." About 140 are enrolled at Clear Creek and these students led 228 people to Christ this year.

**Campbellsville University:** "Campbellsville University has never been more committed to providing Christ-centered higher education in the Baptist tradition," President Michael Carter said. "With one of the most diverse and fastest-growing student bodies in the nation, and with hundreds of decisions for Christ being made annually as a result of CU ministries and missions, the Great Commission is a motivating factor for us. We are committed to being one of America's premier Christian universities as we

work hard to prepare Christian servant leaders." Campbellsville, which saw its largest graduating class this year of 647, had more than 3,360 students enrolled. More than 140 students participated on mission trips and recorded 347 decisions for Christ.

**University of the Cumberlands:** "Our emphasis is on service above self, which is reflected by thousands of alumni who are faithful Sunday School teachers, dedicated deacons, consecrated tithers, along with hundreds of ministers and missionaries serving the mission field here in Appalachia and beyond," said President Jim Taylor. "The sun never sets on the work of our University of the Cumberlands' alumni, who give that cup of water

to the thirsty throughout our state, the nation and around the world." This year, Cumberlands saw more than 500 Christian commitments, more than 300 students involved in missions, an enrollment exceeding 4,300 students, and more than 1,100 graduates.

**Kentucky Baptist Foundation:** "How we plan our estates likely will be the single most important act of stewardship we shall ever undertake," said President Barry Allen. "The KBF exists to assist every Kentucky Baptist in this process, regardless of the size of their estates, so each can make a lasting difference in the world for the cause of Christ. Imagine the impact if every Kentucky Baptist tithed off of the estates the Lord has entrusted to them." For fiscal year 2012, the foundation distributed \$5.7 million, of which \$5.4 million was for KBC-affiliated churches and KBC-related causes.

**Western Recorder:** As the news agency of Kentucky Baptists, the Western Recorder keeps the convention's 2,400 churches informed and connected, encouraging members to cooperate in missions and ministries in their communities and state, across the nation and around the world. In this manner, reading the Western Recorder supports and strengthens both church and individual participation in the Cooperative Program. Recently, we began providing Kentucky Baptist news to more than 70 community newspapers, further promoting the ministries of our churches and a Christian worldview of current events.

**Woman's Missionary Union:** "A passion drives WMU—passion for the lost and for raising up succeeding generations for whom missions is a lifestyle," said Executive Director Joy Bolton. "I wish everyone knew about the fantastic resources that WMU produces which are experiential and challenging. I wish more churches understood that encouraging WMU will strengthen the entire church, increase giving, and raise the level of prayer support for the church and missions around the world."

Don Mathis, chairman of the Mission Board's business and finance committee, expressed his admiration for how KBC agencies and institutions are handling the large transfer of CP dollars with grace. "Our agencies and institutions have never before done more with less (CP support) than they are now," Mathis said. He challenged pastors to begin "a revival of Cooperative Program giving" among their churches.

While our agencies and institutions graciously and sacrificially support Kentucky Baptists' call to send more and reach the nations with the gospel, they don't deserve to have the CP support their ministries depend upon reduced by \$700,000. They deserve \$700,000 more! And, they need Kentucky Baptists now more than ever to be champions for their ministries, for their special offerings, for their endowments, and for the Cooperative Program—not just for the sake of the nations, but also for the sake of our neighbors.

## After Thought

By Todd Deaton



## WESTERN Recorder

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### Shine Like Stars \* Philippians 2:15

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## Offer youth the world, not just the beach

Stop going to the beach! It is not that I have anything against the beach. The beach is beautiful. The sand, the waves, the magnificent sunrise and sunsets, the early morning walks picking up shells can be a great time—and a time to enjoy God's beautiful creation.

### Youth Ministry Corner



Joe Ball

But if it is the only place we ever go, then we miss the beauty of the mountains and the waterfalls, or the vastness of land that make up farms and ranches, or the uniqueness of standing in the busiest intersections in the major cities and looking at the heights of the buildings, and the lights and sounds that only a place like New York or Chicago can offer.

When it comes to involving our students in missions, we have a tendency to only offer the same type of experience year after year. For some of us, it is using pre-packaged experiences with ministry partners like Crossings, Lifeway, IMB or YWAM. Others of us plan our unique experiences in communities or with ministry partners that we have a God-given passion for.

But honestly, most of our mission experiences tend to look the same. The location may change or the ministry partner may change, but most of us give our students the same experience over and over.

Let me propose these questions: What do the last six years of missions experience look like in your ministry? Would the mission experience of those students that are graduating this year be very similar to those that have just finished their first year in the ministry?

One of the biggest regrets I have from my time as a youth minister in a local church was not getting the opportunity to take students on an international mission trip. There was a trip to Canada, but that was still in North America and there wasn't much different about that trip than from the many others we took.

I have had the privilege to serve on short term

mission experiences in Chili, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Dubai, Haiti, Rome and Alaska—all places with a very different culture than what I am used to. All of these required a different skill set to minister. Each gave me a different snippet of the world and how God is moving—and at the same time, how He is needed all across the globe.

As I have reflected on the last several weeks of my most recent trip (Haiti in April 2013), I am more convinced than ever that we, as churches, need to give every student that comes through our ministry the opportunity to go overseas during their time with us.

How can we do that?

**Begin my making this a matter of prayer.**

What we are praying for becomes important to us.

**Begin to figure the logistics out.**

Are you going to go every year and just take juniors and seniors? Are you going to make it an option every year for everyone, or every four years so that every high school student has the opportunity?

**Begin with the youngest.**

Plan age appropriate mission opportunities with children and families and trust God to instill a heart for missions in them. Increase the opportunities that are available each year. If a junior or senior is still involved in missions at the same level they were as sixth or seventh graders, then we have failed them. We wouldn't stand for a school system to provide the same experiences between those two groups, but unfortunately, in most churches this is the modus operandi.

**Make it a financial priority.**

We all know that not every family in our church can afford the cost of sending their child overseas. When you take into consideration airfare, in-country expenses, shots and passport fees, you are easily talking a minimum of \$1,500 per person. If it is a priority of ours, then we need to budget accordingly.

Joe Ball, a former youth minister at Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville, is youth ministry strategist for Crossings Ministries.

## Keeping the peace

By Valerie Vincent

*Q: Sometimes all I want is peace. I get so tired of the complaining that I have learned not to say anything, so there is some peace. How do you keep the peace?*



*A: Peace is a beautiful word. We pray for peace. We seek the peace of Christ. Jesus was called the Prince of Peace. So what is peace?*

If you live or grew up in a home that had a lot of conflict or anger, you may have a strong desire for an environment where there is no fussing or fighting. Many equate peace with the absence of conflict.

Perhaps peace is more assertive than passive, more bold than fearful. In order to experience peace in marriage, it needs to be something that is created.

Peace in a marriage will not happen through avoidance. Peace is created through acts of truth, love, selflessness, faith, kindness, gentleness, self-control. Peace is not the absence of something; it is the presence of the Holy Spirit restoring relationship.

Typically, we wait for peace or hope for peace, instead of working intentionally toward creating peace. We are familiar with the terms peacekeeper and peacemaker. What about being a peacecreator? Creating peace in your marriage can mean taking risks:

- Telling my husband the truth about how I feel.
- Telling my wife what I need from her.
- Telling my husband I am vulnerable or afraid.
- Telling my wife when I am struggling or hurting.
- Telling my husband what I want or dream for us.
- Telling my wife what God is teaching me about myself and Him.

Pray that God will fill your heart with His love, not your own, when you seek to create peace in your marriage.

Valerie Vincent is a Christian counselor with Hardy Day & Associates in Louisville.

## Motherhood plays significant role, 'one of God's greatest gifts to humanity'

By Barrett Duke

"God couldn't be everywhere, so He made mothers."

While not theologically accurate, this old Jewish saying describes beautifully the significant role mothers have in our lives.

Motherhood is one of **FIRST PERSON** God's greatest gifts to humanity. A loving, committed mother is an indispensable person in our development. Just imagine a world without mothers. It would be a sterile place indeed.

Mothers instill powerful social and nurturing characteristics in each generation. It is principally from their mothers that children learn the virtues of sacrifice, sharing, valuing others, compassion, community and a host of other interpersonal values and skills that enable humans to live together in peace.

Biologically, women are designed for self-sacrifice. When pregnant, a woman's body focuses its primary attention on nurturing that new, growing life developing within her. Her body will automatically prioritize the needs of her unborn baby.

And this inherent gift for self-sacrifice isn't only biological. After her children are born, a mother will continue to sacrifice herself for the needs of her children. She will do whatever she can to assure her children have what they need.

Mothers are also designed by God to nurture. There is just no greater nurturing power on the planet than a mother.

When the apostle Paul was describing his love for the church at Thessalonica, he used the metaphor of a mother's love to describe how deeply he cared for the Thessalonians. He reminded them that he was like a



"gentle" mother who "tenderly cares for her own children" (1 Thessalonians 2:7).

When God described His love for Israel, He did so with a motherhood metaphor. He told Israel that He would comfort them like a mother comforts her children (Isaiah 66:13).

I am reminded of the closing chapters of the great biblical book of wisdom, the book of Proverbs. The book that has helped billions of people through millennia live better lives closes with a great testimonial tribute to women.

That's right; the last words of the book of Proverbs don't extend praise to God, or exalt manhood. They

**"(T)he last words of the book of Proverbs don't extend praise to God, or exalt manhood. They speak of the beautiful, indispensable role that women play in God's creation"**

speak of the beautiful, indispensable role that women play in God's creation.

After 30 chapters of directions on living the good, godly, noble life, the great book of Proverbs closes with these words to the godly woman: "Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband also, and he praises her, saying, 'Many daughters have done nobly, But you excel them all.' Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her the product of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates" (Proverbs 31:28-31).

The best of all that God designed a woman to be is expressed in motherhood. Not one of us came into this world without a mother. And in these days of abortion on-demand, motherhood is a conscious, deliberate decision by a woman to enter into that noble, God-like act of loving self-sacrifice to participate with the God of all creation to bring a new life into the world—you.

This Mother's Day, I hope you took the time to say thanks to your mother in a special way. No, she isn't perfect, and no she didn't do everything right, but she gave you life. And if she is like most mothers, she sacrificed for you and did what she could to prepare you to be a loving, caring person.

To mothers, I say thank you for all you have done to prepare your children to be the good men and women of the next generation. Our world cannot make it without you. Thank you for all you do. (BP)

Barrett Duke is vice president for public policy and research for the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

# Obama: State pro-life laws impeding 'progress' of 'choice'

By Michael Foust

**Washington**—President Obama addressed the nation's largest abortion provider April 26, criticizing pro-life laws on the state level and saying that those who wish to restrict or ban abortion are trying to turn back "progress."

Obama never mentioned the word "abortion" during his speech at the Planned Parenthood gala, preferring words such as "choice." Planned Parenthood performed a record 333,964 abortions during 2010-11, the most recent year for which statistics are available.

He became the first sitting president to address Planned Parenthood.

"After decades of progress there's still those who want to turn back the clock to policies more suited to the 1950s than the 21st century," Obama said. "And they're involved in an orchestrated and historic effort to roll back basic rights when it comes to women's health. Forty-two states have introduced laws that would ban or severely limit access to a woman's right to choose."

"In North Dakota, they just passed a law that outlaws your right to choose, starting as early as six weeks," he told the crowd.

The law in question would prohibit abortion based on when the unborn child has a heartbeat, which could be as

soon as six weeks into gestation. It is expected to be challenged in court.

In Mississippi, Obama said, "a ballot initiative was put forward that could not only have outlawed your right to choose, but could have had all sorts of other far-reaching consequences."

He was referring to a personhood initiative, defeated at the Mississippi ballot in 2011, that would have defined the term "person" to include "every human being from the moment of fertilization." It lost, partially because pro-lifers in the state were divided over it and partially because opponents made the campaign about everything but abortion.

"When you read about these laws,"

Obama said, "you want to check the calendar. You want to make sure you're still living in 2013. Forty years after the Supreme Court affirmed a woman's constitutional right to privacy, including the right to choose, we shouldn't have to remind people that when it comes to a woman's health, no politician should get to decide what's best for you."

Planned Parenthood, he said in affirming the organization's mission, "is not going anywhere."

Cecile Richards, president of Planned Parenthood, had released a statement prior to Obama's speech saying he "has done more than any president in history for women's health and rights." (BP)

## NEWS BRIEFS

### SBC appointments

Appointments to the Southern Baptist Convention's Committees on Committees have been announced by SBC President Fred Luter Jr. The Committee on Committees will meet in Houston, Texas, just prior to the SBC annual meeting, June 11-12, to nominate members of the Committee on Nominations who, in turn, nominate trustees to serve on boards of the various entities of the SBC. The Committee on Committees encompasses 70 members, two from each of the areas served by the 35 state or regional conventions. Serving from Kentucky are Ben Dockery, Vine Street Baptist Church, Louisville; and Mark Payton, St. Paul Baptist Church at Shively Heights, Louisville.

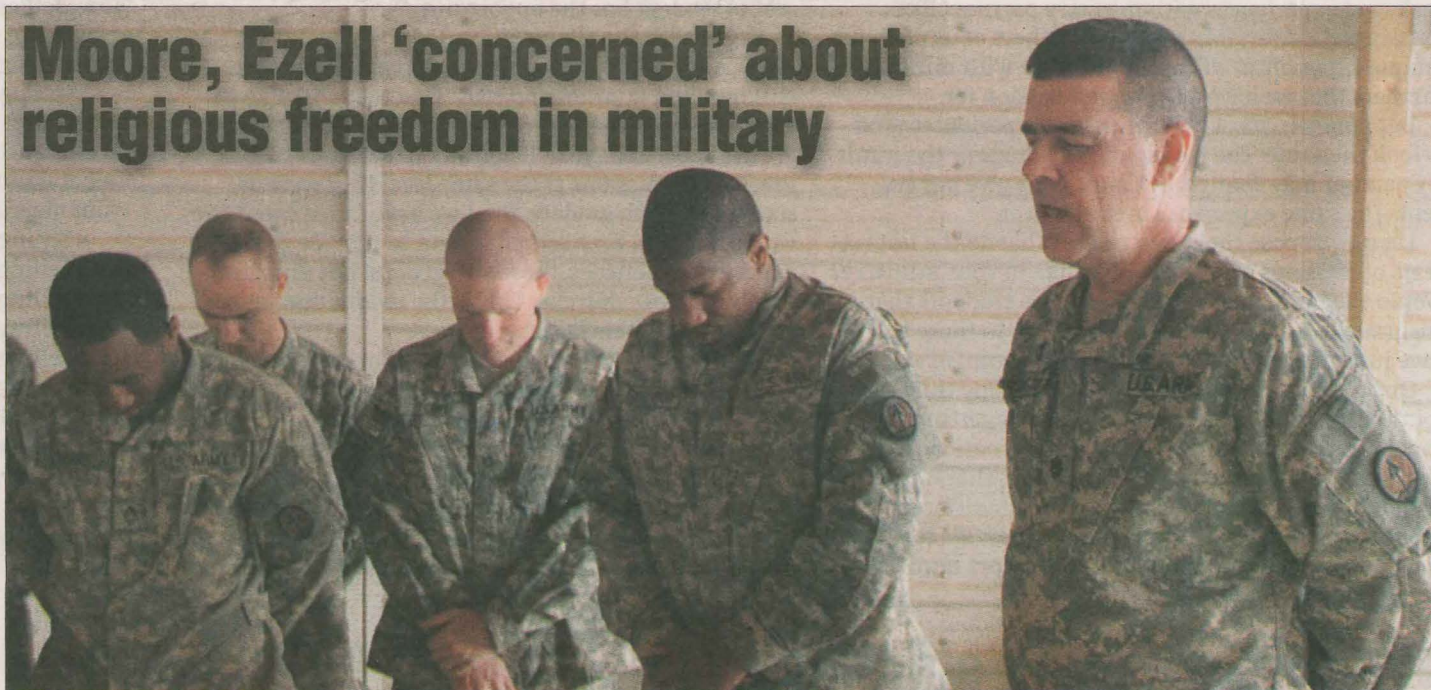
### History prof McBeth dies

Leon McBeth, distinguished professor of church history at Southwestern Seminary for 45 years, died April 29 in Fort Worth. He was 81. McBeth was honored by the Baptist History and Heritage Society this spring with a festschrift (a volume of writings attributed to different authors as a tribute) in its Baptist History & Heritage journal. The publication was placed in the mail the same week as McBeth's death. His 1987 text "The Baptist Heritage: Four Centuries of Baptist Witness"—also called "the big blue book"—became used widely in Southern Baptist seminaries and other academic settings.

### Tyndale wins again

A leading Bible publisher won another court victory against the Obama administration's abortion/contraceptive mandate May 3, thanks in part to the administration's own partial retreat in the case. The publisher, Tyndale House, had won a preliminary injunction in November from a lower court that prevented the government from enforcing the mandate, which forces businesses such as Tyndale to cover contraceptives that can cause chemical abortions. The administration appealed that injunction, but eventually asked that the appeal be dismissed.

## Moore, Ezell 'concerned' about religious freedom in military



In this 2009 file photo, U.S. Army Chaplain Jeff Houston (far right) prays with American soldiers prior to another mission in Iraq. On May 6, two Southern Baptist leaders—Russell Moore and Kevin Ezell—released a statement expressing concern over religious liberty in the military.

By Mike Ebert

**Alpharetta, Ga.**—Two Southern Baptist leaders have issued a statement voicing concern about religious freedom within the U.S. military, but also cautioning Christians to refrain from jumping to conclusions about recent incidents in the military that have been perceived by some as threats to religious liberty.

The statement was issued by Russell Moore, president-elect of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, and Kevin Ezell, president of the North American Mission Board. The ERLC is the SBC's public policy arm. NAMB oversees the endorsement of chaplains to the U.S. military on behalf of the SBC.

"We have no interest in fomenting conspiracy theories," the statement reads. "We have no interest in misrepresenting our military leaders. At the same time, we do not want to ignore potential threats to religious liberty."

The statement addresses several reported incidents that have raised concern among Southern Baptists and evangelical Christians in recent weeks.

"These reports have elicited a great deal of concern and confusion among military chaplains, pastors and congregations," the statement reads. "In some cases, misinformation has been mixed with fact, with the possible result of furthering already tense relationships between military and religious communities."

Ezell said he hopes the statement will

serve two primary purposes.

"We want our chaplains and troops to know their religious freedoms are a top concern for us," Ezell said. "We want the U.S. military to know we are a friend. But right now we are a friend who has some serious concerns."

The statement includes concerns about how the Department of Defense defines terms like "evangelizing" and "proselytizing" as it relates to military personnel who want to share their faith.

"What incidents have taken place, we wonder, that would call for this seemingly arbitrary distinction between 'evangelizing' and 'proselytizing'?" the statement asks. "Proselytizing, after all, includes a range of meaning, encompassing a definition of 'seeking to recruit to a cause or to a belief.' With a subjective interpretation and adjudication of such cases, we need reassurance that such would not restrict the free exercise of religion for our chaplains and military personnel."

"After all, who defines what is proselytizing and what is evangelism? What could seem to be a friendly conversation about spiritual matters to one serviceperson could be perceived or deliberately mischaracterized as 'proselytizing' to the person on the receiving end. The fact that this has been raised at all in such a subjective fashion could have a chilling effect on service personnel sharing their faith at all."

The statement further reads, "We ask then, and expect, from our military

leaders, and from their civilian command, clarification of a commitment to safeguarding religious liberty, including the right for all servicemen and women to share their faith, short of coercion or harassment. This would entail a less subjective and more precise definition of such coercion and harassment, beyond the ambiguous language of 'proselytizing.'"

Moore, who will begin his duties at the ERLC June 1, called on the military to engage in dialogue with Southern Baptists and other evangelicals.

"We agree that no one should engage in coercion to sharing their faith with others," Moore said. "But there must also be room for freedom for our chaplains and military members to be distinctively Southern Baptist and for others to be distinctively Catholic or Jewish or Muslim as the case may be."

Doug Carver, the retired (Major General) Army Chief of Chaplains who now heads NAMB's chaplaincy ministry, echoed the concerns expressed by Moore and Ezell while reiterating SBC support for members of the military.

"Those who serve in our Armed Forces have no better friends than Southern Baptists who pray for their safety and work for their ability to worship freely," Carver said. "We are grateful for all of the sacrifices our military heroes make each day and we are honored to be able to stand alongside them in times of war and peace." (BP)

For full statement from Moore and Ezell, see [www.westernrecorder.org](http://www.westernrecorder.org).

## Mid-Tenn. Scouts call for retaining traditional stance

*Ft. Campbell Scouts a part of those taking a stand*

By Diana Chandler and Art Toalston

Nashville—The Middle Tennessee Council of the Boys Scouts of America has voted to affirm Scouting's current national membership policy as "a core value of the Scout Oath and Law."

Hugh Travis, the Scout executive for the 37-county council, said in a May 6 news release that its delegates "will not vote to approve the resolution"—to allow openly homosexual youth as Scouts—"but to retain the current membership policy."

Meanwhile, Frank Page, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee, has issued a statement underscoring his opposition to what the national Scouting organization has touted as a "compromise" by dropping its plan to allow openly gay Scout leaders. Page also continued his call for new leadership for the national Scouting organization.

Lee Beaman, president of the BSA Middle Tennessee Council Board, said in the council's news release, "We are continuing to uphold the standards, beliefs and traditions Scouting has held for over 100 years. As a representative of the 35,000 youth and adults in the Middle Tennessee Council, it is our duty to take their voice to Grapevine, Texas, on May 23 with a vote to uphold the current membership policy."

The BSA Middle Tennessee Council is chartered by BSA to organize Scouting units and manage all Scouting programs from the Tennessee River in the west to the Cumberland Plateau in the east, including Fort Campbell, Ky.

In the news release, Travis stated that the results of the survey "overwhelmingly signify that the parents, leaders and chartered partners ... believe that the current membership policy is a core value of the Scout Oath and Law. Our delegates ... will not vote



Delegates of the Middle Tennessee Council of the Boys Scouts of America, headquartered at the Jet Potter Boy Scout Center in Nashville, will not vote for openly gay youth as Scouts, council exec Hugh Travis reports. (BP)

to approve the resolution, but to retain the current membership policy."

The council's news release stated that the current policy "does not proactively inquire about the sexual orientation of employees, volunteers or members, but does not grant membership to individuals who are open or avowed homosexuals or who engage in behavior that would become a distraction to the mission of the Boy Scouts of America."

Page, in a statement issued to Baptist Press May 7 expanded on a statement he made in April that some may have mistaken as a softening of his stance.

"On April 19, I was quoted as saying, 'Though this resolution is more acceptable to those who hold a biblical form of morality than what was being considered before, we would still prefer no change in the policy. A No vote keeps the current policy in place, an outcome we would overwhelmingly support.'

"Having thought and prayed about it more since then, I think I should expand on that statement, for I do not wish to be misunderstood. While I do see how the resolution to be voted on has been crafted to make it seem more palatable to people of faith, I actually

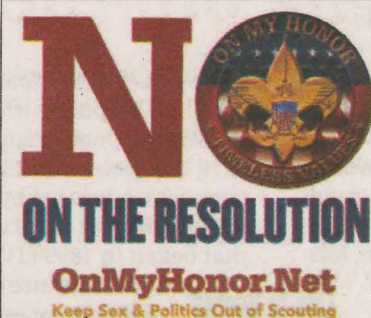
think it is worse than the first proposition that was tendered.

"It may not seem to be running away (from being an organization that guards its moral values) as fast, but it is still going the wrong direction. Its language would force sponsoring churches to subordinate their convictions to stay involved with the Boy Scouts," Page said.

Page said BSA's national Executive Committee's efforts to push for homosexual leaders and members in Scouting "deserve close examination. This issue, regardless of how it turns out, has and will harm the reputation and work of the BSA to a significant degree."

Page said, "This effect will be organization-wide, rather than being confined to just the situations or areas insisting on change. The Boy Scout family did not demand a re-examination of the policies, he continued, only a select few did. Those few seem to have superimposed their own personal values on the entirety—values not embraced in the tradition of the organization."

"Therefore," Page said, "maybe a vote on the resolution is not the only vote that should be taken. A vote to change leadership seems appropriate also." (BP)



## 'Stand with Scouts' sets forth action

By Don Beehler

Nashville—"Stand with Scouts," a national simulcast by the Family Research Council, urged viewers to

preserve Scouting's traditional values by opposing a policy change to allow youth who identify themselves as gay to become Scouts.

Organizers said the online simulcast's purpose May 5 was to provide information about the significance of the proposed change and how people can get involved.

The proposed policy, unanimously recommended by the Boy Scouts Executive Committee, states in part, "No youth may be denied membership in the Boy Scouts of America on the basis of sexual orientation or preference alone." The matter will be put to a vote at the national convention May 23.

John Stemberger, an attorney and Eagle Scout, told Family Research Council President Tony Perkins the policy would "devastate" Scouting.

Stemberger is the founder of OnMyHonor.net, which describes itself as a "nationwide coalition of concerned parents, Scout leaders, Scouting donors, Eagle Scouts and other members of the Boy Scouts of America who are united in their support of Scouting's current membership policies and their opposition to the proposed resolution which requires open homosexuality in the Boy Scouts."

People can connect by signing up for email alerts at [www.OnMyHonor.net](http://www.OnMyHonor.net). The site offers several ways people can get involved, and provides an open letter to the voting delegates of the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America titled, "Ten reasons to vote no on openly gay Boy Scout resolution." Stemberger asked that voting delegates identify themselves when signing up at the site.

Rallies to support the Scouts' long-standing policy will be held May 17 at area councils. Scouts and others concerned about the proposed change are encouraged to participate. (BP)

## Gay player's story turns into discussion on Bible, Christian doctrine

By Michael Foust

Washington—An NBA player made history on April 29 by becoming the first player from a major American team sport to declare he's gay, although news coverage quickly turned to a debate of Christian doctrine following comments from an ESPN commentator.

Jason Collins, a 7-foot center with the Washington Wizards, announced in a Sports Illustrated article that he is gay.

"I didn't set out to be the first openly gay athlete in a major American team sport," he is quoted as saying on the cover of Sports Illustrated. "But since I am, I'm happy to start the conversation."

Media coverage of the event changed when ESPN commentators LZ Granderson—who is gay—and Chris Broussard began discussing their beliefs about the issue during a broadcast of "Outside the Lines." Both men are friends.

"Chris and I have known each other

*"If you're openly living in unrepentant sin, whatever it may be ... I believe that's walking in open rebellion to God and to Jesus Christ."*

Chris Broussard

for a long time, and we've had this conversation many, many times," Granderson said. "We're both happy to be on opposite ends of the spectrum. But we have the conversation respectfully."

Broussard then explained what Granderson meant.

"I'm a Christian. I don't agree with homosexuality," Broussard said. "I think it's a sin, as I think all sex outside of marriage between a man and a woman is. LZ knows that. He knows where I stand and I know where he stands. I don't criticize him, he doesn't criticize me and call me

a bigot, call me ignorant, call me intolerant."

After Granderson said that he, too, considers himself to be a Christian, the host asked Broussard to comment on the fact that Collins—in the Sports Illustrated article—called himself a Christian.

"Personally," Broussard responded, "I don't believe that you can live an openly homosexual lifestyle or an openly premarital sex between heterosexuals, if you're openly living that type of lifestyle, then the Bible says you know them by their fruits, it says that's a sin. If you're openly living in unrepentant sin, whatever it may be—not just homosexuality, adultery, fornication, premarital sex between heterosexuals, whatever it may be—I believe that's walking in open rebellion to God and to Jesus Christ. So I would not characterize that person as a Christian because I don't think the Bible would characterize them as a Christian."

That led Kelly Dwyer of Yahoo Sports to write a column criticizing Broussard.

"Gay young men and women have an impossibly tough time growing up and attempting to fit in," Dwyer wrote. "The last thing they need is to see someone like Chris Broussard ... referring to them as sinners who are in open rebellion to God."

ESPN itself released a statement, regretting Broussard's viewpoints became a distraction and that "ESPN is fully committed to diversity and welcomes Jason Collins' announcement."

Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, said in his daily podcast that Broussard only was reflecting historic Christianity.

"What he was articulating is the classic Christian position," Mohler said. "Indeed, he's exactly right in suggesting exactly what biblical Christianity understands to be the truth about homosexuality." (BP)

## Partners in mission

## Oneida students join WMU's 125th anniversary celebration parade

Women's Missionary Union. Women on Mission. Adults on Mission. Acteens. Youth on Mission. Girls in Action. Royal Ambassadors. Children in Action. Mission Friends. Families on Mission. These organizations testify to the breadth of Southern Baptist missions education and support.

During the 15 years my wife and I served in Nigeria as IMB missionaries, we gave thanks to God for the work of SBC missions support and educational programs. Whether we were on the field or stateside, these groups were a blessing to us. It was a joy to say, "Thank you!" to those who made it possible to fulfill our calling.

In 2005, we changed our mission-field home from Ogbomoso to Oneida, but our thanks for the work of our missions support groups in our local churches, associations, and state and national conventions has not changed. Just as our IMB ministry experienced great blessings from these missions-minded folks, so does our current missions endeavors at OBI.

Though there is no formal or financial relationship between IMB, NAMB and OBI, we who serve at Oneida are definitely partners with these larger SBC missions organizations in the work of reaching the whole world for Christ. Just as certainly, we at OBI rejoice in the opportunity to identify with and give thanks for all that our WMU groups do.

A total of 58 Oneida students and adults took advantage of the invitation extended to us by the Laurel River Baptist Association WMU to march in their parade celebrating the 125th

anniversary of the founding of the WMU. In keeping with the theme of the anniversary, our group carried the flags of 17 U.S. states and 23 foreign countries, which was led by a banner stating, "Oneida Baptist Institute—OUR STORY that began in 1899 LIVES ON." The colorful mixture of flags, clothing and skin tones bore ample and joyful witness to the fact that OBI and the WMU share the same missionary vision. (Check out our Facebook page for pictures from the event.)

There are many reasons why OBI rejoices in our various SBC missions education groups. On a regular basis, the Oneida Baptist Church Women on Mission

encourage our students with snack bags, special worship services and potluck dinners. Other churches send us clothing, school supplies, jackets, quilts and other helpful items provided by generous and compassionate hearts, carried by willing hands, and delivered with smiling faces.

There are groups that come to tour the campus, attend chapel service, share lunch, and sometimes help sort donated clothes or cut out labels that are turned in for money to be used to meet a variety of needs. During school vacations, groups of children and teenagers come for similar days of tours. And, of course, there are those adults who come and spend a week with us as volunteers.

WMU and OBI make for a natural, spiritual partnership. Our shared story—Christ's story—lives on. Thanks, WMU, for helping us tell it.

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

## This is Oneida



Paul Davidson

## Senior memories

## Graduates share favorite memories of time at Clear Creek

The graduation ceremony for our Clear Creek graduates is always a special time. One of the traditions we enjoy every year is reading their favorite memory as they walk across the stage to receive their diploma. I know you will enjoy this preview of that momentous day.

"My fondest memory is living on campus, making new friends, and starting a new life with my wife, Lena. When I got called to preach I felt it would be really hard because I hadn't been in school for 15 years. When I stepped into my first class I was a nervous wreck, but God and His grace saw me through. I have been blessed beyond reason with a wonderful and loving family. I am thankful to God for my salvation and for Clear Creek whose faculty and staff have helped me, my family and my ministry." —**Mark Tate**

"Some of my fondest memories are how God has brought my family closer through financial and emotional struggles. He has seen us through and blessed us with so much, including the salvation of both our daughters while living on campus and through serving

the Lord together as a family in ministry." —**Dottie Mae Evans**

"My fondest memories at Clear Creek include the friends I've made, the knowledge I have gained and the family atmosphere I have experienced. My

greatest memory was after arriving at Clear Creek. God led me to Pump Springs Baptist Church where I met a very beautiful Christian lady whom I married." —**Paul Wayne Jacobs**

"My fondest memories of Clear Creek include a family from Ohio providing finances for my preparation all the way through graduation, the generosity from alumni, churches and associations every Thanksgiving and Christmas, and the many friendships made while attending at Clear Creek." —**Michael Jeffrey Neal**

"My fondest memories were meeting my wife, Demetria, and having our first child, Josiah. I am fond of knowing how God has always been faithful to me at Clear Creek even when I was not always so faithful to Him." —**Christopher Cody Dean**

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

## Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

## Land delivers farewell message

By Diana Chandler

**Nashville**—Southern Baptist ethicist Richard Land evoked the godliness of the prophet Ezra and the wisdom of Martin Luther King Jr. in admonishing the church to set the spiritual temperature of the nation, instead of being a thermometer that merely reflects the culture.

Land preached to the staff of Southern Baptist entities in the SBC Building in Nashville during a farewell chapel message April 29, upon his retirement after 25 years as president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

"The answer for what ails us is not going to come from Washington or from Nashville," said Land, an author and former pastor in addition to the SBC's most visible ethicist. "When God's people change, Washington will change."

Land read from Ezra 7:8-10 and 1 Corinthians 2:14-3:3, encouraging Christians to grow in grace and represent God with authoritative maturity. He also quoted King's April 16, 1963, letter from a Birmingham jail in which the late civil rights leader and Baptist pastor encouraged the church to reengage its God-given power and lead the nation in the ways of righteousness.

"There was a time when the (early) church was very powerful," Land quoted King. "Wherever the early Christians entered a town, the power structure was

disturbed. The early church brought an end to ancient evils, such as infanticide and gladiatorial contests.

"Things are different now. The contemporary church is so often a weak, ineffectual voice with an uncertain sound. Far from being disturbed by the presence of the church, the power structure of the average community is consoled by the church. The judgment of God is upon the church as never before," Land quoted from King's letter.

Land called on Southern Baptists to be leaders in the 21st century.

"We Christians who are called upon to serve God in the first decade of the 21st century have got to decide whether we're going to be thermometers or thermostats. Thermometers reflect the spiritual temperature; thermostats set the spiritual temperature," Land said. "Make no mistake about it, our churches are either going to have their temperature changed by those who are seeking to make the law of the Lord, to know it, to do it and teach it, and to be spiritual change agents who are going to change the temperature, or we'll just be thermometers and reflect the temperature."

Land in 2012 announced his retirement from the post he has held since 1988 when the ERLC was still known as the Christian Life Commission. At that time, Land's title was executive director and treasurer.

Southern Baptist Convention President Fred Luter, by recorded video, thanked Land for his service and friendship, and said he was happy to become the convention's first African American president during Land's tenure. (BP)



Richard Land

## Indian student wins SBTS preaching award

By RuthAnne Irvin

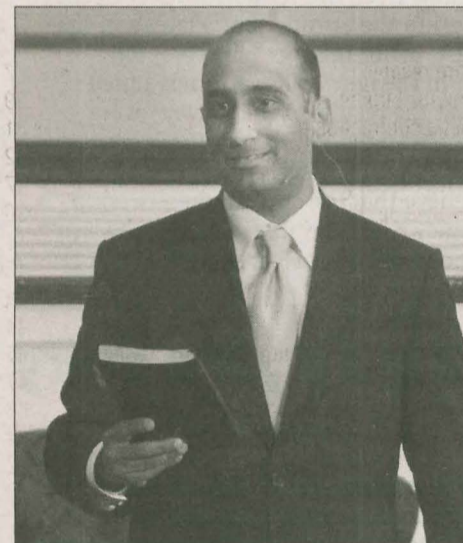
**Louisville**—Aubrey Sequeira, winner of this year's Clyde T. Francisco Preaching Award at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, plans eventually to return to India with his wife Nishika to teach and train pastors.

He preached in the seminary's final chapel service of the semester April 18, leading Russell Moore, vice president for academic administration and dean of the school of theology, to say, "The best preachers in the world have preached in SBTS chapel. But I have never heard such a gospel-powerful sermon as Aubrey Sequeira today."

The Francisco award goes to one student each year based on demonstrable preaching ability. During his sermon, Sequeira said, "You may be a master of divinity, but that means nothing if you are not a servant of humility."

A master of divinity student from Chennai, India, Sequeira began his message—"Following in the footsteps of a foot-washing King"—from John 13:1-17 by saying Jesus' washing of His disciples' feet was unthinkable and explaining the shock this would have brought to the disciples.

Sequeira described his native Indian culture, particularly its cultural norm of removing shoes before entering a building. As a boy in India, he and fellow students wore leather shoes when they played in the severe heat, and then an awful smell would accompany them



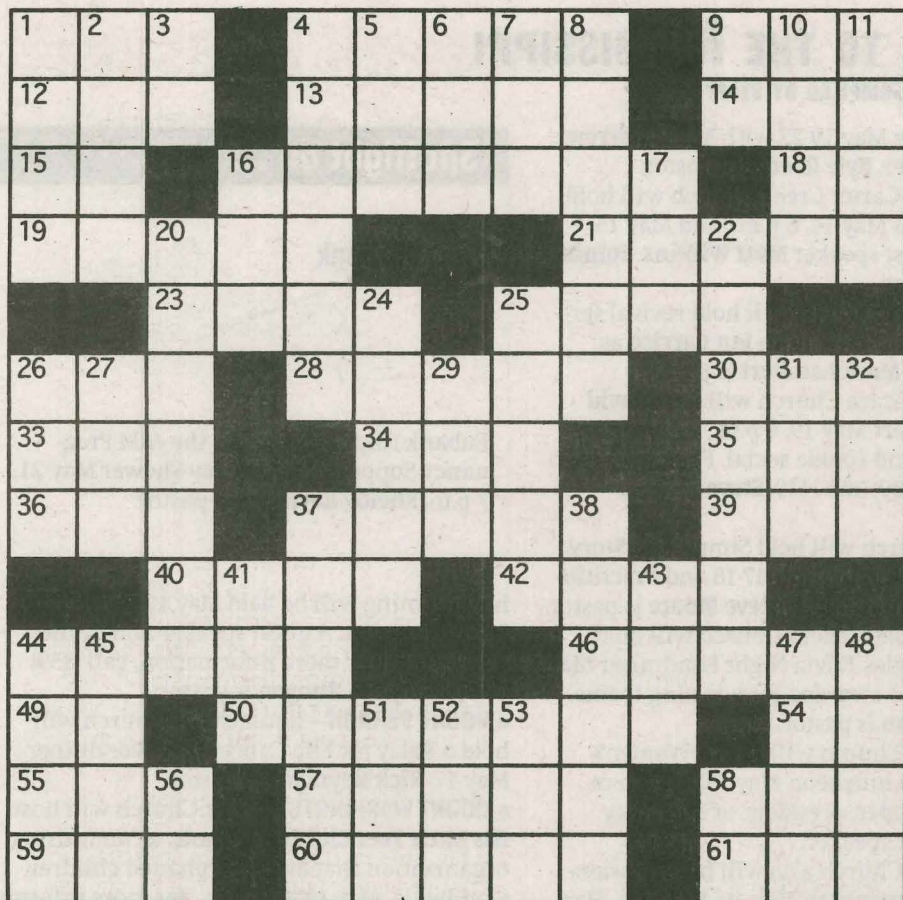
*Aubrey Sequeira is the winner of this year's Clyde T. Francisco Preaching Award at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. (Photo provided by SBTS)*

when they returned indoors for class.

Sequeira exhorted students and faculty to wash the feet of the people around them and to be servants before they are scholars.

"Get down to where it is dirty and where you can smell the toe jam," Sequeira said, adding that humble service is more important than praiseworthy grades or Bible study sessions at Starbucks.

A member of Immanuel Baptist Church in Louisville, Sequeira plans to pursue a doctorate after his graduation in May.



#161

**Bible Crosswords**

By Evelyn Boyington

**Across**

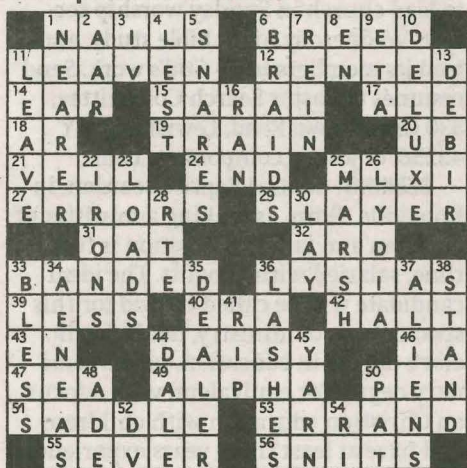
- 1 Linking verb
- 4 Makes like the sun
- 9 Possesses
- 12 Insane
- 13 Lovable nerd on TV's "Family Matters"
- 14 Honest one
- 15 French conjunction
- 16 Land from which the Lord will recover the remnant of His people (Isaiah 11:11)
- 18 Live for the moment
- 19 Like food and clothing
- 21 Held with a certain tool
- 23 Frost, for one
- 25 Pitch in
- 26 High priest in Shiloh
- 28 More reliable
- 30 Director Lupino
- 33 Poetic contraction
- 34 "Then \_\_\_\_\_ brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the Lord" (2 Chronicles 16:2)
- 35 Spat
- 36 Likely
- 37 TV's "Get \_\_\_\_\_"
- 39 Frozen water
- 40 "Thy word is a \_\_\_\_\_ unto my feet" (Psalm 119:105)
- 42 "And he ... cast him into prison, till he should pay the \_\_\_\_\_" (Matthew 18:30)
- 44 At a certain location
- 46 Organic substance from plants
- 49 Concerning
- 50 "While the bridegroom \_\_\_\_\_ they all slumbered and slept" (Matthew 25:5)
- 54 Therefore
- 55 Vein contents
- 57 What hobos rode
- 58 In the manner of
- 59 Benign skin tumor
- 60 Lacking originality
- 61 O.T. book (abbr.)

**Down**

- 1 So be it
- 2 Per diem, for one
- 3 Before PCs, one who used a blue pencil (abbr.)
- 4 Particular potato
- 5 April correspondent (abbr.)
- 6 TV's "\_\_\_\_\_ King"
- 7 Poetic contraction
- 8 Splinter

- 9 Half a laugh
- 10 French cleric
- 11 "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious \_\_\_\_\_" (Psalm 126:6)
- 16 "Why make ye this \_\_\_\_\_, and weep?" (Mark 5:39)
- 17 To pain, discomfort, or trouble
- 20 Letter from Paul
- 22 "Who maketh his angels \_\_\_\_\_; his ministers a flaming fire" (Psalm 104:4)
- 24 Trudge along
- 25 "I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast \_\_\_\_\_, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet" (Jeremiah 4:19)
- 26 Greek letter
- 27 \_\_\_\_\_ service
- 29 Team \_\_\_\_\_, e.g., at the Olympics
- 31 Halliday, for one
- 32 Reverence
- 37 Rips one's reputation
- 38 Feminine name (var.)
- 41 Masculine nickname
- 43 "Arise, take up thy \_\_\_\_\_, and go unto thine house" (Matthew 9:6)
- 44 Believe or think (arch.)
- 45 In or at this place
- 47 Man, for one
- 48 Father of Japheth
- 51 Tell on
- 52 Inlet
- 53 Feeling poorly
- 56 \_\_\_\_\_-Gedi, city of Judah (Joshua 15)
- 58 Article

**Last puzzle's solution #160**



**Alves came to play baseball, will graduate as CU coach**

By Linda Waggener

Campbellsville—"I wasn't here for anything else besides playing baseball and becoming the best infielder I could be," said Senior Jordan Alves, from Lawrenceburg, reflecting on the life-changing experiences of his sophomore year.

That year, Alves said he felt like his life was falling apart until he encountered a Christian professor, coach and mentor at Campbellsville University who began to help him turn things around.

Alves played hard in 30 games as a freshman, but his sophomore year began with a broken hand on the very first ground ball that he fielded. He was out for three months and never fully recovered. He thought baseball was gone.

Then, his mother told him his parents were getting a divorce, and on that same night his grandmother died from a sudden heart attack. Alves was devastated.

"I didn't know what to do, think or say," he said. "I didn't want to be around baseball. The things that I turned to in order to feel better led me into a world of parties, trying to fit in with upperclassmen. My grades went down the drain. I felt like my family was being ripped apart."

Alves' instructor, Ted Taylor, professor of Christian studies and director of Campbellsville's Leadership/Character Development Institute and lead professor of the sports ministry program, looked beyond the falling grades and saw a student getting into deeper and deeper trouble.

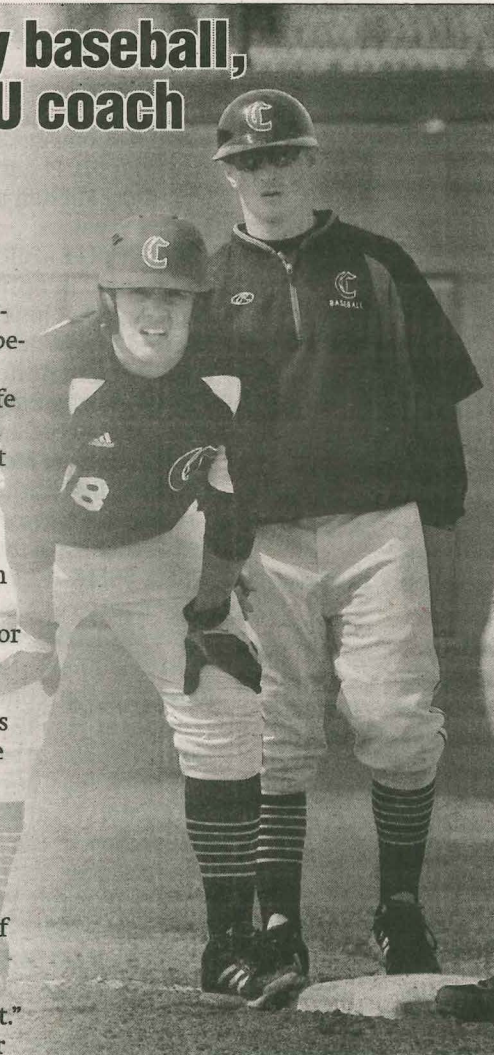
In a Christian coaching program, Taylor related to Alves using examples of others in the field who had walked a similar path to help Alves understand and grow past the events that had sent him into a free fall.

"Dr. Taylor saw something in me when I took his class," Alves said, "and now I'm an assistant baseball coach here at CU. I graduated May 4 with a bachelor's degree in sport management."

Alves was a student assistant during his junior and senior years, coaching first base. He also coached the junior varsity team and helped with the team's Operation Christmas Child effort.

He coached with the Tiger baseball team May 9-11 at the NCCAA Mid-East Regional in Nashville, Tenn. Campbellsville finished as runner-up in the Mid-South Conference Tournament and was the No. 1 seed in NCCAA Mid-East Region Tournament.

Alves remembers meeting new people



Jordan Alves coaches Patrick McMeel at first base. (Campbellsville University Photo by Richard RoBards)

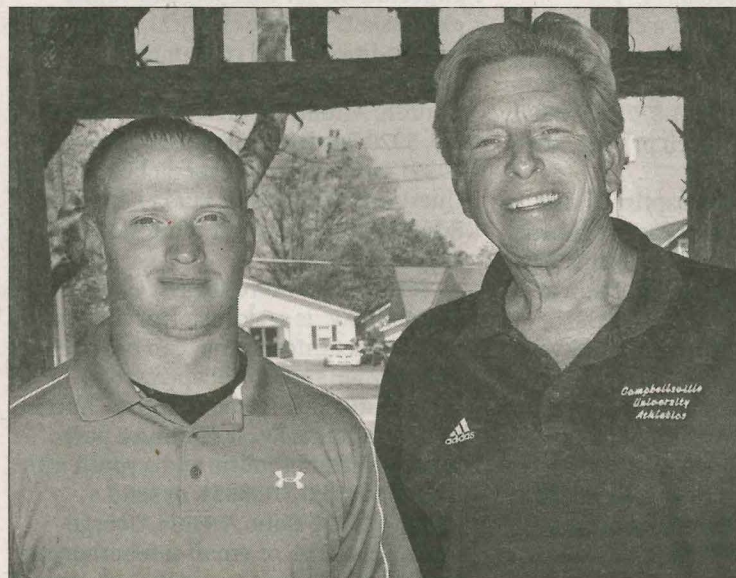
who were on fire for Christ and for being servant leaders while a student at Campbellsville. Seeing those people so happy and living life to the fullest was exactly what he said he needed as a sophomore.

Taylor rewarded Alves' turnaround with the assignment to become a FIRST CLASS mentor with incoming freshmen. Alves said that was a major moment in his spiritual walk.

After graduation, his goal is to enroll in the masters of organizational leadership program, with aspirations of working inside a baseball organization or coaching college baseball.

Alves found that coaching, while different from being a player, still allows him to be a part of the sport he loves. He believes he was born to be a leader in the classroom and on the field.

"And I found out that I was missing one huge person in my life, and that was Jesus Christ. That is by far the best thing that has ever happened to me," Alves said. (CU)



Jordan Alves with his mentor, Ted Taylor, at Campbellsville University's Turner Log Cabin Park. When Alves' world was seemingly falling apart, he said the Christian teacher took notice and stepped in to offer Alves a different way of thinking about himself and his career in baseball. (Photo by Linda Waggener)



## May

- 18 WMU State Associational Leadership Training, First Baptist Church of Mount Washington.
- 20 Leadership and Church Planting Learning Opportunity, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

## June

- 1 Reaching the Summit, Red House Baptist Church, Richmond.
- 10 Mission Adventure Camp, Cedar Crest, Bagdad.
- 14 Mother/Daughter Overnight, Cedarmore, Bagdad.
- 14 Father/Son Overnight, Cedarmore, Bagdad.

- **BEREA**—Conway Church will hold revival services May 19, 11 a.m., and May 20-22, 7 p.m., with **Tony Shelton** as guest speaker. **Bobby Turner** is pastor.
- **BEATTYVILLE**—Faith Church will honor men and women in uniform during morning worship May 19. A lunch will also be provided for the soldiers, police officers, firefighters and others serving in uniform. **Todd Blevins** is pastor.
- **CADIZ**—Rocky Ridge Church will hold revival services May 19-22 with **Paul Cannon** as guest speaker. **Robert McIntosh** is pastor.
- **COVINGTON**—Ninth Street Church celebrates 144 years of service May 19 and 26, 4 p.m. **Richard Fowler** is pastor.
- **COXS CREEK**—Vine Hill Church will hold revival services May 19-22, 7 p.m., with **Ron Davis Ministries**. **Gregory Crenshaw** is pastor.
- **CRESTWOOD**—Crestwood Church will host **Kenn Kington**, comedian, as part of Ultimate Date Night May 17, 7 p.m. For more information, call (502) 241-8534.
- Crestwood Church will hold a Men's Ministry Masters Meal May 21, 6:30 p.m. with **Tony Cruise**, host of the Joe B. and Denny Show, as guest speaker. For ticket information, call (502) 241-8534. **Donnie Patrick** is pastor.
- **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Elizabethtown Church recently called **Sonny Hernandez** as pastor.
- **GILBERTSVILLE**—Bethel Church will hold

- revival services May 19-22 with **Mike Morrow** as guest speaker. **Kyle Reeder** is pastor.
- **GREENVILLE**—Carter Creek Church will hold revival services May 14, 6 p.m., and May 15, 7 p.m., with guest speaker **Matt Wilkins**. **Tommy Wilhite** is pastor.
- **HICKMAN**—East Church will hold revival service May 14-15, 7 p.m., with **Ian Carrico** as guest speaker. **Mark Lambert** is pastor.
- **LEXINGTON**—Grace Church will host **David Biddle** in concert May 19, 6 p.m., followed by an ice cream and cookie social. For more information, call (859) 252-1119. **Steve Price** is pastor.

Victory Church will hold Simply the Story Leadership Workshop May 17-18 and Practitioner Workshop May 18-22. **Steve Moore** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Bethlehem Church will hold Wings Like Eagles Trivia Night Fundraiser May 17, 6 p.m. Prizes awarded for winning teams. **Steve Thompson** is pastor.

Fern Creek Church will hold a Women's Spring Tea and luncheon May 18, 11:30 a.m. with **Linda Cooper**, president of Kentucky WMU, as guest speaker.

Fern Creek Church also will host missionary **Carolyn Herrington** May 19, 5:30 p.m. Herrington and her late husband, **Thomas Herrington**, are the founders of Baptist Medical and Dental Mission International. **Linda Popham** is pastor.

St. Matthews Church will hold a 5K race/walk May 18, 8 a.m., prior to the St. Matthews Street Festival. The church will hold an electronics recycling drop-off that day, 9 a.m., and provide festival parking.

St. Matthews church also will host **Cornerstone** and **Make Us One** in concert May 19, 6:30 p.m. For more information, call (502) 896-8882. **Greg Barr** is pastor.

■ **LANGLEY**—Maytown First Church will hold revival services May 20-24, 7 p.m., with **Slade Stinson** as guest speaker. **Robert Varney** is pastor.

■ **MAYFIELD**—New Hope Church recently called **Alan Morris** as pastor.

Baltimore Church recently called **Robbie Courtney** as pastor.

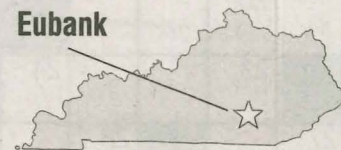
South First Street Church will hold tent revival services May 14-18, 7 p.m., with **Glenn Holifield** as speaker. **Wayne Rambo** is pastor.

First Church will hold Concert of Praise May 16, with **Donnie Sumner**, a Gaither Homecoming artist, Grammy nominee and Dove award winner. **Wes Fowler** is pastor.

■ **MOUNT STERLING**—Spring Street Church

## Spotlight on ...

### Eubank



Eubank Church will host the AIM Pregnancy Support Center Baby Shower May 21, 7 p.m. **Shelby Reynolds** is pastor.

homecoming will be held May 19 with **God Sent** in concert. A guest speaker and dinner will follow. For more information, call (859) 498-5532. **John Runyon** is pastor.

■ **MOUNT VERNON**—Roundstone Church will hold a Relay for Life Cancer Survivor dinner May 17. **Rick Reynolds** is pastor.

■ **MOUNT WASHINGTON**—First Church will host **His Little Feet Children's Choir**, a fundraising organization that assists orphaned children worldwide, May 19, 8:15 a.m. For more information, call (502) 538-7361.

First Church also will host The Party, sponsored by Fellowship of Christian Athletes, May 15, 6 p.m. Students are welcome to enjoy games, worship, music and a guest speaker. **Billy Compton** is pastor.

■ **MURRAY**—First Church will host Bridge Kids Presentation and Celebration May 19, 6 p.m., with presentation of scriptures and projects. Bouncers and food will be available. **Keith Inman** is pastor.

■ **PADUCAH**—Lone Oak First Church will hold Center Shot Archery for children grades 1-8, May 22 and 29. **Dan Summerlin** is pastor.

■ **PRINCETON**—First Church will host the second annual Caldwell/Lyon Associational Missions Banquet May 17, 6:30 p.m. **Russell Davidson** is pastor.

■ **RUSSELLVILLE**—First Church will hold "Down by the Creek Bank," a musical by the children's choir May 19, 10:45 a.m. **Buddy Crabtree** is pastor.

■ **SYMSONIA**—Elva Church will hold revival services May 19-24. **Michael Littrell** is pastor.

■ **WINCHESTER**—Ephesus Church will hold Women's Night May 11 to learn about missions opportunities at New Beginnings Pregnancy Center. Childcare and meal provided. **Todd Rader** is pastor.

## OBITUARIES

### Gill, former KBC Misson Board member, dies

**Madisonville**—Ralph Gill, former member of the Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board and pastor, passed away May 5. He was 86.

Gill was ordained to the Baptist ministry in 1948 and served in several pastorates in Kentucky and Illinois. He was pastor of Park Avenue Baptist Church in Madisonville from 1988-1997, and at Grapevine Missionary Baptist Church, also in Madisonville, where he remained a member

until his death.

In addition to serving twice on the KBC Mission Board—once in the early 90s and later that decade—Gill held several positions on state convention committees and with Little Bethel Baptist Association. He was a Kentucky Colonel and an avid Kentucky Wildcats fan.

Gill was married to his wife, Jean, for 64 years and had three children, five children and five great-grandchildren.

**Correction:** In the April 30 edition of the Western Recorder, Jason Rogers was incorrectly identified as special assistant to President Obama and director of the Office of Faith-Based and

Neighborhood Partnerships. His sister, Melissa, held these positions. Rogers is vice president for administration and university counsel at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**FOR RENT:** Get-away condo in Myrtle Beach, SC. Beautiful, two bedrooms, two bathrooms, sofa bed. [www.mbvacation-condo.com](http://www.mbvacation-condo.com) or (803) 566-0214.

**FOR SALE:** Do you need a church pianist? Try piano CDs for churches to sing by. Hymns, patriotic, choruses, etc. Worship Services Resources (1-877) 977-6800. Free demo. Special church pricing. [www.wsrpianocds.com](http://www.wsrpianocds.com).

**SEEKING:** Woodlawn Baptist Church, a small/medium Southern Baptist church in central Ky., is seeking a full time pastor. Send resumé to Jerry Albertson at 620 George St., Lebanon, KY 40033, or email [home@woodlawnbaptist2serve.org](mailto:home@woodlawnbaptist2serve.org).

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

**SEEKING:** Part-time pianist for Fern Creek Baptist Church. The church has a very strong musical heritage and high expectations for this position. Music expressions include classical, sacred, gospel, traditional and contemporary. Send resumé by June 3 to Fern Creek Baptist Church, Attention: Personnel Committee, 5920 Bardstown Road, Louisville, KY 40291, or to [donna@ferncreekbaptist.org](mailto:donna@ferncreekbaptist.org). Questions? Call Pastor Linda Barnes or Eddie Howell, minister of music, at (502) 239-0316.

**SEEKING:** Stanford Baptist Church, in Stanford, Ky., is seeking a full-time pastor. Contact information can be found on our website: [standfordbaptist.com](http://standfordbaptist.com).

**SEEKING:** Safe Harbor Baptist Church in Georgetown, Ky., is seeking a part-time minister of music and a youth minister. Call (502) 570-5851, or send a resumé to 519 Gano Avenue, Georgetown, KY 40324, or email [safeharborpastor@gmail.com](mailto:safeharborpastor@gmail.com).

**SEEKING:** Bethlehem Baptist Church is looking for a full-time pastor. Please contact Bethlehem Baptist Church, 4411 Hwy. 1664, Nancy, KY 42544, Attn: Morris Norfleet.

**SEEKING:** Union Missionary Baptist Church is seeking a bivocational pastor to lead church in Sunday worship service, Wednesday night Bible study, and lead its members to do God's work. Send resumés to Pastor Search Committee, 530 Graveltown Road, Lewisburg, KY 42256, or [jon@rccomponents.com](mailto:jon@rccomponents.com).

**SEEKING:** Central Baptist Bearden, in Knoxville, Tenn., is seeking a minister of children and families. Position is full time, salaried with benefits. The ideal candidate will be called by God for this specific area of ministry, hold a bachelor's degree in education, hold a seminary degree (or equivalent) with a focus on Christian education with children, and have at least three years experience with children in a church setting.

### To place an advertisement in the Western Recorder:

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



Central Baptist Bearden is a mid-town, dually aligned CBF/SBC congregation of 2,900 resident members. Average weekly SS attendance is 1,100, which includes 100 children, grades 1-6. Position Profile, Personal and Professional Profile (application) and Recommendation Form are all available under Employment at [www.cbcbearden.org](http://www.cbcbearden.org). If questions, contact Dr. Chuck Chance, chair of the CMSC, at [cchance@utk.edu](mailto:cchance@utk.edu).

# A marriage torn by betrayal & porn moves to authenticity

By Kay Adkins

Lakeland, Fla.—Bonnie Hicks had known for years something was wrong in her marriage. At times it seemed good. At other times, although Allen was physically present, she felt he was emotionally absent. From time to time she was certain he was having an affair, but she lacked proof.

In December 2010 the truth was unveiled. Allen, a youth pastor at the time, was caught in an adulterous relationship, which seemed to doom their 22-year marriage. Over time, however, the truth cleared the way for the couple to build an authentic marriage and set Allen on a new path toward freedom from a long-term sexual addiction.

The Hickses are now members of First Baptist Church at the Mall in Lakeland, Fla. The church's senior pastor, Jay Dennis, is leading a movement to battle pornography and sexual addictions among Christian men. Since the "One Million Men" campaign began at Church at the Mall in 2011, Dennis said the church has experienced a new "awareness and openness to deal with those issues."

The campaign—to be set in motion nationwide during the Southern Baptist Convention's June 11-12

annual meeting in Houston—is named "Join 1 Million Men," on the Web at [www.join1millionmen.org](http://www.join1millionmen.org).

"As long as men suffer in silence and secrecy, the enemy has a stronghold," Dennis said. "However, once the secret is revealed by the light of God's Word, Satan loses much of his power to keep Christian men in bondage."

By openly addressing pornography in the church, Dennis said, those ensnared in sexual sin can begin to understand they are not alone in their struggle and that they will be supported and encouraged by other Christians as they repent and do the hard work necessary to break free.

## 'Brokenhearted and defeated'

Allen and Bonnie have worked hard to deal with painful issues on their journey to healing. Bonnie was pierced with the reality of Allen's betrayal first via a text message from the other woman.

"I went into a rage," Bonnie said. "I groaned and moaned, like an animal almost. I hit him—I was physically abusive at this point as a reaction."

That night at Bonnie's request, their pastor at the time and his wife, George and Margaret, met Allen and Bonnie at their church.

George requested Allen's resignation as the church's youth pastor. But George and Margaret, who had once survived a similar trial, did not abandon Allen and Bonnie. Instead, they walked with them through it, George working with Allen and Margaret working with Bonnie.

The other woman continued



Allen and Bonnie Hicks work as licensed marriage counselors and provide first-hand knowledge that God can restore marriages. (BP)

# JOIN 1 MILLION MEN

Key Scriptures for men's moral purity and a booklet, "Our Hardcore Battle Plan A-Z," will be among the resources for Southern Baptists' upcoming "Join 1 Million Men" campaign.

tormenting Bonnie for weeks. Brokenhearted and defeated, Bonnie kicked Allen out of their house just before Christmas Eve.

## 'God started working in me'

Though the year was, in Bonnie's words, "hell on earth" for them, Allen said that is where the story begins of God's grace working in their lives.

Bonnie sought out counseling and support groups right away, and she found L.I.F.E. Recovery International. Her L.I.F.E. group guided her through a process of grieving.

"Then God started working in me, showing me things that were in my own life that I would not have recognized," Bonnie said. "I was so negative and critical, and I had lived that way in my marriage and as a mom."

Not long after Bonnie began going to a women's L.I.F.E. group, Allen began to attend a men's L.I.F.E. group. Recalling his initial response to being exposed, he said, "I had lived these two lives for so long. Part of me was relieved that it was out because it was treacherous holding all that in. But instead of being remorseful, I was very angry with everyone except myself."

His motive in the L.I.F.E. group, he admitted, had nothing to do with trying to get any better; he just wanted to get his family back.

"But," he said, "Bonnie's thought was, 'We can't go back to what it was.'"

Bonnie sometimes called Allen at work, and he was encouraged that they

had had some good talks.

"I was just hanging on," Allen said. But one day Bonnie called and announced that God was leading her to divorce him.

"At first I didn't accept that," Allen said. "Then I talked to some guys in my group, and I realized that I had to change my focus. I had to fix what was wrong with me to be a good husband. I had to put the marriage on the sacrificial altar and just work on me, and who I was. I accepted the fact that she was going to divorce me and signed the paperwork." Allen added, "When the anger subsided, I could see the destruction I had caused in all of these lives—Bonnie, the kids, the youth at church."

In working on himself, Allen said, a key to change was identifying the sources that started him on an addictive path. His home life growing up was "teeming" with alcohol and tobacco addiction, anger, co-dependency and verbal and emotional abuse.

Lacking a positive male role model in his life, Allen said he learned to be more comfortable in relationships with women. "Porn," he said, "helped me carve out a fantasy world where I was in control and was never rejected."

## Accountability partner

In his L.I.F.E. group, Allen found many who could relate to his experiences, several of whom were in ministry.

Dave, a former worship minister, became one of Allen's accountability partners, and their stories had much in common. Both grew up in church, yet

both also grew up in the midst of alcoholism and pornography. Additionally, Dave suffered physical, verbal and sexual abuses that ultimately gave way to sexual addictions.

At age 20 Dave married Barbara, the daughter of a Baptist preacher. "She knew about the abuse," he said, "but we thought she could fix me." Like Allen, his addictive cycles continued.

Dave lamented that the times he sought help from church leaders or men in ministry, he felt condemned by some and exploited by others. Those hurtful experiences left him too fearful to be honest with his pastor.

Dave told himself, "You are 48 years old and this is just how you are." He lost hope that he could be different and for 14 months walked away from his family.

"Then," Dave said, "through counseling, and the help of our three boys, our close friends and our awesome church family, for the first time in 29 years we began walking this journey together."

Dave and Barbara renewed their wedding vows on Sept. 7, 2009.

In 2010, Dave discovered L.I.F.E. Ministries online and began participating in a group. Now he serves as a L.I.F.E. group facilitator in Orlando and coordinates the groups in central Florida.

"Allen works right-hand with me. We have a Tuesday night conference call that is worldwide. We minister to men from everywhere who are dealing with these addictions, and we encourage, empower and equip them to Live in Freedom Everyday. It is a lifelong journey to walk out of. That is why I live by Jeremiah 29:11—'God's Plan'."

## Trusting God

As Bonnie was wrestling with her decision to divorce Allen, God spoke to her in several ways. At a marriage conference, Bonnie had prayed that God would give her a real marriage.

"When I was wondering if I wanted to be married, God reminded me of my prayers at that conference," she said.

One day she tried to fax the signed divorce papers, only to be thwarted three times by the oddly malfunctioning fax machine. That "coincidence," plus some friends who were asking her "the hard questions," prompted Bonnie to slow down and give marriage counseling a chance.

The Hickses began working with a licensed marriage and sexual addiction counselor in August 2011. Both of them lacked hope for their relationship, but Bonnie recalled, "It was a step of faith and saying, 'I trust You, God, and if You want me to go back into this marriage...'"

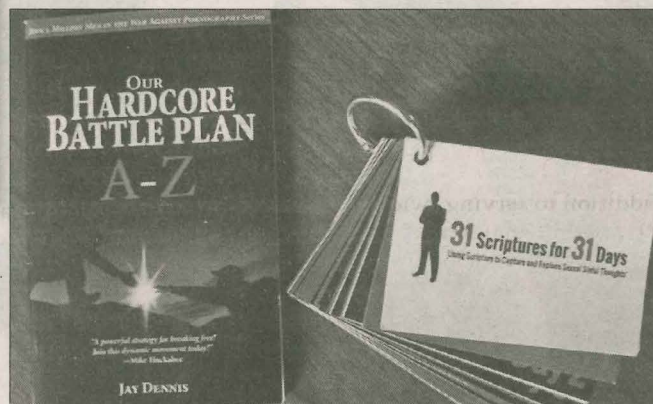
As they began to reveal all of the secrets they had hidden from each other, a new relationship began to develop.

During a 2011 Christmas Eve celebration, Allen and Bonnie renewed their marriage vows. Among the witnesses were many who had supported them throughout their restoration process, including Dave and Barbara and George and Margaret. This year the Hickses will celebrate their 25th anniversary.

"God performed a miracle," Bonnie said. "It's a journey—it's still a journey," Allen said. "We had to start all over. We were lousy communicators. We had so much hidden from each other. But we've come a long way." (BP)

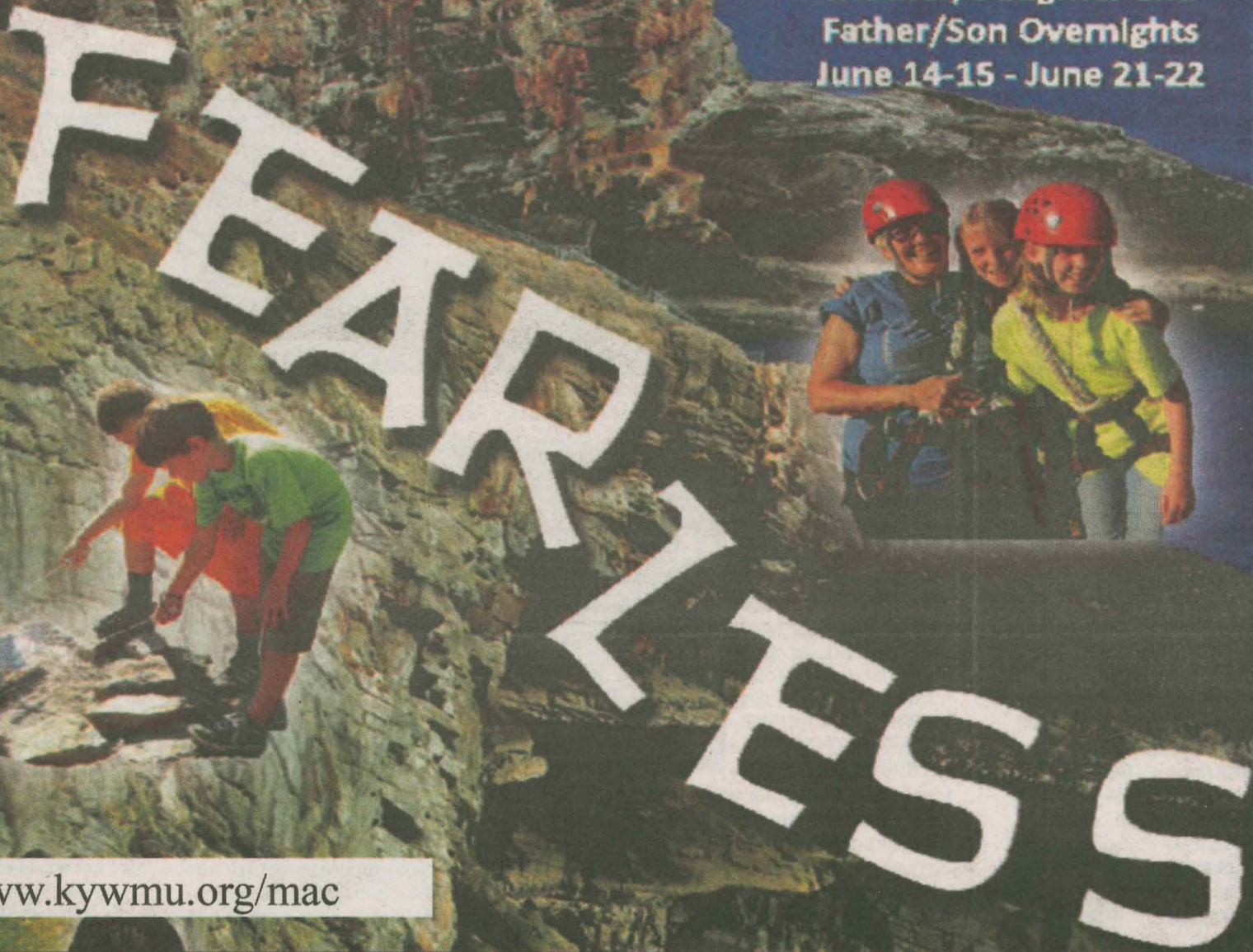


Jay Dennis



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Father/Son Overnights  
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