

# WESTERN Recorder

October 29, 2013

Shine Like Stars \* Philippians 2:15

Volume 187, Issue 41

## KBC annual meeting casts 'Forward' vision of state evangelism

By Dannah Prather

**Paducah**—When Kentucky Baptists from around the commonwealth gather Nov. 12 for the annual meeting of their convention, they will be asked to consider windshields and rearview mirrors.

"Last year marked 175 years since the convention was organized," said Paul Chitwood, executive director-treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. "It is important, and often necessary, to look back, but there's a reason that wind-



shields are bigger than rearview mirrors. What is in front of us must have our primary attention."

The annual meeting theme is "Forward To What Lies Ahead." Based on Philippians 3:13-14, it is appropriate for where Kentucky Baptists, as a convention, are as 2014 approaches, Chitwood said.

"As Christians, we must move forward and become even more involved in our cities, counties and neighborhoods," he said. "There are so many Kentuckians out there who are hurting, and they have never heard the gospel in a way that has really made sense to them. We have the

privilege of changing that."

### Evangelistic 'push'

Chitwood and Dan Summerlin, KBC's current president and pastor of Lone Oak First Baptist Church in Paducah, point to the activity of believers in West Kentucky prior to the annual meeting as a positive example of forward movement.

"RISK: Paducah" is an evangelistic push Nov. 1-11 coordinated by KBC, West Union Baptist Association and churches  
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## Expanding ministry

### Crossings to build camps for elementary-age kids

By Todd Deaton

**Louisville**—Crossing Ministries will soon expand its program to include dedicated camps for children at both its Jonathan Creek and Cedarmore locations.

Crossings acquired a 79-acre tract across the road from its Jonathan Creek property Oct. 15 to be developed into a children's camp, and has announced its plans to redevelop Cedar Crest, originally built as a Girls in Action camp adjacent to Cedarmore, into a new, coed facility for children.

Purchased at a cost of \$637,197, the undeveloped woodland tract at Jonathan Creek, which includes a 6,000-square-foot house and a 20-acre lake, approximately doubles the size of Crossings' current camp facilities on Kentucky Lake.

"Over the last few years, we've been fortunate to have seen growth in our Crossings' camping programs," said President David Melber. While its primary focus has been on middle and high school students, one of the fastest growth areas for Crossings is among elementary school-age children, he said.



David Melber

"This is the very age in which most children are likely to make salvation decisions," Melber noted. "Since our goal at Crossings is to see kids crossover from death to life, we are expanding by building kid camps."



Crossings has camps for younger students, but now the camping ministry plans to build facilities dedicated to elementary-age children at Jonathan Creek and Cedarmore. Children pictured above and below attended camp at Cedarmore in July. (Photos courtesy of Crossings)

Currently, Crossings offers five weeks of camp programs for elementary school-age children on its youth facilities. The youth ministry expects about 3,500 of the more than 11,300 campers who have pre-registered for next year to be elementary school age.

When completed, the two new camps will double Crossing's current enrollment, possibly allowing it to exceed 25,000 campers and employ more than 300 college students and staff, Melber envisioned.

At Cedar Crest, all of the existing buildings except for the newest cabin, Grinstead, will be razed to allow space for new dining hall facilities, worship center and lodges for the new children's camp.

Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union learned about Crossings' plans to expand children's camps this summer, Joy Bolton, executive director of Kentucky  
□ See Crossings ... Page 6



## Affinity evangelism strategist gets nod by KBC committee

By Todd Deaton

**Louisville**—Each region of the commonwealth could soon have its own intentional evangelism strategy, aimed at identifying specific affinity groups and then equipping local churches to better reach them with the gospel.

The administrative committee of the Kentucky Baptist Mission Board approved the creation of an affinity evangelism strategist position during its Oct. 24 meeting in Louisville.

In presenting the concept to committee members, Chuck McAlister, KBC evangelism, church planting and campus ministry team leader, explained that the affinity evangelism strategist would be responsible for developing an intentional evangelism strategy for each region and training the regional consultants of the KBC's church revitalization team to assist area churches in reaching key affinity groups.

The AE strategist will also help train church planters and work with the collegiate evangelism strategist to train collegiate missionaries, McAlister said. The strategist position, he noted, is being created by upgrading a former collegiate evangelism position.

McAlister, in explaining the need for the position to the KBC's administrative committee, told how the

□ See Affinity strategist ... Page 3



Chuck McAlister

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## Forward

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and ministries in the Paducah area.

"The idea of cooperating with one another to do evangelism at this scale is exciting and exhilarating," Summerlin said. "There are so many different events taking place, churches can plug into the area that is closest to them, or to a group they really want to reach."



Dan Summerlin

Twelve Oaks Baptist Church is hoping to draw hundreds of outdoor enthusiasts to their campus Nov. 7 for a wild-game dinner. Pastor Brandt Lyon said there are people in the congregation inviting their fellow deer and duck hunters who perhaps have never heard the gospel or just don't feel comfortable in a traditional church setting.

After dinner, participants will hear Chuck McAlister, founder and host of the cable TV show, Adventure Bound Outdoors, talk about his experiences as a hunter, and the difference God has made in his life.

"It's about speaking a language that they understand, and at the same time sharing the gospel," Lyon said.

For a detailed list of outreach events, and volunteer opportunities, visit [www.kybaptist.org/annualmeeting](http://www.kybaptist.org/annualmeeting) and click on the "RISK: Paducah" tab.

Reports from the outreach will be shared at the annual meeting, which convenes Nov. 12 at 8:30 a.m., CST, at Lone Oak First Baptist Church.

Chitwood said he hopes news from "RISK: Paducah" will inspire all Kentucky Baptists to share the love of Christ and the gospel message in their communities.

"I think when the events surrounding RISK: Paducah are over, the churches in the area will continue to work diligently to follow up with all of the individuals and families that they have met, inviting them to learn more about Christ and to become part of a local congregation," he said.

"That kind of activity is contagious to Christians who are serious about the Great Commission, and that describes Kentucky Baptists," he added.

## Possible first layman president

Also during the annual meeting, a Baptist layman from the West Kentucky area will be nominated to serve as the next KBC president.

Chip Hutcheson, an editor and publisher in Princeton and member of Southside Baptist Church, will be nominated by Ronnie Sivells, pastor of Nortonville Baptist Church.



Chip Hutcheson

If elected Nov. 12, Hutcheson will be the first layman to serve as president since Eugene Siler, a judge and member of First Baptist Church of Williamsburg, accepted the gavel in November 2003.

Only five laymen have held the position in the past 75 years.

Hutcheson is publisher of the Princeton Times and The Eagle Post in Oat Grove. A former dean and Sunday school teacher at Southside Baptist, Hutcheson currently serves through the

## Milburn to be nominated KBC first vice president

By Robin Cornetet Bass and Todd Deaton

**Union**—Kevin Milburn, senior pastor at Union Baptist Church in Union, will be nominated first vice president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention when its annual meeting convenes Nov. 12.

Paul Badgett, senior pastor at First Baptist Church of Pikeville, will make the nomination at next month's gathering at Paducah's Lone Oak First Baptist Church.

"Kevin is a wonderful young pastor" said Badgett. "He has a heart for Kentucky Baptists and will seek to serve them. It will be a very good experience for our convention to have him serve as first vice president."

Badgett, who served as KBC president in 2003, said he has been a friend and mentor to Milburn and believes it is time for the "younger generation to start taking their place in convention leadership."

"He's ready," Badgett said of Milburn.

According to Milburn, 38, he has overseen several changes at Union Church since he became its pastor in 2008. Sunday morning worship has expanded to multiple services and renovations have created five new Sunday School spaces.

Milburn has led the church in purchasing property to further their community food program and clothes closet, and in purchasing four acres adjacent to the church that will be used to expand their Upwards sports ministry.



Kevin Milburn

For the first time in Union Church's 125 year history, Milburn led members on an international missions trip and planted a church.

"I'm just excited to do whatever I can to carry out the cause of Christ in Kentucky and around the world," Milburn said.

If elected, Milburn said he hopes to help Kentucky Baptist churches be strengthened through reaching out to others and through the Cooperative Program.

"I'm someone who truly believes the Cooperative Program is making a difference. It's making a difference in our state. It's making a difference around the world," the northern Kentucky pastor said.

In addition to Union Church, Milburn also has served at Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset as pastor of discipleship and evangelism, New Hope Baptist Church in Harrodsburg as interim then senior pastor, and Gethsemane Baptist Church in Danville as youth pastor.

Milburn has served on the KBC Mission Board, administrative committee, Committee on Nominations and Committee on Public Affairs.

He earned his doctorate at Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary and his Masters of Divinity at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and wife, Jessica, have a daughter and four sons.

According to the KBC's 2012 Annual Church Profile report, Union Baptist Church gave \$22,901 (4.6 percent) of its undesignated receipts to the Cooperative Program. The church also reported 20 baptisms. (WR)

## Amundson to receive 2nd VP nomination

Ed Amundson, pastor of High Street Baptist Church in Somerset since 2008, will be nominated for second vice president by Brian Burkhead, pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Lexington.

"Ed is a big person with an even bigger heart that loves Jesus and to tell others about Jesus," said Burkhead. "He would be a great leader in our state who will challenge us to love God, love people and seek to make a difference for the kingdom."

Amundson served as chairman of the KBC's Committee on Nominations for 2011-12. Most recently, he also has served as vice chairman of the KBC Mission Board's nominating committee, and as a member of the Mission Board's executive and evangelism committees.

Prior to High Street, Amundson served as pastor of Woodlawn Baptist Church in Lebanon and Cooper Chapel Road Baptist Church in Louisville.

According to the 2012 KBC Annual, High Street contributed \$29,503 (8 percent) of its undesignated receipts of \$365,331 through the Cooperative Program, and recorded 18 baptisms.

A graduate of Boyce College at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Campbellsville University, Amundson is working on a Master of Divinity degree at Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Shannon, have three sons. (WR)



Ed Amundson

church's after-school children's ministry and a local ministry to the incarcerated.

Currently in his second term as a trustee for Western Recorder, Kentucky Baptists' newspaper of record, Hutcheson has also served two terms on the KBC Public Affairs Committee.

## Not in Paducah since 1990

In addition to Summerlin's address to the convention Nov. 12, scheduled for 11:40 a.m., Kentucky Baptists will hear from Bill Langley, pastor of Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown at 3:25 p.m.

Summerlin noted that the KBC annual meeting has not been held in Paducah since 1990. The last time the meeting convened in West Kentucky was 2001 at the Regional Special Events Center on the campus of Murray State University.

"Our church is excited and honored to host the annual meeting," said Summerlin, who has led the Lone Oak congregation since 2002. "Many of our members have never attended a KBC annual meeting before and they are looking forward to seeing not only how our state convention operates, but also to witness the many wonderful things God is doing around the state through the efforts of Kentucky Baptists and the Cooperative Program."

A combined choir from Lone Oak First Baptist, Friendship Baptist Church and First Baptist Church of Paducah will provide music for the gathering.

## For pastors and wives

Nathan Joyce, senior pastor of Heartland Worship Center, also in Paducah, will preach the opening sermon of the 2013 Kentucky Baptist Pastors' Conference Nov. 11. The conference is also held at Lone Oak First Baptist's campus at 3601 Lone Oak Rd. It begins at 2 p.m., CST.

For more information, visit [kybaptist.org/pastorsconference](http://kybaptist.org/pastorsconference).

A new event for 2013 is a Ministers' Wives Luncheon scheduled for Nov. 12 between the morning and afternoon sessions of the annual meeting. The complimentary luncheon will be hosted by Chitwood's wife, Michelle, and is made possible by KBC and the North American Mission Board.

The guest speaker is Kathy Ferguson Litton, director of NAMB's ministry to pastors' wives. Registration is still open but space is limited. Visit [www.kybaptist.org/ministerswives](http://www.kybaptist.org/ministerswives) for details and to register.

For details on the annual meeting, including child care and accommodations, visit [kybaptist.org/annualmeeting](http://kybaptist.org/annualmeeting).

## Budget and other business

In addition to the election of a president, first- and second vice presidents and a secretary, messengers to the annual meeting will consider a proposed budget goal of \$22 million for 2014-15.

The proposed budget would equally divide Kentucky Baptists' support of missions and ministries through the

Cooperative Program between Kentucky Baptist and Southern Baptist Convention causes.

Seven percent of the budget, 3.5 percent from the KBC allocation and 3.5 percent from the SBC allocation, would be set aside as Educate Kentucky Program Resourcing, to educate Kentucky Baptists on the unified giving system that has been in place in the commonwealth since 1925.

In other business, the convention's Committee on Constitution and Bylaws will ask messengers to consider two changes to the constitution.

The first follows last year's passage of an updated definition of a "cooperating" church in Article IV as one that contributes through the Cooperative Program and submits the Annual Church Profile.

The question posed to messengers this year is to revise Article IX, Paragraph 1 to specify that trustees to the KBC Mission Board or KBC-affiliated agencies and institutions will be members of cooperating churches as defined by the new Article IV.

The second proposed change would be to Article VII, Paragraph 5 and would remove mention of the "president of the Kentucky Baptist Men on Missions" because the Men on Missions steering committee no longer exists.

The Nov. 12 meeting in Paducah will be the first reading for these changes to the constitution. Messengers to the 2014 KBC annual meeting in Bowling Green will vote on the revisions. (KBC)

# Churches see concrete proof of KBC's missions mobilization

By Ken Walker

**Pembroke**—When it comes to the effectiveness of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's mission mobilization team, pastor Jimmy Stewart sees concrete proof at Salem Baptist Church in Pembroke.

And not just concrete. There's wood, nails, drywall, light fixtures and more.

Thanks to a recent visit by Carpenters for Christ, Salem's two-story, 6,400-square-foot, multi-purpose building is nearly complete.

Other teams have helped the project along, too. Many of those groups connected with the Christian County congregation through Teresa Parrett, missions mobilization coordinator for the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Connecting on-mission Christians to people and ministries in need is the focus of Parrett's work, always with the goal of putting God's people in place to share the gospel with others.

"Whatever skill, talent or gift people have, we can most always find a project for them," Parrett said.

Led by Eric Allen, the KBC mission mobilization team networks with more than 110 self-funded missionaries and six volunteer regional consultants in Kentucky to meet needs and share Christ.

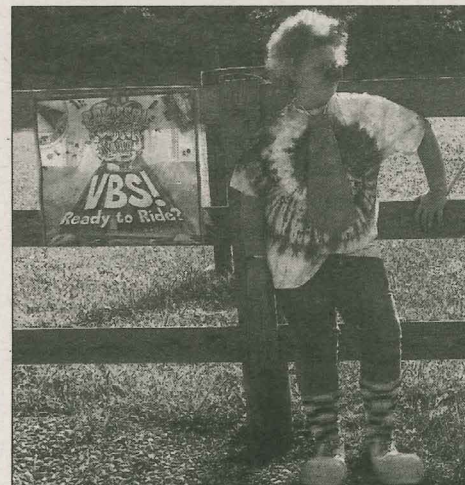
"Our goal is not simply to mobilize as many volunteers as we can," Allen said. "Our goal is to challenge believers to discover and use their gifts in service so that people come to know Christ as a result of their mobilization," Allen said.

In addition to helping mission teams find projects, Parrett's typical week includes fielding requests from churches, associations and ministries across Kentucky and sharing those requests through websites from KBC, Appalachian Regional Ministry, Mississippi River Ministry and North American Mission Board.

She also recruits self-funded missionaries to serve in Kentucky, works with NAMB to get those missionaries approved and ready to serve, and then connects with local churches and other donors to see that the missionaries have the resources they need to serve others.

Resources needed most often are Bibles, tracts, food, clothing, school supplies and building supplies, but there are many others.

After missionaries are appointed, they can count on Parrett to stay in touch



A young clown guides children to Vacation Bible School fun at Crossroads Baptist Church in Helechawa. Through the Kentucky Baptist Convention Missions Mobilization Team, members of Shively Baptist Church in Louisville assisted Crossroads with VBS this year. (KBC)

with them, offering encouragement and support, and to share their ministry stories with fellow Kentucky Baptists.

The six regional consultants serve in similar ways, connecting with missionaries in their areas.

Parrett is a frequent guest speaker at church services, conferences, missions fairs, associational meetings, Women on Missions gatherings and other events. She also writes for the KBC mission mobilization team's blog, Kentucky and Beyond, [www.kyandbeyond.org](http://www.kyandbeyond.org).

In the past year, the team connected nearly 30,000 volunteers to KBC churches and ministries. As a direct result, more than 1,350 people made decisions to follow Christ and nearly 400 people were baptized.

Allen and Parrett agree that elbow grease is a big part of mobilization, but the activity is a catalyst and not the mission itself.

"Drywall, light fixtures and insulation are not what missions mobilization is about, except that those materials make it possible for more men, women and children to encounter Christ," Allen said.

The project at Salem Baptist Church is a perfect example. Stewart said the facility will host Awanas, Sunday School classes, church dinners and sporting events.

"We've almost outgrown it before we've completed it, but that's a good problem to have," he said, noting that Sunday attendance has mushroomed from 20 to nearly 150 over the past five years as Salem Baptist increased its outreach to US Army personnel and their families stationed at nearby Fort Campbell.

The pastor estimates the 126 CFC volunteers from Lakeview Baptist Church in Auburn, Ala., saved the Pembroke congregation about \$150,000, the estimate for putting up walls, wiring the facility for electricity and installing light fixtures.

Much of the connecting begins online at [www.kybaptist.org/go](http://www.kybaptist.org/go) where mission opportunities are listed by location, type of project, length of project and other details.

"For a church or group that has never tried short-term missions before, the web page is a great place to start," Parrett said.

She noted that project pages include detailed descriptions of the type of assistance needed, including equipment, materials and expertise. There is insight and suggestions on housing and meals. Photos of the ministry or job site often are included. Every posting also includes contact information so visitors to the site can find out more.

Usually there are more than 100 posts on the site, so Parrett said if a team leader has problems narrowing down the list, "they should just email me or pick up the phone and call. In talking directly with a team, I can recommend projects that fit their group's make-up."

She can be reached by e-mail at [teresa.parrett@kybaptist.org](mailto:teresa.parrett@kybaptist.org) or by phone at (606) 875-3079.

Stewart heard about the resource from a KBC staff member and submitted several mission opportunities. He said the response far exceeded his expectations.

Allen, who has served on the KBC



A 126-member team of Carpenters for Christ from Lakeview Baptist Church in Auburn, Ala., work on a multi-purpose building for Salem Baptist Church in Pembroke. The Alabama Baptists were assisted through the Kentucky Baptist Convention's missions mobilization team. (KBC)

staff since 2000, said he is excited to see more Kentucky Baptist churches "taking ownership" of projects and forming their own mission partnerships.

With such initiative from the churches, KBC staff can focus on matching more teams to more needs rather than devoting time to planning trips, recruiting volunteers and handling arrangements.

"More churches are realizing the need to serve, not just internationally or around the U.S. but in our state," Allen said. "One of our primary goals is to meet all the needs that come to us. When we're able to help groups fulfill their ministry, it's a big win for us." (KBC) The KBC Mission mobilization team provides free consultations with those seeking help with their missions focus. Email [missions@kybaptist.org](mailto:missions@kybaptist.org).

## Affinity strategist

Continued from page 1

identification of an affinity group for quilting in the Paducah area had led to a quilting seminar being offered at First Baptist Church of Paducah as part of several pre-convention evangelism efforts through RISK—Reaching into the State of Kentucky.

The KBC evangelism, church planting and campus ministry team has also identified affinity groups throughout the state in hunting, relationships with local elementary schools, and in archery as some possibilities for developing outreach strategies, he noted.

In other action, the administrative committee also approved the creation of a Kentucky missionary category with two tracks—KBC employee and non-employee—and renaming the Mission Board's nominating committee.

Eric Allen, team leader for mission mobilization, proposed establishing a Mission Support Catalyst designation for persons serving from nine months to two years in positions with local, KBC-connected ministries.

KY-MSM missionaries will not be employees of the convention, Allen explained. The missions mobilization team will serve only as a connector of missionaries with places of service, while providing training, prayer support, encouragement and ministry awareness, he said.

Brian Combs, director of collegiate evangelism, proposed establishing a Campus Ministry Intern designation for persons serving in campus ministry support roles.

Following an initial fundraising phase, a potential CMI will sign an employee contract and be approved by the KBC's collegiate evangelism strate-

gist as a missionary, Combs explained.

Lowell Ashby, leader of the KBC business and finance team, reported that Cooperative Program receipts for 2013-14 are off to a slow start.

With less than two months completed for the new fiscal year that began Sept. 1, Ashby reported that under \$3 million in CP receipts have been received this year, compared to \$3.13 million in September and October last year.

CP receipts for September of \$1,414,762 exceeded last year's total by about \$140,000. However, with just under two weeks left in October, CP receipts are currently \$1.5 million, or about \$350,000 short of last October's \$1,856,142, Ashby said.

Year-to-date CP totals thus far for the first two months of the fiscal year are \$2,935,438, or about \$200,000 short of last year's total. The monthly budgeted CP goal this year is \$1,875,000, based on the annual goal of \$22.5 million.

Jim Donnell, administration and executive office team leader, recommended changing the name of the Mission Board's nominating committee to placement committee in the board's organizational documents.

The change is needed, Donnell said, to eliminate any confusion with the function of the KBC's Committee on Nominations, which brings recommendations of persons to serve on the boards of KBC agencies and institutions and the Mission Board to the KBC annual meeting. The Mission Board's nominating committee, however, recommends placement of members on the board's various committees, he explained.

The name change still needs the approval of the Mission Board during its Nov. 11 meeting, Donnell said. (WR)

## In response to Sunrise story: It's about the kids

"It's about the kids" is the oft-repeated mantra of Sunrise Children's Services, formerly known as Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. It's a slogan we have always affirmed. Pray with me that the board of trustees will continue to put the kids first and provide them with

**Together**  
We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

caregivers who share and model the gospel. Secular agencies that care for children who are the victims of abuse and neglect are easy to find, but there is only one Kentucky Baptist agency that ensures holistic care, which includes gospel-centered nurture.

After a 12-year legal battle and attorney fees reportedly over \$1 million due to firing a practicing homosexual, Sunrise President Bill Smithwick is now recommending that his board of trustees change its hiring policies to employ people living alternate lifestyles. That news had already been confirmed to me by several Sunrise trustees before Todd Deaton reported on the discussions of the board in last week's Western Recorder.

On behalf of Kentucky Baptist Convention President Dan Summerlin and myself, I requested a meeting with Smithwick to discuss the matter but was simply told, "We will communicate, in full detail, any warranted board actions relevant to the KBC should any be taken."

What has led to Smithwick's reversal of the stance he has so long maintained? His statement in the Oct. 1 edition of the Western Recorder brings clarity. Regarding government money, Smithwick said, "We couldn't operate without it.... If we lose our contract, we're out of business." In actuality, Sunrise operated for most of its 154-year history without government money and could continue to do so today, albeit with a much, much smaller budget.

In addition to what it would mean for the kids, another great tragedy of Smithwick's recommendation is that it ignores the investment of untold tens of millions of Baptist dollars and surrenders the very reason Sunrise came into existence as Kentucky Baptists' gospel-centered ministry to orphans and neglected children. The Covenant Agreement between the KBC and Sunrise states, "This relationship is built upon many years of faithful commitment and trust by many individuals and by many millions of dollars contributed by Kentucky Baptists in support."

The Covenant Agreement also stipulates that Sunrise "shall maintain its distinctive Baptist character as set forth in its purpose and the support of the Kentucky Baptist Convention is based upon faithful adherence to that purpose." If the trustees decide to follow Smithwick and surrender biblical values to maintain government funding, then clearly they will have forsaken the Baptist character of Sunrise and become the equivalent of any secular corporation that contracts with the state to provide childcare.

Recently, the state of Illinois threatened to terminate its contracts for foster children with Catholic Charities unless Catholic Charities placed children with

homosexual couples. When Catholic Charities refused, they lost more than \$30 million in government funding. Doing the right thing can be very costly. The state then placed the children with other contractors and Catholic Charities found other ways to serve hurting kids.

One of the more puzzling aspects of Smithwick's recommendation is that it has come before the state has even required it. Nevertheless, should Sunrise trustees refuse to approve the recommendation, the day will probably come when Sunrise will be denied government money. And, like Catholic Charities, Sunrise will have to dramatically scale back its work in order to be faithful to Scripture and to model biblical values in front of hurting children.

The next meeting of the Sunrise board of trustees is Nov. 8. Pray that God will grant courage and wisdom to the board members, all of whom have been elected by the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Should you want to pray for them by name or contact them to let them know how you feel about the matter, a list of Sunrise trustees can be found at [www.sunrise.org/board-directors](http://www.sunrise.org/board-directors). Their contact info can be found on page 145 of the KBC annual report.

Sunrise has always been different from secular caregivers because of the biblical values that undergird the ministry and are modeled by the caregivers. Hurting children need that from Kentucky Baptists. When the government will no longer help fund it, I pray Sunrise will continue to give gospel-centered care, even if it means a significant reduction in their budget. Either way, I am confident Kentucky Baptists will always minister to hurting children and will do so through a ministry with biblical values.

Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

## Affinity evangelism's unfolding possibilities

The addition of an affinity evangelism strategist to the KBC fold promises some exciting possibilities for Kentucky Baptists.

You may be wondering, "What is affinity evangelism, and why do Kentucky Baptists need a strategist?" If so, you probably aren't alone. Affinity evangelism is a relatively new term in our Kentucky Baptist lexicon, and thus far has mostly been associated with events aimed at attracting hunters, such as wild-game dinners where a gospel is presented—which, by the way, have proven quite successful.

Affinity evangelism, though, may apply to a wide range of activities in which people share a common interest, and by providing training, equipment or meeting space, church members may gain opportunities to share the gospel. Although the term isn't all that familiar yet, the concept has been around for a while.

Growing up, some of us played on church softball and basketball teams. These were affinity groups, of sorts. Mostly, they provided an opportunity for fellowship and friendly competition between neighboring churches. Sometimes, though, we invited people to church. Upward basketball, football and cheerleading, however, have taken sports outreach to a new level, providing devotions for players at practices and for their families at halftimes.

In introducing a strategist position, though, KBC Evangelism Team Leader Chuck McAlister took affinity evangelism in a whole different direction with two activities that I—and most others in the room, I'd guess—didn't

see coming: quilting and archery.

As RISK (Reaching Into the State of Kentucky) organizers planned events prior to the KBC annual meeting, they discovered a strong interest in quilting in the Paducah area, particularly among internationals. So, Mark Sherman, an internationally

## After Thought

By Todd Deaton



acclaimed and award-winning quilt artist, was lined up for a seminar on Nov. 9 at First Baptist Church. His stunning quilts have been featured in magazines, on calendars, and at national

and international quilt shows.

For several years, Lone Oak First Baptist Church in Paducah and area churches have participated in CenterShot, an interdenominational outreach ministry that uses archery as a tool to reach communities with the gospel. Howard Fuller, minister of education, is a CenterShot trainer, and Lone Oak has used archery not only with its youth, but also on mission trips to Alaska, New Mexico and eastern Kentucky. The KBC evangelism team is hoping to see 25 people trained this year and church leagues launched for the eastern and western regions.

Excited by the possibilities? I sure am. Many of you may be aware of my fascination with stars. In a recent devotional, I even shared how the constellations could be used as tools to share the gospel. Last week, for my 50th birthday, my family gave to me a set of astronomical binoculars and a membership to the Louisville Astronomical Society. Hmm... Who knows? One day, Kentucky Baptists may have an affinity group for Christian astronomers.

## Fall for evangelism

By Diana Davis

Is your church planning a family-friendly fall event for your community?

You invest great effort and resources to advertise, extend invitations and create a first-class experience. But when it's over, will guests come back for church? Three tips can help make your event a purposeful outreach.

**Tip 1: Get each family's contact info.** Create a simple, 10-second family registration card, with three blanks: family's last name, number of children, and email or phone. Add a QR code registration option for cell phone users.

### Fresh Ideas



Diana Davis

A greeter gives each arriving family a pencil and registration card to turn in at the entry area. No line. No hassle.

**Tip 2: Personally invite guests to church.** A brief prayer time on the previous Sunday reinforces the goal: to show the joy of Jesus and give guests multiple personal invitations to church.

Print invitations with info about worship, classes and upcoming kids' activities. Personalize tracts with church information.

Recruit lots of volunteer, "cruiser schmoozers," whose single purpose is to stroll around, chat informally with

guests and invite them to church. Add a "Meet the Pastor/Staff" sign in a visible area so members can easily

introduce guests to church leaders.

**Tip 3: Follow-up before Sunday.** Immediately prepare an attendance list from registration forms.

A pre-assigned follow-up team uses email or the phone to make two contacts with each family before Sunday. First, a simple "glad you came and hope to see you Sunday" email with a link to the church website; second, a contact from a church member who has children, offering to meet the guests at an entrance to help pick up their photo and sit with them in worship.

When God brings those guests to church, welcome them warmly. Your fall event can be more than pumpkins and costumes. I'm praying it will impact eternity.

Diana Davis is an author and columnist from Pensacola, Fla.

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Wayne Spivey, Harrodsburg;  
Dan Summerlin, Paducah.

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

Western Recorder is published weekly 48 weeks a year by Western Recorder Inc., an agency of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253. It will not be published the first week of January, the week of Independence Day or the week of Christmas. Periodicals postage paid at Louisville, Ky. (USPS 679-380)

For general information or to give news tips, call (502) 489-3535; or email: [news@westernrecorder.org](mailto:news@westernrecorder.org).

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## An evangelical war on marriage?

By David Prince

"Lord, thank You for the life of this beautiful little girl. Thank You for adding to the heritage of this family. Help her parents raise her in the fear and admonition of Your holy name. Even as we celebrate her birth, I pray that by Your sovereign grace she will experience new birth through faith in Jesus Christ. Lord, give her a future husband who loves You and serves You and will protect, provide and love her as Christ loves the church. In Jesus' name, amen."

As I lifted my head in that hospital room after praying for the family and their newborn baby, I carefully gave the child back to her mother. I saw the grandparents who were in the room glaring at me with astonishment on their faces. The grandfather spoke up and said, "What kind of prayer was that? Why would you already be talking about a husband? She may not even get married! Who knows what she will become?"

These grandparents were not liberal progressives.

They were Bible Belt conservative evangelicals who would heartily defend every word of the Bible as God's inerrant word and would be appalled at the notion of legalizing same-sex marriage.

First Person



David Prince

The moment hit me like a ton of bricks. Without a doubt, the proponents of same-sex marriage have lost an understanding of what marriage really is—but, in alarming ways, so have evangelicals.

The end result of the widespread legalization of same-sex marriage will not be a broadening of the definition of marriage, but the destruction of the institution. We evangelicals must acknowledge that our own failure to communicate the meaning and gospel significance of marriage has hastened the cultural confusion and decline of the sacred institution.

Evangelicals often tell children that their education, career and individual success should be firmly in place before they should even think about marriage. After all, if they marry too young, they won't be able to accomplish their individual dreams and become successful people who lead lives of significance.

At the same time, we act befuddled that a generation we have taught to put themselves first does not understand the importance of self-sacrificial relationships beginning with marriage and family.

Too often we feed our children the junk food of narcissistic self-esteem along with a side of the American dream then wonder why they do not have a healthy Christian worldview. We pair culturally shaped dreams about what our children will become along with a romanticized view of love and marriage, which is rooted in notions of self-fulfillment rather than self-sacrifice. Christian marriage, however, is a gospel-magnifying, self-sacrificial commitment that teaches us what love is over time as we practice long-term fidelity.

The current divorce culture is grounded in the same perverse idea of marriage as a means of self-fulfillment. If marriage is simply about your means to a personal end, then it's right to consider it an addendum to the pursuit of your personal goals and to walk away when it's no longer functioning to your benefit. After all, many evangelicals reason in abandoning their spouse, God would not want them to live in an unhappy, unfulfilling relationship—a reasoning that sounds eerily similar to the contemporary argument for same-sex marriage.

In some ways, the younger generation has become more conservative in recent years, as seen by its growing opposition to abortion, while at the same time approving of same-sex marriage. Why? Evangelicals must be willing to face the reality that what we have taught them in our churches about marriage as self-fulfillment provides them no logical reason to oppose same-sex marriage.

Our assertion that marriage is a lifelong monogamous relationship between a man and woman marked by a lifetime of fidelity rings hollow when we have taught them that self-oriented achievement should be valued above marriage and children. When an evangelical parent tells a college-educated daughter who is

planning to become a stay-at-home mom, "Are you sure? I don't want you to waste your gifts," it is evident that many evangelicals are just as confused about marriage as the homosexual community. When an evangelical father says to his son, "What do you mean you're getting married? You need to finish law school," it is clear that the confusion regarding marriage doesn't stop at the LGBT meeting.

How can evangelicals effectively defend marriage in the culture when we no longer practice and advocate

**"We evangelicals must acknowledge that our own failure to communicate the meaning and gospel significance of marriage has hastened the cultural confusion and decline of the sacred institution."**

## Celebrating an anniversary?

By Valerie Vincent

Here are two memorable ways to mark the anniversary of the day you married your beloved.

### Create a marriage journal.

Many unique and beautifully crafted journals are available at local bookstores. Consider purchasing one of these along with a nice pen and setting the journal in a convenient location in the home. There are several ways you and your spouse could begin to record memories you each hold from your early married years

until now. First spend time thinking about the beginning of your marriage. What do you remember? Write down in the journal some of the stories that come to mind.

Another way to recall memories is to create a timeline. Draw a line on a piece of paper with the year you married until the current date. Draw vertical lines to mark significant events that you remember. Record in your journal some of the stories that you are able to recall by looking at your timeline.

Other ways to recall memories is to review photographs taken through the years. As a photo sparks a memory, record these thoughts in the memory journal. If you have any videos, take some time to watch and see what memories are triggered for you. Sometimes while going about your daily business of living, memories may come to mind. When this happens, jot them down in the journal. Before long you and your spouse will have created a meaningful journal of marriage memories.

### Write a scripture love letter.

Have you ever tried writing a love letter to your spouse by using scripture verses? Rather than simply using verses that speak to love or loving, each of you could include scripture that has significant meaning for you. In the love letter explain why these verses are meaningful and how they have made a difference in the love relationship you share. You could also use verses that offer blessing or affirmation of your spouse. You might select verses that remind you of qualities, gifts, or characteristics of your spouse.

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

## The 5-step investment plan

By Don Spencer

Selecting appropriate investments (often referred to as asset allocation) is critical when investing for retirement or for other purposes. Here are five things to consider when selecting your investments:



**Time is critical.** If you're investing for retirement that is 20 or 30 years in the future you can be more aggressive in investment choices than you would in saving for your child's education expense. The more time you have before you'll need the money, the

more you should probably put in stocks. Likewise, with a shorter time horizon, you generally need to use less volatile investment options.

**Diversify. Diversify. Diversify.** Different types of investments move in and out of favor, sometimes seemingly without much rhyme or reason, but with disturbing consequences for investors who have too much of their money in the wrong area at the wrong time. By owning many different kinds of investments, you'll minimize your volatility. This is one of the advantages of owning a mixture of mutual funds.

**Know yourself.** When stocks were losing so much of their value during some recent periods, did you get upset and move money out of stocks as a reaction? If so, you may have been invested too heavily in stocks appropriate to your temperament. History teaches us that periodically you can expect a significant stock-market decline. If you can't handle those declines, then don't overdo your stock allocation.

**Don't fret about the short term.** For the short term, the market's ups and down defy logic and are frightening. But history also teaches us that stocks deliver the higher returns than other investment categories over longer periods of time. That's why time is critical. Select the right investment approach for your time horizon, then don't make short-term decisions on a long-term investment, like in your retirement plan.

**Plan for increased longevity.** Life expectancy continues to increase. If you retire at 65, there is a good chance you or your spouse will live 25 years or more. Your money will need to last that long too. Because of that, it may be appropriate to keep a significant portion of your savings in stocks when you retire. Some financial planners suggest keeping 40 to 50 percent of your savings in stocks or stock funds anticipating 20+ years in retirement. In today's radically unusual economic environment, some planners would suggest even higher percentages in stocks.

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

Christian marriages in our churches?

Could it be that evangelical churches and Christians have been offering an edict about marriage but not an alternative? Could it be that the evangelical sexual abstinence movement has fallen short because it has simply focused on saying "No" to promiscuity without a reciprocal "Yes" in championing Christian marriage? Could it be that evangelical impotence in dealing with the pornography crisis in our churches is partly because we have allowed marriage and sex to be defined in terms of self-fulfillment rather than the gospel-centric, self-sacrificial commitment?

The Creator of the universe pronounced that it was "not good" (Genesis 2:18) that man should be alone, and He gave to man a woman who was bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh (Genesis 2:23), with whom he was to become "one flesh" (Genesis 2:24) and "be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28). The apostle Paul declared that this marriage union was created to be a living picture of the mysterious one-flesh gospel union between Christ and the church (Ephesians 5:32).

Being pro-marriage will begin with evangelicals who stop saying it is good that man should be alone until his 30s after he has a good education, career and individual achievements. And with evangelicals who stop saying don't be fruitful and multiply too much; after all, you will not be able to afford a nice home in a good neighborhood. In fact, we ought to tell them the good news that Christian marriage and the glorious gospel it represents liberates them from the ball and chain of trying to live the American dream. (BP)

David Prince is pastor of preaching and vision at Ashland Avenue Baptist Church in Louisville, professor of Christian preaching at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

# One year later: Sandy survivor gains hope to go home

By Laura Sikes

**Long Island, N.Y.**—Volunteers are the heart of Southern Baptist efforts to bring help, healing and hope to survivors of catastrophe. Just ask Michael Raab.

"You guys kicked-started my recovery," said Raab, a Freeport, N.Y., homeowner to a volunteer team from Kentucky involved in Southern Baptist Disaster Relief's two-year Sandy Rebuild initiative following the superstorm that made landfall on Oct. 29, 2012.

Raab's waterfront home took on five feet of water from Hurricane Sandy's storm surge and was hit hard by strong winds and waves off Long Island's Great South Bay. Overwhelmed by the extensive damage, Raab said he could not bear to face his home of 25 years to begin repairs.

"There have been weeks that I have driven by and could not even go into my house. I would avoid coming here," Raab said. "My life has literally been on hold for 11 months. It took me months to finally pick up the phone and say, 'Help.'"

Raab, who now serves as Nassau County's storm recovery liaison, managed an American Red Cross shelter that housed 1,200 Long Island families at its peak after the storm. He spent many sleepless nights, thinking about everything from the storm's damage to the stories of hurting people.

"Here I am helping hundreds of families and I was too proud to reach out for help for myself," Raab said. "New Yorkers don't feel very comfortable reaching out for help. We're independent and self-sufficient.

We're very proud people. ... There are people who are out there who are so hurt and in such internal pain that they still can't say, 'I need help.'"

While working with Southern Baptist

**"My life has literally been on hold for 11 months."**

Michael Raab



Sandy Rebuild volunteers Tammy Doston (left), Jennifer Bussell and her son Brayden (right) pray with Michael Raab, a Freeport, N.Y., homeowner, when he stopped by on his way to work. Raab said he has been unable to face his home since Hurricane Sandy nearly a year ago. "When I came here and walked in the door and I saw people helping me, I started to cry," Raab said. "It just all came together. We prayed together. It was very powerful for me and it has truly built my faith again." (NAMB/Laura Sikes)

Disaster Relief leaders, Raab learned that SBDOR volunteers could help him.

Assisting the Baptist Convention of New York, Metro New York Baptist Association, New Jersey Net and local

churches with repairs and community restoration, the North American Mission Board and North Carolina Baptist Men are coordinating Sandy Rebuild efforts on Long Island where nearly

two-thirds of the post-superstorm recovery effort is needed.

Shortly after his call for help, a team came to meet Raab and begin tearing out the damaged basement of his home.

Since the storm, Raab has lived 35 miles away from his empty home. He stopped on his way to work to meet with the crew in the mornings and evenings.

That first day the Baptist volunteer team from Ewing Baptist Church of Ewing, Ky., filled up one and a half dumpsters with water-soaked furniture and debris. They cut tree limbs, patched Raab's roof and cleaned the yard.

Raab returned at day's end and said he was overcome by all the work the group did.

"When I came here and walked in the door and I saw people helping me, I started to cry. It just all came together. We prayed together. It was very powerful for me and has truly built my faith

again," Raab said.

Fourteen members from Ewing Baptist Church who worked at the homes of Raab and other Long Island residents were joined by three other volunteers from nearby Kentucky churches and with other SBDOR volunteers from North Carolina, South Carolina and Illinois over the course of a week in September.

Volunteer Jennifer Bussell said she and the Ewing team saw such a change in Raab.

"On Monday, he looked lost and hopeless. He didn't even know where to start," Bussell said. She said the team helped him realize he is one step closer to going home and that things are going to be OK.

Ewing Baptist pastor Keith Abrams and his wife Linda said the work was a great experience for the group since they developed relationships with the homeowners, which is not always the case on ministry sites.

"We had many opportunities to pray with them and to have conversations," Linda Abrams said. "God made it clear to us that we are not here always just to do the physical work. People are more important than the work."

Raab, although early in his home's restoration, said, "When you see people come together when there is need and people are at their weakest, you get strength from others.

"There are people out there who love others and who are willing to go beyond themselves. I will be forever grateful to them. You guys brought me back to life. I can go home now."

Southern Baptist volunteers, 10,678 strong, have served 1.85 million meals, completed 2,678 jobs, shared the gospel 878 times and witnessed 116 professions of faith since Superstorm Sandy made landfall Oct. 29, 2012. (NAMB/BP)

To volunteer for or learn more about Sandy Rebuild visit [namb.net/Sandy](http://namb.net/Sandy).

## NEWS BRIEFS

### GuideStone offers Colo. Aid

GuideStone Financial Resources will provide assistance to churches and participants who have suffered losses due to severe storms and flooding in Colorado counties declared a FEMA Designated Individual Assistance Area. For participants who qualify, assistance will include continuation of retirement plan protection benefits, a waiver requiring retirement contributions must be made in continuous months, expedited requests for plan distributions and loans, and assistance for life and health plan participants unable to make monthly payments.

### Mandrell the church planter

Ben Mandrell, senior pastor of Englewood Baptist Church in Jackson, Tenn., will partner with First Baptist Church, Orlando, to plant a church in the Mile High City as part of Send North America: Denver.

He and his family will move to Orlando in January to partner with First Baptist and senior pastor David Uth. Mandrell will transition to the Denver area in late spring 2014.

## Crossings

Continued from page 1

WMU, told the Western Recorder. While WMU has provided funds to help build Cedar Crest, the property was owned by Kentucky Baptist Assemblies, now Crossings Ministries, she explained.

"The facilities at Cedar Crest need to be replaced," Bolton acknowledged, adding that "the buildings have served us well for many years.

"We are grateful for the ministry of Crossings in reaching students and in restoring the camps," she continued. "As we consider how to best serve the churches, we are considering a number of options in regard to summer camps."

Attendance at Cedar Crest has declined significantly in the past decade, and the camp's facilities have been used only three weeks out of the year for the last several years, according to Melber.

At Jonathan Creek and Cedarmore, Crossings initially will construct 12 to 15 buildings to accommodate about 250 to 300 campers. Work is expected to begin next August, and the camps should be ready for occupancy by summer 2015.

Similar to the youth camps, the children's camps will offer outdoor activities and water sports, Melber said. The programs also will continue Crossings'



Proposed development with 12-15 buildings at Jonathan Creek. (Courtesy of Crossings)

evangelistic focus, giving children an opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel, while promoting international missions as an integral part of its programming.

An added benefit of building a themed development "from the ground up" is that it can be designed for use as a retreat center for adult church groups in

the fall and winter seasons, Melber also noted.

Total construction cost for both projects is estimated at \$7 million, and Crossings is currently raising funds from churches and individuals who "have a heart for reaching kids with the gospel and see camping as an effective way to reach them," Melber said. (WR)

## WSJ profiles Moore's convictional kindness

**Washington**—The convictional but kind approach to cultural engagement promoted by the Southern Baptist Convention's lead ethicist has gained the attention of one of the country's top newspapers.

The Wall Street Journal profiled Russell Moore, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, in a front-page article Oct. 22. The article sets Moore's approach since taking office in June—maintaining strong biblical stands on such issues as abortion and same-sex marriage while communicating kindness and grace to those who disagree—in the context of the change it represents from the previous tone often used by conservative Christian leaders.

Evangelical Christians should soften their rhetoric on controversial cultural issues and resist political battles, The Journal cites Moore as saying. Yet, he "insists he isn't seeking to return the

Southern Baptists to a past in which (they) shunned politics entirely," according to the article.

"We are involved in the political process, but we must always be wary of being co-opted by it," Moore told reporter Neil King Jr. "Christianity thrives when it is clearest about what distinguishes it from the outside culture."

Evangelicals should refrain from becoming "mascots for any political faction," Moore said.

Instead, he urges church leaders to address the "visceral recoil" among young evangelicals to the cultural war by being "winsome, kind and empathetic," according to the article.

A political and cultural shift among young evangelicals, according to the article, helps explain why Moore faces a different challenge than did Richard Land, who served as the ERLC's president for a quarter of a century before his retire-

ment this year.

The transformation from an expectation of quick fixes politically and culturally demonstrates a new awareness among evangelicals, said Mark Dever, senior pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C.

"What is happening right now with evangelicals is a disabusing of any idea of a simple victory of the right in a fallen world," Dever told The Journal. "They realize that is not going to happen."

While Moore calls for a kinder tone, the article reported that he has not shifted his positions: "He equates abortion with the evils of slavery, considers homosexuality a sin, and insists the Southern Baptist Convention will never support gay marriage." Moore said there is "no doctrinal daylight," as The Journal described it, between the SBC and him.

Moore began advancing what he describes as "convictional kindness" in



Russell Moore, ERLC president, was recently profiled in the Wall Street Journal. (BP)

cultural engagement after becoming ERLC president and offered his vision for such an approach in his first address to the SBC's annual meeting in June and in his inaugural speech in September. The Journal quoted from both of those speeches in its article.

Evangelicals should continue to work for justice, but "we must also remember that we are not Americans first," Moore said, according to the newspaper. "We belong to another kingdom." (BP)

## Pornography on mobile devices fueling addiction, brokenness

By Gregory Tomlin

**Nashville, Tenn.**—By 2017, access to pornography on smartphones and tablets will be available to 250 million people worldwide, according to a new study from Juniper Research, a London-area analyst of the wireless sector.

Higher-resolution screens, faster networks and personal security offered by password-protected phones and tablets will make the devices the fastest-growing distribution channels for adult content since the Internet was created, according to the study, released Sept. 25.

Adult entertainment companies also are beginning to create content specifically for the portable devices because of "the increasing trend towards tablets becoming personal, as opposed to shared household devices," according to a report by the Center for Media Research in Lincoln, Neb., Oct. 11. And much of the content may be available free, making its use more likely and more easily hidden, according to analysts.

Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, wrote in an online column Oct. 9 that sexually explicit images have crept into every facet of American media, including advertising and marketing. This "ambient pornography," Mohler wrote, confronts viewers even in settings traditionally considered safe, like shopping malls and on primetime television.

Earlier this year in a column, Mohler noted how pornography has increased support among men for the legalization of same-sex marriage, according to researchers.

Mohler noted in his column that research also is providing insight into the brain composition of those who are most likely to use adult content on computers, smartphones and tablets—the American male. "While research does nothing to reduce the moral culpability of males who consume pornography, it does help explain how the habit becomes so addictive," he wrote.



Mohler pointed to a book by William Struthers, associate professor of psychology at Wheaton College, who has pointed out that pornography disrupts the normal function of the male brain and rewires it to dismiss the normal, God-given desire for sexual intimacy with a spouse.

"Pornography takes human sexuality out of its natural context—intimacy between two human beings—and makes it a product to be bought and sold," Struthers wrote in "Wired for Intimacy: How Pornography Hijacks the Male Brain," now in its sixth printing since 2009. "By debasing the human body and valuing it in the same way we would something from the local convenience store, pornography promotes a human being's sexuality as a product for consumption."

Pornography becomes a drug, Struthers wrote, and like most drugs, its repeated use builds up tolerances requiring higher and higher doses to achieve the same level of pleasure.

The rise in addiction to pornography led Great Britain researchers to study the brain while it was being exposed to pornographic images. In the process, researchers from Cambridge University found that MRI scans of 19 self-described pornography addicts were nearly

identical to those of alcoholics and drug addicts.

The ongoing study, as yet unpublished, was featured in a multi-part documentary currently on air in the United Kingdom. "Porn on the Brain" chronicles the investigation of the physiological and social effects of pornography by journalist Martin Daubney, who left his job as editor of an adult magazine after the birth of his son four years ago.

A study by faculty at the University of Sydney also found that pornography addiction is on the rise. In that study, released in 2012, researchers said the addiction caused dysfunction in social interaction, harmed personal relationships and even resulted in job losses for some of those addicted to it. "We all know what porn is, but until now we haven't known much about its impact," said Gomathi Sitharthan, one of the researchers in the University of Sydney study.

"Gone are the days when you had to go to a shop, pay for the merchandise, and come out with a magazine in a brown paper bag. You can now download anything, anytime, anywhere—at home, in your bedroom, in your office, in the car, in the park, on the way to work."

Daubney, whose documentary has prompted a national discussion on pornography addiction in the UK, has

expressed remorse for his part in building the adult entertainment business. Readily available pornography, he said, is destroying intimacy because it reshapes the male understanding of sex.

A University of Montreal study recently claimed that 90 percent of pornographic material is now delivered online, and another study from the technology blog Gizmodo indicated that 24.6 million websites, or 12 percent of the total websites online, feature some form of adult content. Studies vary on how early children are exposed to pornography online, but a University of New Hampshire study indicated that nearly half of all 10-year-olds have seen adult content online, many without seeking it out.

In a surprising survey from the Pew Research Center, published Oct. 10, Pew reported that of more than 1,000 people surveyed, only 12 percent of the total number of adults had viewed pornographic videos online. Of males age 18-29, however, 25 percent of those surveyed said they had watched porno-

graphic content. Only 8 percent of women in the same age category said they had seen adult content online.

While the Pew survey conflicts with other studies of viewing habits for online adult content, the draw of online pornography is not debated.

In fact, Mohler wrote, it is "visually magnetic" to the

male brain.

That is why Struthers' book, Mohler wrote, is important. It "presents a fascinating review of the neurobiology involved, with pleasure hormones becoming linked to and released by the experience of a male viewing pornographic images. These experiences with pornography and pleasure hormones create new patterns in the brain's wiring, and repeated experiences formalize the rewiring."

"And then, enough is never enough," Mohler wrote. (BP)

For more information about the Southern Baptist Convention's battle against pornography, go to [Join1MillionMen.org](http://Join1MillionMen.org).

**"By some estimations, the production and sale of explicit pornography now represents the seventh-largest industry in America."**

Albert Mohler

**"Pornography promotes a human being's sexuality as a product of consumption."**

William Struthers

## Now and later

**Consider including Oneida in your charitable contributions**

As parents, we do everything possible to ensure our children have better lives than we had. We teach and train them. We work hard to give them food, shelter, clothing, and safe and fulfilling lives. We sacrifice our wants and desires to meet their wants and desires.

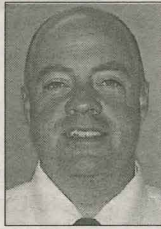
We set aside college funding and start savings accounts. We pay for diapers, toys, cars, insurance and weddings. We invest everything we have in our kids. Angie and I often wonder what we did with our time and money before we had children, but we would do almost anything to secure a safe and happy future for our kids.

My grandmother was a spunky little thing who loved her family. I remember watching her smile from ear to ear as we crammed 60-70 family members into her little house every Christmas Eve. My father, who was the youngest of seven children, said she would ask for the back of the chicken during dinner. There isn't much meat on the back of a chicken. My grandmother wanted her family to have the better parts.

Thousands and thousands of folks have given to, and blessed, the Oneida ministry over the years. Individuals and churches have given of their time, talents and resources to help make Oneida a school that can minister to kids who otherwise might not have a chance to become who the Lord intended them to be. When the Lord has our hearts, He has our time and our finances.

I consider our donors and friends to

be parents to our students. Even though some of our longtime friends have never been to our campus—or haven't been to our campus in a long time—they continue to bless our young people.

**This is Oneida****Larry Gritton**

Many of our friends give to us until they draw their very last breath and go to be with their Lord, and other friends give to us after they are gone because they have included Oneida in their wills. Doing this is such an amazing way to continue a legacy in Christ.

Just as we do our best to care for our own children after we are gone, many of our friends bless their adopted Oneida children after they are gone. My parents have served in Christian ministry for a long time and have often joked about leaving debt to my brother, sister and me, but even if that were the case, they will leave us and their grandchildren a wonderful Christian foundation and heritage.

The Lord's work continues even after our time on this earth is done. We can continue to contribute to His work and divine plan when we designate part of that with which the Lord has blessed us to go to a place like Oneida. Have you considered placing Oneida in your will so that you can continue to bless this ministry even after you have been called home to be with the Lord? Our ministry and students need you now and will also need you later. I pray God blesses all of our wonderful supporters.

Larry Gritton Jr. is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, a Christian boarding and day school. Website: [oneidaschool.org](http://oneidaschool.org). Phone: (606) 847-4111

## Not too good to be true

**Prospective students express surprise by what they find**

One of the first things I like to ask prospective students when they visit our campus is where they first found out about Clear Creek. A frequent response these days is that they "Googled" Bible College and Clear Creek was one of the results. I have actually had students sit in my office and tell me, "I thought it was too good to be true when I saw your tuition rates."

We are aware that our tuition rates often cause a prospective student to raise an eyebrow. I have had other students actually admit, "I almost didn't consider Clear Creek because the price seemed too low. I wondered why."

In case you have had similar thoughts, here are some facts you need to know:

Clear Creek Baptist Bible College is an institution of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. When a Kentucky Baptist church gives to the Cooperative Program through our state convention, part of that money comes to Clear Creek. In effect, Kentucky Baptists pay part of each student's tuition. CP gifts are a lifeline for our students. Thank you for giving to the Cooperative Program!

Also, people all over the United

States are led by God to support the ministry training of students they may never meet. For every dollar our students pay for tuition, someone else gave three dollars so they could attend Clear

**Clear Creek Chronicle****Donnie Fox**

Creek. If the student gets financial aid—and most do—the ratio is even more dramatic.

Clear Creek is not tuition driven. We are a non-profit institution and we keep the tuition as low as we possibly can. If God calls you to Clear Creek, money should not keep you away. For many of our students, their tuition is almost totally paid by a Pell Grant. That money does not have to be repaid.

And yes, Clear Creek is accredited—twice! We are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Association for Biblical Higher Education.

SACS is the regional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education for our geographic area. ABHE also is listed by the U.S. Department of Education as a recognized national, institutional accrediting agency, which keeps us tied to our Bible college heritage.

Donnie Fox is president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, 300 Clear Creek Road, Pineville, KY 40977; toll-free: (866) 340-3196; [ccbhc.edu](http://ccbhc.edu); email: [dfox@ccbhc.edu](mailto:dfox@ccbhc.edu)

## Moore defends 'sectarian' prayer

**ERLC supporting town sued for allowing citizen-led prayers**

By Bob Allen

The Southern Baptist Convention's top expert on religious-liberty concerns says the U.S. Supreme Court should uphold a New York town's practice of opening its city council meetings with sectarian prayer.

"A prayer, by definition, isn't a speech made to a public audience but is instead a petition made to a higher Being," Russell Moore, head of the SBC Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, said in an Oct 15 commentary on the Huffington Post. "For the government to censor such prayers is to turn the government into a theological referee, and would, in fact, establish a state religion: a state religion of generic American civil religious mush that assumes all religions are ultimately the same anyway."

Moore's agency has filed a friend-of-the-court brief in a case scheduled for argument Nov. 6, asking the Supreme Court to overturn a lower court's decision that the town of Greece, N.Y., violated the First Amendment's ban on establishing religion by allowing private citizens to open council meetings with prayers typically ending with the words "in Jesus' name."

The U.S. 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in May 2012 that because the

prayers were overwhelmingly led by Christians, the practice gave the appearance that the town was endorsing one religion over others.

"Where the overwhelming predominance of prayers offered are associated, often in an explicitly sectarian way, with a particular creed, and where the town takes no steps to avoid the identification, but rather conveys the impression that town officials themselves identify with the sectarian prayers and that residents in attendance are expected to participate in them, a reasonable objective observer would perceive such an affiliation," the appellate court decided.

Moore argued, however, that removing the "sectarian" nature of such prayers reduces them to "public service announcements followed by 'Amen.'"

"These prayers are not an establishment of religion," Moore said. "The clergyman offering the invocation isn't an extension of the government. His or her prayers aren't state-written or state-approved."

The case could clear up confusion about "legislative prayer," an American tradition of solemnizing public meetings with prayer that dates back to the first Continental Congress in 1774. The high court has ruled that the practice can be constitutional, but such prayers must not have the effect of endorsing or advancing a particular faith.

In 2011, the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals struck down a practice similar to that of the town of Greece by the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners in North Carolina, and the Supreme Court rejected the county's appeal. (ABP)

**Russell Moore**

# Campbellsville UNIVERSITY



Cordially invites  
**CU Alumni & Friends**  
to attend a  
**Complimentary Lunch**  
during the Kentucky Baptist Convention

November 12 at 12:30 p.m. CDT  
Lone Oak Church of Christ  
2960 Lone Oak Road  
Paducah, KY

Reservations may be made by calling  
800-264-6014 ext. 5216  
or via email at  
[pjsmith@campbellsville.edu](mailto:pjsmith@campbellsville.edu)

1 University Drive - Campbellsville, KY 42718  
800-264-6014 - 270-789-5000  
[www.campbellsville.edu](http://www.campbellsville.edu)





## November

- 1 Engage International Conference, unnamed venue, Cave City.
- 2 RISK: Paducah Jail Ministry, Lion County.
- 2 Reaching the Summit Conference, Friendship Baptist Church, Irvine.
- 3 RISK: Paducah Friend Day, unnamed venue, Paducah.
- 7 Wildgame Dinner, Twelve Oaks Baptist Church, Paducah.
- 8 All-State Junior High School Choir Retreat, Eastwood Baptist Church, Bowling Green.
- 10 Men's Choral Concert, First Baptist Church, Henderson.
- 11 Kentucky Baptist Music Conference, Southside Baptist Church, Princeton.
- 11 KBC Pastors' Conference, First Baptist Church, Paducah.
- 11 Kentucky Baptist Music Conference, Southside Baptist Church, Princeton.
- 11 DOM Dinner, First Baptist Church, Paducah.
- 12 KBC Annual Meeting, First Baptist Church, Lone Oak, Paducah.

- **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Campbellsville Church will hold Eats and Treats Oct. 31, 5 p.m. Campbellsville Church also will hold a youth lock-in Nov. 3, 8 p.m. **Michael O'Neal** is pastor.
- **CECILIA**—Cecilia Church will hold Trunk or Treat Oct. 31, 6 p.m. **Eric Oliver** is pastor.
- **EDDYVILLE**—First Church will hold revival services Nov. 3-6 with guest speaker **Mark**

## UC Music Department hosts Madrigal Dinners

**Williamsburg**—The University of the Cumberlands' music department will present their 46th annual Madrigal Dinners this Christmas season, featuring music dated back to 16th century Europe.

Cumberlands' version of the ancient festivities is patterned after the Elizabethan style as the celebration reached the height of its popularity in England at that time.

The event features period-costumed student participants who portray members of a royal court as they entertain their attending guests with music and comedy. Although traditional madrigal music is a form of unaccompanied, vocal music, at Cumberland, many types of Christmas music are featured. The performance takes place during a sumptuous feast, and although the dishes are slightly similar to what might have been served at a traditional Madrigal feast, they are more attuned to modern tastes.

Madrigal dinners will be held at 6:30 p.m., Dec. 5-7 in the TJ Roberts Dining Hall. Ticket information and reservations are available through UC's music department at (606) 539-4332. (UC)

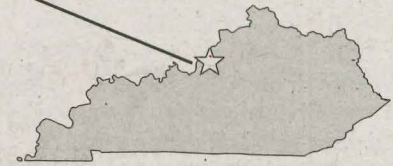
## MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

- Faugh. Timothy Perdue** is pastor.
- **ELIZABETH**—Severns Valley Church will hold Fall Family Fun Fest Oct. 31, 6 p.m. **Bill Langley** is pastor.
- **DUNMOR**—Dunmor Church will be holding revival services Nov. 3-6 with guest speaker **Jim Woodward. Jeremy Whitney** is pastor.
- **GLENDALE**—Gilead Church will hold Trunk or Treat Oct. 31, 5 p.m. **Sam Hinkson** is pastor.
- **GRAHAM**—Unity Church will hold revival services Nov. 1-3, 7 p.m., with guest speakers **Jason Scott, Brent Miller** and **Sonny Fentress. Nick Holeman** will provide special music. **Richard Browning** is pastor.
- **HOPKINSVILLE**—First Church will hold Trunk or Treat Oct. 31, 4 p.m.
- **IRVINE**—Friendship Church will hold Reaching the Summit: Avoiding and Reversing Decline training Nov. 2, 8 a.m. Friendship Church also will be celebrating their homecoming Nov. 3. **Scott Rogers** is pastor.
- **KEVIL**—Newton Creek will hold revival services Nov. 1-3, 7 p.m., with guest speaker **Steve Turner. Wayne Carter** is pastor.
- **LEXINGTON**—Grace Church will hold Trunk or Treat Oct. 31, 6 p.m. **Steve Price** is pastor.
- **LOUISVILLE**—Cloverleaf Church will host the Southern Gospel Music Concert with **Mark Trammell Quartet** Nov. 3, 7 p.m. For more information, call (502) 367-0218. **Geoffrey Lacefield** is pastor.
- Parkland Church also will hold Harvest Festival Oct. 31, 6 p.m. **Tom Curry** is pastor.
- Ralph Avenue Church will hold FallFest Nov. 2, 1 p.m. **Samuel Vance** is pastor.
- St. Matthews Church will hold Trunk or Treat Oct. 31, 6:30 p.m. **Greg Barr** is pastor.
- **MAYFIELD**—First Church will host an association-wide fall festival Oct. 31, 5 p.m., around the town courthouse with inflatables, carnival games, food, music and trunk or treat. **Wes Fowler** is pastor.

### Spotlight on ...

#### Hazard



**Jim Castlen**, director of missions with Three Forks Association, has announced his retirement effective Dec. 31.

- **MORGANFIELD**—First Church will hold Trunk-or-Treat Oct. 31, 4 p.m. **Tim Leadingham** is pastor.
- **PADUCAH**—First Church Lone Oak will hold Family Fun Fest Oct. 31, 6 p.m. First Church Lone Oak also will hold a women's conference called "Together for Tea and Truth" Nov. 2, 7:30 a.m., with guest speaker **Mary Jo Sharp** and worship leader **Cheri Keaggy. Dan Summerlin** is pastor.
- **PAINTSVILLE**—First Church will hold Trunk-or-Treat Oct. 31 and homecoming Nov. 3. **Wayne Cornett** is pastor.
- **PRESTONSBURG**—Allen Church will hold Old Fashioned Fall Festival Nov. 3, 6 p.m. **Arnold Turner** is pastor.
- **PRINCETON**—Eddy Creek Church will hold revival services Nov. 3-6. **Leslie Joyce** is pastor.
- **SALYERSVILLE**—Bethel Bible Church will hold Fall Fest Oct. 31.
- **SCOTTSVILLE**—Scottsville Church will hold Trunk or Treat Oct. 31, 4 p.m. **Dale Darley** is pastor.
- **VERSAILLES**—Versailles Church will hold Trunk or Treat Oct. 31. **Michael Cabell** is pastor.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**FOR RENT:** Two condos in Destin, Fla. Special for remainder of 2013. \$475 week total price. lbrammer@charter.net.

**FOR SALE:** Sound/video/theatrical lighting. JCA Media, LLC, well known in KBC with 20+ years experience installing quality equipment at reasonable pricing. Contact: Jim Cottrell, owner, Elizabethtown, (270) 862-9586, or (270) 312-7492; Rusty King, project manager, Nashville, Tenn., (615) 972-8869; or Amy Cottrell, operations manager, Louisville, (502) 802-4310. jcamediaky.com. References available.

**SEEKING:** First Baptist Church of Louisa, a vibrant mission-minded church is seeking a full-time pastor. Send resumés to Pastor Search Committee, 301 West Pike St., Louisa, KY 41230.

**SEEKING:** First Baptist Church of Walton is seeking a senior pastor. Send resumé to cncforjc@gmail.com, or mail to 47 S. Main St., Walton, KY 41094. Include a CD/DVD.

**SEEKING:** Wickland Baptist Church in Bardstown is seeking a part-time youth minister. Visit wicklandbaptist.org for complete details.

**SEEKING:** East Cadiz Baptist Church in Cadiz is seeking a pastor. Looking for someone who is a passionate soul winner with a vision for church growth, is a man of God who loves to shepherd people of all ages and demonstrates excellent leadership and administrative skills. If you feel God's guidance in applying for

this position, send resumé to East Cadiz Baptist Church, Attn: Brian Stallons, 407 Third St., Cadiz KY 42211.

**SEEKING:** Richland Baptist Church, a church in Richland, Wash., with a strong missions and Bible-teaching culture, is seeking an associate pastor for education and family who can help lead the church to the next level of discipleship, family and relationships. Richland is seeking a seminary graduate with experience, training or interest in modern, small group Bible study methods (life groups, ABFs). The church envisions a strong family emphasis will be critical to preparing its congregation for a challenging future society. Richland Church has built and sustained a strong platform of missions, outreach, Bible study, discipleship and age group ministries. The church is preparing for the future and needs an energetic, small group leader with a proven record of making godly things happen, and who wants to join a solid, caring staff. For informal inquires, call Bob Marshall at (509) 521-2494. richlandbaptistchurch.org.

**SEEKING:** Trenton Baptist Church in Trenton is seeking a part-time student minister for grades 6-12. Trenton is located in Todd County near Hopkinsville and Clarksville, Tenn. For information, or to submit a resumé, contact the Student Minister Committee at P.O. Box 191, Trenton, KY 42286, or email trentonbaptist@bellsouth.net.

**SEEKING:** Minister to assist pastor with preaching, visitation and building a Sunday School. Prefer a family man that has a desire to see souls saved and church growth. Contact pastor James Hook at (502) 637-4404.

**SEEKING:** Immanuel Baptist Church in Elizabethtown is seeking a part-time worship minister. Responsibilities include planning, evaluating and leading congregational music, coordinating music and directing the adult choir, praise team, young adult/youth praise band, preschool, children's choirs and working with the media team. Worship at Immanuel can be described as "blended" with a mix of both traditional hymns and contemporary choruses. Emphasis is on exalting the heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, under the leadership and quickening of the Holy Spirit. Interested candidates may contact the church office at (270) 765-6516 for detailed job description. Mail resumé to: Immanuel Baptist Church, c/o Worship Minister Search Committee, 800 Rhodes Drive, Elizabethtown, KY 42701, or email to chuck@ibcetown.org. Deadline: Nov. 15.

**SEEKING:** New Friendship Baptist Church in Auburn is seeking a pianist. Duties for this paid position will include playing for three Sunday gatherings and the choir. For more information, contact worship pastor Alex Watkins at (270) 542-6244 or alex@newfriendshipchurch.com.

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

Rates are available upon request. Call (502) 489-3428; or visit westernrecorder.org

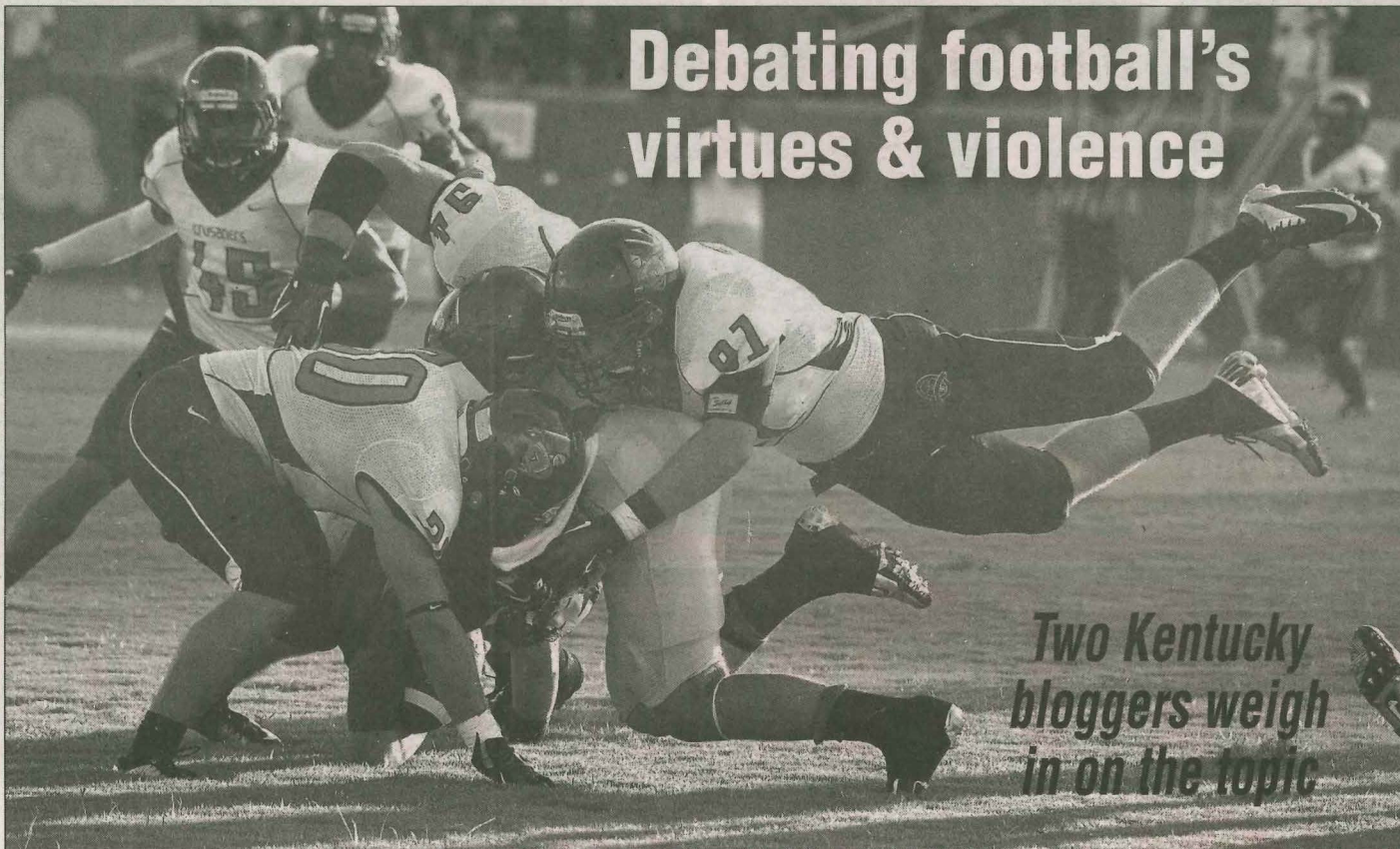


Claims made by advertisers are not necessarily those of the Western Recorder's staff or directors.

**SEEKING:** DeHaven Baptist Church is seeking a children's ministry director of 4 yrs. to 5th grade. Send resumés to Personnel Committee at DeHaven Baptist Church, P.O. Box 349, LaGrange, KY 40031.

**SEEKING:** Salvisa Baptist Church is seeking a senior pastor. Mail resumés to Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 75, Salvisa, KY 40372, or email to patty@salvisabaptist.org.

**SEEKING:** Pianist needed. Mount Washington United Methodist Church is in search of a pianist. This would involve traditional morning service on Sundays, one hour with youth choir Sunday afternoons, and one hour with adult choir on Wednesday evenings. If interested, email pastor Steve Boutell at mwumc@gmail.com.



## Debating football's virtues & violence

Two Kentucky bloggers weigh in on the topic

By Tim Tune

**Nashville, Tenn.**—Football has become one of the Baptist blogosphere's dividing lines this fall with the debate focusing on football's aggressive nature and Christians' response to its frequent violent hits and its effect on players.

A bit of common ground, however, emerges regarding football's appeal and its character-building qualities.

Football's "grace, precision and the crushing of bone," as Owen Strachan puts it, make the game appealing.

"There is nothing quite like a hit over the middle. A ballet-graceful wide receiver at full extension grabs a tightly thrown pass only to be smacked down like a rag doll by a heat-seeking safety," Strachan, assistant professor of church history and Christian theology at Boyce College in Louisville wrote in a post titled "Our Shaken Faith in Football" at ChristianityToday.com in early September.

Two other Baptists in the blogosphere, David Prince and Jimmy Scroggins, also noted football's appeal in a joint post titled "Is football too violent for Christians?" at the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission's website.

"No other game combines brute force and elegant choreography the way football does," Prince and Scroggins wrote in late September.

Prince is pastor of preaching and vision at Ashland Avenue Baptist Church in Lexington, and an assistant professor of Christian preaching at Southern Seminary. Scroggins is senior pastor of First Baptist Church in West Palm Beach, Fla.

Strachan, Prince and Scroggins noted football's appeal of providing "a place for people of wildly different backgrounds to come together," Strachan wrote, and serves "a profound communal and civic function." As Prince and Scroggins put it, "the atmosphere and pageantry of football attracts countless people who are fans of the spectacle more than" the actual game.

Among numerous character-building qualities of the sport, the trio agreed it calls for discipline, determination, courage, teamwork and self-sacrifice.

"Many of these virtues," Strachan

noted, "line up nicely with biblical character (1 Cor. 9:27, for example)," while Prince and Scroggins suggested that the Bible "draws a relationship between sport and war" and that "the lessons learned from agonizing and struggling in one can readily prove instructive for the other (Heb. 12:1-4, 1 Cor. 9:24-27, Eph. 6:12, Phil. 3:13-14)."

### Risks & downsides

Then, however, comes the debate over how Christians should respond to the game's inherent risks as well as its potential cultural downsides.

For Strachan, the harmful physical effects that full-contact football has on players and its brutal nature raise "concerns for Christians, who of all people have the most stake in human flourishing based on the imago dei, the likeness of man to God (Gen. 1:26-27)."

Referring to the National Football League's deliberations over players with concussion-related injuries, Strachan asked, "Does it behoove Christians to reconsider the game's violence? I think it does."

"Concussions are the scariest part of the game" and "are under-reported and under-diagnosed in youth sports," Strachan wrote. Despite millions of children playing football nationwide, he pointed out that, "there are almost no studies of the effects of youth football on the human brain."

Also, the "culture of football should concern Christians," Strachan wrote, and "football-related arrests, assaults on women and tiny children, murders, drug charges, and more should not glance off the evangelical conscience.

"Christians should think hard about involving their children in such a violent game," he wrote, acknowledging that "I would have a hard time sending my son into a sport that is leaving 40-year-old men with dementia."

### Safer than the playground

"Nevertheless it is wrongheaded to use data from NFL football players who have made the game their career at the highest level and attribute it to everyone who plays football," wrote Prince and Scroggins.

According to Price and Scroggins,

many American parents are keeping their children out of youth football. They cite a survey that 25,000 fewer kids played football in the U.S. in 2012 than only four years before. From a news article they quote a pediatric surgeon who said, "I tell parents that it's safer to send their children to Pop Warner (football) than to the playground."

"As Christians," Prince and Scroggins wrote, "we believe that it is our responsibility to take every thought captive to obey Christ (2 Cor. 10:5). This means that followers of Jesus are right to question their participation in any activity, including football."

They lauded attempts to reform corruption and cheating in the game and "are saddened every time a player gets injured on the football field, but no more so than when one is injured in a cycling or skateboarding accident."

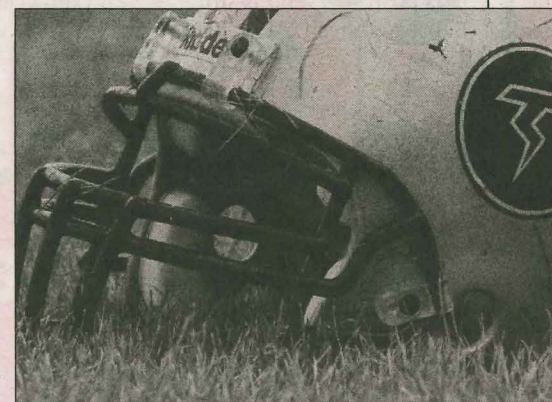


Photo by Jordan Thompson

Nevertheless, Prince and Scroggins wrote, the "rugged, physically demanding, purposeful aggression of football is an asset, not a liability" on the gridiron, providing "a consistent and valuable metaphor for contemporary churches that need to remember that the Great Commission is not a public relations campaign, but rather a war cry that demands self-sacrifice."

Sacrifice and calculated risk "are good things that ought to be cultivated on a pathway from boyhood to Christian manhood," Prince and Scroggins wrote.

"Sadly," they noted, "evangelicals seem to be leading the movement to train bravery and adventure out of our children in favor of a cult of safety." (BP)

## Why my sons aren't in football (this year)

By Jason Allen

**Kansas City**—I grew up in a family with all boys, that fostered competition, and valued athletic achievement. Athletic participation was presumed, and sports came as natural as life itself.

### FIRST PERSON

This year, though, a funny thing happened—I chose for my sons not to play football, and it wasn't because the sport is too violent. Three reasons in particular persuaded me to take a pass on football—this year.

### Time commitments

First, the time commitment was simply too much. Combined, my sons (ages 6 and 8)—and me or my wife—would have been out of the house nearly seven nights a week for more than three months.

Some may protest that not committing the time means I'm not a good father. I say, given the ages of my three daughters and two sons (ages 10 through 5), to be a good father necessitates I not yield our family structure to a peewee football league. Unapologetically, I hoard our family time like a miser, gripping it tightly and intuitively swatting away opportunities and expectations that would compromise it. This fall, football was poised to do just that.

### Corrupting influence

Second, the corrupting influence seemed too intense. The words and actions of the team leaders and the general tenor of the league itself, troubled me. Daily subjecting two young boys to full-throated immorality seemed unwise.

I am not willing to permit such an unhealthy influence over my sons at such an impressionable age. Priority one is to shepherd my children's hearts. I can live without hearing my 6-year-old son's name called on the loudspeaker, but I can't live with myself if I lose his heart along the way.

### Boys tackling girls

Finally, any remaining indecision evaporated when I realized my sons' league—for tackle football—was coed.

Though I'm concerned for the girls, I'm more concerned about what tackling girls might do to my sons. The boy who learns it is appropriate to pulverize the girl on the field might well become the man who's OK with degrading women in other contexts.

This is more than an appeal to chivalry. It is a reminder that God created us male and female—boy and girl—and to undermine or confuse those distinctions is wrong. Our children are confronted with enough gender confusion without it being introduced on the gridiron.

I love sports, but like other life utilities, sports are only as good as our stewardship thereof. As a Christian father, I want to redeem the sport and channel it to cultivate maturity, self-discipline and virtue. I want to be judged not by my sons' batting averages or varsity letters, but by whether I shepherded their hearts toward Christ. (BP)

Jason Allen is president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.



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