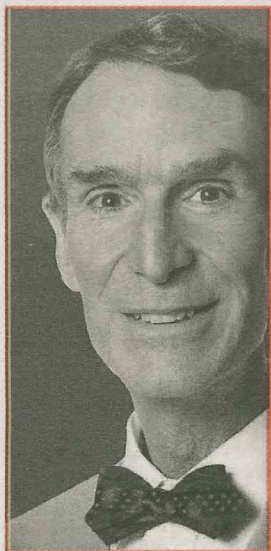


WESTERN Recorder

February 11, 2014

Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

Volume 188, Issue 5



The Bible is not "a more reasonable assessment of the natural laws we see around us."

Bill Nye

Creation debate in Ky draws global interest

By Erin Roach

Petersburg—Hundreds of thousands of people comprised an international audience to watch a debate between creationist Ken Ham and evolutionist Bill Nye, demonstrating a vibrant interest in origins in an era when many consider the topic settled science.

"The battle is really about authority. It's more than just science or evolution or creation. It's about who is the authority in this world, man or God?" Ham, founder of Answers in Genesis and the

Creation Museum, said Feb. 4 during a debate he hosted in Petersburg with Nye, known on television as "The Science Guy." The event was streamed live online.

"If you start with naturalism, then who decides right and wrong? Well, it's subjective," Ham said. Marriage becomes "whatever what you want it to be."

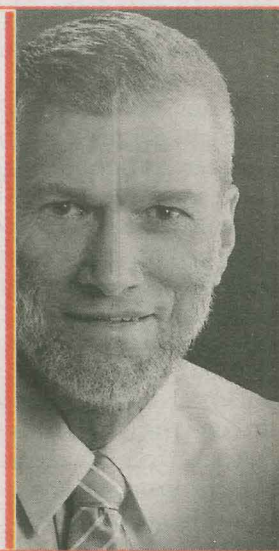
Euthanasia and abortion also become acceptable because "we're all animals."

"But if you start from God's word, there are moral absolutes. God decides

□ See Debate ... Page 2

"The word 'science' has been hijacked by secularists teaching evolution to ... kids."

Ken Ham



Copy 'duck'

Pastor sacrifices 'Duck Dynasty' beard for CP

By Roger Alford

London—Call it the face off over a beard.

Members of Victory Baptist Church in this southeastern Kentucky city had a good-natured contest over whether pastor Jared Gullion would keep his whiskers that had grown nearly long enough to rival the Duck Dynasty cast.

Half of the congregation wanted him to shave the beard, and they were willing to pay up to get their way. The other half wanted him to keep it, and they were just as willing to write fat checks to save that facial hair.

Seizing an opportunity, Gullion issued a challenge: The side that shelled out the most cash would get its way.

That contest ended Sunday with better than \$160,000 in pledges over the next decade and Gullion's beard

□ See Beard ... Page 3



Jared Gullion, pastor of Victory Baptist Church in London, reacts to losing half his beard Sunday as a way to raise money to pay off the church mortgage. (John Flavell/KBC)



Former Ky couple minister to neighbors amid crime, poverty

By Tobin Perry

Indianapolis—Many families with four small children wouldn't consider moving to a neighborhood with high crime and poverty rates and crumbling homes—the kind of place you protect your children from, not move them to.

But Barry and Amy Rager—who moved to the Mapleton-Fall Creek neighborhood of Indianapolis last year to start a church—aren't most families.

"It's a neighborhood that needs Christ," said Rager, a North American Mission Board church planter, noting that the State Convention of Baptists in

Indiana estimates the neighborhood to be 95 percent non-Christian. "And so that's another draw to us being here: ... if there's a place where the population of the area rivals the lostness in foreign countries, it's right where we need to plant a church."

North American Mission Board trustees, meeting Feb. 3-5 in Indianapolis, connected with Rager and other local church planters during a Catch the Vision tour of the city. The city is one of 32 Send North America cities where NAMB is focusing the attention of Southern Baptists for evangelism and church planting. Indianapolis has only one SBC

church for every 19,965 people.

Rager and wife Amy began to sense a call to Indianapolis in 2008 when the young couple attended the Southern Baptist Convention in the city. Barry, then a seminary student, had just taken a senior pastor position at Utica (Ky.) Baptist Church and didn't feel the time was right for a move.

But for the next couple of years the couple prayed for Indianapolis and often thought about what ministry might look like in the city. In 2009 Rager began to talk with a variety of churches about the possibility of their support for starting a

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Western Recorder 2-11-2014

'More for Christ' commitment lifts rural Ky. church to new heights

By Karen Willoughby

Mexico—Members of Mexico Baptist Church in rural Kentucky decided in the early 1940s to begin increasing their Cooperative Program giving toward 25 percent of their undesignated offerings. By 1978 they had reached that goal, which they maintain to this day.

Now they're rallying to do "More for Christ."

Pastor Tim Burdon, who has led the Kentucky church 10 years, describes its members as "gracious and giving."

"I prayed about it and decided I wanted to present a concept to the church: Doing more than we've ever done before," said Burdon, who first heard the motto during the Kentucky Baptist Convention's annual meeting.

"The Lord has blessed us," Burdon reasoned. "Let's give more to missions through the Cooperative Program."

The church, which draws 225 people to worship on Sundays, adopted a seven-point plan in 2011 with a goal of achieving it in three to five years. CP giving "was number one of our seven-point plan" to support missions and ministry throughout the state, nation and world.

"It's a basic plan that all of us as believers ought to be doing," Burdon said. "It's not anything new, but whenever we put it into this More for Christ framework and asked the church to adopt it, everybody just caught the vision. It just challenges us to do more this year than last year."



"It's all part of being obedient. The Cooperative Program is part of the ... belief system of the church."

Tim Burdon

In addition to giving more annually to the CP, the plan includes:

- Each member giving \$3 a week more through the church;
- Having more members involved in the church's visitation and outreach;
- Providing more witnessing training;
- Members spending more time alone with God in prayer, Bible reading and Bible study;
- Increasing Sunday School attendance, and
- Increasing mission work.

Now in its third year of doing "More for Christ," Mexico Baptist has started additional ladies' Bible studies, involved more men in disaster relief and home repair ministries, and has edged its Sunday School to within 25 of a year-end goal of 200 active participants.

"That group of folks in the 1940s had a vision that we're carrying forward," Burdon said. "If we grow the church, win the lost, disciple them, teach them the importance of giving, the Cooperative Program and the total giving to the church will increase naturally."

Burdon said he personally and Mexico Baptist as a congregation are strong proponents of the CP.

"Our church is a very conservative, Bible-believing church that believes in tithing and believes in missions," Burdon



From their annual Wild Game Supper to their Cooperative Program giving, members of Mexico Baptist Church in rural Kentucky aim to optimize their gospel impact. (Photo provided by Mexico Baptist Church)

said. "It's all part of being obedient. The Cooperative Program is part of the ingrained belief system of the church."

Mexico is an unincorporated community in western Kentucky near the Ohio River and six miles south of the

Crittenden County seat town of Marion. Mexico was established when US Steel started mining for fluorite. The mine has since closed and today the area is primarily agricultural, with fewer than 10,000 people living in the county.

Debate

Continued from page 1

right and wrong. Marriage: one man and one woman. Sanctity of life: we care for old people; they're made in the image of God. Life begins at fertilization, so abortion is killing a human being," Ham said, explaining how a person's view of the origins of life impacts all of life.

Ham distinguished between the way scientists determine what happened in the past and the way they investigate phenomena in the present, calling the two fields "historical science" and "observational science." Creation, as described in the Bible, he said, is the only viable model of historical science when it comes to origins.

"People by and large have not been taught to look at what you believe about the past as different from what you're observing in the present," Ham said. "You don't observe the past directly."

Ham said a scientist can observe that the earth is not flat but cannot observe the age of the earth. "There's a big difference between historical science, talking about the past, and observational science, talking about the present," he said in the 150-minute debate moderated by CNN's Tom Foreman.

Nye, CEO of the Planetary Society, said mainstream science makes no distinction between historical science and observational science. "These are constructs unique to Mr. Ham," he said, adding that the same natural laws apply to the past and the present.

Nye claimed that if students are

taught creation as a viable model of origins, then the U.S. economy will suffer because America will lag behind other nations in technological advancements.

Ham cited several accomplished scientists and inventors who embrace the creation model, and he asked Nye to name one piece of technology that could only have been developed starting with a belief in molecules-to-man evolution.

Nye, an agnostic, made a case for what he called the absurdity of "Ken Ham's creation model."

"Mr. Ham and his followers have this remarkable view of a worldwide flood that somehow influenced everything that we observe in nature—a 500-foot wooden boat, eight zookeepers for 14,000 individual animals, every land plant in the world underwater for a full year. I ask us all is that really reasonable?" Nye said.

Fossils found in limestone in Kentucky, for example, prove the earth is much older than Ham allows, Nye said. "We are standing on millions of layers of ancient life. How could those animals have lived their entire life and formed these layers in just 4,000 years?" he said. "There isn't enough time since Mr. Ham's flood for this limestone that we're standing on to have come into existence."

The Bible is not "a more reasonable assessment of the natural laws we see around us than what I and everybody in here can observe," Nye said, calling such a view "unsettling, troubling."

"By far the biggest challenge," Burdon said, "is reaching the many who are lost in our community."

Mexico Baptist hosts four annual events, such as each February's Wild Game Supper. On Mission Night once a month, the church's Woman's Missionary Union and Baptist Men meet to decide on their upcoming local projects, such as taking food to those recovering from surgery, cleaning people's yards and "being in a rural area, somebody may be down and we go feed the cattle," Burdon said. The church also has a clothes closet.

The church was cited during the 2013 annual meeting of the Kentucky Baptist Convention as one of the top three churches in the state for per capita giving to missions through the Cooperative Program.

Burdon received the KBC's 2013 CP Distinguished Leadership Award.

"Tim Burdon serves a church that has always exhibited a sacrificial commitment to reaching Kentucky and the world for Christ," said KBC Executive Director Paul Chitwood.

Associate Executive Director Curtis Woods added, "Tim Burdon is a man of conviction. He stands head and shoulders above most in his commitment to, and confidence in, the genius of the Cooperative Program." (BP)

Nye charged Ham with holding a "magical" notion that natural laws have not always operated in the same way, an apparent reference to Ham's view that God intervened in the world supernaturally at key points in history.

In the debate over origins, Ham said the terms need to be defined correctly. "I assert the word 'science' has been hijacked by secularists in teaching evolution to force the religion of naturalism on generations of kids," he said.

"... We see the collapse of Christian morality in our culture and increasing moral relativism because generations of kids are being taught the religion of naturalism and that the Bible can't be trusted," Ham said.

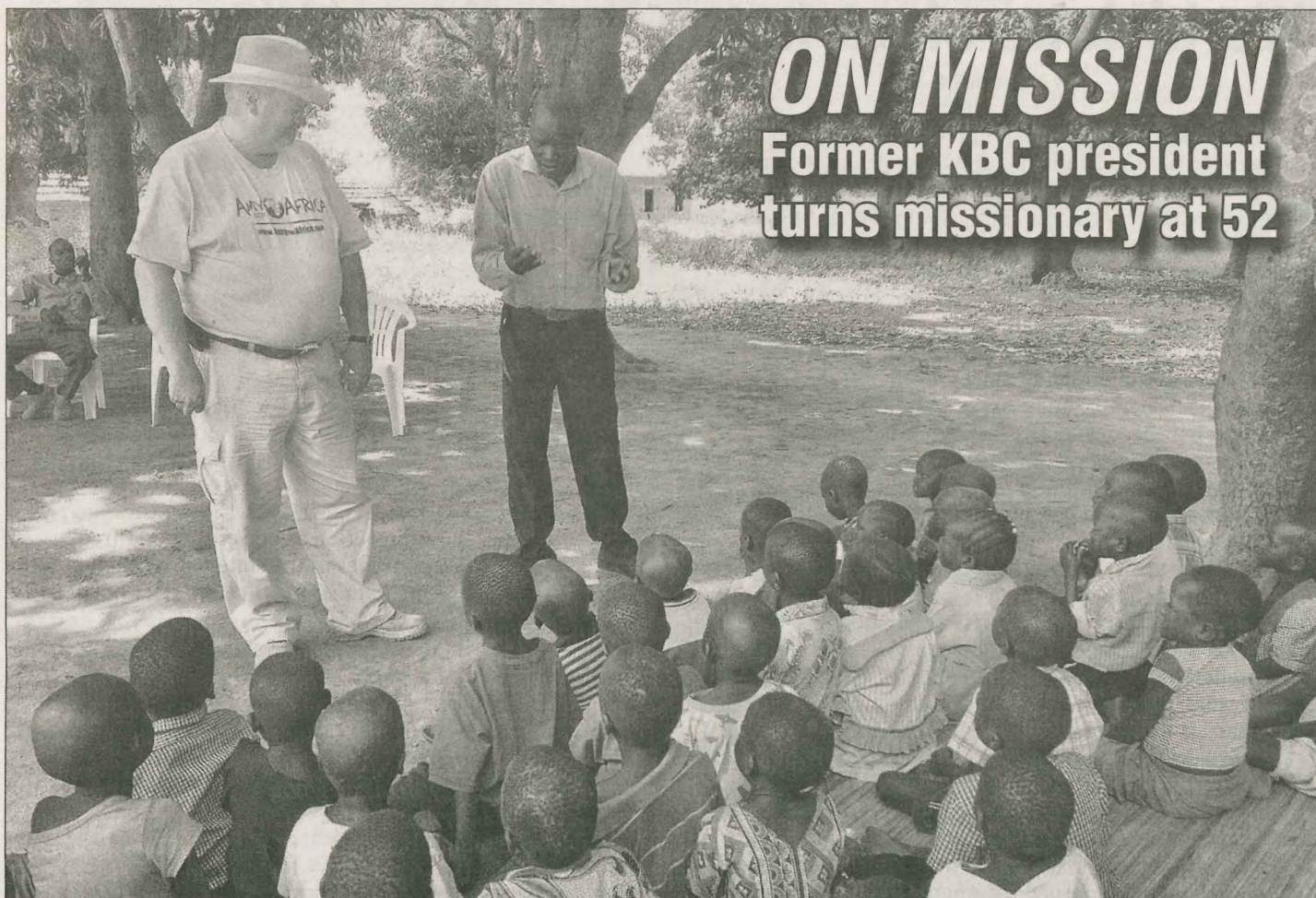
Creationists and evolutionists work side-by-side on medicines, vaccines and other innovations, Ham said. "It doesn't matter whether you're a creationist or an evolutionist. All scientists have the same experimental, observational science."

Where he and Nye differ, Ham said, is in their starting points as they try to interpret the evidence for how life began—something they didn't witness.

"It's a battle over philosophical world-views and starting points but the same evidence," Ham said. "I admit my starting point is that God is the ultimate authority. If someone doesn't accept that, then man has to be the ultimate authority. That's really the difference when it comes down to it." (BP)

Looking for more on this topic?

Read columns by Paul Chitwood, KBC executive director, and Albert Mohler Jr., Southern Seminary president, on page 4.



ON MISSION

Former KBC president turns missionary at 52

Floyd Paris, a former Kentucky Baptist Convention president, plans to serve as a self-supported missionary to the people of Uganda. (Photo provided)

By Ken Walker

Ashland—While too old for appointment as a Southern Baptist missionary, when Floyd Paris felt God calling him to go overseas, he found a way to respond.

"It's a really exciting time," said Paris, who at 52—two years past maximum appointment age—is shepherding the ministry to Uganda he organized. "As pastors, we tell people to trust God and believe in God. It's time to step up."

A former president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Paris was pastor of Unity Baptist Church for 15 years until resigning last September. He recently returned to Ashland to pack up belongings and attempt to sell his home.

During his sojourn in Kentucky, Paris has addressed churches and students at the University of the Cumberlands. He will speak to several groups at a missions conference in his hometown of Memphis, Tenn., just prior to departing for Africa March 6.

Ironically, the ministry of Paris' United Christian Expeditions has its origins in tragedy: The death of Penne, his wife of 26 years, from a massive heart attack in May 2009.

While their children were growing up, the Parises prayed about serving in overseas missions. After Penne's death, many donated money in her memory—funds that Floyd, daughter Julie, and son

Philip felt they should use for missions.

In the summer of 2010 the family visited Uganda, where Paris had taken many short-term teams.

This visit involved looking at work started by Kentuckian Harold Cathey, who (prior to retirement) later served as director of missions for the Ashland-area Greenup Association of Baptists.

When they reached Moyo in Uganda's West Nile region, the desperate conditions stirred a compassionate response. Julie wanted to minister to children at the hospital, while her brother said without an education they had no future.

So, the Parises decided to use those memorial funds to help a hospital there purchase medicines and start the Penne Paris Nursery School (comparable to an elementary school here) in Laropi.

As the ministry grew, Paris said he saw he could no longer manage it long-distance. Last year, after praying with his MasterLife group at Unity Baptist, God confirmed that he needed to go.

In addition to planting 14 Baptist churches, UCE helps in practical ways:

- Operating a model farm to show residents such skills as composting, crop rotation and de-boning a goat.
- Offering vocational training in sewing, carpentry and plumbing.
- Providing financial support for hospitals and medical clinics.

Paris calls this multi-faceted outreach

a "new paradigm" for missions. Most organizations do one thing and do it well, which he said is fine when surrounded by other groups handling various tasks. However, in remote regions, he said a ministry must meet many needs.

That is why his theme verse is Luke 4:18, where Jesus talks about preaching, healing and setting the captives free.

Paris believes in the strength of partnerships. He promised Ugandans if they would make bricks and provide timbers for the schools, he would raise funds for cement and roofing.

The missionary bases that pattern on Jesus telling people to roll away the stone from Lazarus' tomb after the Savior resurrected his friend: "He asked them to do what they could do and He did what they couldn't do."

Among financial supporters are members of Unity Baptist Church, including Amy Compston. Last year, while training for the Boston Marathon, the registered nurse sensed God telling her to use running as a fundraising vehicle for United Christian Expeditions.

Soon after the Boston race, Compston signed up for a 50-mile ultra-marathon in Nashville and started "Amy for Africa." Since then, the non-profit group has raised more than \$46,000.

"At first I missed him," Compston said. "But I couldn't think of a better person to send over there to help the people."

Compston and her husband, Chris, will be part of a group planning to visit Uganda in early November. Another team from the University of the Cumberlands plans to go in late December, coordinated by Paris' daughter.

Paris, who gets emotional deciding which mementos to keep, said it is a "scary" time as he contemplates a future with no place to call home and no lucrative retirement plan.

"When Penne passed away, God told me, 'People are going to look and see if Christ makes a difference,'" he recalled. "Can Christ take care of me? Yes. My God is able." (WR)

Beard

Continued from page 1

falling in red locks onto the sanctuary floor. It was a sacrifice the preacher gladly made to better position the church for ministry in London and around the world.

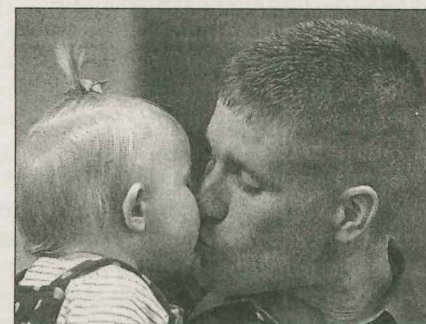
"Some people might ask 'why in the world would a preacher grow a big bushy beard anyway?'" Gullion said. "But that beard is helping pay down our mortgage so we'll be able to direct more resources to fighting the drug epidemic in this region and so that we can better support the Cooperative Program to get the gospel to every corner of the globe."

Gullion, a student at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College outside Pineville, had allowed his beard to grow since he arrived as pastor of Victory Baptist last June. Gullion confided that he had grown tired of the whiskers, and that he and his wife, Megan, put their money in with the anti-beard crowd.

More than 100 people made their way into Victory Baptist Church to see Gullion's transformation to a clean-shaven pastor. Doing the honors was London barber Michael Carroll, one of 25 people who have accepted Christ at Victory Baptist Church since Gullion arrived seven months ago.

"We've had a lot of fun with this, but the purpose is quite serious, to free up money to do ministry," Gullion said.

The 29-year-old pastor said the church's \$233,000 mortgage has been a hindrance to broader ministries. Serving in an area ravaged by drug abuse, Gullion said he wants the church to have a stronger ministry to recovering addicts and their families. But he also wants the church to be a stronger contributor to the Cooperative Program that he sees as vital to spreading the gospel.



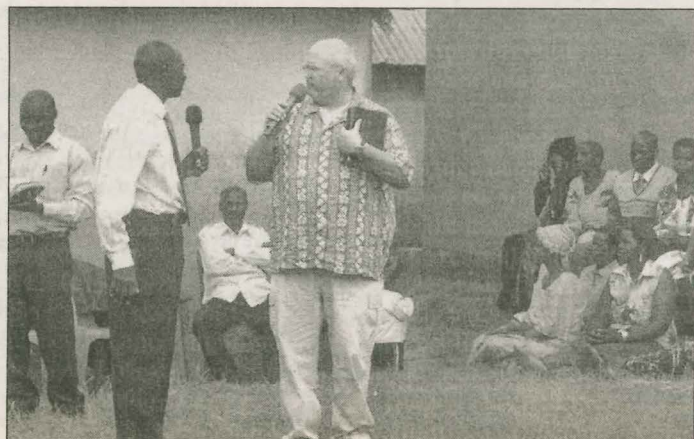
Jared Gullion gets a kiss from his youngest daughter. He thought she wouldn't recognize him without a beard. (John Flavell/KBC)

"Right now, our church might be able to afford to send a missionary out of the country for a week," Gullion said. "But through the Cooperative Program we can help support missionaries in countries around the world."

To do that, members of Victory Baptist Church committed to contributing an additional \$1,356 a month to pay down the mortgage. That's \$16,272 a year or \$162,720 in 10 years, which, along with the existing payments, will allow the congregation to be debt free much quicker.

"God's will is for us not to remain in debt," Gullion said. "We have much to do for Jesus, and the sooner we pay that off, the sooner we direct more resources into our community and our world. And if sacrificing my beard helps, I'm more than willing." (KBC)

Floyd Paris preaches in a village with the help of an interpreter. Kentucky churches wanting to schedule a speaking engagement with Paris in February can contact him at ucb-paris@gmail.com, visit [Facebook/unitedchristianexpeditions](https://www.facebook.com/unitedchristianexpeditions), or send him a Facebook friend request.



Mysteries of origins

With more than 3 million others, I watched the debate Feb. 4 between Ken Ham of "Answers in Genesis" and Bill Nye "the Science Guy" online. The topic of debate: Is creation a viable model of origins in today's modern, scientific era?

Like me, Ham subscribes to the "young earth" position, believing the book of Genesis gives an accurate, intentional, historical account of the origins of the universe and of humankind.

Also like Ham, I believe that personal faith in Jesus Christ, not in the creation account, is what is necessary for salvation. With that stated, the inconsistencies and conundrums that disbelieving the book of Genesis presents to people who claim to believe the gospel are manifold.

Unlike me, Nye is a naturalist and evolutionist. Moreover, he is an antagonist toward creationism. According a CNN reporter, just before the debate Nye said, "I will remind Kentucky voters that this is a serious issue and that it is inappropriate to include creationism as an alternative to ... the body of knowledge and the process called science."

Nye also stated, "I'm here for the U.S. economy. See, what keeps the United States in the game for the world economy is our ability to innovate, to have new ideas, and those inventions come from science."

Remarkably, Nye believes that creationism and, therefore, biblical Christianity, is a threat to the U.S. economy. He has even gone on record stating that parents should not teach their children creationism.

Nye's message isn't simply, "You Christians take your Bibles and go home." Rather, his message is, "And keep those Bibles out of reach of your children."

Apparently we need warning labels and protective covers on the Sacred Book.

If biblical Christianity is the great enemy of scientific progress Nye believes it to be, how has the discipline of science progressed on the backs of so many Bible-believing Christians? To quote Ham, "The Bible and science go hand-in-hand."

Dealing with questions about how matter and energy became life, the origin of consciousness, or what existed before the theorized Big Bang, Nye could only say, "It remains a mystery." Ham kept referencing the Book that sheds light on those mysteries.

While neither debater changed his opponent's position, the debate itself shed light upon the essence of disagreement. In the words of Al Mohler, "The reality and authority of divine revelation ... was what the debate was all about." (See Mohler's article on this page.) He also said, "The central issue was really not the age of the earth or the claims of modern science. It was about the central worldview clash of our times, and of any time: the clash between the worldview of the self-declared 'reasonable man' and the worldview of the sinner saved by grace."

Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Together We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

Worldviews clash in the Ham-Nye debate

By Albert Mohler Jr.

Last week's debate between Bill Nye and Ken Ham attracted a huge international audience and no shortage of controversy—even before it began. Nye, whose main media presence is as "The Science Guy," and Ham, co-founder of Answers in Genesis and founder of the Creation Museum, squared off in a true debate over one of the most important questions that the human mind can contemplate. That is no small achievement.

I enjoyed a front row seat at the debate, which took place even as a major winter storm raged outside, dumping considerable amounts of snow and ice and causing what the local police announced as a "Class Two" weather emergency. Inside the Creation Museum there was quite enough heat, and the debate took place without a hitch. Thankfully, it also took place without acrimony.

The single most defining aspect of the debate was Nye's repeated citation of the "reasonable man" argument in his presentation and responses. He cited Adolphe Quetelet's famed *l'homme moyen*—"a reasonable man"—as the measure of his intellectual authority. Writing in 1835, Quetelet, a French intellectual, made his "reasonable man" famous. The "reasonable man" is a man of intellect, education and knowledge who can judge evidence and arguments and function as an intellectual authority. The "reasonable man" is a truly modern man. Very quickly, jurists seized on the "reasonable man" to define the law and lawyers used him to make arguments before juries. A "reasonable man" would interpret the evidence and make a reasoned judgment, free from intellectual pressure.

Nye is a firm believer in autonomous human reason and the ability of the human intellect to solve the great problems of existence without any need of divine revelation. He spoke of modern science revealing "what we all can know" as it operates on the basis of natural laws. As Nye sees it, Ham has a worldview, but Nye does not. He referred to "Ken Ham's worldview," but claimed that science merely provides knowledge. He sees himself as the quintessential "reasonable man," and he repeatedly dismissed Christian arguments as "not reasonable."

In an unexpected turn, near the end of the event, Nye even turned to make an argument against Christianity on grounds of theodicy. He asked Ham if it was "reasonable" to believe that God had privileged a personal revelation that was not equally accessible to all. Nye's weakest argument had to do with his claim—made twice—that billions of religious people accept modern science. He provided a chart that included vast millions of adherents of other world religions and announced that they are religious but accept modern science. That is

nonsense, of course. At least it is nonsense if he meant to suggest that these billions believe in evolution. That is hardly the case. Later, he lowered his argument to assert that these billions of people use modern technology. So, of course, do creationists. There are few facilities in the world more high-tech than the Creation Museum.

Nye is clearly not a fan of theistic evolution, since he argued that a purely natural argument should be quite enough for the "reasonable man." He seemed to affirm a methodological agnosticism, since he sees the question of a "higher power" or "spiritual being" to be one of little intellectual consequence. He did argue that nature is a closed system and that natural selection can allow for absolutely no supernatural interference or influence. In this respect, he sounded much like Stephen Hawking, who has argued that God may exist, but that there is nothing for him to do.

Ham is a Young Earth Creationist (as am I), but the larger argument was over worldviews, and the debate revealed the direct collision between evolution and the recognition of any historical authority within Genesis 1-11. As if to make that clear, in one of his closing arguments, Nye actually went back to cite "this problem of the ark."

The ark is not the real problem; autonomous human reason is. Nye is a true believer in human reason and the ability of modern science to deliver us. Humanity is just "one germ away" from extinction, he said. But science provides him with the joy of discovery and understanding.

As the Apostle Paul made clear in Romans 1:18-23, the problem with human reason is that it, along with every other aspect of our humanity, was corrupted by the fall. This is what theologians refer to as the "noetic effects of the fall." We have not lost the ability to know all things, but we have lost the ability to know them on our own authority and power. We are completely dependent upon divine revelation for the answers to the most important questions of life. Our sin keeps us from seeing what is right before our eyes in nature. We are dependent upon the God who loves us enough to reveal Himself to us—and to give us His Word.

As it turns out, the reality and authority of divine revelation, more than any other issue, was what the debate was all about. As the closing statements made very clear, Ham understood that fact, but Nye did not.

The central issue was really not the age of the earth or the claims of modern science. The question was not really about the ark or sediment layers or fossils. It was about the central worldview clash of our times, and of any time: the clash between the worldview of the self-declared "reasonable man" and the worldview of the sinner saved by grace.

Albert Mohler Jr. is president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. A full version of this article is available on Mohler's blog, www.AlbertMohler.com.

Guest Viewpoint



Albert Mohler Jr.

Sharing the Savior in the middle of a polar vortex

By Diana Davis

Consider these opportunities for sharing Jesus in a wintry wonderland:

Fresh Ideas



Diana Davis

■ Build a gigantic snowman on the church lawn with a tree limb arm holding a big sign: "God loves you snow much! Join us for worship Sunday at 11!" You'll enjoy fun Christian fellowship, and it may make the local paper's front page.

■ Build a snow family or a row of snowpeople on the church lawn—snowmen, snowgrandpas, snowgirls, snowpets and so on. Each snow creature holds a sign inviting passersby to Sunday worship.

■ During extended extreme weather, ask members to join deacons to shovel sidewalks for elderly church members and neighbors. Provide thermoses of hot cocoa for shovelers.

■ For snow parties, everyone brings cans of vegetables to add to huge, steaming soup pots.

■ Assign church members to call

homebound church members during weather crises to assure their safety. Walk elderly folks to their car on slippery Sundays.

■ Have a coat exchange. It's like a cookie exchange, but warmer. Ask members to donate outgrown coats. Place them on big coat racks and invite everyone to help themselves.

■ Hot cocoa and warm teaching. Advertise a winter Bible study to feature a hot chocolate buffet with all the trimmings.

Diana Davis is an author and wife of NAMB Vice President for the South Region Steve Davis.

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Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

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7 questions from a bi-vocational pastor

By Joe McKeever

A bi-vocational pastor is one who holds down two full-time jobs, one at church and another one which pays most of the bills. Either his church is small and cannot afford to pay him a full salary, or he has started the church himself and it has not grown to the point of self-sufficiency, or he feels called to a bi-vo kind of ministry.

I have always had a place in my heart for pastors who try to ride this "bicycle built for two," the ministry of bi-vocationalism. So I agreed when a friend asked me to write a piece for bi-vo pastors. What follows is his list of concerns and my attempt to respond to them. I am more aware than anyone how feeble some of these answers are, but I send them forth with the prayer that someone may be encouraged.

How do I manage my time?

I tell young pastors that if they are to last, they must learn to live in a world of unfinished jobs. There are not enough hours in the day. And, if that's true of a full-time pastor, how much more of the pastor who has only part of his life to devote to the work.

A bi-vo pastor cannot be passive, but must be proactive in planning and working his schedule. If he does not, he will always be running, running behind, and running out of everything.

A bi-vo pastor must enlist, train and use his people. Since he cannot be at the hospital in the mornings before someone's surgery, he has to select good people who can—and train them. Since he is unavailable from 8 to 5, and presumably at other times, he must ask the Lord to raise up others in the church to fill this breach. (Clearly, there are a hundred other ministries to which the laypeople can be called, equipped and commissioned. We're having to skim the surface here.)

How do I manage finances with limited resources?

Some would think you have twice the resources with

two jobs. But we know better. Often, the church income is just enough to cover your expenses, which will include the cost of your study, book allowance, mileage, and a hundred other things laypeople aren't aware of.

Short answer: The pastor and his wife must become a S.W.A.T. team focusing on wiping out the dreaded enemy of emergency expenses. To do that, they have to agree where to cut expenses and where to spend, how to save money and for what purposes. If both are not on the same page, the result is disaster.

Second answer: The pastor would do well to have the close counsel of a small group of key laypeople. At least two or three godly, mature, and informed lay men and women may be brought into the pastor's inner circle to hear of his finances, learn what he is dealing with, and speak up for him when key financial decisions are being made in the church. Only a secure can pull this off; only the Lord can raise up those advisers.

Everyone at church is related. Help!

This is often the case in small churches. And it can actually be a good thing. In a "family church," the lines of communication and the pecking order are already established and you don't have to re-invent the wheel. So, perhaps your situation is like that.

You'll want to learn to keep confidences, of course. Anything you tell Aunt Susie is going to get to Cousin John by nightfall, and In-law Betsy is not going to like it one bit. So, a tight lip is your biggest asset here.

In intermarried churches where everyone is constantly fighting among themselves, I have no word of wisdom other than to keep on keeping on. Preach the word, demonstrate and teach the principles of godly living, praying constantly that the Lord will either change their hearts or move you on.

How do I juggle work, prayer life & personal time

There will always be tension. You'll get this right sometimes and flub it up royally at other times.

Cut yourself some slack here and assume that there will be weeks when your study time suffers. Try to make it up the following week.

Always have a number of sermons in process. When you sit down to work on a message, first review the others—adding to them anything that comes to mind. That way, you're not at the mercy of a hectic week.

How do I be effective in ministry with little time?

You probably do it the way the rest of us do: poorly. But you give it what you have. You try to work in hospital visits with your regular job if possible, so that if your work sends you to the county seat to pick up supplies, you run by the hospital to check on Deacon Waller. And, you enlist the best and godliest leaders in the church—usually retirees—to assist you.

One positive from being bi-vocational is that no reasonable person is going to demand that you be on call 24/7. You are therefore empowered to stand before a small group of leaders and announce, "I cannot do this without you. Will you help me?"

Do it, pastor. You'll end up blessing those people, enlarging your own ministry, and freeing up time for your family. And this will honor Christ.

How do I mentor the most faithful members?

It's good you feel the need to do this. Paul said to Timothy, "The things you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2).

Whether you make this a formal mentoring relationship with them—which means commitments on each end—or it remains informal and casual, you will still want to focus on a few men and women with extraordinary potential and encourage their growth and development.

This means praying for them often (as Paul did Timothy; see 2 Timothy 1) and caring for them deeply (Paul even knew the names of Timothy's mother and grandmother). This will form a basis for those brief teaching times as you're able to work them in.

Take them to visit hospitals, the home-bound, the unchurched, and those in trouble. During the drive, talk to them about what you just did. This is something

Show your love on Valentine's

By Valerie Vincent

Is it difficult to find a card for your spouse? Why is that? Is it because the two of you rarely discuss the nature or quality of your marriage? Is it because one or both of you dismiss the day as too commercialized



and so make an excuse not to focus on your relationship?

Maybe it is difficult to choose a card because loving words simply do not fit your relationship, which has become hurtful or artificial. For some, choosing a card is challenging because none of the words

truly capture the love you feel for your spouse. Yes, Valentine's Day is commercialized and an opportunity for stores to sell candy, flowers and cards.

That reality does not negate the clear focus of Scripture: "If I speak with human eloquence and angelic ecstasy but don't love, I'm nothing but the creaking of a rusty gate. If I speak God's Word with power, revealing all his mysteries and making everything plain as day, and if I have faith that says to a mountain, 'Jump,' and it jumps, but I don't love, I'm nothing. If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don't love, I've gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love" (1 Corinthians 13, The Message).

Let the challenge this Valentine's Day be to "show your love!" That may take the form of candy, flowers or cards as long as you are being authentic. That may mean an act of humility and honesty to be authentic. That could be a sincere apology and a commitment to change. It could be a moment set aside to communicate your heart. You can choose to make it the day that the Lord has made, to rejoice and be glad in it for you will love as it is written in the Scriptures.

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

pastors of larger churches almost never do due to the pressure of so many responsibilities, but which you can and must do.

How do I reserve time for my wife and a hobby or two?

You do it by planning, and if you are not a planner, this is going to go bad quickly.

Your people mean well, but they just think their beloved pastor ought to be present at every event that involves them without one thought to what doing so might cost you.

When someone tells you they have a retirement party coming up Saturday night and "I just have to have my pastor there," you tell them the truth, but not all of it. "I sure wish you'd told me before now, Charlie," putting the onus back on him. Then you add, "I'd love to come, but I have an important appointment that has been on my calendar for weeks."

That this appointment is a movie and dinner with your wife or a baseball game with your child is none of his business.

Even if he learns what you are choosing over him, hold to your guns. Don't weaken. Your wife (or your child) is standing back watching how you handle this. You can come through as pure gold or you can cave in to pressure and abandon those you love best and who need you most; it's up to you.

In the long run, the church member who is disappointed because you will not be able to make his/her event because of a prior commitment to your wife or child will come to respect you for it. If they do not in the short run, well, then, that's their problem.

You cannot remain bi-vocational and succeed if you are weak and a people-pleaser.

You must stay focused on the Lord and obedient to His call for your life or you will soon throw up your hands in despair and say it cannot be done.

God bless you, friend. We're pulling for you to get this right.

Joe McKeever is a former director of missions and a pastor, speaker and author in New Orleans. For more, go to joemckeever.com.

Three greatest financial risks

By Don Spencer

Good financial planning can help you avoid or reduce the risk of these three financial disasters:

Dying too soon—Make sure there is adequate life insurance to take care of the needs of your family and heirs. If you still have dependent children, adequate life insurance is even more critical. The amount should cover any final illness expenses, burial, family living needs, education, etc. Most people have insufficient coverage, but some coverage is at least better than none.

Becoming disabled—Protecting yourself and your family from the financial effects of disability is essential and can be done by having adequate disability insurance. Otherwise, your disability could cause drastic changes in your family's lifestyle. This is true whether the disability is temporary or permanent.

Think of disability insurance as "income insurance" in the event of your disability. Most disabilities are not related to accidents and injuries. Neglecting disability insurance protection can be costly.

Living too long—People understand the consequences of dying too soon, but most probably do not foresee the danger in outliving their incomes. People are tending to live longer. But with inflation, more and more elderly folks find can't afford things they consider necessities. Sound financial planning includes saving adequate amounts to fund your retirement years, no matter how long you live.

Former first lady, Eleanor Roosevelt, said "It takes as much energy to wish as it does to plan." Set concrete, attainable goals for retirement, commit to those goals, then set aside the funds needed to reach that goal. Just do it.

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



NAMB trustees see lostness in Indianapolis firsthand

By Tobin Perry

Indianapolis—North American Mission Board trustees recently boarded buses to see how four Indianapolis church planters are pushing back lostness. As trustees entered the buses, their hands were stamped with a number—1943.

The trustees would soon learn that 1943 represented the number of years it would take, at the present level of growth, to have enough churches of all denominations to get the gospel to metro Indy's populace, according to a study by missiologist Jim Slack.

Indianapolis is one of 32 Send North America cities where NAMB is focusing the attention of Southern Baptists upon the need of evangelism and church planting. With one Southern Baptist church for every 19,965 people in the metro area, Baptists plan to start 90 churches during the next five years.

"I want you guys to know that what you're doing is changing the culture of the church in Indianapolis," said church planter Chris Elliott as he spoke with

trustees in the outdoor park where he launched a church last year.

"Whenever I talk about your goal of planting 90 churches in the next five years, eyes get about this big around and then they glaze over," Elliott said. "Then the subject changes. That's because it's unheard of. What you are doing is sending shockwaves around the body of Christ. And 90 churches are going to be planted. The gospel will be preached and a movement of Southern Baptists will start here."

Trustees met Elliott during their Indy tour along with three other church planters—each focused on reaching different geographic or cultural segments of the city. Elliott, who grew up on the west side of Indianapolis, started Oasis of Hope Southern Baptist Church in the park after asking people nearby, "Who is Jesus?" and "What did He do for you?" and getting few responses that reflected the gospel.

Barry Rager shared with trustees the story of bringing his family of six from western Kentucky to the inner city of



North American Mission Board trustees braved the snow and cold for a vision tour of Indianapolis, visiting Chris Elliott (facing trustees) and three other church planters in NAMB's Send North America: Indianapolis initiative. (Susan Whitley/NAMB)

Indianapolis last year. In the past year Rager and his family have started a monthly worship service and several small groups.

Curtis Cunningham, a layman from Send North America: Indianapolis' lead partner Second Baptist Church in Springfield, Mo., also attended the vision tour. He is leading a team of young families from his church to help Rager at New Circle Church this summer.

Kerry Jackson said he is planting in Indianapolis' arts district. He plans to launch Circle City Canvas Church in the fall.

Bobby Pell, director of church planting for the SCBI, ended the vision tour by reminding trustees of the number stamped on their hand that was now fading.

"My prayer is that ... we may have a greater heart for Indianapolis," Pell said. "Because we saw what we saw, we might be able to think about partnering or something for these and these plants. My prayer is that this number 1943 would fade in a very real way—not just on our hand." (NAMB)

For more information about Send North America: Indianapolis, visit www.namb.net/Indianapolis.

Rager

Continued from page 1

church in Indianapolis.

"Every time we set one of those up, it never happened," Rager said. "We just thought maybe it wasn't going to happen for us. And so we had prayed that our kids would be missionaries, that they would plant churches. I just assumed I'd pastor established churches in Kentucky."

But God had an Indianapolis plan for them after all. In the summer of 2012, Jamus Edwards, pastor of Pleasant Valley Community Church in Owensboro, approached Rager with an idea. The church wanted to start a new congregation in an urban environment—and they wanted Rager to be the planter.

When the Ragers moved to the Mapleton-Fall Creek neighborhood, they were told it would take months—and maybe years—to connect with their neighbors. In the early days of the last century, the neighborhood was young, growing and affluent—the place to be in the city. But then new communities began to emerge and became the city's new magnets.

Decades of decline followed. In recent years there has been a strong effort to revitalize the neighborhood, but it's still a work in progress.

"It's a broken place, but the people are strong and resilient," Amy said. "And they're beautiful people, and we love them. They just need Jesus. So we're excited to be here. It is a flavorful neighborhood in that we do hear gunshots. There is crime. But the people are open and receptive to the gospel in a way that is beautiful."

Knowing it would likely be tough to get to know their neighbors, the Ragers relied on a tried-and-true tool for making friends—freshly baked cookies.

"We still had boxes around and within the first week I had made cookies for our whole block," Amy said. "We took cookies to every door. We tried to initiate



Church planter Barry Rager (left) greets Ray Williams, one of about 60 people who attend monthly worship services in a building shared with two other congregations. Also pictured is North American Mission Board vice president for mobilization and marketing Aaron Coe. (Susan Whitley/NAMB)

relationships with each individual."

The cookies helped the Ragers build bridges with their neighbors. Over the past year they've met just about everyone on their block. They also host two small

discovery groups in their home. To further build relationships, Barry began frequently working from a nearby Starbucks. Because it was near a college campus, he also has built relationships with

a number of students.

The Ragers also lead a monthly worship service that attracts 50 to 60 people as they prepare for the launch of their church. Ethiopians, African Americans, Asians and Caucasians all attend the services.

Though at times, Rager admits, life on the mission field can be frustrating and discouraging, he said the support of Southern Baptists has been critical. One pastor from Missouri regularly calls and texts him with encouragement. He's also appreciative of one Southern Baptist church in Mississippi that prays for his family every Wednesday night.

"We believe God is worthy to be known," Amy said. "He loves us despite our brokenness. And, we believe not only is He the solution for eternity, but He's the solution to life now. ... These people, this city, desperately need to know that He is the only solution that will bring about peace and joy here." (NAMB)

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Introduction of Speakers
Message Dr. Al Mohler
Worship Music Bo Warren
Message Dr. Al Mohler
Special Music Bo Warren
Message Dr. Jeff Iorg
Benediction
Break for lunch 11:30 a.m., Meal for speakers, musicians and Evangelism Team will be provided.

Session 2 • 1:30 p.m.

Worship Music Bo Warren
Welcome and Invocation
Introduction of Speakers
Message Dr. Fred Luter
Worship Music Bo Warren
Message Dr. Paige Patterson
Special Music Bo Warren
Message Dr. Jeff Iorg
Benediction
Break for dinner 4:00 p.m., Meal for speakers, musicians and Evangelism Team will be provided.

Session 3 • 6:00 p.m.

Concert Bo Warren
Introduction of Speakers
Message Dr. Paige Patterson
Worship Music Bo Warren
Message Dr. Fred Luter
Benediction

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Ukraine's religious freedom at risk, some warn

Kiev, Ukraine—Amid months-long protests that recently turned violent in Ukraine, observers are warning that hastily-imposed anti-dissent laws inadvertently threaten religious liberty and the future of Christian ministries in the Eastern European nation.

The unrest began in November when protestors began demanding the president's resignation over accusations of corruption and a decision to strengthen ties with neighboring Russia rather than agreeing to a modernizing trade deal with the European Union.

President Viktor Yanukovich agreed to some concessions in talks with opposition leaders Jan. 24. One of those concessions reportedly is to change the harsh anti-protest legislation.

As it is, the legislation categorizes protesting against the government as "slander," punishable with a 15-year prison term, and it calls organizations that receive funding from outside Ukraine "foreign agents," penalizing them with a tax, according to Mission Network News.

Michael Cherenkoff of the Kiev-based Russian Ministries likened the new laws to Stalin's Soviet Union of 1937. Many of the Christian ministries operating in Ukraine previously operated in Russia but left because of religious freedom concerns, Mission Network News reported.

"It's much like Russia's laws, but much worse," Cherenkoff said.

Young leaders of evangelical churches in Ukraine initiated a roundtable in Kiev Jan. 17 to discuss implications of the new laws, including how the church should react to the sudden threat of dictatorship after more than 20 years of independence.

In December, Mission Network News reported that a spiritual wind was blowing throughout Kiev's Independence



Many churches have set up tents in Freedom Square to offer a refuge from the violence.

Square, where protesters were camping out en masse. Cherenkoff was manning a prayer tent inside the square, and he repeatedly heard protesters call on Jesus and ask for God's mercy.

Some protesters even asked for copies of the New Testament in the Ukrainian language, Cherenkoff said, prompting a fundraising effort by Russian Ministries that led to 100,000 copies of the Gospel of John being distributed among the protesters, Mission Network News said.

Though the majority of the protests have been peaceful, two people were killed in a clash with police Jan. 22 and protesters have seized government buildings, with some shouting "Revolution!" according to AP. Mission Network News characterized some of the protesters as "thugs trying to take advantage of a lawless situation."

International Mission Board workers

Brady and Millie Sample* serve near the area where the violence occurred.

"It's a real mess down there," Brady said. "Barricades every few feet with guards, tents everywhere."

For the most part the Samples are going about their lives normally.

Brady works closely with the Ukrainian Baptist Union, the largest evangelical association of churches in the country, which is calling for members to pray for a peaceful solution to the conflict.

"They are not taking sides and not encouraging the protests," Brady said. "They are praying for our country to turn to God."

Many churches have set up tents in Freedom Square, about a half-mile from the center of the most recent violence, in order to pray for individuals, serve hot chocolate, hand out tracts and share the gospel.

The president of Russian Ministries, Sergey Rakhuba, told Mission Network News in a Jan. 24 report that the organization was closing its headquarters in Kiev because of the increasing violence. "We thought we might be the target for possible provocation," he said.

U.S. Vice President Joe Biden, in a phone call with the Ukrainian president Jan. 23, urged an immediate de-escalation in the standoff between protesters and the government's security forces.

Biden asked Yanukovich to meaningfully address the legitimate concerns of peaceful protesters, and he underscored that freedoms of assembly and expression are fundamental pillars of a democratic society. Biden warned that further bloodshed would have consequences for Ukraine's relationship with the United States. (BP)

*Names changed.

NEWS BRIEFS

Appeal of clergy tax ruling

The Justice Department will appeal a federal court ruling allowing clergy to avoid paying taxes on a part of their income designated as a housing allowance violates the constitutionally mandated separation of church and state.

The department filed a notice of appeal with the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago Jan. 24, just days before the Jan. 27 deadline.

Senior U.S. District Judge Barbara Crabb said a section of the tax code granting a benefit for "ministers of the gospel" not available to everyone else favors religion over non-religion, thus creating an establishment of religion prohibited by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. If the Seventh Circuit affirms Crabb's ruling, it would affect only Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana, but might prompt the Internal Revenue Service to apply the ruling nationally to ensure consistent tax treatment of ministers.

'Gospel and sexuality'

The Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission will present "The Gospel and Human Sexuality," a leadership summit to be held April 21-23 in Nashville at the SBC building.

The summit will address such issues as marital sexuality, moral purity, discussions with teenagers on sex, pastoral care for sexual immorality, pornography, homosexuality, sex trafficking, and biblical manhood and womanhood.

Among the speakers will be Moore; J.D. Greear, lead pastor of The Summit Church in the Raleigh/Durham (N.C.) area; Trillia Newbell, the ERLC's consultant for women's initiatives; and Mark Regnerus, author and associate professor of sociology at the University of Texas-Austin.

For more information, see erlc.com/summit.

Croston heads black outreach

Mark Croston, former pastor of East End Baptist Church in Suffolk, Va., will head up an outreach at LifeWay Christian Resources designed to encourage African-American churches.

Croston has worked as LifeWay's national director of Black Church Partnerships since last November. He helps African American churches assess their needs and determine how LifeWay can help meet those needs.

"Our job is to help churches in their ministry of making disciples. I provide training, consulting and resourcing to churches across the length and breadth of our country, African American churches," he said.

Croston holds a doctor of ministry degree from Virginia Union University in Richmond, with a concentration in Christian education in the African American church. In 2012, he was president of both the SBC-affiliated Baptist General Association of Virginia and the Virginia Baptist State Convention.

WINTER OLYMPICS: Baptists trek to Sochi to share their faith

Sochi, Russia—Amid tight security, the 2014 Winter Olympics have commenced while Baptist volunteers from across the United States arrived to be part of the international festivities.

Partnering under the name Engage Sochi, their purpose is simple: to make a difference for Christ before, during and after the 2014 Winter Olympics. The Southern Baptist volunteers journeyed thousands of miles despite persistent media attention to fears of terrorist threats.

Engage Sochi is a network of Southern Baptists seeking to create opportunities for meaningful conversations with those living and working in Sochi or who are attending the Games. Volunteers hail from across the United States, including Oklahoma, Missouri, Colorado, Georgia and Alabama.

Scheduled to perform are the Singing Men of Oklahoma, Woman's Missionary Union drama teams and ministry teams from Missouri and Colorado intent on sharing the love of Christ.

Volunteers engage people throughout the community, walking in the knowledge that thousands around the world are praying for them and for Sochi during the coming weeks.

"Never in our lives have we felt the prayers of people so tangibly," one volunteer said. "Even tonight, a casual conversation on the train turned into a person



Southern Baptists, partnering under the name Engage Sochi, are engaging tourists and Russian residents with the gospel. (William Bagsby/IMB)

helping us, and a really good local contact was made."

As people respond and ask questions, steps are taken to ensure that once they return home, they are connected with a local community of believers, regardless of where they live throughout the world.

Engage Sochi prayer request

The North Caucasus region of Russia,

in which Sochi sits, has long suffered from political unrest. Evangelical churches in the region work hard to reach people with the good news that turning to Jesus Christ offers eternal hope—hope that cannot be found in any political dogma. Pray for the pastors and members of these churches to have boldness and stamina as they reach out to those around them. (BP)

Clearing away the snow

Thankful for dedicated staff members at Oneida

The Lord has blessed us with a great staff that loves the Lord and loves young people. These amazing staff members execute both small and large tasks every day on our campus. Some of these tasks are visible to all, but many go unnoticed.

We have had our fair share of snow the past several weeks, and many days our campus roads have been covered with a hazardous wintry mix. Several of our hard-working staff members get off to an early 5 a.m. start to begin clearing our roads and sidewalks in order to make them safe for driving and walking. These staff members don't ask for extra pay or time off. They simply serve our students and staff.

Recently, one of our workers was working hard to clear a sidewalk, and as quickly as he could remove the snow and ice, more snow and ice covered what he had just cleared. This made me think of the way sin and forgiveness work in the life of a believer.

Oftentimes as quickly as we can give our sin over to the Lord, new sin covers our hearts and minds. Just as the beautiful snow turns to brown, dirty slush so does our cleansing if we do not walk in the victory provided by Christ. As soon as we experience the Lord's forgiveness and joy Satan swoops in to steal, kill, and destroy us and our joy.

Many times the Lord delivers us from the bondage of recurring sin and we soon find ourselves right back in the same pit of sin and despair. This is why we must walk closely and daily with

our Lord.

Sin and the daily struggle with sin are just as real on our campus as they are anywhere else. All of our students and staff are sinners. Many students and all staff are sinners saved by God's grace. In addition to the biblical integration that our teachers do in the classrooms, Oneida offers programs to help our students overcome their struggle with sin. There are Bible studies in the boys' and girls' dormitories. We offer Fellowship of Christian Athletes and Baptist Campus Ministry. We have daily chapel services. We have Sunday school. We have

Creative Ministries.

I often tell new students that their Oneida experience will be whatever they choose for it to be. If they get involved and take advantage of some of these opportunities I have mentioned, they can and will most likely have a great Oneida experience. Young people today face temptations and sin that did not exist a few decades ago. At Oneida we do our best to provide an environment in which young people are given every opportunity to overcome sin and to live a life of gratitude.

I am thankful for our folks who clear our streets and sidewalks to make our campus safe, but I am even more thankful for our Lord who makes our eternity safe and secure.

The next time snow falls in your area, thank the Lord for his forgiveness and pray for Oneida.

This is Oneida



Larry Gritton

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

On mission

Student's passion for evangelism evident in her life

Just a few short years ago, senior Rebekah Harris would have never imagined herself in college, much less at Clear Creek Bible College ready to graduate with a bachelor's degree in missions and evangelism.

"My time at Clear Creek has been such a blessing to me," said Harris. "I have been able to travel the world sharing the gospel. God has provided for me in so many ways.

"I have been amazed from the very first day that God has allowed me to attend Clear Creek and be able to graduate with my degree. I have loved all my classes. They have helped me to learn more about God's word and how I can apply His word to the ministry opportunities He gives me."

"I have been privileged to be involved in an extensive jail ministry while a student here," Harris said. "I get to visit two jails in the area on a weekly basis. I also get to minister at a prison in Nashville, Tenn., once a month.

"I come from the same background as many of the inmates in those jails and prisons," Harris noted.

"It is such an honor for me to be able

to go into these places and share the hope of Jesus Christ with the inmates. This is my passion in life because I personally know that God can change anyone who is willing to surrender their life to Him.

"God is really moving behind those bars. We have had many people surrender their lives to Jesus Christ because they are sick and tired of being sick and tired. My pastor goes to the jails with me and does baptisms right there in the facility."

"I don't know exactly what God has for me after I graduate," Harris said. "I do know that missions and evangelism is my pas-

sion in life and that is where my heart is. Whether I stay in the area or go somewhere else, I really believe I will be involved in this type of ministry when I graduate. I would like to expand the jail ministry I am involved with and perhaps start a half-way house for those who transition out of the prisons."

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

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

ERLC joins Supreme Court brief supporting Hobby Lobby case

By Bob Allen

Washington—The Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission joined other faith groups in a Supreme Court brief filed Jan. 28 arguing that for-profit corporations cannot be forced to pay for employee insurance coverage of contraception if their owners object on religious grounds.

The ERLC, the public-policy arm of the Southern Baptist Convention, joined the Christian Legal Society, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, World Vision, Inc. and other diverse organizations in filing for the brief.

"We're in this because religious liberty isn't a government grant, but a human right grounded in the image of God," said agency President Russell Moore.

The brief says the U.S. Supreme Court should affirm a lower-court's ruling that the Southern Baptist owners of the Oklahoma City-based craft store chain Hobby Lobby are entitled to run their family business on Christian principles under protection of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

RFRA protects "a person's exercise of religion," said Douglas Laycock, a

constitution lawyer who drafted the brief. And that protection is guaranteed whether or not that person owns a business. He said "person" in federal legislation includes both natural persons and "artificial" persons, including for-profit corporations, unless the context indicates otherwise.

Laycock said Congress twice rejected attempts to exclude corporations from the bill's universal coverage, applying a single standard to all cases.

"(R)eligious liberty isn't a government grant, but a human right grounded in the image of God."

Russell Moore

"If you take seriously the belief that a new human life begins at conception, and if your business grows to the point where you need to incorporate it, the government says you are ... out of luck in this country," Laycock said. "Violate your faith, or sell your business."

"Our Baptist forefather

John Leland wasn't content to trust politicians with tyranny over the conscience. We are his sons and daughters and we will carry the banner of soul freedom to the Supreme Court and beyond."

Moore and the ERLC presented an earlier amicus brief last October asking the Supreme Court to review split decisions by lower courts on whether the Religious Freedom Restoration Act applies to corporations or only to individuals. (ABP)

ERLC to help church's social witness

Nashville, Tenn.—The Southern Baptist Convention's ethics entity has launched a new initiative to help evangelical Christians understand and respond to public issues.

The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission unveiled "Canon & Culture: Christianity & the Public Square" Jan. 28. The new project—with blog and podcast components—will seek "to help build and strengthen the church's social witness by providing thoughtful content that inspires a rising generation of evangelicals to think Christianly about the public square," according to the ERLC.

The Canon & Culture blog channel will include essays by leaders in Southern Baptist life, scholars, seminary presidents and professors, policy experts and think-tank specialists. The essays—expected to be posted each Tuesday and Thursday—will address a broad range of topics, such as art, ethics, vocation, culture, philosophy, politics and technology.

At least once a month, a new Canon & Culture podcast will be posted at the website. The podcasts will include conversations with congressional staff members, specialists with non-governmental organizations, columnists and bloggers.

The goal of the new initiative "is not to be just another publication, but to be a tool for spiritual warfare," ERLC President Russell Moore said in a written release. "Each generation faces new, complex questions about how to be faithful to the mission of Christ. Canon &

CANON & CULTURE

CHRISTIANITY & THE PUBLIC SQUARE

Culture recognizes that this task requires a band of joyful warriors devoting themselves to asking hard questions, and thinking deeply about difficult issues all from a kingdom-focused grid."

Andrew Walker, the ERLC's director of policy studies and managing editor of Canon & Culture, said in an introductory post at the website the initiative "desires to be an avenue that helps evangelicals discern and navigate the times we find ourselves in—in a culture where religious nominalism is dropping out, even as vibrant and orthodox belief continues to move forward."

"I believe as Christians our task is to judge culture and to weigh culture against the claims of Christ."

Andrew Walker

With the blog channel, the ERLC wants basically to provide "public thinkers an opportunity to ... think in depth about the issues that are affecting Christians," he said on the inaugural podcast episode.

Walker explained the title Canon & Culture by saying, "Canon is in reference to a precept or a standard or a rule that we're

trying to judge something against. And so when we talk about 'Canon and Culture,' I believe as Christians our task is to judge culture and to weigh culture against the claims of Christ and His kingdom."

The project may be accessed at canonandculture.com. (BP)

Training 'anytime, anywhere' via Ministry Grid ready for churches

By Bob Smietana

Nashville, Tenn.—Pastors know that well-trained lay leaders and volunteers are essential for the health of a local church. But implementing a training strategy can be difficult, said Todd Adkins, director of leadership at LifeWay Christian Resources.

Enter MinistryGrid.com, a new site for online delivery of easy, affordable and high-quality training.

Ministry Grid features more than 2,000 original, readily accessible video sessions on topics from church leadership and finances to parking ministry and childcare.

The idea behind the site is to give churches a framework for their training programs, Adkins said, noting, "If you don't give people a framework, they won't grow."

In the past, local congregations sent volunteers to conferences or utilized denominational programs such as Training Union to equip church members for ministry, Adkins said.

"People used to take a week of vacation to attend training events like



Sunday School week at Ridgecrest," he said. "They don't do that anymore."

Instead of sending volunteers or staff members to an event, Ministry Grid allows churches to bring the training to their people via computer, smartphone, tablet or other mobile device. There's also an app for offline viewing.

Ministry Grid doesn't replace face-to-face training, but the training model is based on the idea of a "flipped classroom" now common in colleges and high schools.

In this case, volunteers and church members learn by watching videos and reading resources on their own time. Then they'll be better prepared for in-person discussion.

It's all part of creating a culture where leadership training and personal development are a normal part of church life.

"The church wins when ministry is handed back to the people," said Eric Geiger, vice president of LifeWay's church resources division which oversees Ministry Grid as a service to "help churches more intentionally invest in leaders."

The site is easy to use. Once a church subscribes, church leaders can place volunteers in categories such as greeters, small group leaders, Sunday School teachers or staff members. A training plan can be created for each group.

The site will automatically set up a personalized profile page with links to recommended training resources. From there users can watch videos, read resources and keep track of their progress. It's as simple as point, click and learn.

A "group at a glance" feature allows pastors and church staff to track members' progress.

For users, the site is part Facebook, part Netflix and part Discipleship Training. They can have some fun along the way by earning badges similar to Royal Ambassadors patches or Sunday School bars for completing parts of the training process.

Adkins said the badges were inspired by his experience growing up in a Baptist church in Kentucky and going to church training classes on Sunday evenings.

"It's a combination of old-fashioned accountability and achievement psychology," Adkins said.

Ministry Grid organizers believe churches of all sizes can benefit from the site's training options. Church leaders can choose built-in tracks or video sessions, upload their own video content, link to additional articles, turn off unwanted content and even put their church's name and logo on the site.

In its first month, the new MinistryGrid.com site has drawn nearly 12,000

unique visitors from more than 60 countries.

Videos already on Ministry Grid's free preview site include Melita Thomas, of LifeWay Kids Ministry, discussing eight approaches to how children learn; Danny Franks, connections pastor at The Summit Church in North Carolina, on the importance of preparing for guests who visit your church; and Mark Marshall, pastor of ClearView Baptist Church in Franklin, Tenn., relaying practical tips and information to pastors about the "what" and "how" of baptism.

Among other contributors are Tami Heim, president of the Christian Leadership Alliance; Mac Lake of The Launch Network; Kevin Peck, lead pastor of Austin Stone Community Church; Derwin Gray of Transformation Church; and Aubrey Malphurs, professor of leadership and pastoral ministries at Dallas Theological Seminary.

Ministry Grid also has partnered with congregations like Austin Stone Community Church; Brentwood Baptist Church in Brentwood, Tenn.; and Sojourn Church in Louisville, Ky.

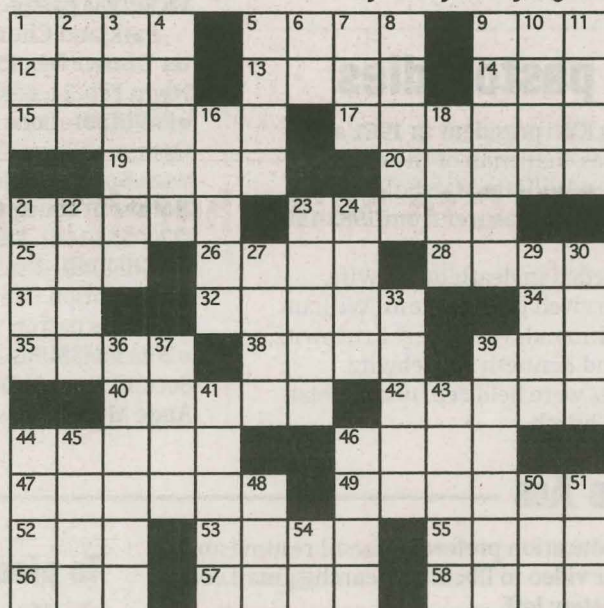
Subscriptions start at \$9.99 per month for individuals and \$24.95 a month—or \$134.95 per year—for small churches. Subscriptions for larger churches are based on weekly attendance.

"We've made this issue a major priority," LifeWay President Thom Rainer said. "We see a great opportunity to provide almost unlimited training in this digital age that could not be done in earlier years. We've created something that will be convenient for church leaders and those being equipped at an affordable cost for all churches." (BP)

Bible Crosswords

Across

- 1 Sign of the end times (Matthew 24:6)
- 5 "Fear God and _____ his commandments" (Ecclesiastes 12:13)
- 9 Trucker's "motel"
- 12 "He (Isaac) called the name of the well _____" (Genesis 26:20)
- 13 Exclamation
- 14 Tint
- 15 Sinks
- 17 "I was afraid, and went and hid thy _____" (Matthew 25:25)
- 19 _____ and the Thummin (Exodus 28:30)
- 20 "My servant _____ at home sick" (Matthew 8:6)
- 21 Puts an end to
- 23 Parts of capitols
- 25 Charade
- 26 In the near future (arch.)
- 28 "Buy the truth and _____ it not" (Proverbs 23:23)
- 31 Preposition
- 32 Church part (pl.)
- 34 That is (abbr.)
- 35 "Ye may rejoice, and that I may be the _____ sorrowful" (Philippians 2:28)
- 38 Nuisance
- 39 Promise Keepers attendees
- 40 "Ye shall receive _____, after that the Holy Ghost is come" (Acts 1:8)
- 42 "_____ your ways and your doings" (Jeremiah 7:3)
- 44 "There _____ from heaven a great light" (Acts 22:6)
- 46 Actor Thicke



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- 47 Unleashed
- 49 "Those who by reason of use have their _____ exercised to discern" (Hebrews 5:14)
- 52 Holiday, for one
- 53 Choose's cohort
- 55 Settle in a cozy spot
- 56 French pronoun
- 57 "Thou hadst cast me ... in the midst of the _____" (Jonah 2:3)
- 58 "The poison of _____ is under their lips" (Romans 3:13)
- 16 Hebrew month
- 18 "Behold, thou (Samson) hast mocked me (Delilah), and told me _____" (Judges 16:10)
- 21 Greet
- 22 Teen trauma
- 23 Capital of Delaware
- 24 Singles
- 27 Back of the neck
- 29 Property claim
- 30 Let borrow
- 33 Not fresh
- 36 Forks' cohorts
- 37 "As my beloved _____ I warn you" (1 Corinthians 4:14)
- 39 Monthly occurrence
- 41 Mourns
- 43 "Our fathers did eat _____ in the desert" (John 6:31)
- 44 Skirt feature
- 45 Practice and practice and practice
- 46 Queries
- 48 "To live is Christ and to _____ is gain" (Philippians 1:21)
- 50 Extra sense (abbr.)
- 51 Byways (abbr.)
- 54 About (abbr.)



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Role of trustees

Trustees provide accountability, encourage ministries to dream

What is the role of a board of trustees?

Perhaps that is a question that seldom crosses your mind, but it is one that is of utmost importance to me.

Our society is full of such groups—in large corporations, these groups provide oversight and seek to insure proper rate of return for the company's investors. These boards also hire, fire and hold accountable the CEOs of such business.

In the world of non-profits and colleges, boards perform similar functions and also raise money for their respective organizations. In Baptist life we have trustees that protect various ministries and agencies—such as Crossings.

Recently, we had a Crossings board meeting—one of three meetings we have each year. These meetings are one of the many highlights of my role.

While the group of 10 people we have serving as our trustees provide numerous roles on behalf of Crossings and Kentucky Baptists as a whole, I would like to focus on what you may not know about these people.

First, they all love the Lord and have

committed their lives to Christ.

Secondly, they provide accountability for me not only personally, but also professionally as it relates to Crossings. What you may not know is that they

dream together as a group about our future. This particular area is very exciting.

Not that many years ago, many thought that camps—specifically Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek—did not have a future. Thankfully some had dreams that camps still could be used by God.

Today, some 17 years later, these same camps are seeing record numbers of students come to Christ each year. This summer will yet again be a record year in attendance.

Throughout our recent board meeting much of the time was spent dreaming with my brothers and sisters about the opportunities that God has placed before us. Again, I am most blessed to have 10 people around me that are much more than just trustees. This is good news for Crossings and good news for Kentucky Baptists.

Crossings Ministries



David Melber

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

KBC KENTUCKY BAPTIST CONVENTION CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February

- 22 Leadership Network Meeting, KBC Building, Louisville.
- 24 RISK 2014: State Evangelism Conference, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

March

- 4 Power Lunch, KBC Building, Louisville.
- 6 Seminary for a Day, Trace Creek Baptist Church, Mayfield.
- 7 Disaster Relief Chaplaincy Training, First Baptist Church, Richmond.
- 8 Vacation Bible School Clinic, Bellevue Baptist Church, Owensboro.
- 8 Disaster Relief Training, First Baptist Church, Richmond.
- 11 Transitional Interim Pastor Training, Warren Baptist Association, Bowling Green.
- 13 Kentucky Baptist Men's Chorale/Women's Chorale combined concert, Central Baptist Church, Corbin.
- 14 RAMCON, Beaver Dam Baptist Church, Beaver Dam.

Campbellsville students and faculty work at home and abroad on mission trips

By Samantha Stevenson

Campbellsville—Residents of Grand Isle, La., Haiti and Cuba received help from Campbellsville University students and faculty during mission trips over the winter holidays.

Twenty-two Campbellsville students partnered with First Baptist Church of Grand Isle, repairing pews and landscaping. Some students also participated in leading a worship service on Sunday nights.

Two CU students went to Haiti with Crossings Ministries and helped with Vacation Bible Schools in Haitian villages. Crossings also hosted a day camp at Camp Le Phare, partnering with Baptist Haiti Mission with the assistance of translators.

Campbellsville Trustee Joel Carwile and Twyla Hernandez, assistant professor of Christian ministries, traveled to Cuba to set up a new center of the Hispanic Baptist Bible Institute in the Iglesia Bautista Ebenezer in Banes, Cuba.

Carwile's church, Valley View in Louisville, provided financial support for the center. John Chowning, pastor of Saloma Baptist Church and the university's vice president for church and external relations and executive assistant to the president, also provided a



Cortni Cruse (bottom right) and Bethany Thomaston (standing, left), both with their backs to the camera, work with children in Haiti. (CU photo)

sizeable donation in support of the 47 students there. In addition, they provided a month's salary for several area pastors.

"There are a million stories that I could share about how God's hand was on this trip, and we give Him all the praise for all that is going on there. God is definitely at work in Cuba," Hernandez said.

Clemente Hernandez, pastor of a Hispanic Baptist Church in Georgetown, and husband of Twyla Hernandez, also traveled to Mexico with them. (CU)

Kruschwitz, long-time Kentucky pastor, dies

Louisville—Verlin Kruschwitz, 99, a retired pastor and former president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, died Feb. 7 at Baptist Health Louisville.

Kruschwitz served as pastor of St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville (1941-1952) and Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown for 28 years (1952-1980). He was instrumental in leading Severns Valley to be a perennial leader in Cooperative Program giving in the state.

He served as KBC president in 1961 and 1962, and he was chairman of the search committee when William Marshall, KBC executive secretary-treasurer from 1983-1997, was hired.

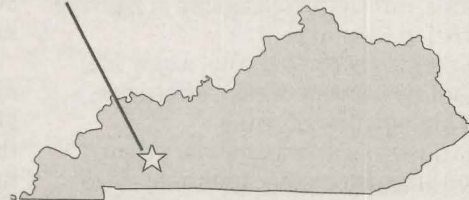
He was preceded in death by his wife, Ruth, and is survived by three sons: William Krushwitz, Richmond, Va.; Robert Krushwitz, Waco, Texas; and Kenneth Kruschwitz. Funeral services were held Feb. 10 at St. Matthews Baptist Church.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

Spotlight on ...

ALLEGRE



Bellview Church will host the Southern Kentucky Bible Conference Feb. 16-20. Guest speakers include **Curtis McGhee**, **James Shutt**, **David Skinner**, **Jeff Noffsinger**, **Ben Stratton**, **Donnie Wilkins** and **Roger Skipworth**. **Rodney Skipworth** is pastor.

■ **ARLINGTON**—First Church welcomes **David Spinx** as pastor.

■ **CLINTON**—Mount Moriah Church welcomes **Keith Howell** as pastor.

■ **FULTON**—Cayce Church welcomes **Dale True** as pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Bethany Church will hold a Family Winter Banquet Feb. 16, 5:30 p.m. **Ken Vickery** is pastor.

Parkland Church will hold a Daddy Daughter Dinner Feb. 15, 6:30 p.m., and a Mother Son Night Feb. 21, 6:30 p.m. **Tom Curry** is pastor.

■ **PADUCAH**—Lone Oak First Church will hold Operation Love Thy Neighbor Feb. 18, 7 p.m., with **Gordon Mote**, **Buddy Greene** and **Eric Horner** in concert. For more information, call (270) 554-1441. **Dan Summerlin** is pastor.

■ **RICHMOND**—Unity Church will hold a Ladies Appreciation Dinner Feb. 16, 6 p.m. **Dennis Brewer** is pastor.

■ **WILLIAMSBURG**—First Church will hold the Second Annual Dessert Auction Feb. 16, 12 p.m. **Ande Myers** is pastor.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR RENT: Two condos for rent in Destin, Fla. Two bedrooms, two baths, sleeps six, completely furnished. (423)309-4422 lbrammer@charter.net

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Paris is seeking a full-time minister of music and education, experience and education preferred. Send resumé to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 327, Paris, KY 40362, Attn: Gary Ellcessor, or email to fbcbrogary@att.net.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Paris is seeking a full-time minister to students and families. This person will be working with all ages, from preschool to senior adults. Send resumé to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 327, Paris, KY 40362, Attn: Gary Ellcessor, or email to fbcbrogary@att.net.

SEEKING: Tunnel Hill Baptist Church in Elizabethtown is seeking a part-time youth director. Approx. 20 hours per week. Submit resumé to tunnelhillbaptistchurch@gmail.com.

SEEKING: Christian Values Technology Company seeks mature business professionals for high-income opportunity. Home-based office. Hands on support and apprenticeship style training. For complete information, call Keith at (888) 395-6557.

SEEKING: Living Faith Baptist Church in Hartford is accepting resumes for a senior pastor. We are a young and

thriving church that will benefit from an enthusiastic individual with spiritual maturity. Candidate needs to have a passion for proclaiming the gospel and reaching the lost. A degree is preferred, but not required. Send resumé to Kevin Burt, 75 Mount Carmel Church Road, Utica, KY 42376, or email to rbsautomotive@bellsouth.net. Resumés will be accepted through Feb. 28 and confirmation will be sent when received.

SEEKING: Eubank (Southern) Baptist Church, congregation of approximately 300, located in Eubank, is seeking a senior pastor. Send printed (no email) formal resumé with cover letter to Eubank Baptist Church, P.O. Box 3356, West Somerset, KY 42564. Resumés accepted until March 31.

SEEKING: Woodhaven Baptist Church, Burlington, is seeking a full-time, bivocational pastor for a small, but growing church. If interested, contact Jack at jackandlindalawrence@gmail.com or (859) 586-6542.

SEEKING: Elizabethtown Baptist Church, a congregation of 280, is seeking a pastor. Send resumé to 1525 North Miles St., Elizabethtown, KY 42701. Resumés accepted until March 15.

SEEKING: Ephesians 4:11-12. Lewis Lane Baptist Church in Owensboro is accepting resumés for a full-time worship and education pastor. Experience and

education preferred. Email resumé and/or video to llbcmusicsearch@gmail.com, Attn: Jeff.

SEEKING: Zion Baptist Church of Henderson is seeking a full-time equipping pastor to lead the church in equipping and training, with the focus on mobilizing the church evangelistically. 3-5 years pastoral experience and a degree from an SBC-affiliated seminary preferred. Send resume to Equipping Pastor Search Committee, Zion Baptist Church, 8158 Hwy. 351, Henderson, KY 42420.

SEEKING: Scottsville Baptist Church, located in south central Kentucky, is seeking a full-time minister of music. Send resumés to Scottsville Baptist Church Search Committee, P.O. Box 392, Scottsville, KY 42164. Resumés will be received through March 5.

SEEKING: The Blackford Breckinridge Baptist Association is accepting resumés until March 31 for a full-time director of missions. Mail resumés with references to Blackford Breckinridge Baptist Association Search Committee, 404 Elm St., Cloverport, KY 40111, or email to thebaptistassoc@bellsouth.net. No phone calls.

SEEKING: Central Baptist Church of Paris is seeking a full-time associate pastor of families and youth. Send resumé to Central Baptist Church, Attn: Charles Courtney Jr., 829 High St., Paris, KY 40361, or email to youthcbc@bellsouth.net.

To place an advertisement in the Western Recorder:

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or visit
westernrecorder.org



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net. Resumés will be accepted until March 31 or until filled. For further details regarding the job description, visit our website at cbcparis.org.

SEEKING: Full-time communications coordinator. Maintains church's publications, website, social media, database and performs reception tasks. College degree preferred. Experience with MS Office and Publisher required. Experience with WordPress and ACS preferred. Graphic design experience desired. Must have interpersonal skills and the ability to multitask. Email resume to cholm@hurstbournebc.org or mail to Hurstbourne Baptist Church, Attn: Carolyn Holm, 8800 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, KY 40222.

A Valentine's Day story: Nepal couple finds lasting love through the romance of leaf blowing

By Caroline Anderson

Kathmandu, Nepal—In the West, the question, "How did you meet your spouse?" garners a variety of answers. Some husbands and wives met in high school or college. Some are set up on blind dates or meet through dating websites. Other couples met through mutual friends.

Bal and Anila Rai met through the sounds of a leaf.

The Rais believe music and instruments are not just a way to meet spouses, but are a way people can connect with their Creator. In the past, the Rais translated worship songs for a Christian organization and now are involved in writing worship songs in their native language.

The Rais are incorporating traditional instruments into the songs—a leaf being one of them.

Nepal is a nation rich in musical instruments, and some people groups use leaves as an instrument. The Rais live in eastern Nepal and are from the Lorung Rai people group. Nepal has 120 people groups.

"Playing the leaf was not something our parents taught us," Bal said.

Rather, leaf whistling is something that someone passed on through giggles and whispers in jungles and rice fields.

When Lorung Rai youths are out collecting firewood or working in the fields, a boy who wants to communicate romantic interest or get a girl's attention whistles a tune on a leaf. If she's interested, she'll play back.

Blowing leaves is like blowing kisses, Bal explained. It's how he and Anila met and fell in love.

When asked who sent the first leaf whistle, the couple chuckles, and, in an instant, the wrinkles disappear and they're both teenagers again. Bal is now 55 years old and Anila is 53.

"The rooster crows, and the hen answers," Bal said impishly, slapping his knee and breaking out into a boyish laugh. Anila playfully swats him for his comment.

Anila is pleased he remembers and that he still gets excited talking about it.

In Nepal couples don't often talk of "love stories" and how one would meet his future spouse. The culture is conservative, which is one reason for not talking about love, but people don't often ask. Bal and Anila expressed thanks for being asked how they met.

Times are changing now, but most Nepalese couples in the past met through arranged marriages.

Bal and Anila have what's known in South Asia as a "love marriage." Technically, it was first the leaf that arranged it, Bal and Anila said jokingly, and then they went to their parents to officially arrange it.

"We have a 40-year love story," Bal said, grinning from ear to ear. Anila smiles shyly.

The Rais became Christians at a young age. Their parents initially rejected their accepting Jesus Christ as

RIGHT: When asked who sent the first leaf whistle, the couple chuckles, and, in an instant, they're both teenagers again. Bal is 55 and Anila is 53. **BELOW:** Anila Rai and another Lorung Rai believer test out the leaves to see if they can be used as an instrument. The Lorung Rai have a tradition of "leaf whistling" to communicate romantic interest. (Caroline Anderson/IMB)



their Savior. Their relationship with their parents was strained for many years, but Bal said their relationship is now restored.

Turning over a new leaf

The leaves are not right here, Anila said, as she plucked a leaf off the nearest tree and carefully folded it. She placed it in her mouth and began to blow. A shrill sound came after a few tries.

Anila insisted that the leaves in the hilly area where she hails from make better sounds. She listed the Nepali names for the trees.

As another Lorung Rai woman danced, Anila played the leaf to the tune and beat of the song they've just written at a recent music writing workshop.

Bal is the musical coordinator of the group of five Lorung Rai who attended

the workshop. As the group rehearsed, Bal leaned over Anila's shoulder, using his reading glasses to help him see to mark where Anila's voice should rise and fall with more vibrato.

Anila is the singer and dancer of the group. Even though she's older now, her voice can still hit the high notes and fluctuate between notes that typical Tibetan songs have. She sat on a bed—her legs dangled and missed the floor by several inches—and sang through the newly written lyrics.

The songs they've written have a clear gospel presentation and use their traditional instruments—a mini-tambourine and leaves. One of the songs features Anila playing a leaf.

Though the leaf whistling was associated with romance, it can also be used for the Lorung Rai to express love

for God.

"Tomorrow may not come; we have today," Anila sang in the traditional Tibetan mournful manner.

People groups in Nepal are described as hill people or "terrain," plains people. The people of the hills have Tibetan lineage and the plains have lineage from the Indian subcontinent.

Anila said singing and dancing have been a part of her life since she was young. As Anila and women her age get older, "you lose it a little bit," she said.

She believes it's time to refresh traditional music.

"We know these songs are the ways hearts are touched," Bal said. He and Anila want to reach their people with the love of Christ and they know music is an inroad.

They also see these new songs as a way to save their slowly disappearing culture.

"Further up in the hills, it is much easier, our culture is more distinct," Bal said.

In cities, the youths are distributed and the young people leave behind cultural roots.

The younger generation of Lorung Rai are going to other countries and moving to the cities where they only speak Nepali.

Now, with the songs they've written, parents have an attractive way to pass on their mother tongue and musical styles, Bal said.

It saddens Bal and Anila that the tradition of leaf whistling is disappearing. "Nowadays, we have mobile phones," he said. "We didn't even have letters back then."

Next generation

Music workshops like the one the Rais attended are salvaging this dying art. The workshops have also sparked interest and enthusiasm in a younger generation of believers.

Anila said that when people see her playing a leaf, they ask about what she is doing and she's able to give a brief history. She was recently able to give a brief lesson to youth from the Magar people group, one of the most populous people groups in Nepal.

Spit and escaped breaths flew as a group of Magar boys tried to replicate Anila's leaf-whistling skill.

The teens drew in deep breaths and mostly just managed to generate brief spurts of sound. But their interest was piqued. Bal and Anila hope more youth in Nepal will carry on the tradition and use the music to worship the Lord.

Maybe, just maybe, traditional music will be a part of a new generation's love story. (BP)

MOUNTAIN OUTREACH



This winter University of the Cumberland's Mountain Outreach (MO) program provided 493 children with gifts for their mothers and fathers for Christmas. The lesson taught the children through this event is the joy of giving to others. The children were assisted in their selections by 25 volunteers from the baseball, track and field teams. Another MO project assisted the parents of 413 children by providing toys, clothes, household items, \$50 food vouchers, and adult and children's Bibles and nativity story activity books for Christmas. The toys for Gift Day were chosen by 81 student volunteers at a midnight shopping spree.

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BAPTIST CAMPUS MINISTRIES

Christmas break for 22 UC Baptist Campus Ministries students was a busy time as they traveled to Belfast, Northern Ireland to serve with Adventure Leadership Training for the second year. While there they led a Holiday Kid's Club teaching Bible lessons from Luke 15, participated in a 24/7 Prayer Vigil for Northern Ireland, an inter-denominational ministry sponsored by The Dock at the Titanic Quarter of Belfast, and assisted with a program known as Safe Zone, a collaboration of Belfast law enforcement and inter-denominational churches to help vulnerable people on the streets of Belfast. Also, a group of 11 students lead Bible study and taught crafts at Prince of Peace Home for Girls in San Cristobal, Guatemala. The team also distributed donated food to a remote community.