

WESTERN Recorder

March 11, 2014

Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

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Firearms & Faith

Chuck McAlister, a preacher who focuses his messages on God, guns and good ol' boys, uses a shotgun as a prop while speaking to some 700 people at Buck Creek Baptist Church near Calhoun, Feb. 1. McAlister, Evangelism and Church Planting Team leader for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, has been the subject of many feature stories by regional and national media outlets. (KBC)

Kentucky Baptists target gun enthusiasts for outreach

By Bob Allen

Louisville—A Kentucky Baptist Convention initiative to draw unchurched men to worship gained national attention after the Louisville Courier-Journal featured an upcoming gun giveaway at a Paducah church.

This year Lone Oak First Baptist Church adapted its regular wild-game dinner to a "Second Amendment Celebration and Dinner" March 6. The church led by Pastor Dan Summerlin, who recently completed service as KBC

president, is one of a number of congregations employing the state convention's new emphasis on affinity evangelism.

"When we talk about affinity evangelism, basically we're talking about the identification of needs, interests or affinities in a community that you can utilize as a platform for winning people to Christ," Chuck McAlister, who began Sept. 1, 2012, as leader of the newly formed evangelism and church planting team, said in a training video linked to the KBC website.

"It can include things like hobbies or if there is a predominant employer in a community," said McAlister, former host of "Adventure Bound Outdoors," a hunting program that airs on cable TV.

He said Kentucky Baptists are using the strategy in rural communities rallying around struggling schools and to capitalize on the state's fastest-growing sport, archery, fueled by interest among elementary and middle-school students in The Hunger Games book and movie.

The centerpiece of the affinity

□ See Guns ... Page 2

EASLEY: Gay Scout leaders closer than ever

By Diana Chandler

The Walt Disney Company is playing into the hands of Boy Scouts of America by cutting donations to BSA, giving the Scouts greater public leverage to accept gay leaders, Atlanta area pastor Ernest Easley said March 7.

Disney in February joined a growing list of companies who have cut financial support to BSA because of the

Scouts' ban on openly gay leaders. Such pressure will make it easier for BSA to open Scout leadership to gay men, said Easley, pastor of Roswell Street Baptist Church and chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

"Walt Disney has (apparently) done," what the Boy Scouts wanted, Easley said. "They've done them a favor in

□ See Boy Scouts ... Page 7

ANNIE ARMSTRONG OFFERING

Cancer survivor impacts lives in South Bronx

By Sara Shelton

New York—Raised in the South Bronx neighborhood of Mott Haven, Shamar Smith is no stranger to the lifestyle and perils that mark the lives of many in the neighborhood; his own brother is already serving out a sentence on Rikers Island, New York's primary jail complex. Had Smith not found his safe haven through Graffiti 2 Community Ministries, his path might have looked the same.

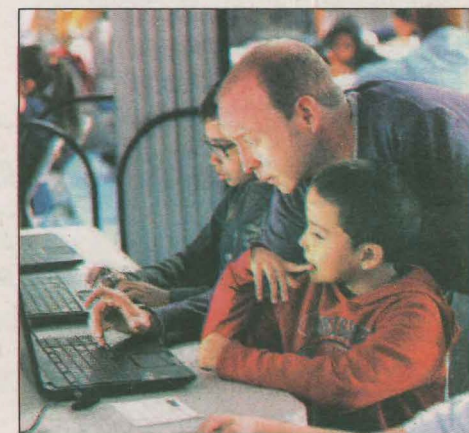
A high school student, Smith has attended the ministries' after-school program for years. "Without Graffiti 2, without Andrew," he said, "...I don't know where I might have ended up."

Many of the children and families Andrew Mann, pastor and director of Graffiti 2 Community Ministries, works with every day have similar stories. Since Mann opened the church and community center doors in 2005, he has seen tremendous growth and influence in Mott Haven.

When Mann planted the church he was the sole staff member. Now it has grown into a beloved part of the community, and includes six full-time staff members (seven counting Proof, Mann's beloved therapy dog). The staff all relocated to the area from other parts of the U.S. after serving short-term alongside Mann.

Together they host daily after-school

□ See Mann ... Page 6



Tools, like computers for after-school mentoring, help North American Mission Board missionary Andrew Mann be more effective in reaching students with the gospel. Mann serves as the director of Graffiti 2 in the Bronx. (Susan Whitley/NAMB)



Disney joins list of companies cutting funding to the Boy Scouts over lack of gay leadership. (BP)

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Building a passion for Christ through love, service to others

By John Shindlebower

Louisville—More than 50 young people and their adult volunteers gathered in downtown Louisville on the last weekend of February. They came to serve. They came to pray. Most of all, they came to Love Louisville with the love of Jesus.

Love Louisville is now in its third year of connecting various churches and ministries with the needs of the state's largest city. Stephanie Corus, youth minister at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Louisville is an organizer of the program, and was on the ground with the group from Friday evening until Sunday afternoon when they dispersed.

"Our purpose for gathering is to build passion for Jesus and passion for our city," explained Corus.

This is done by encouraging young people to leave their comfort zones and interact with real people the way Jesus did. The program spurred the group "to serve the homeless, to pray for people on the spot, to scrub and clean like they never do at home and to cry out with one voice for our city," she said. It was a weekend designed to teach young people to "love deeply, to pursue unity and to tear down cultural and denominational walls."

Love Louisville began with a time of intense worship and prayer on Friday evening followed by a visit to the Big Four bridge, a pedestrian span across the Ohio River that's become a popular attraction in the city.

"We went out over the water in small groups to pray healing, blessing, unity and love over our city," Corus said.

On Saturday morning, it was an early wakeup and the young people split up to work at three different shelters to provide a hot breakfast to the city's homeless.

Danika Davis, who along with her



Sherri Selby chats with a man at Wayside Christian Mission during Love Louisville. Selby, of Hunsinger Lane Baptist Church in Louisville, was among 50 volunteer adults and teens sharing the love of Christ through acts of service. (John Shindlebower/WR)

husband Chris serve as youth leaders at Awakening Church in Louisville, looked cheerful as she stood over a table in the Wayside Christian Mission kitchen cutting potatoes.

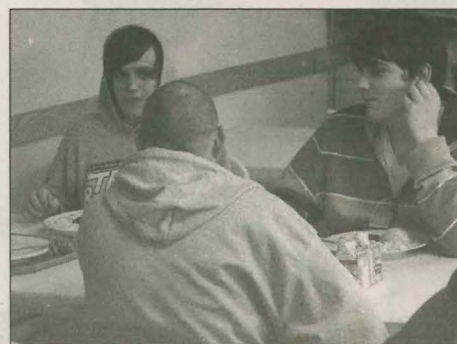
"I love knowing that this is pleasing to God," she said. "I got up early this morning with a smile on my face."

Nearby, teenagers Andre Tilford and Brock Snoddy were busy doing dishes at an hour when most young people were still in bed. Brock said it's a good feeling helping others. Tilford readily admitted that the task was more meaningful because it had purpose.

"It's a lot better doing dishes here than doing dishes at home," he said.

In addition to giving of their time, the young people also gave of themselves. When it was time to eat, they found spots at tables where they could talk to those who came for a meal.

Sherri Selby, an adult volunteer from



Cody Blackerby (left) and Ronnie Keen talked to men at their table over breakfast.

Hunsinger Lane Baptist Church, listened intently to a man sitting across from her as he shared about his life. Even more nourishing than the biscuits and gravy on his plate, was having someone look him in the eye and engage him in conversation.

"It's a blessing to encourage others and just to share in their day," said Selby

after the man had left. Selby's example was followed by a number of young people who struck up conversations with people at their tables.

Corus said this type of interaction is exactly what Love Louisville is trying to provide.

"We want them to get a chance to interact with people they might normally pass by," Corus said young people need to be taught to talk to people, how to find out what their needs are and how to pray for them.

"Some of our young people probably had never prayed out loud before. It's one thing to say 'I'll pray for you,' it's another to say 'Let's pray right now.'"

After breakfast, the young people were hard at work doing service projects at Wayside Mission and two other shelters nearby before meeting together again that afternoon for another prayer walk through the city. Corus said they offered up specific prayers for salvation, healing, ministries, repentant hearts and peace.

On Sunday morning, they returned to the missions to serve the morning meal again, and then attended the morning service at the Church Without Walls, a church for the homeless in Louisville. Corus said she was thrilled to see the closeness of the group as the weekend came to an end on Sunday.

"It was so beautiful to look around Sunday and observe that the walls of division had been removed and everyone was hanging out, laughing and loving without regard to the group they arrived with. We cultivated love and found love all in the same moment. That is how Jesus works and I love it."

Corus is already looking ahead to next year's Love Louisville event. Any area youth ministries who want to participate, should contact her at onfire4x@gmail.com. (WR)

'Celebration Continues' during the 111th Ky WMU Annual Meeting in April

By Joy Bolton

Louisville—The 111th Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union Annual Meeting will be held April 4-5 at Central Baptist Church, Winchester, and continues the celebration of the 125th birthday of the national organization.

Keynote speakers include Wanda Lee, National WMU executive director, Gordon Fort, senior vice president for Prayer Mobilization and Training at the International Mission Board, and Lori Funderburk, Bucket Project Prayer Coordinator with Baptist Global Response.

"Bertha and Berniece," a dynamic duo also known as Jana McKnight and Vickie Lloyd of Arkansas, will bring their brand of humor in each session. The women are popular Christian humorists and have been featured at national and state WMU meetings.

Jason Stewart, music consultant for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, will lead the music. Larry Lee will be the pianist. Interpretation for the deaf will be provided in all general sessions by

interpreters from the Central Baptist Church Deaf Ministry.

Conference activities include the Bucket Project, missions displays, a WMU History Room, missions education helps, a walking tour of Winchester ministries, and various missions conferences.

"We have a great program. ... activities offer something for everyone."

Joy Bolton

A prayerwalking guide will also be provided and participants are encouraged to prayerwalk downtown Winchester.

The work of Kentucky WMU will be featured on Friday afternoon, including

a special emphasis on Heritage Fund mite boxes which were distributed in 2013.

Officers and Executive Board members for 2013-14 will be elected during the business session, including a new president. Linda Cooper, elected in 2010, will conclude her term at the close of this annual meeting.

The Kentucky Missionary of the Year Award will be presented in the Friday evening session followed by a commissioning service for new Kentucky missionaries. Gordon Fort will share a

missions challenge and extend an invitation to missions commitment. WMU birthday cake and a reception for outgoing officers and missionaries will follow the evening session.

On Saturday morning, Kentucky Baptist Nursing Fellowship will gather for a breakfast meeting at First Baptist Church of Winchester at 7:30 a.m. Children are invited to participate in a special children's program at 9 a.m. in the chapel of Central Baptist Church. Children will then join in the Saturday general session which begins at 10 a.m.

The Bucket Project, a ministry of Baptist Global Response, will be a special emphasis throughout annual meeting. Participants are invited to bring completed buckets or items for buckets. Buckets will be packed during the meeting and loaded on a truck to be taken to Houston for shipment. There will be a blessing of the buckets at the conclusion of the Saturday session outside at the filled bucket truck.

The 2014 Annual Meeting also includes a collection project for Family-FEST, a ministry of WMU to take place in the Boones Creek Association this summer. Various items to be used as prizes at block parties are requested.

An offering for Kentucky WMU

ministries to missionaries and Missionary Kids will be received in several sessions. Kentucky WMU provides Christmas gifts to Kentucky born international missionaries as well as a fall and spring gift to Kentucky MKs who are attending college in Kentucky. The Kentucky Missionary Parents Fellowship, another facet of Kentucky WMU ministries to missionaries, will meet on Friday during lunch. All parents of international missionaries are invited to participate.

Pre-registration is required for all meals and preschool child care. Contact Kentucky WMU for registration information or download an informational brochure from the Kentucky WMU website kywmu.org/annualmeeting. Online registration is also available.

Joy Bolton, executive director-treasurer of Kentucky WMU said she is excited about the 2014 Annual Meeting. "Not only do we have a great program, but there will also be the excitement of filling a truck of Hospice Care Buckets. The Friday night session will be a worship service as we focus on 'Accepting the Challenge of the Great Commission.' The conferences, displays, and all the activities offer something for everyone. You will enjoy the fellowship, music, and missions inspiration. Be there!" (WMU)

Nye debate, 'Noah' film fuel ark project, construction begins in May

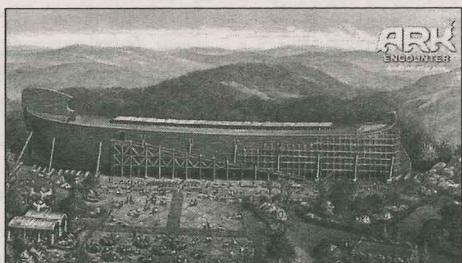
By Diana Chandler

Petersburg—A successful bond offering allowing construction to begin in May on a full-scale replica of Noah's ark can be tied to publicity generated by a creationism debate with Bill Nye "The Science Guy" and by Paramount's film "Noah," Answers in Genesis CEO Ken Ham said.

Ham's defense of creationism against Nye's evolution arguments was viewed by 7 million people in a Feb. 4 live stream, according to the biblical apologetics ministry Answers in Genesis (AiG). Three weeks later, Ham announced enough money had been raised to fund the \$73 million first phase of the Ark Encounter educational park, which includes a 510-foot ark.

He credited God for bringing the project to fruition.

"The date of my debate with Bill Nye had been on our calendar several months before we knew the final delivery date of the Ark bonds," Ham said in a press release. "But in God's timing, not ours—and although the bond registration had already closed before Feb. 4 and no more bonds could be purchased—the high-profile debate prompted some people who had registered for the bonds to make



Architectural rendering of a full-scale ark planned by Answers in Genesis. (Photo provided)

sure they followed through with submitting the necessary, and sometimes complicated, paperwork."

The raising of several million dollars in donations and ark memberships prior to the bond paid for the purchase and clearing of land, architectural plans, exhibit designs and other costs, AiG reported.

The first phase of the Ark Encounter will include installation of the park infrastructure on 800 acres off I-75 in Grant County, Ky., south of Cincinnati, and the construction of the ark. The ark is slated to open in 2016, Ham said.

Ham continues to caution people about watching Paramount's upcoming Noah. He described it as not only biblically inaccurate, as Paramount has admitted, but outright "anti-biblical."

The official website for the film Noah prominently displays the message that the movie takes artistic license, and that the biblical story can be found in the book of Genesis. That's not enough to redeem the film's inaccuracies, Ham said.

While films based on Bible stories have often strayed from Scripture, Paramount's Noah, Ham said, goes beyond artistic enhancement of Scripture.

"The Noah movie is an attack on the Bible," Ham told Baptist Press. "It's not just unbiblical, it's anti-biblical, because the environmentalism is over the top. Noah is more interested in animals than he is in humans (in the movie)."

"The Bible portrays Noah as a man of great reverence ... and he's a preacher of righteousness, whereas the movie has Noah a very angry man who even wants to kill his grandchild because when his daughter-in-law gets pregnant, he wants to stop the propagation of the human race. I mean, it goes on and on; there are a lot of things like that in it."

The Ark Encounter will help people understand the biblical account of Noah's ark, which is crucial to the gospel, Ham said.

"I believe the ark is the greatest reminder of the gospel," he said. "As Noah and his family had to go through a

door to be saved, we need to go through a door to be saved. So it's a reminder of Jesus. He said, 'I am the door.'

"We want to build the ark with that emphasis, to lead people to the door, to go through. Whereas the Noah movie is being produced by Hollywood for entertainment."

The Paramount production will potentially lead astray youth and Christians of all ages, Ham said.

"Unfortunately I think a lot of young people ... they're not going to read their Bibles these days. They're not going to check it out," he said. "And then many Christians don't read their Bibles like they should. So I think even many Christians will probably be led astray by the movie."

Ham encourages moviegoers to instead see a biblically solid portrayal of the global flood in a movie directed by Ray Comfort, "Noah—and the Last Days," available for Internet download ahead of its March 28 release on YouTube and DVD.

Comfort, founder, president and CEO of Living Waters Publications, said he directed and produced his Noah film in protest of Paramount's production. For more information on Comfort's production, go to NoahTheMovie.com. (BP)

Guns

Continued from page 1

evangelism program, however, are the Second Amendment rallies featuring door prizes of shotguns, rifles and handguns donated by local businesses.

"One of the things we've been doing recently is morphing these wild-game dinners into Second Amendment rallies," McAlister said. "You know, we get in there and we burp and scratch and we talk about, you know, the right to bear arms and all that stuff."

"One of the things that we've learned in doing these is that when you do an affinity event, you have to have a hook that draws the unchurched," he explained. "In the event of a Second Amendment rally the number of unchurched men that show up will be in direct proportion to the number of guns you give away."

Twenty-five guns were to be given away at last Thursday's event in Paducah, along with an invitation to come to church the following Sunday dressed in hunting "camo" or other casual attire to hear McAlister preach at all three morning services.

"Our nation's founders provided for our freedom to worship as we choose and our freedom to protect and provide for ourselves and our families," says a flier promoting the event. "The Second Amendment Celebration (formerly Beast Feast) recognizes the rights and responsibilities of those freedoms while celebrating both through appreciation of the outdoors and God's provisions with the purpose to point people to Christ."

"There is a huge interest among unchurched men in the state of Kentucky regarding the Second Amendment and gun rights," McAlister said in a video interview with the Courier-Journal.



Hunting enthusiasts line up around the building in anticipation of the Second Amendment rally at Lone Oak First Baptist Church in Paducah Friday night. Among the speakers was Paul Chitwood (left), executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. (Photos provided by Lone Oak First Baptist Church)

Center in Hot Springs, Ark., McAlister picked up on the regional popularity of hunting and fishing by launching "Adventure Bound Outdoors," in 1996. The award-winning program pioneered the magazine-style format for outdoor programs, before then driven by the personality of a particular sporting celebrity.

In 1999, Baptist Press reported on an "Awakening" revival at McAlister's Arkansas church resulting in 600 professions of faith in Christ and 406 baptisms. Ten years later McAlister retired as a pastor, following negative publicity when he was named as a defendant in a civil lawsuit against the real-estate development corporation he served as vice president.

Starting in 2000, he devoted full time to Promise of Hope Ministries, an evangelistic ministry to "help people have an encounter with Jesus" through affinity ministries, marriage enrichment and

missions.

McAlister became acquainted with Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Director Paul Chitwood as a trustee of the SBC International Mission Board appointed to lead the overseas committee when Chitwood, then a pastor, was chairman.

In 2011, McAlister worked as director for constituency relations with Baptist Global Response, an independent relief and development organization based in Nashville, Tenn., that works closely with the International Mission Board.

After Chitwood's election as KBC executive director in 2011, he turned to McAlister to head one of three areas of focus in a new organizational structure, along with missions mobilization and church consulting and revitalization.

McAlister tested the affinity concept internationally in a mission trip targeting hunting and fishing opportunities in Argentina. "I guess rednecks are my people group, and it doesn't matter if they live in South Georgia or South America," McAlister quipped in Baptist Press.

"Whatever affinity group of interest you can find that unites a group of people, I think it's our responsibility to exploit it and use it for advancing God's Kingdom and impacting lostness."

McAlister appeared surprised when asked about his response to criticism that it's insensitive to give away guns a few miles away from Heath High School in West Paducah, Ky. That's where three teens were killed and five wounded when a high school freshman opened fire on classmates in an informal prayer circle in the school's lobby on Monday, Dec. 1, 1997.

"That's the first time I've heard of that," McAlister said. "I've heard of that event, but I hadn't put the event together with that, but that's certainly the call of the church. If the church decides that they'd rather not do it in that context, then that's fine." (ABP)

More than an offering

According to Kevin Ezell, president of the North American Mission Board, NAMB "exists to work with churches, associations and state conventions in

Together We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

mobilizing Southern Baptists as a missional force to impact North America with the gospel of Jesus Christ through evangelism and church planting."

Provision for NAMB comes primarily through the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions.

NAMB contends that the AAEO is much more than an offering envelope and an annual missions-giving emphasis. When people give to the offering, 100 percent of their gift will be transformed into missionary salaries and ministry supplies. Those missionaries and supplies will help others hear the message of Christ and respond in faith to His offer of salvation. Behind each penny, there is a Southern Baptist who believes in what the missionaries do and are affirming the need to equip them to share the gospel with those who need a Savior.

When Southern Baptists place their money in the offering plate, they are in essence placing it in the hands of a missionary since every dollar given to the AAEO goes to support missionaries on the field. NAMB works in partnership with state conventions to distribute monies given through the AAEO to missionaries and their efforts.

The offering was begun as an emphasis of the Woman's Missionary Union in 1895 and later named for Annie Armstrong (1850-1938). WMU Executive Director Wanda Lee describes Armstrong as "our respected mother whose voice called for the birth of WMU." Armstrong served as WMU executive secretary for 18 years. Lee notes, "As a woman of means, she worked without financial support from WMU, yet she set an example of sacrificial giving and commitment that continues as a part of the fabric of WMU today. From teaching children to caring for the immigrants in Baltimore, to sending aid to the Native Americans of Oklahoma, she modeled during those formative years how Jesus calls us to share His story with all people while meeting their physical needs."

Since the offering's inception, more than \$1 billion has been received by NAMB to use in reaching people in North America for Christ. The 2014 national goal for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering is \$70 million.

As for results, NAMB missionaries and resources helped provide for nearly 1,000 new church plants last year. They were also instrumental in revitalizing many local churches, coordinating disaster relief efforts, providing chaplains for our armed services, and leading evangelization efforts in what NAMB terms "Send Cities," that is, cities with profound loss.

NAMB is helping churches push back the growing spiritual darkness in North America. Will you help NAMB by giving through the AAEO?

Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Finding spiritual lessons in a sinkhole

On Feb. 12, Corvette enthusiasts awoke to news that would make even a grown man cry: Eight iconic cars had been swallowed by a sinkhole in Bowling Green. This past week, an audible gasp and cheers rose as five of the precious 'vettes were carefully pulled out by a crane.

Tornadoes, earthquakes, ice storms and floods, one grows to expect living in Kentucky. But sinkholes? Yet, those in cavern areas tell us that sinkholes also are potentially hazardous in the Bluegrass. Who knew?

Though I've often passed by the National Corvette Museum off of I-65—especially since my daughter started attending college in Nashville—I have yet to visit the Sky Dome, which one car enthusiast has dubbed "The Church of the Corvette." Still, having grown up in a day when Corvettes were revered, I could understand when motor-heads everywhere let out a collective Tim "The Tool Man" Taylor-type grunt when the first Corvette resurfaced on Monday. And, I could share their concern for the three other cars that remained buried in the red clay dirt and debris on Friday.

Newscasts showed workers being lowered in a cage and painstakingly hooking straps around the cars before they were slowly hoisted from the 40-foot wide by 60-foot deep pit. The first Corvette recovered was near the top and sustained only minor damage to door panels and a broken widow. Other cars have been less fortunate, however, with smashed windshields and significant scratches, dents and tears. They will be sent to a GM facility in Michigan for restoration.

In one news report, the museum's marketing and communications manager assured Corvette lovers, "They're doing extra measures to make sure once they get in there to start poking around in the dirt, we're not going to have more dirt fall away from under the building. They're just hoping the vacuum process works, because at this point a lot of dirt is like red clay mud ... they're really careful to take their time and do it safely."

Beyond the readily apparent lesson from Matthew's Gospel concerning storing up treasures in heaven, rather than on earth where moth and rust destroy and thieves steal (or sinkholes swallow), a "deeper" spiritual truth may be extracted from the pit. Watching the great care taken to safely remove and restore these precious cars brought to mind a turn-of-the-20th century hymn, "He lifted me." Its first verse begins, "In loving-kindness Jesus came my soul

in mercy to reclaim, And from the depths of sin and shame through grace He lifted me." Subsequent verses tell of God's love, forgiveness and restoration, while the chorus intones, "From sinking sand He lifted me, With tender hand He lifted me; From shades of night to plains of light, O praise His name, He lifted me."

So, I contacted Esther Crookshank, the Ollie Hale Chiles

Professor of Church Music at Southern Seminary, where she has taught since 1994, to find out more about this beloved hymn and its author, Charles Gabriel. I was surprised to learn that Gabriel had penned at least 870 hymns and was the most popular American gospel hymn writer during the 1920s.

Charles Gabriel grew up on an Iowa farm and learned to love music from his

father, a farmer and singing master, who would think of songs while working the fields, Crookshank said. Leaving home at age 16 after his father died, he would spend the next 15 years as an itinerant singing teacher, publishing songs and quickly growing famous as a revival musician and songwriter. His first marriage ended in divorce, and Gabriel later settled in Chicago, before ultimately becoming a prominent hymn writer for Billy Sunday's revivals, she said.

Gabriel wrote many tunes for other lyricists, including Johnson Oatman Jr.'s "Higher Ground," with the rousing refrain: "Lord lift me up, and let me stand ... A higher ground than I have found, Lord, plant my feet on higher ground." Among his other collaborations were some of the best-known songs of the era, including two which left their stamp on the entire century and became icons in American culture, Crookshank noted. "His Eye Is on the Sparrow" became the signature song of singer-actress Ethel Waters, and the immortal "Will the Circle Be Unbroken" was later adapted by countless artists, but most notably June Carter Cash and her husband, Johnny Cash, she added. "Like Cash's life, Gabriel's certainly had its sinkholes, but it ended firm on higher ground," Crookshank observed.

The Psalmist writes, "He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand" (Ps. 40:2). How much more precious and worthy of recovery and restoration than classic cars which fell into a sinkhole are sin-sunk souls to our Lord! In loving-kindness, He came ... and with loving-kindness we are called to help lift others out of life's sinkholes to higher ground.

After Thought

By Todd Deaton



Disturbed by guns

I have read articles in the Western Recorder and in secular newspapers concerning the gun giveaways at the wild game dinners sponsored by the KBC's evangelism team. This practice really disturbs me.

Let me say that I am not against guns, nor hunting, nor the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. However, I am against the Christian body giving away weapons that could be used to harm individuals.

We are citizens of a greater nation than the U.S., that is the Kingdom of God; and all our efforts should be to

telling others about Jesus—not luring them by the possibility of winning a gun.

I understand firearm recipients are checked out before receiving the guns, but there is something evil sounding to all of this. Why should we, as people who preach peace to the heart coming from a relationship with Jesus Christ, promote peace through shotguns?

I believe Paul when he said he "would be all things to all men in order to win some," but this is taking it too far. I have expressed my opposition to the leader of our evangelism department, but to no avail.

Larry Baker
Russellville

Thank you

Bill Smithwick deserves thanks for his love and devotion to the youth at Sunrise. How great Sunrise grew and expanded love for so many young, needy, helpless, mistreated young children. Thank you, Mr. Smithwick. I will not forget your services to our youth today and the youth that are now adults reading about the criticism of their devoted leaders.

I've wondered if an employee, whatever "choice in life," might in time become a believer. I don't think we win people by the criticism. What would Jesus have done?

Dorothy Swain
Drakesboro

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Fasting on 'same level' as praying and giving

By Ronnie Floyd

The Bible is filled with references to the prayers and fasting of God's people. In Matthew 6, Jesus placed fasting on the same level as praying and giving. He said, "When you fast! When you pray! When you give!"

I wonder why Christians today and churches in our generation don't place fasting on the same level as praying and giving? Jesus, by His example and His teaching, demonstrated that prayer and fasting are important and integral ingredients in the lives of His followers.

Fasting and love

One purpose of prayer and fasting is to bring our hearts to a place of being filled with a sacrificial love that results in godly attitudes in our lives. True fasting will draw us closer to God and His purposes.

Fasting and humility

I can't explain why God has chosen prayer and fasting as the gateway to supernatural power. One thing I do know: Scripture, prayer, and fasting are the ways believers humble themselves in the sight of the Lord. When we humble ourselves, He promises to exalt and lift us up at the appropriate time (1 Peter 5:6; James 4:10). God also indicates that He will resist the proud, but give grace to the humble (James 4:6). Again, 2 Chronicles 7:14 indicates the importance of humbling ourselves before God.

Fasting and focus

Fasting brings a sharp focus to the dramatic difference between our physical and spiritual natures. Eating is one of the most fundamental things we do as physical beings. One of the most natural desires is for food. Without proper nourishment we die. By exercising our wills and depriving ourselves of food for spiritual purposes, we acknowledge our spiritual natures and honor

our Creator-Father. When we deny the natural for the purpose of calling upon God to do the supernatural, He will enable and empower us to experience the supernatural.

Fasting and worship

Through fasting, we confirm the words uttered by Jesus in the face of temptation during His forty-day fast: "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). Through prayer and fasting we forsake our own physical needs and the creature comforts of this world and call upon God as the Originator, Giver, Source and Sustainer of all life, especially our own. We exalt Him as our hope and salvation. True spiritual fasting will result in submission and devotion to God.

God blesses when we fast and fasting allows us to:

- Focus on Him and honor Him. Although you will receive spiritual blessings when you fast, these are not the proper motives for fasting.
- Have spiritual purposes. Although you may realize certain physical benefits, these are not the proper motives for spiritual fasting (for example, weight-loss purposes).
- Humble ourselves and submit to the authority of God and His word.
- Acknowledge and repent of sin.
- Deprive our natural desires and lusts to focus on the spiritual.

An observation

Even when we honor God by praying and fasting, this does not mean that our heavenly Father will grant everything on our wish-and-whim list. God will only work and bless in ways that are consistent and in harmony with His will and purpose. (BP)

Ronnie Floyd is pastor of Cross Church in Springdale, Ark. This column is excerpted from his book, "The Power of Prayer and Fasting."

9 reasons why church leaders should read newspapers

By Chuck Lawless

If you're a church leader, whether laity or clergy, I know you're busy. I get tired just thinking about non-stop meetings, prospect visits, member ministry, lesson and sermon preparation, emails and phone calls, community responsibilities, reading, and dozens of other tasks—not to mention personal spiritual disciplines and family priorities.

With this much to do, who has time left to read the newspaper every day? Even when we have access to the news via the Internet, the time required for a full reading is still not insignificant.

Think about, though, these reasons for reading the news:

We need to know the world God loves.

Because He loves the world, we need to know that world. In a recent paper, I read of Ukraine, Russia, Venezuela, Syria, China, Pakistan, Yemen, Afghanistan, Switzerland and Myanmar.

Get a map, and locate these countries. Find out what unreached people groups are there. It's all God's world, and He died for all. To know only our part of the world is too self-centric.

Missionaries live in much of that world.

Missionaries often live in volatile places. They go under God's call, believing and trusting we are praying for them. As you read the news, let that news drive you to prayer on behalf of missionaries in those areas. I assure you they long for it. If you suspect missionaries may not be there, ask God to open a door there.

That world lives among us.

You know this reality: internationals live beside us, work with us, take classes with us, and attend church with us. They most often know the news of their countries of origin. Sometimes they have family in difficult situations. Our ignorance of those realities simply

because we do not follow the news is poor pastoral leadership.

Others are reading the news every day.

They may, in fact, be leaders in your church or city. Perhaps their job requires their reading the news, or maybe they just want to be informed. They can speak intelligently in many circles.

When we cannot join them in the conversation because we've ignored the news, we limit our ministry opportunities.

News moves us outside our local Christian bubble.

Read the "local news" section of your paper, and you might learn something you need to know as a Christian leader in your community. For example, I recently read that the local Muslim leadership in my city sponsored an event this weekend to share their faith with residents. I will now seek to learn more about the size of the Muslim community, and I will pray with more focus and fervor—as a result of reading the newspaper.

Even evil people need prayer.

I am hesitant to name names here, as all of us are sinners in need of the gospel. It's easy, though, to read the news and label our enemies as evil. We are quick to condemn and reject those who commit sins that are not ours. Without ever compromising a call to righteous judgment, however, we are still to love our enemies and pray for them (Luke 6:27-28). Reading the news will challenge you to do so.

News provides relevant, current applications.

All who teach God's people are continually challenged to help others see how the gospel applies to life.

Teach your children to give

By David Garrard

I recently had a conversation with a young lady who is in her early 20s. She has graduated from college and is looking for a teaching job. In the meantime, she is living at home and doing odd jobs to generate a little income.

The topic of giving came up. My friend told me that she gave most of the money she earned to her church. "If I want something for myself, I have to save in order to be able to buy it and it ends up meaning more to me."

I don't know too many young people who think this way. Most are caught up in trying to amass stuff and establish themselves—possessions, property and position. I wondered where my young friend had learned to think and act this way, so I asked.

As it turned out, there were three major influences. The first was a sister who spent everything and ended up with some debt. My friend watched and decided she did not want to live like that. The second was Francis Chan's book, "Crazy Love," in which he describes how God provides for those who choose to trust Him with their money and give faithfully despite personal circumstances. The third influence was a friend who joined in a commitment to giving and who agreed to be an accountability partner.

As I listened, I couldn't help but wish that my friend had simply said, "I learned it at church," or "I learned it from my parents."

Here's the bottom line. Churches need to do a better job teaching that trusting God with your life means trusting God with your money. Parents need to come alongside that teaching, model it for their children, and help their kids become givers at an early age.

The Bible is quite clear. It is hard for a person who is focused on money and possessions to put God first. We cannot trust both God and money. God loves a cheerful, faithful giver. Be one! Give before you spend, and teach your children to do the same. If you don't teach them anything else about money you will have still done well.

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

Entire websites are devoted to providing sermon and teaching illustrations, but those illustrations are often dated or overused. The news can provide contemporary illustrations (as in the feature story in my city's paper—a story of a man who has trusted God through a horrendous illness).

Reading will challenge you to keep learning.

Consider into how many areas reading the news will take you. Politics. Geography. Economics. Business. History. Vocabulary. Sports. Weather. Religion. Media. Relationships. Arts. Advice. Vocations. Health. Medicine. Science. Language. And the list could go on.

God has given us a brain to use as we do ministry, and reading the news will stretch that brain.

We are reminded of the urgency of the gospel.

The news is about life, from the weekly birth announcements to the daily death notices. It's about people—people we minister to, people we are trying to reach, people who have never heard of Jesus. It's about the effects of human sin, including pride

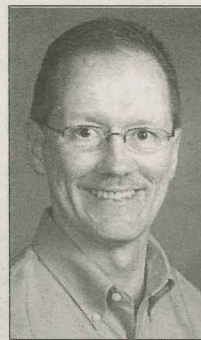
in our accomplishments and depth in our wickedness. It's about a world that needs the message of Christ.

Read your Bible first every day—but then read the news through gospel, Great Commission lenses. You will look at the world differently.

Chuck Lawless currently serves as professor of evangelism and missions and dean of graduate studies at Southeastern Seminary. This article first appeared on thomrainer.com.

FIRST PERSON

FIRST PERSON



Chuck Lawless

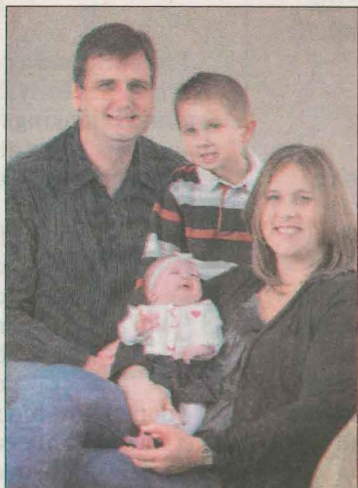
"Read your Bible first every day—then read the news through gospel, Great Commission lenses. You will look at the world differently."

ANNIE ARMSTRONG WEEK OF PRAYER MISSIONARIES

**Lucas Aube**

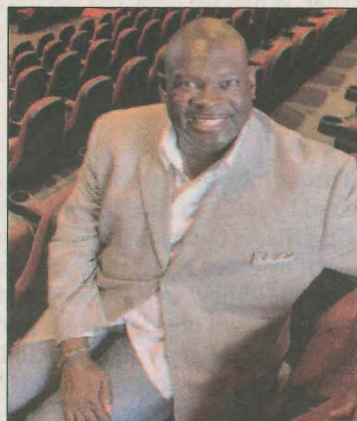
Sherbrook, Quebec Canada

Lucas is a church planter and pastor of Encounter church outside Montréal, Canada. His church focuses on reaching students Bishops University and Champlain College.

**Scott and Karen Blanchard**

Clinton Township, Michigan

Scott is a church planter and pastor of Lakepointe Church, near Detroit.

**Patrick and Archalena Coats**

Miami, Florida

Patrick is church planter and pastor of Kingdom Covenant Baptist Church and works with the Florida Baptist Convention's Urban Impact Ministries Team.

**Jose and Mayra Nater**

Baltimore, Maryland

Jose is a church planter and pastor of Primera Iglesia Bautista Cambridge.

**Ara and Anet Torosian**

Burbank, California

Ara is a church planter and pastor of Armenian Fellowship of Burbank reaching Armenian and Farsi-speaking people.

Mann

Continued from page 1

programs and tutoring for more than 60 children and teenagers, a weekly fellowship meal and Bible study every Thursday, monthly life skill classes, mentoring programs for teenagers, special outreach events and camps and weekly Sunday services. All of it is designed to reach the families of Mott Haven for Christ.

"We're a family program," Mann explains. "We work hard to empower the families we serve as a whole. That's really God's mission for our ministry."

Mann's sense of God's mission is what has kept him living in Mott Haven for nearly a decade. The area is home to some 90,000 people—30,000 of whom are under the age of 18 and subject to a number of risk factors for future struggles including poor education, gang violence and instability in the home. Despite these hurdles, Mann says there is a real strength to the neighborhood.

"There is a strong sense of the value of neighborhood here and a deep rooted community. We may face difficult circumstances in Mott Haven, but God is always working."

Mann is one of six missionaries featured this year by the North American Mission Board (NAMB) as part of its 2014 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering promotion. New York City, where Mann serves, is one of 32 Send North America cities NAMB is bringing special emphasis and resources to in its effort to help Southern Baptists start 15,000 new churches in 10 years. Half of NAMB's financial support comes from the Annie offering.

North American Mission Board missionary Andrew Mann (with iPad) leads a Bible study at Graffiti 2 in the Bronx with young men in the student group being mentored through the church's learning center. Mann not only serves as pastor and center director, but is also actively involved in mentoring and discipling members. (Susan Whitley/NAMB)



Andrew Mann stands in front of some of the "trademark" graffiti from which Graffiti 2 derives its name. Mann, a North American Mission Board missionary, is one of six Week of Prayer missionaries whose ministries are being featured during the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering promotion. (Susan Whitley/NAMB)

Mann moved to Mott Haven from suburban Missouri after serving alongside missionary Taylor Field and his team at Graffiti in Manhattan. He connected with the church while attending New York University to pursue a degree in music. He quickly jumped in, joining the

music team his second Sunday in attendance. However, Mann soon made the decision to transfer to Wheaton College in Illinois. That decision took him out of the city and away from the ministry of Graffiti. Even still, Mann says God was preparing his heart for his return to the city one day.

"Every step was preparing me for my eventual move to Mott Haven," Mann says. "When I transferred to Wheaton I started serving in Humboldt Park, a tough part of the Chicago area. God was slowly growing in me a heart for neighborhoods like this—neighborhoods like Mott Haven."

Mann continued to spend time alongside Field and his team at Graffiti, serving two summers with them before Field asked the recently graduated Mann to consider leading the launch of a second campus for Graffiti in the Bronx.

"I spent some time prayerwalking through Mott Haven after Taylor asked

me about launching Graffiti 2. Walking those streets, I really felt a sense of calling to the people there. In that moment I believe God gave me a promise—if I would be obedient to His call to Mott Haven, He would take care of my needs."

And since the launch of Graffiti 2, God has been faithful to that promise, Mann says. The workload for him and his team is heavy, each one taking on a number of responsibilities to keep the church growing and thriving. Mann does everything from leading worship band practice and Bible studies to preaching Sunday services and mentoring and tutoring students after school each day.

"We all really have a sense of calling to this neighborhood and operating out of that calling has really improved our ministry," Mann explains. "It helps the people in the community really trust us because they know we're here for the long haul and that trust has enabled us to minister to them in totally different ways."

The relationships Mann and his team have built in the community have helped the ministry at Graffiti 2 to flourish. Their dedication to the community didn't miss a beat last year when Mann was diagnosed with cancer. The ministry soldiered on as Mann endured two major surgeries and months of chemotherapy, taking him in and out of work repeatedly over the course of the year. Now cancer free and back to work full time, Mann says the experience reminded him of God's faithfulness to not just him but to the people of Mott Haven as well.

"I'm still trying to process all that God showed me during that year, but I know one thing: God is faithful. He called me to Mott Haven, but with or without me, God will continue working to see this community changed in His name because He loves these people even more than I do."

The support of Southern Baptists and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering has also given Mann a great sense of encouragement throughout his ministry but in particular through the last year.

"I appreciate so much the prayers of our network of churches in the Southern Baptist Convention," Mann says. "The generosity and support they've shown our ministry has empowered us to press on in the work God has called us to do in Mott Haven." (NAMB)



Ukraine-Russia tensions expand church ministry

By Erich Bridges

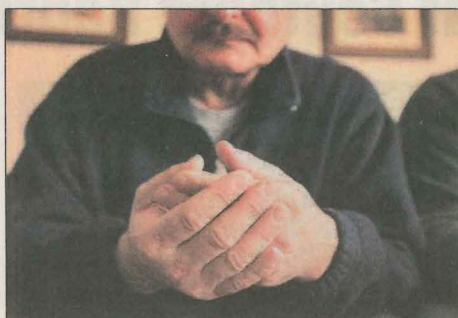
Kiev, Ukraine—As Russian forces occupied Ukraine's Crimean peninsula in late February, Ukrainian Baptists aren't slowing down their ministry to a nation battered by months of internal crisis. In fact, they're picking up the pace.

"The response from the churches has been fantastic," said IMB worker Shannon Ford, who lives in Ukraine's capital city of Kiev, during a March 4 interview. "(D)espite all the uneasiness and the frightening pictures ... our personnel and our national brothers and sisters are still doing their job, still having outreach groups, still holding services, still doing the things they do."

Ford doesn't downplay the dangers facing Ukraine—or the agony the nation has experienced in recent months as protesters battled police and blood flowed. He has served there for more than 15 years and feels the pain of Ukrainians more than most foreigners.

"The last couple of weeks in Kiev have been really tense," he said, reflecting on the violent clashes in Kiev's Independence Square. "The loss of life was just very hard to accept. The days after that turned into something more like an extended funeral period. I don't know that I've seen a more grieving or sorrowful time in Ukraine."

But Christians came alongside Ukrainians, setting up tents in Independence



A Crimean Tatar pauses to pray. The man, who wished to remain unidentified, is a church planter to his own people in Crimea. The Crimean Tatars have inhabited the Crimean peninsula, now a part of Ukraine, for more than seven centuries. (Chris Carter/IMB)

Square to pray for people, provide medical aid, serve food and tea, distribute Bibles and share the gospel. In Ford's view, it's an outward sign of the maturing of evangelical work since Ukraine gained independence from the dissolving Soviet Union.

Oleksandr Turchynov, who was voted interim national president by the Ukrainian Parliament until new elections take place in May. He took office after President Viktor Yanukovich was removed Feb. 23 and later fled to Russia (Russia's incursion into Crimea followed within a week).

Turchynov "has been a lay preacher in one of our Baptist churches, and he has brought a demeanor of trust and respect

to the acting government," Ford said.

"It's really been a great time for the churches to be doing what we ought to be doing. They've not hidden. They've activated and gotten more visible."

Unless circumstances force a change in plans, Baptists and mission workers anticipate a full schedule of summer camps, evangelistic outreach events and other ministries this year. In fact, Ford hopes Southern Baptist volunteers come to work alongside them.

"It may sound like a fool's errand, but we still think you can come and serve, because we're still here and we'd like you to come and join us," he said. He also challenged Southern Baptists to use the current situation as a way to reach out to ethnic Ukrainians and Russians in American communities.

Ford said he and other IMB workers have been overwhelmed and greatly encouraged by the many emails and social media posts from Southern Baptists expressing concern and promising prayer.

"It's kind of strange. We're in a sense of alert, but we're also very much at ease," he said. "Our No. 1 prayer is not necessarily for our safety, even though we of course want that for ourselves and for our people. Our No. 1 prayer is that we make use of this opportunity to be purveyors of the gospel light. There's just a lot of opportunity, and I'd hate for us to miss it." (BP)

Boy Scouts

Continued from page 1

putting more pressure out there for the Scouts to come back later on and say, 'Here's the deal. Walt Disney's cut us.... We have no choice than to let the (gay) men be part of this.'

BSA voted last May to allow openly gay youths to become Scouts beginning this year, but retained a Scout prohibition on gay leaders that survived a 2000 Supreme Court challenge. BSA's national membership has dropped 6 percent in the past year, although the group doesn't attribute the numbers to the policy change.

"I think it's part of (the Boy Scouts) strategy," Easley said. "... Why open the door to it? They knew that in May it was such a hot issue that they could not go

all the way and let (gay) men be leaders in that organization. But they knew it was a matter of time."

Disney does not give direct donations to the Scouts, but Disney's VolunTEARS program allows its employees to do volunteer work in exchange for cash donations to the charities of their choice. Employees taking part in the VolunTEARS program will no longer be able to submit the funds to BSA, Disney said Feb. 28. The change goes into effect in January 2015.

Disney did not release any data to show how much money has gone to the Scouts through the VolunTEARS program. But Easley, whose church stopped hosting Scout troop meetings because of the inclusion of gay Scouts, said the issue is about promoting the inclusion of gay Scout leaders, not about money.

"I don't really think it's a money issue.

I think it's the principle of it," Easley said. "I think that you're going to continue seeing an effort from individuals and corporations to pressure them into taking the final step that (BSA) started in May of allowing homosexuals to be adult leaders in their organization."

"You're going to have legislation, you're going to have corporations, you're going to have influential individuals continuing to put pressure on them," Easley said. "And my guess is as I said last year, it's going to happen. I think they want it to happen, the Scouts."

Companies that have cut funding to BSA because it excludes gay leaders are Lockheed Martin, Caterpillar, Major League Soccer, Merck, Intel and UPS, said Scouts for Equality, a national group fighting for the inclusion of gay Scout leaders. Scouts for Equality applauded Disney.

"We're never happy to see Scouting suffer as a result of the BSA's anti-gay policy, but Disney made the right decision to withhold support until Scouting is fully inclusive," said Eagle Scout and Scouts for Equality co-founder Zach Wahls, the son of two lesbian parents. "Scouts for Equality will continue to advocate for a fully inclusive membership policy, to help build a stronger Scouting community that is eligible for the support of Corporate America."

Other moves in the fight to open Scouting to gay leaders include the anticipated litigious fight on behalf of Pascal Tessier, a gay 17-year-old Maryland boy who in February was awarded Eagle Scout status, the highest ranking. At 18, he will be ineligible for Scout participation.

"On my 18th birthday, I'm planning on applying to be an adult leader for the Boy Scouts so that we push the issue," Tessier has said. (BP)

NEWS BRIEFS

Pressley gets nod for first VP

Clint Pressley, senior pastor of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C., will be nominated for first vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention when Baptists meet June 10-11 for their annual meeting in Baltimore, Md. Pastor Ted Traylor announced through the Biblical Recorder he will nominate Pressley.

Pressley serves as vice-president of the SBC Pastor's Conference and is the vice-chairman of the trustees for Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He is a graduate of Wofford College and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and is currently completing the doctor of ministry program at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Hickory Grove is one of the largest churches in North Carolina with more than 17,000 members. They have five worship services that meet weekly on two campuses and two Hispanic services.

Dockery to lead Ill. seminary

Union University President David Dockery will assume the leadership of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Ill., after the institution's Board of Regents unanimously elected him as president Feb. 28.

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, one of the most highly respected evangelical institutions in the country, is one of four schools comprising Trinity International University. The university also consists of Trinity College, a small, liberal-arts based institution; Trinity Graduate School, with programs in such fields as biomedical ethics, leadership and education; and Trinity Law School. Total enrollment for the university is about 2,800.

In January 2013, Dockery announced his intention to transition out of the presidency of Union, a position he has held for nearly 18 years. During his tenure, the institution saw 16 straight years of increasing enrollment and more than doubled in size, growing from a fall enrollment of 1,972 to 4,288 in 2013. Union trustees on Feb. 10 elected Dub Oliver as Dockery's successor.

GuideStone releases tax guide

The 2014 edition of GuideStone's annual Tax Return Preparation and Federal Reporting Guide is now available. The guide provides both active and retired ministers step-by-step help in understanding the latest tax laws, along with sample tax forms to assist them in preparing their 2013 federal tax returns.

This year's edition contains a special supplement addressing key points of the recent housing allowance ruling. Also, church treasurers and other church leaders can refer to the guide's special section about important federal requirements for churches. Obtain PDF format at GuideStone.org/TaxGuide or by calling 1-888-984-8433.



KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION
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The board of directors is seeking a person to serve as
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Interested persons may obtain a packet of information
relevant to the job and qualifications at:
www.kybaptistfoundation.org/about

Resumes should be mailed to the above address on or before May 1.

Pray without ceasing

Calling all prayer warriors, OBI lists prayer requests

James 5:16 says, "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective," and 1 Thessalonians 5:17 says, "Pray without ceasing."

Twice, I recently noticed a pair of staff members who were praying together in the middle of the day in our parking lot. Oneida needs and covets the prayers of God's people. The Lord has had his hand on our ministry for more than 114 years, and I really believe that is because of the prayers His saints have offered on our behalf.

Please take a few minutes today—and as many other days as the Lord lays on your heart—to pray for us, and if the Lord leads you to do so, please take the following list of prayer needs for our school to your church friends:

1. Board of Trustees.
2. Administration.
3. Faculty and staff.
4. Future faculty and staff.

This is Oneida



Larry Gritton

5. Current students.
6. Former students who have recently left us.
7. Future students.
8. The families of our students.
9. Volunteers.
10. Our partner churches and pastors.
11. The local Oneida community.
12. Donors and friends.
13. Alumni.
14. Our daily chapel and Sunday service speakers.
15. Guests on our campus.
16. Vendors and businesses that provide services for Oneida.
17. Salvation for our lost students.
18. Discipleship for our students who know the Lord.
19. Our choir, which travels the state most Sundays.
20. That the Lord will keep His hand upon this place.

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

Getting an early start

Student takes advantage of dual enrollment

Leah Kahkola is the daughter of our director of computer services, Shane Kahkola. She is a high school senior, but already well on her way to getting a start on the college requirements she will need in the years ahead.

"I am currently taking advantage of a new program that Clear Creek Baptist Bible College has just recently implemented called the dual enrollment program," said Leah Kahkola.

"You can actually start taking college classes through Clear Creek when you are a junior or senior in high school. The classes count for credit in my high school and I also get college credit at the same time. With this new program I am going to be able to take a lot of my general education classes while I am still in high school, so when I get to college I will have a large part of my studies in that area completed."

"I am so thankful to be back on the campus of Clear Creek," Leah said.

"When my dad was called into the ministry and came to Clear Creek as a student, it meant a lot of changes for us.

After we moved here from Indiana and got settled, I really enjoyed it. It was a great place to grow up," she said. "When my dad graduated and we moved back to Indiana I really missed living here."

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

"When he was asked to come back to serve on the staff, it was exciting for us to get to move back to campus," Kahkola said. "When I found out that I would be able to participate in this new dual enrollment program, I was excited to get started on my college experience."

"I have been able to participate in numerous mission trip experiences while our family has lived at Clear Creek," Kah-

kola said. "I have traveled on mission trips with a local choir that I sing with. We tour locally and go on a mission trip to Florida each year, ministering to people. That has been a great experience for me. I have also participated in the Clear Creek mission trip to New York City. The mission trips have really helped me to grow in my faith."

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.

Criswell's preaching honored at Southern Baptist seminaries



W.A. Criswell, delivering a presidential address at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1970, was known for preaching the Bible verse-by-verse. Academic chairs are being established in his name at four SBC seminaries. (Photo courtesy of Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives)

By Erin Roach

Dallas—W.A. Criswell's noted expository preaching is being honored in academic chairs at four Southern Baptist seminaries to model for new generations the verse-by-verse teaching that led thousands to Christ during his lifetime.

The W.A. Criswell chair for expository preaching was installed at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in January and at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary last fall. Two more chairs, at Southwestern and New Orleans seminaries, have not been formally announced.

At Southeastern, Jim Shaddix, professor of preaching and a teaching pastor at The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Ala., was installed in the new chair.

Jack Pogue, a close friend of Criswell's and chairman of the W.A. Criswell Foundation, is establishing the academic chairs. The foundation's aim, Pogue said, is to be involved in winning people to Christ through preparing pastors, missionaries, church workers and laypeople to lead people to Jesus.

Pogue said "expository" is the key component of the academic chairs in

Criswell's honor. Criswell, who helped return the Southern Baptist Convention to its conservative roots, died in 2002.

"He preached through the entire Bible one time. It took him 17 years and eight months. He started at the first verse of the Book of Genesis, and he preached verse by verse by verse-by-verse all the way through the Bible," Pogue said.

"Dr. Criswell said, 'Where I would leave off Sunday morning, I would start at the next verse on Sunday night. Where I would leave off Sunday night, I would start at the next verse the next Sunday morning. I never have to worry about what I'm going to preach the next Sunday. It will be just the next verse.'

"After he got through preaching through the Bible, he'd start at different books in the Bible, and he would preach verse-by-verse all the way through that book," Pogue said. "I think it's a great lesson for young preachers."

The announcement of the chairs at Southeastern and Southern was accompanied by a video of Criswell's sermon "Whether We Live or Die," delivered in 1985 at the Pastors' Conference preceding the SBC annual meeting in Dallas during the Conservative Resurgence.

Shaddix, who now occupies the sixth SEBTS chair installed in the past 10 years, said, "I was there in 1985 as a seminary student when Dr. Criswell gave this address. It opened my eyes to become aware of what was going on and the need to stand on God's word and preach it faithfully with integrity."

Being named to the chair, Shaddix said, "is the greatest honor, encouragement and affirmation in my life in ministry."

Pogue established the first academic post in Criswell's honor nearly two decades ago at the Criswell College he founded in Dallas, naming it the W.A. Criswell Chair of Expository Preaching. (BP)

Prayer Conference with Bill Mackey March 22-23, Louisville

Hunsinger Lane Baptist Church invites everyone to attend this free conference led by Dr. Mackey, former executive director, Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Saturday: 4 p.m.

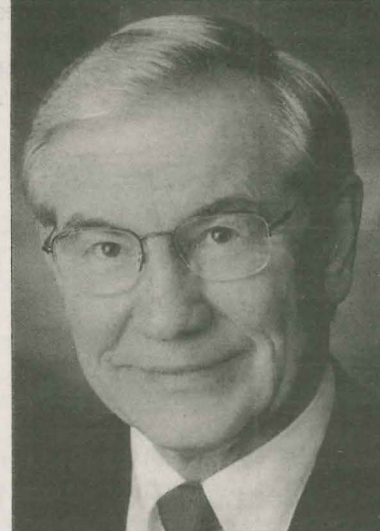
- What Is Prayer?
- Why Should Christians Pray?

Sunday morning: 9 & 10:44 a.m.

- The Necessity of Prayer (both services)

Sunday evening: 5 p.m.

- Prayer & Fasting
- Corporate Prayer Service



Care available at no charge for children through 5th grade. Registration required by March 15. Call the church at (502) 491-4356.

Hunsinger Lane Baptist Church, Charlie Davis, pastor
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Campbellsville's swim teams win 'Champions of Character' awards

By Chris Megginson

Oklahoma City, Okla.—For the last five years, Campbellsville University has used the slogan "More Than a Game"—a fact recognized by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics when it awarded the women's and men's swim programs March 5 with the Buffalo Funds NAIA Champions of Character Team Award.

CU sophomore Shelby Mattingly also was recognized as CU's individual Champion of Character.

"This is a great honor for our swim teams, the athletics department and the entire campus community," said Rusty Hollingsworth, CU athletic director.

The team award is presented annually to one university athletic program from each of the NAIA's 23 championship sports.

Casey Smith, coach of both the men's and women's swim programs, said she was thrilled her teams—comprised

mainly of freshmen and sophomores—received the awards.

"They have such a strong desire to reach out not only to each other, but also to other student-athletes on Campbellsville University's campus," Smith said. "My athletes have been a wonderful model of what it means to truly be a Champion of Character. Being with them as they show such amazing character reminds me why I love to coach."

During the first week of the 2013-14 season, CU's athletic department began an emphasis in character building. For the last few seasons, Smith has rewarded Champions of Character swim caps to swimmers displaying positive attitudes. This, along with teachings throughout practice and meetings, helped to encourage student-led movements.

In September, both swim teams participated in the Green River Lake Cleanup, and later helped host the inaugural CU Tigers Fall Festival for the local community.

During each home meet this season, the teams placed a "Change for Change" jar at the front door to help raise money for Beading to Beat Autism, a non-profit seeking to raise funds for autism research.

In November, athlete Shelby Mattingly rallied her team to hold a 12-hour dance marathon called Dance Maroon to raise awareness for the St. Baldrick's organization, which gathers funds and research for pediatric cancer. More than 100 students and community members participated to launch the men's and women's teams' combined goal of raising \$5,000 for St. Baldrick's. Members of both teams will also participate in the annual Color to Conquer 5K on March 15 and the St. Baldrick's Shave-a-thon on campus March 22.

While the list of acts of kindness could go on-and-on, as well as stories of team and personal Bible studies within the team, one thing that stands out about CU's program is the character building and life changes which occur during the season.

Sophomore Bailey Foxworth said she has learned to enjoy her sport again at Campbellsville. Instead of focusing solely on her result, she has learned to cheer for her teammates when out of the water.

"If swimming isn't a team-oriented sport, then I don't know what is," Foxworth said. "I have been swimming competitively since I was 6 years old, and for 13 years I've dedicated my life to this sport, but until I started swimming for Campbellsville University, I held fast to my belief in swimming as individual sport."

Foxworth said she considered transferring two years ago to get away from swimming, but that was before she accepted Christ at a campus revival.

"I finally let Jesus into my heart," Foxworth said. "I stopped worrying about

being the best swimmer on the team. It was through my teammates, my wonderful coach, and my growing relationship with Christ that I learned sportsmanship, and what it truly means to be a part of a team."

Freshman Devon Cross said the men's team has had to learn skills in communication, commitment and accountability, even when it wasn't fun.

"We've learned the hard way this season, but yet through any trial it builds more and more character," Cross said. "Our coach taught us that being on a team, we are one body. It has several different parts that make the whole system operate, some seem small and insignificant, but when you move just one of those parts it cannot work like it used to."

Smith's message of her teams being one body comes from 1 Corinthians 12, a passage she has taught throughout the year and placed on her team's shirts during preseason—a lesson which the teams are now living out and sharing with others.

"I am blessed by my teams and so proud of the way they are learning to serve together," Smith said. "Living and loving like Christ is not an easy lifestyle choice, especially in collegiate athletics, but it is a choice that is much more possible when you have support. My athletes have been working on supporting one another to live, practice and compete in a way that is not the norm, a way that takes much more effort."

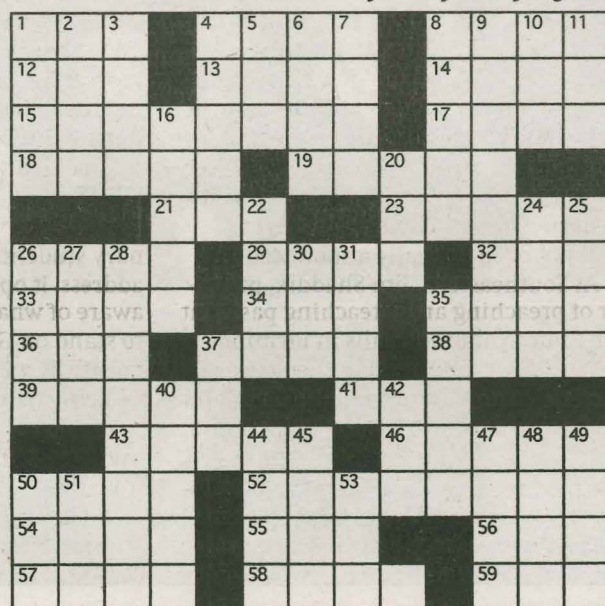
Men's and women's swim teams are the third and fourth Campbellsville sports teams to receive the NAIA Champions of Character Team Award since 2010. Women's basketball received the award in March 2010 and football received it in December 2010. (CU)

Bible Crosswords

Across

- 1 Cartographer's creation
- 4 Had a stroke
- 8 Captain Hook's henchman
- 12 Mother of Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:2)
- 13 "The king arose, and _____ his garments" (2 Samuel 13:31)
- 14 "I _____ you!"
- 15 "My money is _____; and lo, it is even in my sack" (Genesis 42:28)
- 17 Deserve
- 18 Mar, in a way
- 19 "Beware of the scribes, which love ... the chief _____ in the synagogues" (Mark 12:38,39)
- 21 English breakfast, for one
- 23 Keeps away from
- 26 Cathedral feature
- 29 "The vine languisheth, all the merry hearted do _____" (Isaiah 24:7)
- 32 Norma _____ (Sally Field role)
- 33 "He that hath clean hands and a _____ heart" (Psalm 24:4)
- 34 Worldwide workers group (abbr.)
- 35 Fantasy (Fr.)
- 36 Time for les grandes vacances
- 37 College building
- 38 "Thou hast been in _____ the garden of God" (Ezekiel 28:13)
- 39 "Evening _____" (former TV show)
- 41 Part of a circle (abbr.)
- 43 Tithe fraction
- 46 Park _____ (neighborhood in Brooklyn, NY)
- 50 _____ Canal

By Evelyn Boyington



#191

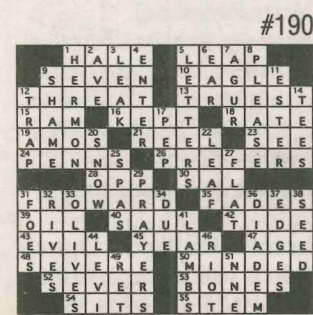
- 52 "_____ his marvellous works ... his wonders" (1 Chronicles 16:12)

- 54 Circuit
- 55 Mouths
- 56 On; upon (prefix)
- 57 _____ room
- 58 Blemish
- 59 Actress Sandra

Down

- 1 _____ Hill, where Paul spoke in Athens
- 2 Assist
- 3 City on the Arno River
- 4 "The _____ that smote the image became a great mountain" (Daniel 2:35)
- 5 "The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but _____ was in his heart" (Psalm 55:21)
- 6 Mythological god of war
- 7 Babylonian conqueror
- 8 "Smite ... and destroy all the children of _____" (Numbers 24:17)
- 9 "The children of Israel ... cannot be _____ nor numbered" (Hosea 1:10)
- 10 "Men have not heard, nor perceived by the _____" (Isaiah 64:4)
- 11 Sea bird
- 16 "Ye pay _____ of mint and anise" (Matthew 23:23)

- 20 Furniture wood
- 22 "They ... were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in _____" (Acts 16:6)
- 24 Church part
- 25 Observed
- 26 Mirrors
- 27 Orpah's sister-in-law
- 28 "From the beginning of the _____ God made them male and female" (Mark 10:6)
- 30 _____ at ease
- 31 "They should not worship devils and idols of _____" (Revelation 9:20)
- 35 King's domain
- 37 Little red one
- 40 "Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit ... in the _____" (Psalm 88:6)
- 42 To cause to be (suffix, Brit.)
- 44 "Doth he thank that servant ... ? I _____ not" (Luke 17:9)
- 45 Wife of Zeus
- 47 Grandfather of David
- 48 Cartoon character LePew
- 49 Pennsylvania city
- 50 Small-town America street
- 51 _____ v. Wade
- 53 "They _____ my path, they set forward my calamity" (Job 30:13)



#190

Weather and providence

Inability to control weather is a lesson in trusting God

Well, it seems like this is the winter that never ends. I do really like the winter and snow, but like everyone else, I like it on my own terms and usually in my chosen months of November and December.

As you can imagine, we have this thing called camp that is coming and with the extended winter season our tasks have been compressed into an ever shrinking window.

These are the circumstances that can cause us to become very anxious about how everything will get done and how all the details come together. These are the times that test our beliefs—actually they reveal our beliefs. It is one thing to mentally ascribe to certain facts, but another to live them out—kind of like where the rubber meets the road.

I have been reading Proverbs lately and the short pithy statements are very convicting. I have tried to slow down and really think on them as opposed to just reading through them quickly.

In a recent staff meeting we discussed Proverbs 12:1: "Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid."

I am not sure how the warning could be more to the point?

Knowledge and discipline seem to be somewhat equal. If you love one you must love and accept the other.

To the contrary, one who hates reproof is called "stupid." That word is one most of us try not to use. It sounds terrible coming out of our mouths and feels even worse to be called "stupid."

I know that I do not enjoy receiving correction, but I would rather have the discomfort of correction than to be proclaimed as stupid.

While this may sound like a stretch, I view weather as an instrument of discipline from the Lord. The weather is beyond our control and we are to accept it as part of God's plan to purge us of self reliance. In other words, the weather is a created situation that is humanly beyond our ability to overcome and God uses it as a form of discipline to help us realize we cannot do anything on our own. When you think of it, that fact is very freeing to us as we embrace the truth of John 15:5.

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

Crossings Ministries



David Melber



March

- 11 Transitional Interim Pastor Training, Warren Baptist Association, Bowling Green.
- 13 Kentucky Baptist Men's Chorale/Women's Chorale combined concert, Central Baptist Church, Winchester.
- 15 VBS Clinic, First Baptist Church, Richmond.
- 15 Seminary for a Day, First Baptist Church, Mount Washinton.
- 18 Get Acquainted Day, Kentucky Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 22 Seminary for a Day, Corinth Baptist Church, London.
- 22 Seminary for a Day, Immanuel Baptist Church, Glasgow.
- 23 Women's Chorale Concert, Farmdale Baptist Church, Louisville.
- 27 Basic Training for Church Planters, Kentucky Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 29 VBS Clinic, Crestwood Baptist Church, Crestwood.

April

- 1 Power Lunch, Kentucky Baptist Building, Louisville.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Saloma Church will hold Student Ministry Sunday March 16, 11 a.m. **John Chowning** is pastor.

■ **CLAY CITY**—Powell's Valley Church will host Boone's Creek Associational Men's Prayer Breakfast March 15, 9 a.m. **Gary Willoughby** is pastor.

■ **CRESTWOOD**—Crestwood Church will host "Using Social Media More Effectively in Our Churches," with KBC Communication Specialist **Brenda Smith** March 13, 6:15 p.m. **Donnie Patrick** is pastor.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Severns Valley Church will hold a Daddy-Daughter Date Night March 14, 7:30 p.m. **Bill Langley** is pastor.

■ **HOPKINSVILLE**—First Church will host Brumfield Family Tradition in concert March 16,

10:45 a.m. For more information, call (270) 886-1216.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Cloverleaf Church will host Southern Gospel Music Concert Tribute from Nashville, Tenn., March 14, 7 p.m. For more information, call (502) 367-0218. **Geoffrey Lacey** is pastor.

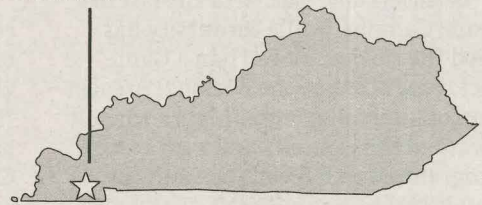
Fern Creek Church will hold a Young at Heart Pot-Luck Luncheon with guest speaker **Norma Routt** presenting "Exercising and Healthy Living for Senior Adults" March 13, 11:30 a.m. **Linda Popham** is pastor.

Melbourne Heights will host Life Line as part of "Healing Hands Health Screenings" March 17. **Adam Schell** is pastor.

Parkland Church will hold Ladies' Spring Tea March 15, 12 p.m. **Tom Curry** is pastor.

Spotlight on ...

DEXTER



Dexter Church will hold a Children's Pine-wood Derby March 15, 9 a.m. **David Little** is pastor.

■ **WINCHESTER**—Central Church will host the Kentucky Baptist Convention Chorale and Orchestra in concert March 13, 7 p.m. For more information, call (859) 744-4328. **Travis Drake** is pastor.

Quality time with Dad

Hope Saindon, 12, spends some quality time with her dad, James Saindon, during the Father-Daughter Ball Feb. 28 at First Baptist Church of Somerset.

About 30 father/daughter couples attended the event, one that Children's Minister Heather Anderson said is sure to be repeated next year. Anderson said she got the idea from a breakout session at the Kentucky Baptist Convention's 2013 Imagine Conference.

"(Heather) transformed our fellowship hall into something fit for little princesses—all pink and sparkly," said Sara Robinson, director of women's ministries at First Church Somerset.

The evening included a catered meal, candy buffet and specially-made bracelets for fathers to give to their daughters. "It was so special for the dads just to have that moment with their daughters," Anderson said. (Photo provided by FBC Somerset)



What's happening?

Send your church news and association events to:

Mountains to the Mississippi
sitha.salyers@westernrecorder.org

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR RENT: Two condos for rent in Destin, Fla. Two bedrooms, two baths, sleeps six, 10 percent discount for first-time guests. (423)309-4422 lbammer@charter.net

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. Resumes 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. Resumes accepted until March 31.

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

SEEKING: Ephesians 4:11-12. Lewis Lane Baptist Church in Owensboro is

accepting resumes for a full-time worship and education pastor. Experience and education preferred. Email resumé and/or video to llbcmusicsearch@gmail.com. Attn: Jeff.

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

SEEKING: Highland Avenue Baptist Tabernacle Church is seeking a part-time youth pastor, 15-20 hours weekly. For more, call (859) 781-4510, or email pastor-habtc@fuse.net.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Woodlawn Baptist Church in Lebanon. Congregation of approximately 150. Experience preferred. Send resumé to Jerry Albertson, 620 George St., Lebanon, KY 40033, or woodlawnbaptist2serve.org.

SEEKING: The Pastor Search Committee of Second Baptist Church, Madisonville, prayerfully seeks a southern Baptist minister for pastoral position. Send resumes to Second Baptist Church, 633 Bishop Street, Madisonville, KY 42431-1379, or contact Clarence Berry, search committee chairman, at (270) 841-8308.

SEEKING: Oakland Baptist Church, in Oakland, is seeking a part-time music minister to direct our praise teams and choir in blended worship. All applicants can learn more at obclive.com, or by contacting us at (270) 563-4011. Send resumes to Oakland Baptist Church, P.O. Box 154, Oakland, KY 42159, Attn: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: Auburn Baptist Church is seeking a pastor or bivocational pastor. Send resumé to Pastor Search Committee in care of tcorum@logantele.com.

SEEKING: Ladies who will be 75 years of age or older in 2014 for a senior ladies travelling softball tournament team. Call (256) 690-6277, or email pjcox6277@gmail.com.

SEEKING: Walnut Street Baptist Church, in the heart of urban Louisville, is seeking a senior pastor to lead our church and the staff to significant ministry. Walnut Street offers every facility to reach our urban community including a television ministry. Written communication should be sent to: WSBC Pastor Search Team, c/o Marilyn James, 8313 Alpena Way, Louisville, KY 40242 or via email: pastorsearch@walnutstreet.org.

SEEKING: The Community Church at Cedar Springs, located in the rural community of Cedar Springs near Browns-ville, is seeking a part-time or bivocational senior pastor. If interested, send

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resumé to Phillip Coleman at phillip.coleman@wku.edu. For more, visit communitychurchlovesyou.com.

SEEKING: Cynthiana Baptist Church is seeking a part-time worship leader (minimum 15 hours per week). Send inquires and/or resumé to hozacanuc@gmail.com, or to CBC, 212 East Pleasant St., Cynthiana, KY 41031. Attn: Personnel.

SEEKING: Bardstown Baptist Church is accepting resumes for a full-time pastor. Send resumé with picture to: Bardstown Baptist Church, 101 West Brashear Ave., Bardstown, KY 40004, or email to Jessieanne Wells, search committee chair, at wellsjh@bardstown.com.

SEEKING: Pleasant Point Baptist Church in Kings Mountain is seeking a part-time youth minister. Call (606) 416-3994. Visit us at pleasantpointbaptist.com.

40 Days for Life impact felt as clinic closes in Texas



Krysten Haga, a student at Texas Tech University, speaks as campaign director at a 40 Days for Life rally in Lubbock, which is no longer home to an abortion clinic. (Photo provided by 40 Days for Life Lubbock)

By Tom Strode

Washington—The most enriching occurrence in Krysten Haga's time as director of a 40 Days for Life campaign came when she learned there was no longer a need for her to fill that role.

Near the conclusion of last fall's campaign in Lubbock, Texas, the city's only abortion clinic—Planned Parenthood—shut down a business that had taken the lives of more than 30,000 unborn babies, according to the 40 Days for Life national staff. The facility had not only been a site of 40 Days prayer vigils, but reportedly could not meet the state's new abortion clinic regulations.

As the local campaign director, Haga "had the honor of sending the email that announced the closing of Planned Parenthood Lubbock for good, which was by far the most rewarding experience I have ever had while being involved with 40 Days for Life," the Texas Tech University

student told Baptist Press.

When Planned Parenthood Lubbock, an affiliate of the country's largest abortion provider, stopped performing the lethal procedures, Haga recalled, "I spent that Friday afternoon emailing everybody that I could think of to share the good news, including the national team" of 40 Days.

As a result, there was no need for a prayer vigil outside an abortion facility in Lubbock when 40 Days launched its next campaign March 5.

During the campaign, tens of thousands of volunteers will gather outside abortion clinics in 251 cities spread across 11 countries, hoping for an outcome similar to the one the 40 Days team in Lubbock witnessed. The campaign, which concludes April 13, will be held not only throughout the United States but in cities in Australia, Canada, Croatia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, England, New Zealand, Russia,

South Africa, Spain and Wales.

The around-the-clock prayer vigils outside abortion facilities that are at the heart of the semi-annual campaigns have provided a significant boost to the pro-life movement since the effort went national in 2007. In the ensuing six years, 40 Days—which also consists of community outreach, prayer and fasting to end abortion—has reported the following.

- More than 8,200 unborn children have been spared from abortion.
- 44 abortion facilities have closed, and 88 clinic workers have left their jobs.
- About 600,000 people representing some 16,500 churches have participated in 522 cities across all 50 states and 20 other countries.

Haga, 24, became one of those participants four years ago when, in spite of her age, "knew it was time to stop stalling and jump head first towards something I knew God was calling me to." She served as the 40 Days director for the final four campaigns outside Lubbock's Planned Parenthood facility.

The "biggest motivation" for her pro-life work is her mother, Haga said.

"She found herself in a crisis pregnancy at the age of 16 and chose life after visiting Planned Parenthood and considering abortion," Haga told BP. "She had me the beginning of her senior year in high school. Every time I find myself out on the sidewalks counseling, I see my mom in those scared and lonely girls. I thank God that someone was there to show her Christ's love and know that I was given the opportunity to do the same."

On its website, the 40 Days national staff encourages participants during each campaign to pray not only for women considering abortion and the unborn children whose lives are threatened but, among other requests, for post-abortion women and men, and abortion center workers.

Haga and the other participants in 40 Days have always been from a diversity of religious, ethnic and age groups, but "noticeable growth" came in three areas in the fall 2013 campaign, said 40 Days National Director David Bereit. These areas, he said, were "youth and young adults, Protestant and evangelical Christians, and minorities—most notably a dramatic increase in Hispanic participation."

A Roman Catholic, Haga is part of the largest religious group of 40 Days participants. Catholics make up an estimated 65 to 70 percent of volunteers, while Baptists constitute the second largest religious affiliation and continue to increase, Bereit said.

The most recent 40 Days international campaign was marked by continued growth demonstrated in new locations and greater numbers of participants at repeat locations, Bereit told BP in an email interview.

The fall 2013 campaign appeared to reflect "a growing sense of hope and optimism as record numbers of abortion centers are closing, as more workers are converting and going public and as more local and state pro-life laws are enacted," Bereit said.

"In addition to the reports of lives saved, more abortion workers experiencing changes of heart, record numbers of abortion centers closing, I was most encouraged by the reports and photos of children participating in this 40 Days for Life campaign who were saved from abortion during previous 40 Days for Life campaigns—some of them are now several years old."

Along with the hopeful signs, the foremost discouragement reported to the national 40 Days staff, Bereit wrote, was volunteers asking: "Where is the rest of the church of Jesus Christ?"

There remains "enormous opportunity for greater Christian participation in pro-life efforts," he said. (BP)

Noah film 'inspired, not literal,' says a new disclaimer by Paramount

Nashville, Tenn.—The official website for the film "Noah" displays the new message that the movie takes artistic license, and that the biblical story can be found in the book of Genesis.

The movie's maker Paramount Pictures and international Christian communicators group National Religious Broadcasters jointly announced the new promotional message Feb. 27. They indicated the message would appear on future Noah marketing materials for the film's March 28 release. It would appear on the soon-to-be released online trailer, on print and radio Noah promotion, and on a percentage of the film's online and broadcast material.

NRB President Jerry Johnson, past president of Criswell College in Dallas, Texas, lobbied Paramount to inform moviegoers that the film is not a line-by-line retelling of the true biblical account.

"My intent in reaching out to Paramount with this request was to make sure everyone who sees this impactful film knows this is an imaginative interpretation of Scripture, and not literal," Johnson, a former Baptist pastor and administrator and faculty member at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, said in the press release. "Because of the quality of the production and acting, viewers will enjoy watching main themes from the Noah story depicted in a powerful way on the big screen."

The message states, "While artistic license has been taken, we believe that this film is true to the essence, values, and integrity of a story that is a cornerstone of faith for millions of people worldwide. The biblical story of Noah can be found in the book of Genesis."

After test screenings late last year, the film drew criticism from many Christians who expressed concern that it strays from the biblical text. Faith Driven Consumers, the group which supported Duck Dynasty's Phil Robertson in the IStandWithPhil.com campaign, said Paramount's newly released message shows a respect for the film's core audience.

"While many Faith Driven Consumers will likely find valid reason to pause on some elements of the film, we are becoming more hopeful that many other areas will resonate and be compatible with the Bible's core message," Faith Driven Consumer founder Chris Stone said in a Feb. 28 press release. "We are looking forward

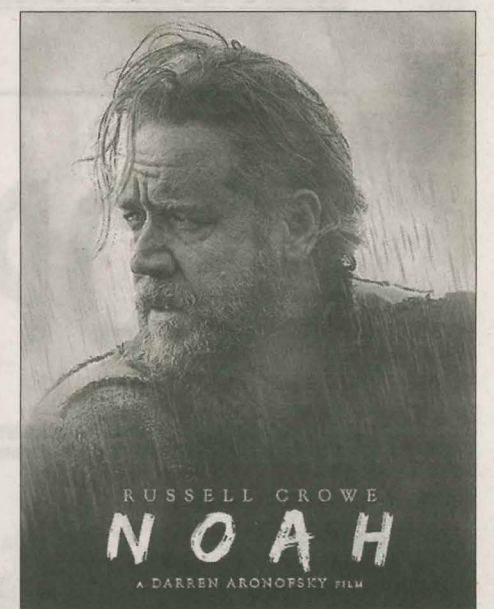
to reviewing and further evaluating the film and sharing that information with our community using our Faith-friendly Film Review rating system."

Paramount Pictures vice chairman Rob Moore, a professing Christian, expressed in the press release appreciation for Johnson's initiative. "Our goal has been to take every measure we can to ensure moviegoers have the information they need before deciding to buy a ticket to see the film," he said.

Johnson's initiative followed the NRB 2014 International Christian Media Convention in Nashville, where Johnson led a panel discussion on the movie, joined by John Snowden, a biblical consultant for Noah, and Phil Cooke, a filmmaker and media consultant who is a member of the NRB Board of Directors.

Johnson said he hopes the disclaimer will hopefully make it clear to Christians that Noah was not intended to be a literal presentation of Scripture.

"We are grateful that Paramount is striving ... to strike a proper balance between artistic creativity, character development, and honoring the sacred Scripture," Johnson said. "It is a significant and welcome development when a



leading Hollywood studio like Paramount makes a major film about a story from the Bible."

"Many people will go to this film and enjoy it," Johnson said. "Christians should be ready to engage with them about the main biblical themes that are portrayed in the film, namely sin, judgment, and salvation." (BP)



THE POWER OF 'AND'

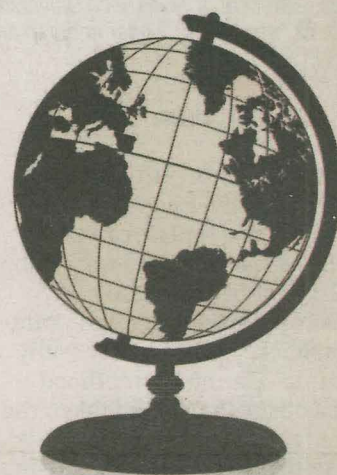
IN ACTS 1:8, JESUS SAYS,

YOU WILL BE MY WITNESSES

IN JERUSALEM,
AND IN ALL JUDEA
SAMARIA,

AND

TO THE ENDS
OF THE



JESUS DIDN'T SAY 'OR.' HE SAID 'AND.'

HOW CAN
YOU



AS

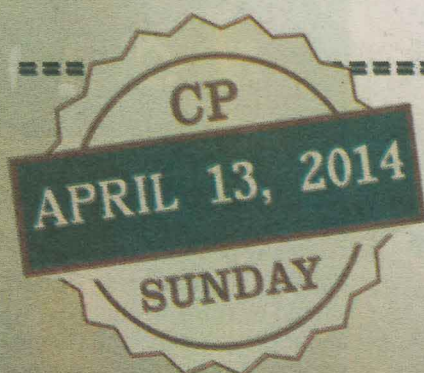
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