

WESTERN Recorder

December 9, 2014

Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

Volume 188, Issue 45

Ferguson crisis calls churches to 'unify & pray'

By Art Toalston and Diana Chandler

Nashville, Tenn.—The unfolding Ferguson saga calls churches to “unify and pray for our nation,” the president of National African American Fellowship within the SBC, Marshall Williams, said in the hours after a grand jury reported its decision not to indict a white Missouri police officer in the shooting death of an 18-year-old African American.

“We need to be both an empathetic listening ear for the community and herald forth a prophetic voice for justice and compassion in a spirit of humility,” Williams, senior pastor of Nazarene Baptist Church in

“In times like these, our love for God must manifest itself in tangible ways by love for one another and love for our neighbor.”

Marshall Williams, president of National African American Fellowship

Philadelphia, Pa., said in a statement to Baptist Press.

The weeks-long crisis—from the Aug. 9 shooting of Michael Brown, an unarmed teen, by Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson to the grand jury report and a subsequent night of arson, violence and arrests in the St. Louis suburb—fueled Williams’ statement.

“In times like these, our love for God must manifest itself in tangible ways by love for one another and love for our neighbor,” Williams said.

“The African American communities of this nation are our neighbor and right now we are hurting in ways which very few people



Numerous fires were set in Ferguson, Mo., following a grand jury decision Nov. 24 not to charge Officer Darren Wilson in the shooting death of 18-year-old Michael Brown. Protesters blocked highways and burned buildings and cars throughout the evening. (Photo by Victor Miller)

groups in this nation have a historical reference point to appreciate,” he said, referencing eras in U.S. history when it seemingly was “safe to murder Negroes.”

“A radical obedience to the gospel and an unflinchingly Christ-centered engagement of the age-old questions of whether

we are our brother’s keeper is in order especially at this time,” Williams said. The church must be “a catalyst for unprecedented revival and spiritual awakening in our land that will manifest itself in how we honor God, our

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World AIDS Day: Love sent to Africa in buckets

By Lily Jameson

Nairobi, Kenya—Rosemary opened up the five-gallon plastic bucket and pulled out gifts, including a set of new bed sheets. She clutched them to her chest. Her eyes filled with tears.

Rosemary wouldn’t even let her visitors help her put the sheets on her mattress. She wanted to clean her entire house before spreading such a precious gift across her bed.

The bucket and its contents were delivered to Rosemary by CARE for AIDS in Kenya, a partner organization of Baptist Global Response. As organizations recognized World AIDS Day on Dec. 1, BGR focuses on people—like Rosemary—who fight HIV and AIDS every day while trying to care for families.

In the past two years, BGR has sent nearly 6,000 hospice kits, as part of The Bucket Project, to African countries for distribution to sick and terminally ill people and their caregivers. The kits contain items that enhance patients’ comfort and improve their caretakers’ abilities to tend to them. These simple items include bed sheets, socks, petroleum jelly, vitamins and lip balm—all packed neatly into buckets.

Duncan Kimani, Kenyan director of CARE for AIDS, said clients have loved each part of the kit, right down to its packaging.

“The bucket itself has been received very well because they use the bucket (for) storage,” he said. “They store water or other food stuff, like grain ... basically everything included in the buckets has been received very well.”

Churches and individuals from all over the United States donate their time and money to purchase and prepare these kits for shipment. BGR then partners with organizations like the International



Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers help unload hospice buckets at Living Hope Baptist Church in Hopkinsville. In November, Baptist churches throughout the state delivered 1,458 pre-packed buckets to the Kentucky Baptist Convention Annual Meeting, held in Bowling Green.

Mission Board and CARE for AIDS to distribute the kits to people in Sub-Saharan Africa, where 24.7 million people lived with HIV in 2013, according to the World Health Organization.

In November, Baptist churches throughout the state of Kentucky delivered 1,458 pre-packed buckets to the Kentucky Baptist Convention Annual Meeting, held in Bowling Green.

“(It’s important) to help relieve suffering of those who are at the last stages of their lives,” Paul Chitwood, KBC executive director, said.

Kentucky churches donated more than 2,000 buckets to BGR earlier in the year and, this

□ See Africa Love ... Page 2

“(It’s important) to help relieve suffering of those who are at the last stages of their lives.”

Paul Chitwood
KBC Executive Director

Blue Christmas

Hardinsburg gives pastor the blues with shoebox challenge

By Brenda Smith

Hardinsburg—When it came time to collect shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child, Hardinsburg Baptist Church gave its pastor a serious case of the blues.

Pastor Paul Gibson threw down a unique challenge to the church: Collect more than 400 shoeboxes, and I’ll turn up to preach one Sunday morning dressed head-to-toe in blue.

That’s no small commitment for Gibson, a dyed-in-the-wool Western Kentucky University fan who once served as the manager for the Hilltopper’s mens basketball team. He also served for two years as campus missionary to the University of Louisville.

“I’m not anti-UK, just definitely pro-Topper and pro-Cardinal,” said Gibson.

Members of Hardinsburg Baptist Church tackled the challenge with enthusiasm. By Nov. 17, the Breckinridge County congregation—and even some family and friends from across the state—had filled up a total of 582 boxes, blowing away the goal by 182 boxes and topping last year’s collection of 252 boxes

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Campbellsville students make history with 7,600 OCC boxes

Campbellsville—History was made on the campus of Campbellsville University Nov. 24 when the Taylor County Operation Christmas Child collection site at the university became the first collection point in the history of the Heart of Kentucky Area to collect more than 7,000 shoebox gifts in a single year.

Campbellsville University collected 7,647 boxes with 44 churches donating boxes. A total of 174 volunteers worked with OCC. The total is 1,626 shoeboxes more than last year. Campbellsville is the only relay center on a college campus in Kentucky.

This is the third year Campbellsville University has served as the official collection site for shoebox gifts in Taylor County.

From Nov. 17-24, Campbellsville University again opened its doors to residents, churches and community groups who dropped off a total of 7,632 shoebox gifts to provide much-needed love and joy to needy children around the world.

The Campbellsville collection site is the first stop on a journey across the world to where the gifts will be delivered to hurting children overseas using whatever means necessary—boats, airplanes, trains and even elephants.

"It's a beautiful picture when Campbellsville University and Campbellsville and Taylor County join our hearts together in servant leadership," said Ted Taylor, CU director of



Amanda Lindsey, a freshman from Leitchfield, leads a group of students carrying Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes. CU helped the community collect 7,647 boxes.

church outreach, who is the Taylor County Relay Center coordinator.

"The explosion of Operation Christmas Child 2014 on campus and community has been breathless. Together we have created 7,632 gospel opportunities with 42 churches and 172 volunteers. 'To God Be The Glory, Great Things He Has Done!'" he said.

"OCC unites people. It's amazing how serving children brings CU, churches and our community together to share the love of Jesus," he said.

Sherry Bowen, secretary of the CU School of Theology, said, "We have been blessed to have so many volunteers help us at the relay center. We had 74 volun-

teers to help."

Operation Christmas Child regional manager, Kate McKinnie, expressed OCC's appreciation for the commitment by Campbellsville University students and staff noting, "There are only a handful of college campuses across the country that OCC chooses to serve as official drop off sites."

OCC Heart of Kentucky Area Coordinator Kathy Kendrick, who was present at the Taylor County collection site for the milestone event, echoed OCC's appreciation saying, "We wish more college students and staff embraced the ministry of Operation Christmas Child in the same manner Campbellsville does, and we want to thank the CU administration, staff and students for engaging whole-heartedly in this simple project, that has a global scope and an eternal impact on children all over the world when they learn the good news of Jesus Christ."

Operation Christmas Child is a project of Samaritan's Purse, an international Christian relief and evangelism organization headed by Franklin Graham.

Since 1993, Operation Christmas Child has delivered gift-filled shoeboxes to more than 113 million children in more than 100 countries. In 2014, Operation Christmas Child hopes to collect enough shoebox gifts to reach another 10 million children.

Each year, Operation Christmas Child encourages individuals, groups and churches across the United States to fill empty shoeboxes with toys, school supplies and hygiene items.

The gifts are collected at more than 4,000 drop-off locations nationwide, and hand delivered by missionaries, teachers and ministry partners to children in need overseas. For many children, these are the first Christmas gifts they have

ever received.

Using special tracking technology, participants can follow their boxes online and discover the country to which their gifts will be delivered to children in need. To register a shoebox gift, use the online donation form at samaritanspurse.org.

For more information on how to participate in Operation Christmas Child or how to host a packing party, call (270) 789-5029 or (865) 235-4827 or visit samaritanspurse.org. (CU)

Blue Christmas

Continued from page 1

by a significant margin.

True (blue) to his word, Gibson made his appearance decked out in the signature hue of the University of Kentucky Wildcats. While the congregation had great fun teasing Gibson about the challenge, the mood turned serious when it came time to dedicate the boxes.

"People were in tears as they brought the boxes forward. They were moved, and so was I, at the overwhelming response from the church and community.

"People were shocked that we collected so many. It was truly an inspiring moment! And that's just the beginning of describing the impact," said Gibson.

The real impact will begin when each box is delivered, along with a presentation of the gospel, to a child somewhere in the world, said Gibson. The impact is being felt now closer to home, too.

Families have been attracted to the church by the project, including several for baptism. (WR)

Ferguson Crisis

Continued from page 1

Creator and the created of His creation."

Southern Baptist Convention President Ronnie Floyd, in a statement to Baptist Press, said, "Only the gospel of reconciliation through Jesus Christ can heal the broken in heart, bridge the racial divide that marks our society, and calm the passions that grip the human heart.

"Our prayers continue for the Brown family and for the pastors and churches in the Ferguson, Mo., area and across the United States as they seek to minister the message of God's peace to individuals in their communities who have been impacted by this tragedy," said Floyd, pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas.

Fred Luter, the SBC's immediate past president, told Baptist Press, "The only



People protested in Ferguson, Mo. on Nov. 24 after the announcement of a grand jury decision related to the shooting death of Michael Brown. (Photo by Victor Miller)

way that the racial problem will be resolved in our country is to understand what really is the main problem.

"As my friend Marshall Williams, the current president of the National African American Fellowship, often says, 'We do

not have a SKIN problem in America, we have a SIN problem in America!' And to that I say Amen!

"Until lost men are changed on the inside, we cannot expect to see change on the outside," said Luter, pastor of

Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans.

Luter acknowledged that "there are mixed emotions about the verdict in the Ferguson case across the Southern Baptist Convention.

"However, because of the fact that none of us were in the courtroom to hear the testimony before the grand jury, we must trust the process and the legal system.

"The fact is, the only thing leaders can do to usher in peace is to speak in one voice that violence is not the way to deal with issues that you do not agree with," Luter said.

"The life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is a testimony of what can happen through nonviolent protest.

"A lot of the rights and privileges that African Americans enjoy today is a direct result of the nonviolent protest of Dr. King and those who marched with him during the civil rights movement." (BP)

Africa Love

Continued from page 1

fall, Chitwood said he challenged them to pack more for the annual meeting. He set a goal for those churches to send 800 buckets to the event, but they nearly dou-

bled that amount.

Chitwood said he saw this successful bucket drive as a way for his convention to be a part of BGR's mission.

"We are very grateful for Baptist Global Response and see just tremendous opportunity for Southern Baptists across the state conventions to be able to minis-

ter in areas of need," he said.

Lori Funderburk, director of the Bucket Project, said Baptist churches in Missouri have also undertaken a similar challenge. State leadership set a goal to produce 5,000 hospice kits in 2015.

On World AIDS Day, BGR asked Southern Baptists to take a moment to

pray for those around the world who live with a disease that warrants these buckets.

It also asks them to thank God for the people, organizations and churches who are willing to donate, pack, ship and deliver hospice kits to patients who need them. (BP)

Mt. Freedom finds revitalization through giving

There are many things one could share about how God is revitalizing Mt. Freedom in Wilmore. Facility makeovers, moving staff to full-time positions, and a community perception of vitality are all evidences that God is doing a great work at the church.

However, one evidence that particularly jumps out is their willingness to sacrifice for the kingdom.

Small churches that are struggling to make budget become nervous about financial matters, but this is not the case with Mt. Freedom in Wilmore. Pastor Nathan Elliot shared a story recently about the church's generosity:

"Lalhmgaiha (Andrew) arrived in the United States in August 2011 to study for a PhD in intercultural studies. Andrew was from Mizoram, India, a small strip of hill country sandwiched between the Muslim nation of Bangladesh and the Buddhist nation of Myanmar. Northern India is predominantly Hindu, but this narrow land is 87 percent Christian.

"Andrew is a Baptist and has served as a missionary in various parts of Northern India for many years. God put a burden on his heart to start a training program for equipping Mizo Baptist missionaries for going to the mission field. He approached the Baptist Bible school, the Academy for Integrated Christian Studies, and proposed that a master's level program in missions be started and they agreed. Andrew had come to Asbury Seminary to earn his PhD so that he could teach in that program. Andrew has a desire to provide training, not only for those who want to start serving as missionaries, but also for the several hundred Mizo Baptist missionaries who are already serving on the field.

"Shortly after his arrival in Wilmore, Andrew began attending Mount Freedom Baptist Church. He was quiet and reserved, which is not unusual when making such a significant cultural adjustment. One Sunday in the spring of 2012, Andrew and I were talking in my office after the service. I asked him whether he had a family, and he said he had a wife and two children, a 6-year-old son and a 12-year-old daughter.

Regional SPOTLIGHT



Nick Sandefur
North Central

"Is there a plan for them to come over to Wilmore while you study?" I asked.

"We are trusting God to make a way," he replied.

"What do you need for them to be able to come?" I inquired.

"The seminary and U. S. Embassy would need confirmation that the funds to cover rent and insurance were certain for the whole time of our stay and that we would only be here temporarily and then return home," he explained.

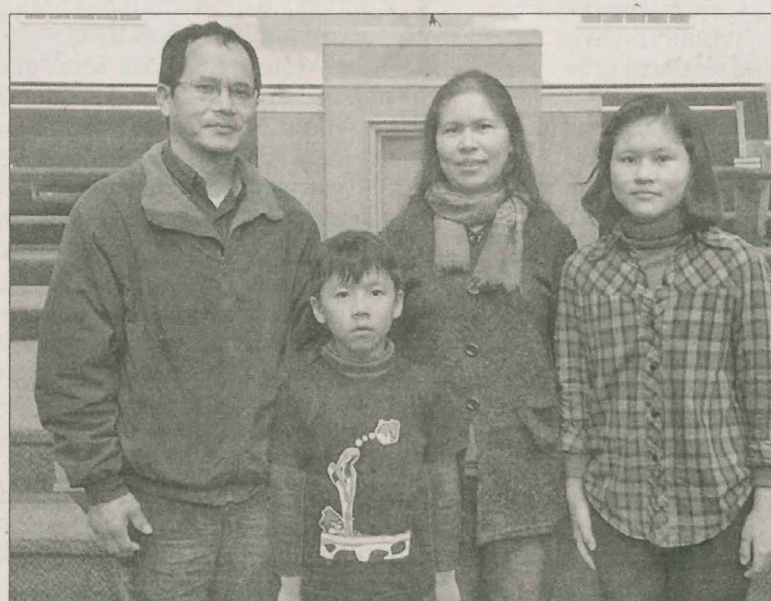
"Andrew's salary in Mizoram was \$200/mo. That would not cover their expenses for travel to and stay in the U.S. I promised Andrew that I would pray over his situation.

"In the days following my conversation with Andrew, I was struck with two thoughts.

"First, here was a clear opportunity for Mount Freedom to minister to Jesus by helping 'one of the least of these brothers of mine' (Matthew 25). Here was a servant in the kingdom who did not have the resources to have his family with him while he devoted his life to training workers for the harvest field. What we did for him we would be doing for Christ.

"Second, Christ's call to us was to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations. Here was a perfect opportunity for Mount Freedom to develop a close relationship with a Baptist missionary leader in the center of the unreached world of religions. Who knows what opportunities could open up for us in partnering with Andrew in reaching the Muslims, Buddhists and Hindus of that part of the world with the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

"I presented my thoughts to the members one evening and encouraged all of



Lalhmgaiha (Andrew) arrived in the United States in August 2011 to study for a PhD in intercultural studies. Andrew is from Mizoram, India. Andrew and his wife have two children, a 9-year-old son and a 15-year-old daughter.

them to pray. A year earlier, an elderly member of Mount Freedom, Mary Lee Duncan, had passed away and left a large, old house to the church. It was in need of significant renovation, so we decided to sell it, which was one of the options given us in her will. It was at this time, when we were considering Andrew's situation, we finally sold the house.

"Roger Woolums, the trustee who had overseen the sale of the Duncan house, was praying about the situation when it finally struck him that in the will, one of the wishes of Ms. Duncan was that her house would be used for helping missionaries. Roger encouraged the church to move forward with supporting Andrew's family financially from the Duncan house sale because it was her express desire to help missionaries with her house.

"We held a special called business meeting. This meeting had the highest attendance of any business meeting in any of my six years at the church. The atmosphere was positive and energetic. I proposed that we designate \$45,000 (about 75 percent of our annual budget that year) from the sale of the house to be used to support Andrew's family. Most of the questions were asking whether this would be enough and what other ways the members might be able to support Andrew's family.

The final decision was unanimous in favor of \$50,000 for the support of Andrew's family with the possibility of giving more if needed. The church members were able to collect items for furnishing and equipping their apartment before arrival as well.

"That vote took place on July 8, 2012. Due to difficulties securing visas for Andrew's family, a process that included church members writing letters and making phone calls to U.S. Representatives, it wasn't until August of 2013 that Andrew's family finally arrived.

"Andrew's family has been here for more than a year now and has been actively involved in our church fellowship. What a blessing they have been to our faith!

"I am planning to travel with Andrew to Mizoram in June 2015 to speak at a two-day spiritual retreat at the start of the school year at AICS and to meet some of the leaders of the Baptists of Mizoram.

"We only have stories of God's blessing through this step of faith. I have not heard any second guessing or criticism of the decision to support Andrew's family. They are greatly loved and we look forward to seeing how God continues to grow and develop our relationship and ministry together in the years ahead." (WR)

Rappin' grandma had missions heart with 'Words from Eloise'

By Shawn Hendricks

Nashville, Tenn.—Remembered by many for her tough-talking, missions-focused rappin' grandma character in numerous promotional videos for the International Mission Board, those who worked closely with Eloise Dieker also recall her servant heart.

Dieker, an IMB staff member for 44 years, died in November at age 87. During her stint with the video segment "Words from Eloise" in the late '90s to mid-2000s, Dieker's character was part of "The Task" video series that promoted missions among thousands of high school and college students.

During a chapel service, Clyde Meador, IMB's executive adviser to the president, said Dieker "always looked for new challenges even agreeing to be part of a video series that made her into a celebrity. Eloise always rose to the task."

Among the one- to three-minute

segments, her character—with the help of editing and a few stunt doubles—appears hang gliding, dunking a basketball (in a University of Kentucky jersey), riding the rapids in a kayak, lifting weights on a bench press and jumping on a boardroom table to fire Donald Trump during a spoof of "The Apprentice" TV show. All of it was used as a tool to help point a younger audience to a Christ-filled life and missions involvement.

The segments also promoted giving through the Cooperative Program and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

"Time is a comin' so don't be buggin', so Co-op with the Program. Ya dig?" she said in a segment about the Cooperative Program funding channel central to Southern Baptist missions and ministries. "The cheddar you drop in the plate can

help more hear about J.C. So clean it up, fly right before J.C. is in the house! Give J.C. a dollar or I'll give you a holler."



Rose Dieker

In another segment she said, "Yield to God's plan. Come share Christ in a foreign land. Because when it's all said and done we're gonna be hangin' with the G-man and singin' praises to the Son."

David LaMar, a former senior video producer with IMB, pitched the idea of doing the segments to

Dieker and fondly recalled working with her on nearly all of the video shoots.

"I've been directing music videos and doing videos my entire career and that is probably the one thing that people go, 'What? You did Words from Eloise?' That is so cool!" said LaMar, who continues to freelance for IMB. "Not the Mercy Me music video. Not Michael W. Smith. No. It's

Words from Eloise. I'll take that because she was so sweet."

Words from Eloise was made when IMB was sending out many of their products on VHS and the YouTube craze hadn't yet taken off, LaMar recounted. Thousands of The Task videos that included the popular segment were mailed out to churches across the country.

"I heard stories that people would come up to the board and ask if they could meet her and get their picture taken with her," LaMar said. "Tourists would come through and they would want to meet Eloise.

LaMar said he admired Dieker's "willing spirit."

"I think she really enjoyed it because she felt like it was making a difference and having an impact," he said. "She was a sweet grandma and a willing spirit who trusted us.... I really felt like Dr. Frankenstein, and the monster just took on a life of its own.... It was a lot of fun to see it happen." (BP)

To the nations

The Week of Prayer for International Missions was an opportunity for us to reflect upon the need for Christ to be preached among the nations.

With billions of people remaining in the grasp of idol worship and unbelief, the call to make known the life-giving mes-

Together We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

age of the gospel must be heard. "Go ye therefore!" declares the one who suffered for the sins of the world. He who wills that none be lost has charged those who have been found to pursue any who yet stand in need of His mercies.

While some of us may hear the call to permanently move to foreign fields, those of us who have not can still take advantage of opportunities to serve alongside our career missionaries through volunteer mission trips.

And ALL of us can do our part to support God's missionaries with our prayers and offerings.

Among the Southern Baptist family, Kentucky Baptists have led the way in our giving to get the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Only the new Southern Baptists of Texas Convention sends a higher percentage of Cooperative Program gifts to the International Mission Board than the Kentucky Baptist Convention. The CP funds many ministries in Kentucky and North America, but 5 million CP dollars now make it to the IMB from Kentucky. In addition to CP support, Kentucky Baptists give approximately \$5 million more to the IMB through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Over the years, Kentucky Baptists have given generously to support our IMB missionaries.

Yet, in spite of our generosity, the growing cost of missionary support and the lack of sufficient growth in giving finds the IMB missionary count down nearly 1,000 from where it was five years ago.

How can this problem be fixed? Here is a simple plan for Kentucky Baptists to get another 100 missionaries to the foreign fields.

First, if every KBC church giving less than 10 percent through the CP increased its giving to 10 percent, we would provide for another 40 IMB missionaries, not to mention the additional funds that would be available to help reach Kentucky and North America for Christ.

Then, if every KBC church increased its giving to Lottie Moon by \$1,000, another 60 missionaries could be serving through IMB. Last year, the average KBC church gave approximately \$2,000 to Lottie. Keep in mind that some of our churches are giving tens of thousands while others give nothing.

Yet, if all 2,400 churches send \$1,000 more, regardless of the amount of last year's contribution, 60 more workers can be sent out to the harvest fields.

Paul said of the Macedonian believers, "They gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means" (2 Corinthians 8:3). My prayer is that Kentucky Baptists will exhibit that same kind of generosity.

Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Who should read the state Baptist newspaper?

Kentucky Baptist churches should encourage every active family to read their state Baptist newspaper, the Western Recorder. Some may argue that sending the newspaper to all active families in their congregation isn't essential. So, here are a few questions to help you determine who should be reading the Western Recorder.

1. Do you want your church family to know the many ways Kentucky Baptists are sharing the gospel? Take a good look at this issue! Much of it is devoted to promoting the work of our international missionaries, encouraging Baptists to pray regularly for them and support them through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

At other times, issues support the work of our North American missionaries through promoting the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, and still other issues promote state missions offering during the Eliza Broadus emphasis.

A consistent aspect of the Western Recorder's ministry is telling the stories of how Kentucky Baptists are spreading the gospel in the underserved areas of the United States as well as to thousands of unreached people groups around the globe.

2. Do you want to help your church family look at moral and ethical issues from a biblical perspective? Drawing on a variety of Christian resources, including the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and the Family Foundation of Kentucky, hot-button social issues like gay marriage, abortion, hunger, gambling, drug and alcohol abuse, marijuana legalization, race relations and many others are examined from a Christian viewpoint. Articles set forth biblical teachings and analyze how biblical principles can be applied to these controversial issues, better preparing Baptist families to engage the culture.

3. Do you want to encourage your church family through what other Kentucky Baptist churches are doing? The Western Recorder shares reports of successful programs and ministries being done by churches across our state. A new article series begun just this year spotlights the work of our churches in each region of the commonwealth.

In addition to learning new ideas to spark revitalization, our readers are given a chance to celebrate the successes of sister churches and pray for their outreach ministries.



After Thought

By Todd Deaton

to others in the name of Christ through efforts like disaster relief, Kentucky changers, youth camps and collegiate ministry. We unite through our resources and efforts to give everyone everywhere an opportunity to hear the gospel. The Western Recorder's stories encourage believers as they work together for the cause of Christ.

So back to our main question: Who should read the state Baptist paper? The answer is apparent. Every active Kentucky Baptist family should be reading the Western Recorder, because regular reading of a state Baptist paper will impact every area of the Christian life.

Since 1826, the Western Recorder has been the trusted source of news, information and inspiration of Kentucky Baptists, and for nearly 100 years now the state convention has urged its churches to provide the paper for all their families.

The cost is negligible—only \$11 per family for an entire year. It's a small investment to make for such a valuable resource for Christian living.

But, even if your church budget doesn't allow you to do so at this time, you still can enroll them in a group plan, saving each family \$6 off an individual subscription rate. Call 502-489-3535 to hear how.

Pray for the ministry of your state Baptist paper and encourage every active family in your church to read the Western Recorder. Today, more than ever, Kentucky Baptists need their state Baptist paper!

Stand up with conviction for international missions

Nothing gives me greater personal joy than giving through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. As a local church pastor, I am thrilled when I get to share the vision of how we are reaching the world for Jesus Christ.

When I share with our people this grand vision and how our Lottie Moon offering is significant to what we are doing around the world, they immediately join in helping fund this vision.

With world crises occurring daily and the severity of lostness ever increasing, we have no other choice as Southern Baptists than to do all we

can to take the gospel to every person in the world. I want to challenge every pastor: Stand up with great conviction

before your people, asking them to join you on this journey by making a sacrificial financial gift this Christmas season to our Lottie Moon offering.

May we embrace this opportunity by seeing that when we give through this offering, we are helping reach the world for Christ.

Now is the time we cooperate together in this one sacred effort. We must now reclaim our historic roots of 1845 that brought us together for "eliciting, combining and

directing for the energies of the whole denomination in one sacred effort, for the propagation of the gospel."

May what bound us together 169 years ago still bind us together today.

Our gifts through the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions is one way each Southern Baptist can come together to advance the message of the gospel to every person in the world. Let's do it this year together for God's glory! (IMB)

Ronnie Floyd has served as senior pastor of Cross Church in Northwest Arkansas since 1986. He was elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention in June 2014.

First Person



Ronnie Floyd

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Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

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Letters to the editor:

The Baptist Forum section of the Western Recorder provides an opportunity for Kentucky Baptists to express their viewpoints. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Western Recorder's editorial staff, its Board of Directors, or the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Letters should be no more than 300 words in length and will be edited for style, clarity and space. Letters must reflect a spirit of Christian charity and civility.

Our obligation to the nations: The gospel & the Great Commission

By David Platt

Imagine over 6,000 people groups—spanning billions of individual people—who have yet to even hear that God loves them. Some of them have never even heard the name of Jesus.

Meanwhile, Jesus has given us, as His followers, a clear command: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20, HCSB).

We call this command the “Great Commission” and the gospel the “good news” of what God has done in Christ. We owe this gospel to the world. As Paul said in Romans 1:14, we are “obligated” to tell the nations this good news. Believers this side of heaven owe the gospel to lost men and women this side of hell.

But do we really believe Jesus was serious in His commission to us? And do our actions, our decisions, our use of resources, and our lives show that we are serious about getting the gospel to people who have never heard it?

“The gospel is only good news if it gets there in time,” Christian theologian Carl Henry said. In order to get the gospel to people all over the planet on time, the IMB is focused on exalting Christ, mobilizing Christians, serving the church, and completing the Great Commission.

Exalting Christ

More than anything else, we want to exalt Jesus Christ in everything we say, think, and do. Jesus must be at the center of any mission strategy. After all, the beauty of the Great Commission is that Christ promises to be the One who will accomplish this mission through us.

“Remember,” He said, “I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20, HCSB).

We exalt Christ when we trust His Word. God’s Word is the authority for what we believe and how we operate. Our aim in missions is not to come up with plans and ask God to bless them, but to align with the plan He has already promised to bless. That plan is to make disciples and multiply churches in all nations, and we exalt Christ when we obey His plan.

More than we want our own lives, we want the glory of Christ among all nations. We’re captivated by a vision of Him high and lifted up, receiving the praise He is due from all the peoples of the earth. His exaltation is what drives us in our mission.

Mobilizing Christians

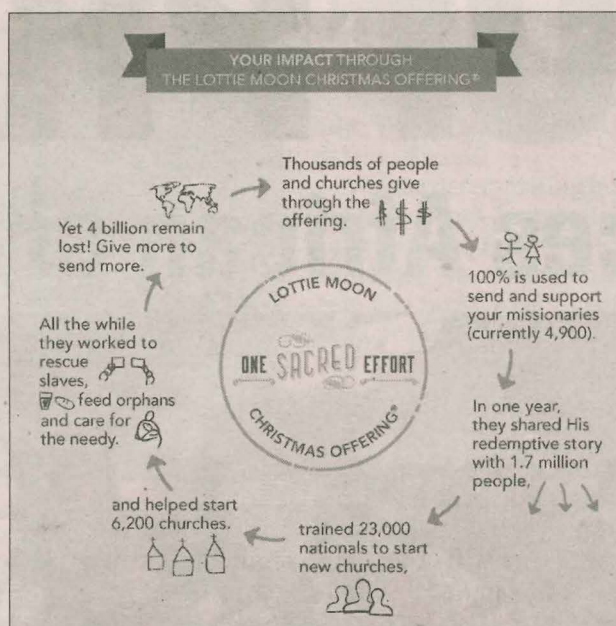
In order to exalt Christ, we must see our lives as uniquely designed and ultimately blessed for this purpose. The reason why we have breath, and the reason why we have the gospel, is to make His grace and His glory known to the ends of the earth. That means that global mission is not a compartmentalized program in the church for a select few who are called to that. Instead, global mission is the purpose for which each one of us was created.

Throughout the history of IMB, 20,000 missionaries have been sent out—and we praise God for that! But we need 20,000 right now. And our task is too great not to be thinking like that. Such thinking is not idealistic. It’s imperative. IMB desires to help followers of Christ with different skills and gifts, in different locations, with different jobs, all realizing that we have a role to play in the global mission of God.

Serving the Church

Biblically, the local church is the agent that God is going to use to accomplish the Great Commission. Therefore, our role at the IMB is to come alongside local churches to equip, encourage, and empower local churches to complete this global task. We believe pastors are the primary global missions strategists—pastors who know they are created for this global mission and who will lead their church for the sake of global missions. IMB exists to help pastors fan a flame for God’s global glory in every local church.

Throughout the New Testament, we see churches sending missionaries, and we want to come alongside



churches in order that they might do the same. Then, as churches send missionaries, the IMB exists to help the local church shepherd these brothers and sisters who are serving on the global mission field. We want to help churches care for their missionaries spiritually, emotionally, relationally and physically.

The force of over 40,000 churches working together specifically to take the gospel to unreached peoples is a powerful picture, to say the least! As churches send and shepherd missionaries to make disciples and multiply churches around the world, we begin to realize God’s plan for making His glory known among the nations.

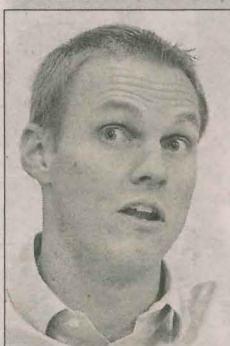
Completing the Great Commission

All of the above means that the goal of the IMB is clear: we want to be a part of the accomplishment of the Great Commission. With tens of thousands of churches, we can play a significant part of reaching every single

unreached people group with the gospel. I long to see this reality. I live to see this reality. I would love to be part of the generation that ultimately sees all nations reached with the gospel. Yet if I don’t see that day in my lifetime, I want to die trying.

As breathtaking as Southern Baptists mission work has been through the ages, I’m convinced that God has so much more for us. This is a critical time for the SBC and for the IMB. But let’s be clear. We are not fighting for the survival of our convention or our missions agencies. No, we’re fighting for the day when the IMB is needed no more because disciples have been made and churches have been multiplied in every nation.

FIRST PERSON



David Platt

Together in praying, giving

During this season of concentrated giving for international missions, a force of nearly 16 million Baptists has the opportunity to petition God with requests related to specific missionaries around the world, and to give to increase that force of missionaries serving in the world.

When you pray for specific missionaries, you are pleading to God for the people without Christ whom they will encounter. Further, when you give through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions, you are fueling and sustaining a missions movement with eternal ramifications. This is a mission worth praying for, and this is a mission worth giving to.

So let’s join together to exalt Christ as we work together to complete His Great Commission.

Let’s ask the people around us: Will you join me in this effort to reach the unreached with the gospel, in order that they might hear the gospel, believe it, and give God the glory due Him? And let’s ask ourselves: With the individual gifts God has given me, how can I mobilize more people to be more engaged in praying, giving, and going for the sake of global mission?

May God use your church, your life, and our partnership together in the gospel to reach the nations in the days ahead for the glory of His great name! (IMB)

David Platt serves as president of the International Mission Board.

The aroma of CHRISTmas

What’s the best Christmas scent? Is it cinnamon? Pine? Nutmeg? No, it’s much better than those! The “aroma of Christ” is something every Christian spreads like a sweet perfume.

Read carefully: “But thanks be to God, who always puts us on display in Christ and through us spreads the aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. For to God we are the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing” 1 Corinthians 2:14-15.

How are you handling extra stresses of the Christmas season? With unusual expectations, bulging calendars and extra work, it’s easy to become anxious and self-absorbed. But that’s not an option for a Christian.

You are assigned to spread the fragrance of Christ everywhere. God’s the source; you’re the carrier. Try simple ways to intentionally spread His aroma:

- If you use social media, each update, “like” or photo can be a life-giving fragrance to readers seeking purpose in life
 - In the place where you work, your Christ-like fragrance permeates the atmosphere. Give your best effort during this season. Be extra patient and kind.
 - Share His aroma with children. Kneel down and say a kind word to your young neighbor or relative.
 - Before you cross any threshold into a room—a party, your office, the living room, a doctor’s office—silently ask God to help you spread the aroma of Christ.
 - Public places need His scent. Be aware as you walk through the mall or stand in a slow checkout line, at the concert, game or town festival.
 - Fill your home with the aroma of Christ. Talk about Him. Be joyful. Treasure small moments. Take pleasure in your family and guests.
 - To believers and nonbelievers, friends, enemies, neighbors, hairstylist, babysitter, server—to every individual you encounter—spread the fragrance of Christ.
- Isn’t it amazing that God has entrusted you to spread the life-giving fragrance of Christ everywhere you go? Smell sweet this CHRISTmas season. (BP)

Diana Davis is an author, columnist and ministry wife in Pensacola Fla.

Fresh Ideas



Diana Davis

Where’s your treasure?

By Don Spencer

Jesus tells of the rich man who used all his resources on himself. He planned to tear down his barns and build bigger ones so he could store more for himself and take life easy. The Scripture says this man is short-sighted. God says to him, “Tonight you will die. You have made your money, now who will get it?” (Luke 12:20)

His handling of possessions was an outward visible indicator of an inner spiritual condition. He was rich toward himself, but not toward God. No matter how wealthy one is in the things of this world, material possessions are worthless in eternity. Jesus says, “Do not store up treasures on earth.”

Accumulated wealth will not last. Proverbs 23:5 says, “Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle.” Randy Alcorn, in his book, “The Treasure Principle,” uses a beautiful analogy: “The next time you buy a prized possession, imagine it spouting wings and flying off. Sooner or later it WILL disappear.”

Accumulated wealth will always leave us—during life or at death. There are no exceptions. When we store wealth for the sake of accumulating wealth we are being shortsighted. When it is used to serve God and others, then we are building heavenly treasures. This includes taking care of the needs of one’s family as we are admonished to do in 1 Timothy. This must be done with forethought. At the same time, we must remember that it’s only the heavenly treasures that will last forever. Invest in something that has lasting value.



WEEK OF PRAYER

Layman embraces African city's challenge

Abidjan, Ivory Coast—Dinner was a far cry from a Baptist church supper.

On this night, six members from Valley Baptist Church in Searcy, Ark., squeezed into a modest home in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, of a Muslim family breaking their Ramadan fast. The Arkansans ate by dipping their spoons into African groundnut stew and fish sauce served over attiéké, a couscous-like staple Ivorian food.

"Man, you couldn't have told me 10 years ago I'd be over here eatin' with a Muslim," Paul Yingling said with an incredulous shake of his head.

But then, you couldn't have told Yingling and his wife Jan that God would so burden their hearts for Muslims that they would find themselves traveling to West Africa to tell about Christ.

Yingling is an auto technician in Searcy, about an hour northeast of Little Rock. The Yinglings were part of a Valley Baptist volunteer team who first journeyed to Abidjan last year to see how their church might impact a West African city far away.

Welcome shared, dinner shared

The room is cramped on this summer evening. It's July and the hosts haven't eaten a bite or sipped a drink since before dawn. But in a formal greeting in French, they tell the Baptists they are honored with their visit.

The small home belongs to a hospitable and dignified man named Seidou. He shares it with his immediate family along with a brother and his two wives. Seidou and his three brothers, all tall and stately, have gathered for the meal tonight. They, like many immigrants, came to Abidjan from Burkina Faso looking for work.

Two of the wives, dressed in vibrantly colored traditional gowns with matching scarves around their heads, serve the men and guests and then disappear back to the "kitchen" outside the front door.

Along with typical Ivorian dishes, Seidou pours traditional drinks. The Baptist volunteers tentatively sip bissap, a sweet ruby red drink made from dried hibiscus petals, and the more adventurous sample gingim, a beverage infused with so much fresh ginger that it delivers a spicy kick. Paul Yingling bravely drinks it down.

IMB missionaries Mike and Heather McAfee and their children, Caleb, Karis and Benjamin, are here as well, among more than 4,800 workers overseas supported by Southern Baptists' Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and Cooperative Program.

The McAfees, friends of Seidou's family, are urban church planters in Abidjan, the economic capital of the country. Its ever-growing population of at least 6 million reflects the diversity of West Africa: city dwellers speak 60



Above, IMB missionary Heather McAfee, holding her son Ben, enjoys Sunday morning worship at a Baptist church in Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

indigenous languages, with French as the official language, a remnant of its colonial past.

Religious practices in the city reflect the same cultural milieu; Islam, Catholicism and African tribal religions influence daily lives. Evangelicals are in the minority. Mike McAfee estimates there are about 30 small Baptist congregations in this city of millions, most with fewer than 100 members.

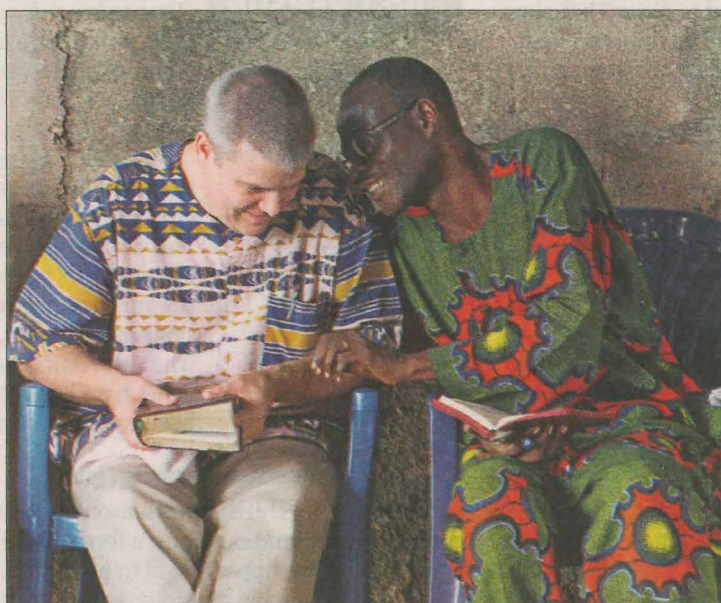
The McAfees wear many hats as they work with Ivorian churches and seek to establish new church plants in this sprawling metropolis. They train, they encourage and they evangelize.

They also network and thus have turned to Southern Baptist churches such as Valley Baptist to partner in their labors. On the church's first visit, the McAfees introduced the team of five women and one man to areas of the city where they saw potential for a church plant. The team worked with translators and members of the local Treichville Baptist Church to meet neighborhood residents and engage them with Bible stories.

New territory

One morning they ventured to Attécoubé, a community to the northwest of the central business district of Abidjan. To get there they traveled up a rutted dirt road muddied by recent rains to where a Treichville church member named Mama Tra lives.

There, Mama Tra shared with them how she hoped a small plot of land she gave to the Lord could be the place for a new church. Then the team fanned out into the neighborhood to pray in homes



Left, IMB missionary Mike McAfee and George Kassou, pastor of Belleville Baptist Church in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, work together to nurture the vision of planting churches in unreached areas of the West African city. (IMB Photos)

and share Bible stories with those they met. It was the first time Paul and Jan Yingling shared their faith with a Muslim.

Later, Paul Yingling described the dynamic of joining with the Treichville church to impact Abidjan.

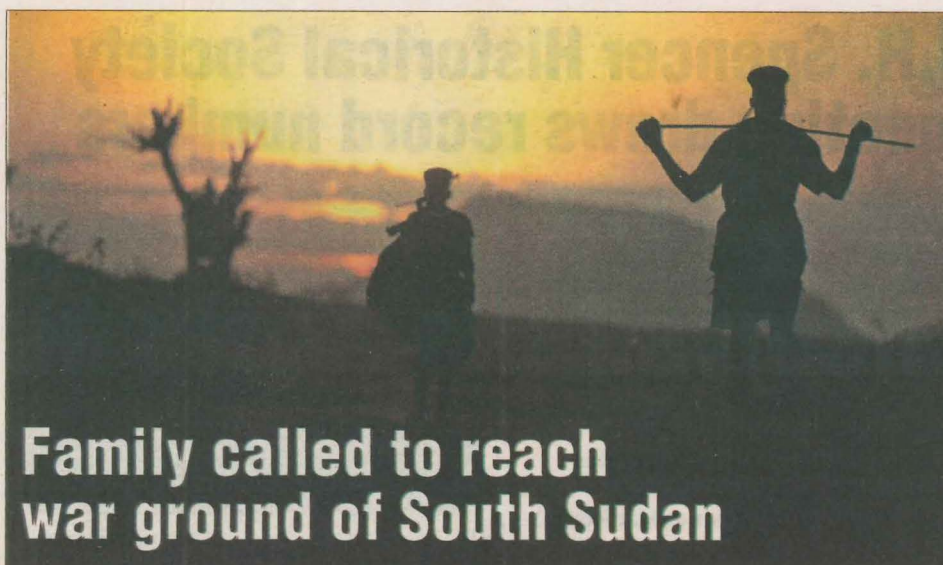
"The believers here ... want to reach this city for Christ. They are capable of sharing the gospel; it just kind of helps that we're here—it kind of gets their foot in the door, you know.... They love God and even though I'm a country boy from Arkansas, we're able to come together in one accord and share the gospel for Christ," Yingling says.

"We have been blessed with the fact that we have monetary resources but also the fact that we're free to worship, we're uninhibited, we can share the gospel any way we want," he reflects. "But a

lot of times we sit on the pew and we don't fulfill the Great Commission."

Back at Seidou's home on that summer evening before dinner was served, Yingling had walked with his dinner hosts to the neighborhood mosque so that the men of the family could pray. He sat on a bench just outside the door of the mosque and watched the ritual.

"That was saddening to see them so dedicated to doing their work and praying ... and the fact that they don't really know for sure that their sins are forgiven and where they'll stand with God on judgment day," Yingling recounts. "I've seen (Muslims) pray on TV and documentaries and things. It's sad there, but when you actually see it firsthand and you hear the call to prayer in Arabic, it moves you like you can't explain." (IMB)



Family called to reach war ground of South Sudan

By Stephanie Lane

South Sudan—Moving to South Sudan, a war ground of turmoil and strife in northeast Africa, has been a major risk for Robert and Maridith Lane, even to the point that the IMB missionaries call in daily to assure their teammates in Uganda that their family is still alive.

Since age 8, Maridith, a Georgia native, knew she would one day lead a life surrendered to Christ on the mission field. Robert, from Texas and Tennessee, found his calling at age 19, when he became aware of the startling amount of unreached people groups, which now number more than 6,500. By 21, he was committed to reaching the unreached with the gospel overseas.

"I thought maybe there's a chance that I can go and in some way make Christ's name accessible to the people who have not been able to hear it," Robert said.

When the Lanes visited South Sudan in 2010, their hearts became burdened for the unreached peoples of the nation. There are more than 400,000 people unreached by the gospel in South Sudan, which became independent of Sudan in 2011.

The Lanes' journey began with two years of preparation in neighboring Uganda, where they lived among the Karamojong people. Gunshot echoes and cattle raids were common, but the couple also learned about other realities, such as cooking from scratch with local ingredients and learning which gospel-sharing methods work best with cattle-culture people groups.

In November 2013, they moved to South Sudan. Now, they are learning to live a life more difficult than they ever experienced. They see it as a risk worth taking if it means following God in obedience to reach out to the Dinka Rek people group, numbering nearly 3 million.

"We need to be ready for those hardships, ready for those difficulties, ready to be used as a sacrifice for Christ as we try to make His name famous," Robert explained.

The Lanes, along with their teammates Selvin and Laurel Jeremiadoss, attend language classes five days a week and immerse themselves into the culture every day, building relationships with tutors, neighbors and local church leaders.

The Lanes admit life is not easy in South Sudan because of the hot climate, political conflict, water scarcity and high food prices. Raising their 2-year-old son, Shepherd, in such an environment takes a lot of prayer and a strong marriage, Robert said.

The Karamojong people are cattle herders and warriors. Robert Lane says they live in fear of starvation, fear of a cattle raid, fear of death and fear of God. (Photo by Joann Bradberry/IMB)

"It's a challenge to live and work in a country where even the local people find it at times too difficult ... and move away," he said.

Another challenge they face is trying to teach a warlike people group to love. The Dinka take pride in their cattle, raiding other groups to gain more and defending their own by force.

"The Dinka are very strong and proud. In tradition, they're extremely warlike," Robert explained. "They say, 'We hate our enemy, we hate this other people group, we hate people who try to take anything from us or keep us from political power.'"

However, the Lanes have no doubt South Sudan is where God has called them. Getting into the country is usually difficult, Robert said, but they were able to gain access, set up a house and build relationships with local people in a relatively short period of time.

"It's not been easy by any stretch of the imagination," Robert explained, "but in a lot of ways we've been able to do something that should really be impossible, and I see that as a very big confirmation of God's will to have us in South Sudan."

As the team forms ministry plans, they recognize the best method is to bring in trainers from Uganda who can adequately equip believers in church leadership.

Bringing in the trainers will not only help the local believers in their confidence as leaders but also will strengthen their faith and their understanding of church, Robert said. The hope is that these leaders will one day plant churches among their own people.

The Lanes are grateful for the strong support they have through their team in South Sudan and Uganda, along with Southern Baptists' prayers and giving through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions and Cooperative Program. As a team, they encourage one another daily, trying to stay positive.

They believe their call is to persevere through the hardships and teach the Dinka what love really looks like. At the end of the day, Robert said, there's no price too great to pay because this sacred effort is worth it.

"It's taken a strong dependence on Jesus Christ and understanding the truth and reality of the message," he said. "The only reason why we do what we do is because there's such a great, wonderful, beautiful, eternal reward, not simply for us but for the glory of God." (IMB)

Nurturing 'fishers of men' in Ecuador

By Kate Gregory

Lagarto, Ecuador—Amadeo Torres took Jesus' command in Matthew 4:19 literally: "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

When contemplating how to share the gospel with an unbelieving friend in an Ecuadorian fishing village, Amadeo asked IMB missionary Johnny Maust to help him buy a fisher's net for the friend.

In return for the net, the fisherman continues to give Torres and Maust a portion of his yield of shrimp and lobster.

Torres and Maust, his key church-planting partner, began visiting Luis Quintero each Sunday afternoon at his hillside home overlooking the waterway he fishes in his canoe-sized boat.

They concentrated on sharing the Gospel of Matthew with him. In addition to their personalized example of a fisher's net, Maust brought a DVD of the story of Matthew to show the Quintero family, along with other books of the Gospel.

Quintero says the Word of God had an effect on him, and that's why he has placed his faith in Christ. His 12-year-old son Marlon followed suit. Marlon's mother, however, is holding back from making a similar decision, waiting to see if Quintero's newfound faith in Christ results in him becoming a better man.

That's why Torres and Maust return to visit the home each week—to disciple the family about what it truly means to follow Christ.

"Amadeo's introduced me to a lot of people in the area I wouldn't have known otherwise," Maust says.

'You come in friendship'

When Maust met Yoryi (pronounced Georgie) Cortez, a community leader in the town of Lagarto where Maust and his wife Donna hope to guide U.S. partnering churches to plant a church, the missionary knew Cortez was "a person of peace."

Cortez is not a Christian but has agreed to participate in and possibly host a Bible study.

"Your groups are different than others (religious groups) who come here," Cortez tells Maust about the U.S. partnering churches. "That's why I accepted your invitation to Bible study. Other groups come in and preach to us. You don't come in with (preaching) fear but with



friendship. Your churches come in doing something for the community."

Cortez owns a discotec (music/dance club) on the first floor of where his mother Gloria lives, a few houses away from him. In her second-story home, U.S. church groups have eaten many a meal prepared by members of a weekly cooking class Donna Maust teaches.

"If you want to use my home, you are welcome," Gloria tells Johnny during an English-as-a-Second-Language certificate ceremony led by ESL teachers from Great Hills Baptist Church in Austin, Texas.

The Mausts envision the rectangular dance floor of the discotec converted into a venue to show the "JESUS" film, teach Bible studies and eventually house a church of new believers.

"They are recognizing we are here to share the love of God," Donna says.

"When problems come in people's lives, they know they can rely on our friendship to give them guidance, to talk with them about God and to pray together." (IMB)

This year's Week of Prayer for International Missions theme is "One Sacred Effort—Find your place in God's story" from Matthew 28:19-20 (HCSB).

The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions in tandem with Cooperative Program gifts from Southern Baptist churches support about 4,800 international missionaries in

seeking to fulfill the Great Commission. Gifts to the Lottie Moon offering are received through local Southern Baptist churches or online at imb.org/offering. This year's goal is \$175 million.



Echelon Team members study Scripture with South Sudanese training camp participants. Robert Lane says, "If we sent them out alone then they would not make it because they wouldn't be able to stand. But if we send them out as a church, then they can stand against the world." (Photo by Joann Bradberry/IMB)

International Bazaar

50 students from 24 nations share native culture, customs

I am told that a switch flips and we begin to fall apart at 40 years of age. I recently tried to hang onto the last few days in my 30s because I just turned 40.

As I grow older, I find myself appreciating things that I did not necessarily appreciate as a youngster. As an Oneida student, I had the privilege of being surrounded by students from all over the country and all over the world.

Imagine that—a kid from Oneida, Ky., sitting in the classroom next to a kid from New York, Asia, or South America.

Even as a kid, I had at least some small appreciation for classmates from all over the world.

One of my best friends in middle school was from the Philippines, and one of my best friends in high school was from Colombia. This Colombian friend is still one of the best friends I have ever had.

We currently have 50 international students from 24 different nations, and one of our annual campus events is the International Bazaar.

During this designated week, our international students take turns sharing in chapel each day about their native lands and customs.

At the end of the week, the international students are hosted in the homes of our staff to cook some of their favorite foods.

On Saturday evening, our school

family gathers in the gymnasium to sample the food. It is a great night of eating and fellowship, but I must admit the foods I sample sometimes are a tad bit hotter than I can handle.

Cold water is typically in high demand during this event.

It still amazes me that the world comes to this little place. Guests on our campus often ask how kids from the other side of the world decide to come to Oneida.

The answer is very simple. The Lord makes it happen. Oneida really is a mission field, but what we frequently fail to recognize is the fact that these

international kids often return to their home countries after finishing their education.

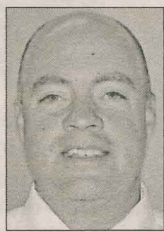
Our hope is that they will take Jesus back with them to wherever home might be.

We share the love of Jesus with these kids, and one of the ways we do this is through daily chapel services. Imagine speaking in chapel to kids from 25 states and 24 nations.

If you are a pastor, we'd love to have you here to do chapel and would love for you to bring some church members with you.

If you are a church member, tell your pastor that Oneida wants him to come speak and then come along with him. We'll even feed you lunch, but we'll go easy on the spices.

This is
Oneida



Larry Gritton

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

J.H. Spencer Historical Society meeting draws record numbers

Bowling Green—Forty-two Kentucky Baptists attended the J.H. Spencer Historical Society meeting on the Monday prior to the annual meeting of the Kentucky Baptist Convention to hear Thomas White's presentation on "James Madison Pendleton and his contributions to Baptist ecclesiology."

White serves as the president of Cedarville University in Ohio and is author of the three volume set of "Selected Writings of James Madison Pendleton."

About 25 more people heard Ronnie Hicks give a second presentation on "The Life and Influence of Bro. Richard Oldham." Included in the meeting attendance were several students from Anchored Christian School in Bowling Green, which was founded by Oldham.

While more than 200 men surrendered to preach under Oldham's ministry, Hicks was the third to do so. After serving as pastor of Baptist churches for more than 40 years, he has retired and returned to Bowling Green.

Rodney Skipworth, pastor of Bellview Baptist Church of Allegheny, was elected president of the historical society. Don Houston, pastor of Oak Grove Baptist Church of Mayfield was elected vice-president, and Ben Stratton, pastor of Farmington Baptist Church, was elected secretary-treasurer.

Former officers include Charles Blair, pastor of Poplar Grove Baptist Church of Hickman; Stan Williams, pastor of First



Thomas White, president of Cedarville University, speaks at the J. H. Spencer Historical Society annual meeting in Bowling Green Nov. 10.

Baptist Church of Cannonsburg; and Stephen Wilson, former chair of history at Mid-Continent University in Mayfield.

The historical society continues work on Volume 2 of "Twentieth Century Kentucky Baptist Biographies." Volume 1 contained 403 entrees written by 97 authors, and 525 copies of the volume were sold.

So far nearly 100 entrees have been written for Volume 2, and Bill Whittaker again is serving as editor. To submit a biography of a significant Kentucky Baptist from the 20th century, contact Whittaker at brwhitt@glasgow-ky.com

The J.H. Spencer Historical Society was founded in 2008 and currently has 103 members. Its purpose is to preserve and promote the distinctives, doctrines and history of Kentucky Baptists. For membership information, write to P.O. Box 26, Farmington, KY 42040. (WR)

Baptist lawmaker stresses importance of relationships in state politics

Louisville—Christians could have more influence in the political world if they would build relationships with their elected representatives, state Rep. David Floyd told the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Committee on Public Affairs earlier this week.

The Bardstown Republican briefed members of the committee Tuesday on some of the major issues that could arise in the upcoming legislative session—and how they can weigh in on them.

Floyd, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel who is a deacon at Bardstown Baptist Church, told the panel made up largely of Baptist pastors that they need to take the time to call their lawmakers, take them to lunch and let them know how they feel about particular issues.

"Build relationships with your legislators," Floyd said. "Relationships matter."

Kentucky Baptists tend to have strong relationships in the General Assembly, considering nearly half the Senate and a third of the House identify as Baptists.

The Cincinnati Enquirer reported this year that Baptist influence in the General Assembly was responsible for the defeat of a proposal to legalize casinos in Kentucky. Floyd said he doesn't expect the proposal to expand gambling beyond horse tracks, bingo halls and lottery terminals to have any better chance in the upcoming legislative session. He said the proposal remains widely unpopular in the Republican-controlled Senate. Because of that, Floyd said he doesn't believe the Democratic-controlled House is willing to tackle the



Rep. David Floyd of Bardstown meets with the KBC Committee on Public Affairs Dec. 2.

issue. House Democrats, many of whom are from conservative districts, do not want to be on record as voting for gambling if it doesn't stand a chance in the Senate, he said.

Floyd also said he expects legislation to be filed again in January to require pregnant women seeking abortions to undergo an ultrasound. However, he said he has little hope of that measure getting out of the House Health and Welfare Committee, which has killed the bill in prior years.

Baptists who want to influence that proposal and others need to speak up now, Floyd urged. Waiting until legislation has been filed to voice support or opposition can be too late, he said, telling committee it's better to be engaged year round.

"I think by the time the vote comes to the floor, you won't find many minds being changed," Floyd said. "The groundwork that has been laid on any issue is important." (KBC)

Traveling the world and studying (Part 1)

Online student combines work travel with studies

Online student Tex Lawson, from Milford, Ohio, travels all over the world as a field service technician.

He is thankful for our online program that is equipping him for the ministry God has placed on his life.

"I came to know Christ when I was 10 years old during VBS," Lawson said. "When I was around 14, I got involved in a lot of sports and slowly stopped going to church. I would go every once in a while, but I did not attend regularly for years."

"After a conversation with my uncle who was a pastor, the Holy Spirit began to convict my heart," Lawson said. "Soon after that my wife and I started talking about going back to church. Both of us knew our family needed to be in church."

"One of our friends invited us to go to church with him. So we started going to a local Baptist church."

"My wife and I turned our lives over to the Lord while attending this church. We got involved in the church doing mission trips and other ministries."

"I had felt God calling me into the ministry for several months but I

hesitated in surrendering," Lawson continued.

"Our pastor specifically directed the invitation during one worship service to ask if anyone was feeling called to the ministry to please come forward. I just stayed where I was at and did not go forward."

"The next Sunday, my wife and I went to visit her parents and attended Oak Grove Baptist Church in Monticello, Ky."

"Pastor Tommy Floyd, who is a graduate of Clear Creek, asked during the invitation if anyone felt they were being called into the ministry to come forward."

"I stayed right where I was. I had never heard a pastor ask if anyone felt called into the ministry to come forward. Now it was two services in a row that this had happened."

"When we returned back to our home church the next Sunday our pastor again asked, if anyone feels called into the ministry, then come forward."

"This time I did not hesitate, I went forward and surrendered to the ministry."

To be continued ...

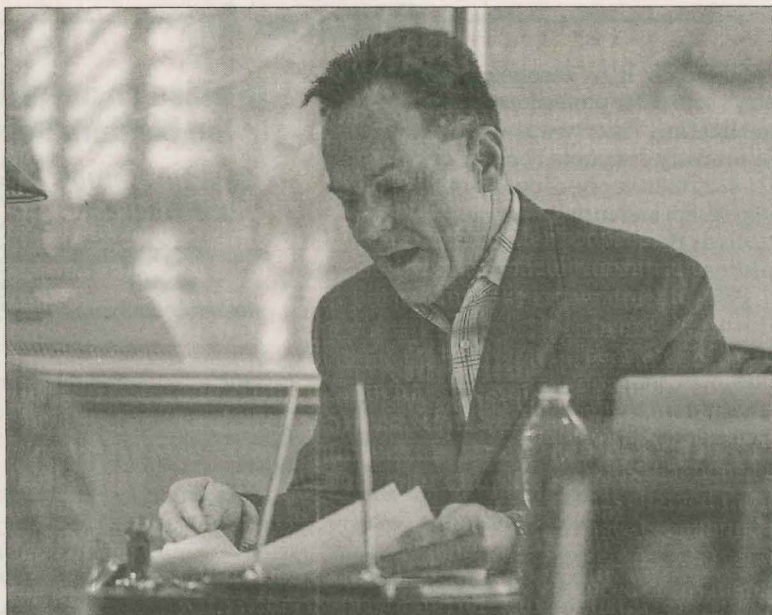
Donnie Fox is president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, 300 Clear Creek Road, Pineville, KY 40977; toll-free: (866) 340-3196; ccbbc.edu; email: dfox@ccbbc.edu.

Clear Creek
Chronicle



Donnie Fox

During a press conference call from his office at Cross Church in Springdale, Ark., Southern Baptist Convention President Ronnie Floyd unveiled his ebook and other tools to help pastors lead their congregations in concerted prayer for the next great awakening.



SBC president, Floyd, releases ebook for prayer, revival

By Diana Chandler

Springdale, Ark.—Southern Baptist Convention President Ronnie Floyd has released a motivational tool book to help pastors and churches across the SBC engage in concerted prayer for the next great awakening in advance of the 2015 annual meeting in Columbus, Ohio.

Floyd announced the release of his ebook in a recent press conference call, joined by Southern Baptist editors, writers and state convention leaders. The announcement also marked the release of the annual meeting theme, "Great Awakening: Clear Agreement, Visible Union, Extraordinary Prayer," based on Romans 13:11, for the June 16-17 gathering.

During the conference call, Floyd highlighted several recommendations from his ebook: intercessory prayer for pastors on Saturday evenings and Sunday mornings in advance of weekly sermons; a month of preaching on the subjects of repentance, extraordinary prayer, revival, awakening and teaching on God's word; the dedication of a full Sunday morning worship service to congregational prayer; a day of prayer and fasting in May, and attendance at the Columbus meeting.

Floyd's ebook, "Pleading with Southern Baptists To Humbly Come Together before God in Clear Agreement, Visible Union, and in Extraordinary Prayer for the Next Great Awakening and for the World to Be Reached for Christ," is available for free download at pray4awakening.com, sbc.net, RonnieFloyd.com, ibookstore.com and other sites.

Additional tools and resources to promote the call to prayer are available on pray4awakening.com, including sermons from SBC pastors, encouraging pastors to learn from one another, Floyd said.

"I believe pastors need handles," he said of the ebook. "I think sometimes we

operate in generalities, like you should do this, or you should do that.

"But I also believe there's historical precedence set in the awakenings, of them coming to agreement about a certain thing.

"I mean for example, let's just say that a few hundred of our churches would really try their very best to have a month where they're preaching on matters like repentance, and revival and awakening and reaching the world for Christ, and fasting and those kind of matters," he said. "I mean that makes a major difference."

Southern Baptists need to be in prayer for their churches, for their pastors, Floyd said.

He called for three minutes of prayer each Saturday evening and Sunday morning for the anointing of God to come upon pastors as they preach His Word.

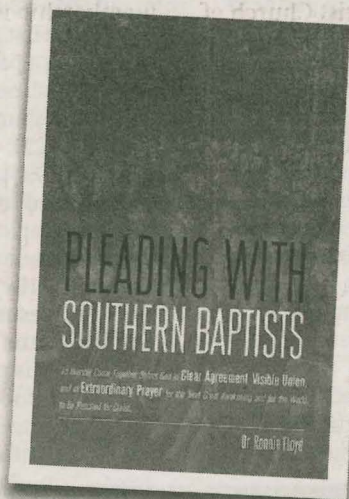
"I think we'll have less conflict if we learn how to pray together," he said. "And we'll have a greater force of the Holy Spirit and His power in our churches if we pray regularly.

And the sunrise and sunset is an image; that's all it is. It's a reminder to pray, either one or the other, when people get up or when they go to bed at night."

Floyd compiled the book in consultation with theologians and leaders across the SBC, and referenced such stalwarts as Billy Graham, Jonathan Edwards, David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Jeremiah Lanphier, Charles Spurgeon, D.L. Moody and William Booth.

"Surely we can embrace with clear agreement that spiritual revival personally, spiritual revival in the church, and spiritual awakening in the nation are all needed so we can accelerate our pace in reaching the world for Christ," Floyd wrote in the book.

"Certainly we can deny ourselves, defer our own preferences, and visibly unite in extraordinary prayer for the next Great Awakening and for the world to be reached for Christ." (BP)



Simplify ... multiply ... dignify

Simply your life, multiply giving, dignify with legacy gift

With all of life's complexities with which we are bombarded daily, the idea of simplifying anything sounds refreshing, does it not?

Even though we Christians know the reason for the season, we still seem to get caught up in the complexities of shopping, cooking, entertaining and traveling and miss the full blessings of giving.

So, why not **simplify** your life, avoid some of the complexities of the holidays, do more for Christ and make sure your giving reflects the true spirit of Christmas.

And while you are at it, why not **multiply** your giving to make your gifts go further? If you are about to write checks to your church and other charitable organizations, let me suggest that you consider, instead, gifting appreciated stocks or mutual fund shares, if that is an option for you.

By gifting appreciated assets, you avoid the capital gains tax and, therefore, lower the cost of your gifts or multiply the value of what you give versus cash gifts.

In addition, why not consider establishing with the KBF a donor-advised fund to which you can make cash gifts and appreciated stock gifts to take advantage of the tax deduction in

2014, but defer the distributions to your church and other charitable organizations to 2015 or later? This is another practical way to multiply your giving.

Call Laurie Valentine or me toll-free for more information on this simple, but effective, tax-advantaged giving option.

Finally, why not **dignify** your giving by considering a legacy gift that pays tribute to someone you love, or one that would perpetuate your own Christian witness beyond your lifetime?

A legacy gift to the KBF to establish a permanent endowment for the perpetual benefit of your church and other charitable organizations near and dear to your heart would be a wonderful way to dignify your 2014 giving.

You could start with a modest gift and make additional gifts in the future, including a bequest or beneficiary designation in your estate plan. Laurie and I are just a toll-free phone call away to assist you.

'Tis the season to simplify, multiply and dignify.

Ky. Baptist Foundation



Barry Allen

Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, PO Box 436389, Louisville, KY 40253; toll-free (866) 489-3533; KyBaptistFoundation.org

Envisioning the Global Church

Motivation to take part in God's mission to reach all peoples

If you have never done so before, take a moment to imagine yourself standing before the throne of God, surrounded by people from every nation, representing every tribe, tongue and language.

Beautiful picture, is it not? Yet, let's be honest, was it difficult to envision?

The truth is, for most of us, our picture of the church is what we see reflected week in and week out through our local body.

It is a challenge to fully grasp the reality of the multitude that will be worshipping alongside us in heaven one day.

While the local church is, in fact, a beautiful image of the body of Christ, the picture is not quite complete.

The body of Christ is a global fellowship of believers, an earthly representation of the throne room of heaven.

So, the question remains: how can we possibly begin to cast a vision for the Global Church to our children and to ourselves? I would suggest that this is just one area where cross-cultural missions can play a vital role.

Whether you take part in a missions experience that is short-term or long-term, international or local, it does not matter.

What matters is that you take the chance to step outside of your comfort

zone in order to proclaim the gospel and serve the least of these.

Mission trips provide an unparalleled opportunity, for both those going and those receiving, to witness the love and fellowship of believers in a cross-cultural context.

It grants the unique experience for you, and those with you, to observe firsthand how the power of God can, and does, cross all borders.

It allows you the gift of seeing how the gospel is, indeed, the power of God for the salvation of every person who believes.

As we quickly approach the Christmas season, and spend focused time reflecting on the grace of God through His Son, Jesus Christ, let us also consider Christ's final and great command to go and make disciples of all nations.

May this glorious vision of heaven humble us, and inspire us to take part in the mission of God to reach all peoples with His salvation message.

This article was written by Kendal Conner, guest relations coordinator for Crossings Ministries.

Crossings Ministries



David Melber

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

MOUNTAINS TO
THE MISSISSIPPI

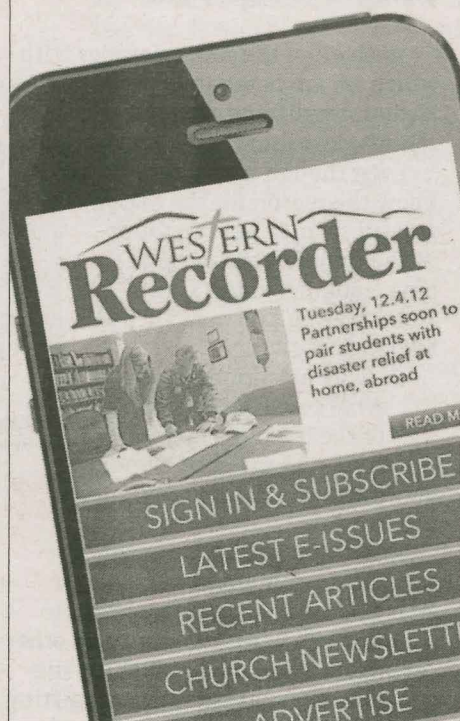
COMPILED BY STAFF

ADAIRVILLE—Adairville Baptist Church will host a retirement reception for **Pastor Mark Bond** on Sunday, Dec. 14, 2-5 pm. A 1991 graduate of Mid-Continent Baptist College, Bond also served at First Church of LaCenter; Second Church of Princeton; Grace Southern Church in Russellville, and he was moderator for West-Union and Logan Todd Associations. Bond has been a member of the Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board from 2005-2007; the Home Mission Board Directors from 1992-1997 and the North American Mission Board Directors from 1997-1999.

LOUISVILLE—Fern Creek Baptist Church will hold a Polar Express Pajama Party for children birth to 5th grade in the Christian Life Center on Dec. 19, 7-9 pm. **Linda Barnes Popham** is pastor.

LYNNVILLE—Rhodes Chapel Baptist Church in Graves County has called **Virgil Hanks** as pastor.

WACO—Waco Baptist Church has called **Mike Erickson** as pastor.

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resumés with references, CD/DVD, or internet link for sermons to: McDowell First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 241, McDowell, KY 41646.

SEEKING: Pleasant View Baptist Church (Lincoln County, Ky.) is searching for a part time worship leader to lead music and direct the choir. Send resumé to pvcsearchteam@gmail.com or the church at 13571 Kentucky Highway 1247, Waynesburg, KY 40489.

SEEKING: Full-time maintenance supervisor. Sets up for church events, cleans church building, performs and coordinates maintenance and repairs. Custodial experience preferred. Flexible schedule, some evening/weekend hours. Must have a pleasant attitude and the ability to give attention to detail. Email resumé to cholm@hurstbournebc.org or mail Hurstbourne Baptist Church, Attn: Carolyn Holm, 8800 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, KY 40222.

FOR SALE: 1996 International School/Church Bus. 52 passenger. Low mileage, and in great condition. \$5,500. Call Mike at 606-437-7642. Located in Pikeville, Ky.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Whitesburg is hiring a full-time position for minister of children, youth and family. Send to tony.brown@whitesburgfbc.org. For more info, call 606-633-2277.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Whitesburg is hiring a part-time director of church music. 20 hours per week. Send to tony.brown@whitesburgfbc.org. For more info, call 606-633-2277.

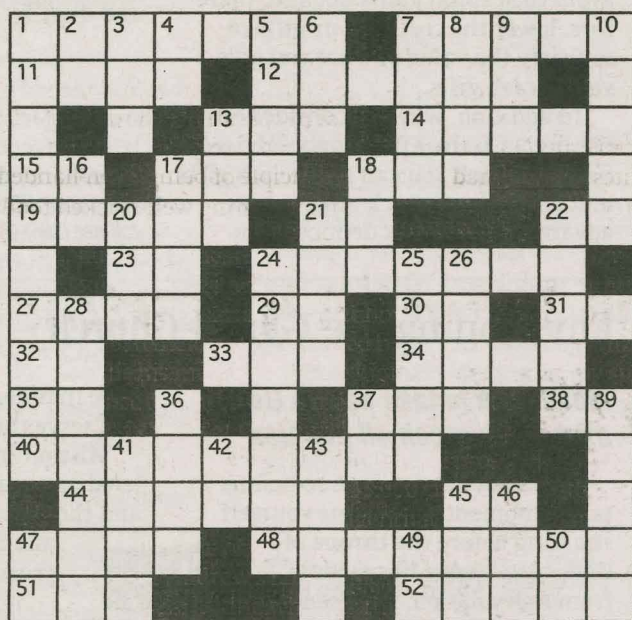
SEEKING: Okolona Missionary Baptist Church located in Nancy, Ky. is seeking a full-time pastor, called by God, to lead the congregation according to God's will. Send resumé to 757 Hwy. 2993, Nancy, KY 42544. Deadline for resumés is Jan. 15, 2015.

SEEKING: Sand Spring Baptist Church in Lawrenceburg is prayerfully searching for a minister to students (grades 6-12). Please email resumés to Pastor Mike Hamrick at mhamrick@sandsspring.org

Bible Crosswords

Across

- 1 "Blessed is the man that _____ not in the counsel of the ungodly" (Psalms 1:1)
7 "The ungodly shall not _____ in the judgment" (Psalms 1:5)
11 "Christ is the _____ of the church" (Ephesians 5:23)
12 "Be like a tree planted by the _____ of water" (Psalms 1:3)
13 "A word spoken in _____ season, how good is it!" (Proverbs 15:23)
14 Nest of an eagle or hawk
15 Preposition: toward
17 "Eyes have they, but they _____ not" (Psalms 115:5)
18 Took food
19 "All we like _____ have gone astray" (Isaiah 53:6)
21 William, abbr.
22 Church, abbr.
23 Californian city, abbr.
24 "Nor _____ in the seat of the scornful" (Psalms 1:1)
27 Revise
29 It's capital is Indianapolis, abbr.
30 English Version, abbr.
31 Morning, abbr.
32 Vesicular exanthema, abbr.
33 Conjunction
34 "His _____ also shall not wither" (Psalms 1:3)
35 Elevated railroad
37 Alvin and Alan
38 Material at the bottom of the page, abbr.
40 "The Lord knoweth the way of the _____" (Psalms 1:6)
44 A cart for hire in India



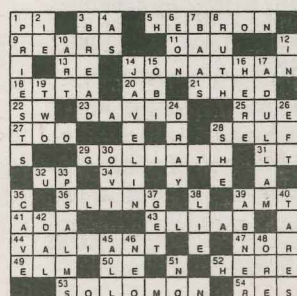
#022

- 45 National Guard, abbr.
47 Word to begin a question
48 To begin on a journey (2 words)
51 A telephone company, abbr.
52 "A tree ... that bringeth forth his _____ in his season" (Psalms 1:3)

Down

- 1 "_____ he doeth shall prosper" (Psalms 1:3)
2 Initials of the man who wrote the equation E = MC²
3 "His delight is in the _____ of the Lord" (Psalms 1:2)
4 Boxing term, knocked down, abbr.
5 "I am the _____ vine" (John 15:1)
6 Go quickly
7 "Nor sitteth in the _____ of the scornful" (Psalms 1:1)
8 "And he shall be like a _____" (Psalms 1:3)
9 Airport surveillance radar, abbr.
10 "Whatsoever he _____ shall prosper" (Psalms 1:3)
13 Department, abbr.
16 Exclamation of surprise
17 "We shall all stand before the judgment _____ of Christ" (Romans 14:10)
18 Amount, abbr.
20 "Therefore, _____ said unto Samuel, Go, lie down" (1 Samuel 3:9)
21 "The _____ driveth away" (Psalms 1:4)
22 "The godly are not so: but are like the _____" (Psalms 1:4)
24 "Nor standeth in the way of _____" (Psalms 1:1)
25 Gives a report
26 The nights before
28 "His _____ is in the law of the Lord" (Psalms 1:2)
36 Cozy talk
37 Gold, chemical symbol
39 "In his law doth he meditate day and _____" (Psalms 1:2)
41 Indian riverbank steps
42 Translation, abbr.
43 Public crier's word
45 Neither
46 Russian chief intelligence directorate, abbr.
47 Northwestern state, abbr.
49 Following, abbr.
50 Seventh note on the musical scale

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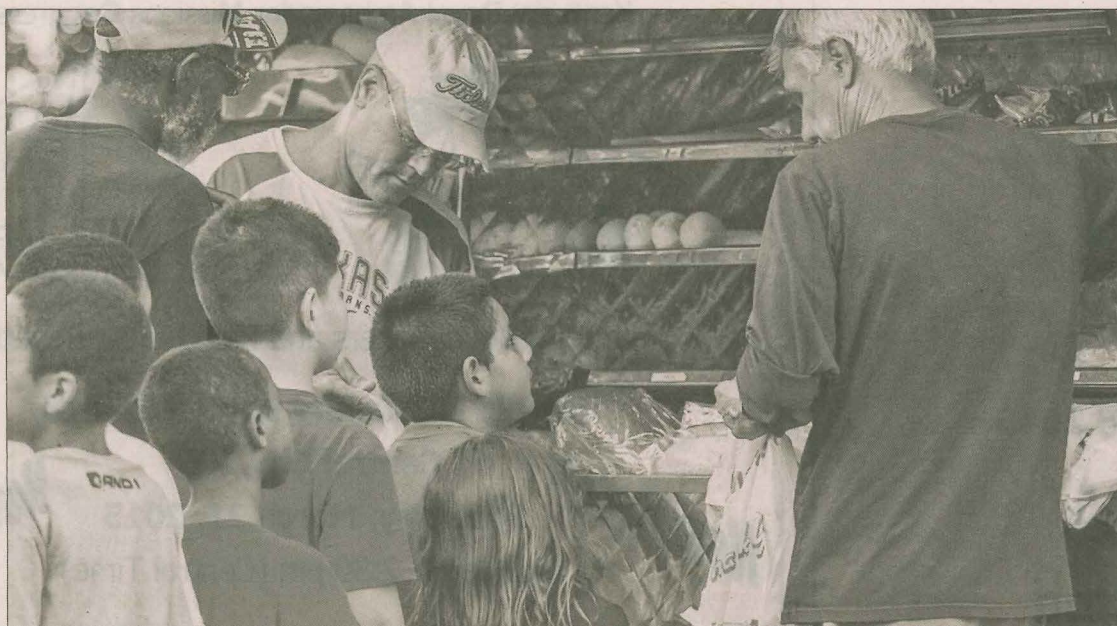
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Volunteers from Lake Hills Church in Austin, Texas, are part of the citywide Mobile Loaves and Fishes ministry to feed the hungry.



Survey: Food ministries aid 1 in 4 families

By Bob Smietana

Nashville—As the holidays approach, food pantries across the country will collect donations to help those in need.

Chances are some of the folks who donate also know what it's like to go to bed hungry.

Nearly one in four Americans (22 percent) say their family has turned to a church-run food pantry in the past for help, according to a new survey from LifeWay Research.

"Churches may have the reputation for serving donuts, coffee and potluck dinners to their members," said Scott McConnell, vice president of LifeWay Research. "But they also are supplying food for many people in need."

The online survey of 1,158 Americans was conducted in September. They were asked to respond to the statement: "My family has received food from a church-run food pantry in the past."

Americans from a wide range of backgrounds said yes.

That includes one in four churchgoers (26 percent) along with one in five (18 percent) of those who never attend services.

One in three African Americans (37 percent) and evangelicals (35 percent) say their family has received help. So do nearly three in 10 (28 percent) of those without a college degree.

About one in four Hispanic Americans (25 percent) and one in five (19 percent) of whites say they had turned to a church-run food pantry.



Those in the West (28 percent) were more likely to say they'd received help than those in the Northeast (17 percent) or South (20 percent).

Older Americans (11 percent) and those with college degrees (13 percent) were among the least likely to say yes.

Some 50 million Americans have trouble putting food on the table, according to Feeding America, a national network of food banks. A similar number of people received food stamps in 2013, according to the USDA.

"There is an abundance of food in the U.S. but plenty of people still go hungry," McConnell said. "Many churches respond by faithfully following the biblical principle of being open-handed to the poor and needy by maintaining well-stocked food pantries to share." (BP)

Green's Bible museum construction to begin in Washington D.C.

By Diana Chandler

Washington—Construction on the Museum of the Bible begins this month as the final tenants leave the Washington D.C. site that will house the building just three blocks from the U.S. Capitol, museum board Chairman Steve Green said.

Presenting the archeological evidence of the people, places and events of the Bible in a non-evangelistic way will hopefully prove the truth of the book, but leave people to decide for themselves whether to accept Jesus as Lord, Green told Baptist Press.

"Evangelism would not be a direct result. The museum would be nonsectarian," Green said. "Our role is just to present the information. But I think that, and our hope is that, it would change peoples' lives, that they would realize that this book is something for them to consider and would embrace its principles and live accordingly."

General contractor Clark Construction is demolishing the interior of the former Washington Design Center that will house the museum. The eight-story, 430,000-square-foot museum is slated to open in 2017 with \$800 million in assets.

"We want to invite all people to engage with this book," Green said. "We think education is the first goal, for people to realize how this book has impacted their lives, and then consider the principles and apply them to their own lives because of the benefits that it brings."



The museum will house the Green Collection, the world's largest private collection of rare biblical texts and artifacts, but will also feature additional exhibits designed to immerse visitors of all ages into interactive, biblically-based settings. The Green family, owners of the Hobby Lobby retail chain, amassed the collection over the past five years and has presented it to the public in a travelling exhibit that Green said has changed the lives of its viewers.

"We've had many that have indicated—and they've gone through our traveling exhibit—it has strengthened their faith for example," Green said of his collection. "They are encouraged by the fact that they can actually see the evidence that shows that what they have been taught is accurate. We believe that many will be encouraged and their faith will be strengthened because of the evidence that is presented."

"There have been many atheists, for example, when they are willing to just let the evidence lead to its natural conclusion" Green said, "I think it leads them to realize that this book is accurate in what it claims to be."

The Bible's history, impact and narrative will comprise the main focus of the museum, Green said, showing the reliability of Scripture as a historical document.

"I think the evidence shows that the Bible is accurate," Green said. "But we won't say it's accurate; we just present the information and we will let the visitor make their own decision."

The museum will present the history of the Bible's narrative and show its impact on society, Green said.

"The evidence will show that when we've applied (the biblical narrative) to principles, it has been good for society and again, that judgment we leave up to

The eight-story, 430,000-square-foot museum is slated to open in 2017 with \$800 million in assets. The museum will house the Green Collection, the world's largest private collection of rare biblical texts and artifacts.

the visitor," he said. "(People) just need to know the story of the Bible. What is the narrative from Genesis to Revelation? (We aim) for the person that has never read it, that knows nothing, to have a basic understanding of what the Bible's message is, what its narrative is."

The museum will allow visitors to explore the Bible's impact on world culture and modern civilization, including literature, fine arts, architecture, education, science, film, music, family, government, law, human rights and social justice.

Archaeological and historic treasures, including the Dead Sea Scrolls, ancient Torah scrolls, early New Testament texts, rare biblical manuscripts and first-edition Bibles will be included, said Cary Summers, the museum's chief operating officer.

"We've assembled," Summers said in a press release, "the best in architectural, interior and environmental design to provide Museum of the Bible guests with an experience that is unique, innovative, customizable to each visitor's level of interest and, most of all, memorable."

Exhibits will allow visitors to walk through a replica of first-century Nazareth; witness the preservation, translation and transmission of the Bible over time, from clay tablets revealing the earliest writings to today's digital Bible. Visitors will take a high-definition, sensory ride through history, offering dynamic encounters with historical people, places and events that changed the world. (BP)

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February 14, 2015

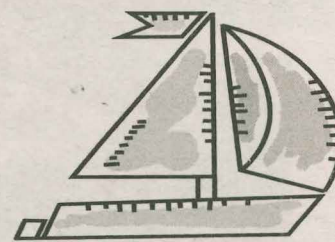
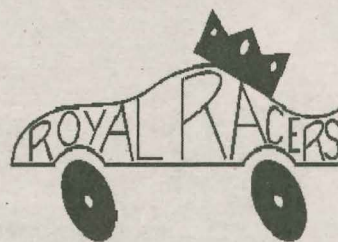
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Participants must bring their own race car

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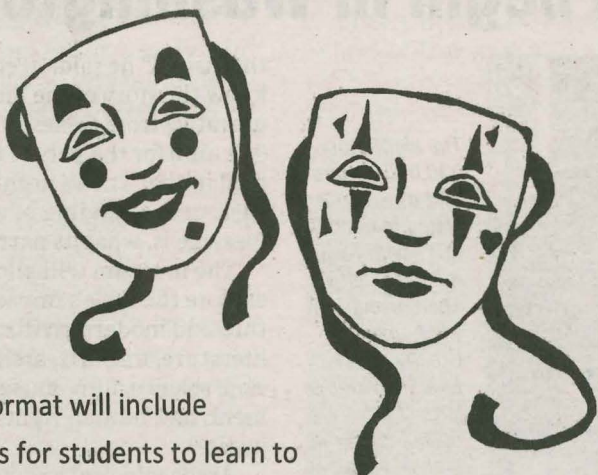
Learn more at www.kywmu.org/ramcon

Creative Ministries Festival 2.0

March 6-7, 2015

Living Hope Baptist Church, Bowling Green, KY

Taking it to the Streets



This year's format will include opportunities for students to learn to use creative ministries to share the gospel and for groups to connect with ministries across the state that can use their talent. Participants will also use their skills in ministry through block parties during the event.

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