

WESTERN Recorder

March 24, 2015

Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

Volume 189, Issue 6

Right, University of Cincinnati students Katy Cornelius and Audie Pearson spend their early morning devotion at the beach before starting a day of ministry with Beach Reach.



BEACHREACH

Impacting lives one ride, one pancake at a time

Photos and story by Robin Cornetel

Panama City, Fla.—“Free pancakes. Free rides,” yelled Hannah Wiggins as she walked down the Panama City Beach strip waving business-sized cards in the air.

After getting brushed off by one-too-many sunburned Spring Breakers, the University of Kentucky student turned and said, “I don’t know why anyone would turn down free pancakes.”

More than 870 Baptist Collegiate Ministry students took part in Beach Reach 2015, including 105 from Kentucky. The servant evangelism ministry offered free transportation and breakfast for two weeks in March to college students on Spring Break in Panama City, Fla.

“There’s a lot of darkness down there,” said Brian Combs, collegiate evangelism strategist at the Kentucky Baptist Convention, “but there are also a lot of people that don’t know Jesus. Beach Reach gives our students the opportunity to practice their faith, while also meeting a need of helping other people encounter Christ.”

But like free pancakes, Combs said the offer of free salvation through Christ gets ignored, too.

Abbey Hudspeth said she dismissed God’s pursuit of her heart despite growing up in a strong Christian home and attending church regularly.

Last Spring Break, Hudspeth was standing in the drink mixer aisle of a major retailer in Panama City when she

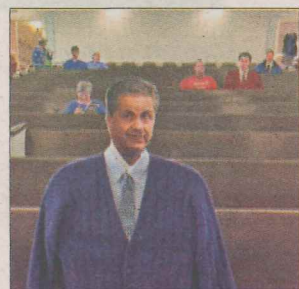
□ See Beach Reach ... Page 8



Above, UK student Zach McKinney (right) plays a game of pool with Fresh Winfrey, a Spring Breaker from Kennesaw State University in Atlanta. Beach Reach students are encouraged to develop relationships with Spring Breakers and look for opportunities to share the gospel.

UK, Duke basketball rivalry engages Hopkinsville congregation

By Myriah Snyder



A cardboard cutout of UK Coach John Calipari at Second Baptist Church in Hopkinsville.

Hopkinsville—The combination of March Madness, former University of Kentucky basketball star Cameron Mills preaching revival services, and a desire to have his congregation sit up front led David Tucker, pastor of Second Baptist Church of Hopkinsville to get creative.

Tucker placed cardboard cutouts of coaches and players

from Duke, University of Louisville and other UK basketball “enemies” in the back rows, along with “reserved seating” for rival team fans, during a March 11 service.

“The goal is obviously to move our folks forward. The further involved you are in church, the more joy you’re going to get out of it,” he said.

“If you sit on the back row and never really engage in the

service, you don’t get as much out of it than if you will just walk on in and get right in the middle of what’s happening.”

Tucker’s efforts to engage his congregation have drawn the attention of television and print media, including USA Today and Sports Illustrated.

After Mills shared photos online, the story started “trending” on social media.

□ See Basketball Rivalry ... Page 2

Whitetrees to receive Kentucky missionary service award

Pikeville—Greg and Alice Whitetree, who operate the Freeda Baptist Center deep in the heart of Appalachia, have been selected by the Kentucky Baptist Convention to receive a service award.

“The Whitetrees have served God faithfully for many years,” said John Morris, executive director of God’s Appalachian Partnership, who nominated the couple for the award. “Throughout their long tenure, God has used them to touch countless lives.”

The Missionary of the Year award is given annually, most often to an individual. However, in several instances, it has gone to couples who work alongside one another.

Recipients of the award must show a commitment to and effectiveness in evangelism, church planting or ministry; demonstrate a willingness to go the second mile; be effectiveness in achieving assigned tasks; demonstrate an unusual commitment to serving the Lord; reflect positively in their representation of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and the North American Mission Board; and be solid examples of on-mission Christians.

“They have not only ministered to children through boys and girls clubs but the entire family through various ministries,” Morris said. “Greg and Alice have become solid pillars in their community. I have witnessed families calling upon them in time of need or crisis at all hours.”

The Whitetrees will receive the award April 10 at the Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting at Sand Spring Baptist in Lawrenceburg. They have served as directors of the Freeda Harris Baptist Center in Marrowbone for over 30 years.

“They love serving the Lord, and it’s evident that they love the people to whom He called them to minister,” said Eric Allen, KBC’s Mission Mobilization team leader. The Whitetrees retired in 2011 but volunteered as co-directors so the ministry could continue.

Allen estimates there have been over 1,200 professions of faith as a direct result of the Whitetrees’ ministry during the last 30 years. (KBC)



Alice Whitetree



Greg Whitetree

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Western Recorder 3-24-2015

Louisville international ministry celebrates 40 years

By Myriah Snyder

Louisville—Forty years ago, the women of Long Run Baptist Association and Kentucky Baptist Woman's Missionary Union groups saw a need to befriend the growing international community in Louisville, and Friendship International was born.

On March 11, members, volunteers and guests old and new gathered to celebrate its anniversary.

Friendship International, modeled after Immanuel Baptist Church of Lexington's program by the same name, offers 10 to 20 classes in Bible, citizenship, English, computer, driver's education, scrapbooking, sewing and other various interests to internationals from every part of the world.

"It's evangelistic in some ways, but primarily it is relationship building. It's just having them become comfortable with being here and knowing they have a friend," Julie Hillen, director of Friendship International, said.

The ministry meets at Walnut Street Baptist Church every Wednesday morning from September through May.

Volunteers are generally "coupled up" with an international, and they are provided rides to and from the church on Wednesday mornings, Hillen said.

Around 120 internationals and 60-70 volunteers attend the weekly meetings. Typically, their meetings include refreshments, an opening assembly, and two class periods.

"Wherever I went, I never saw anyone I had seen before. I didn't even know anyone I could call on the phone. When I



Top, Internationals dressed in traditional clothes participated in a "Roll Call of Nations Parade."

Right, Edna Keeling, a 40-year member of Friendship International, poses with a friend.

came here to visit the program, I felt like I had been set free. I had found my place," said Victoria Santin, an international pastor's wife, whose remarks were read.

"Over the years I have been fortunate to receive letters from many international friends telling us what an impact we have had on their lives, and in many cases how we changed their lives



completely," Edna Keeling, a 40-year member of Friendship International shared. Her words were read by Jane Allen.

However, the internationals weren't the only ones blessed by the ministry.

"Every Christmas, our family would have a group of international friends visit our home for a Christmas luncheon. We loved having people see how we celebrate Christmas in this country and the real meaning of Christmas," Keeling said.

"Friendship has provided me with leadership opportunities, and I have loved every minute of it. It is so easy to love people from other countries, and they teach us amazing things about their culture," she added.

The 40th anniversary celebration began with an invocation from Walnut Street's pastor, Mark Williams, and a presentation from the Friendship Choir led by Jim Brooks.

Following recognition of special guests, Merry and Johly, a couple from Indonesia, sang worship songs in their traditional language and in English.

Internationals in their traditional clothing participated in the "Roll Call of Nations." Altogether, there were more than 35 nations represented. The history of Friendship International was presented with pictures and facts. A candlelight memorial took place for the volunteers and leaders who have passed.

An impromptu offering of praise for the ministry from an unnamed former international friend from Iran ended the celebration.

"I believe that it is my biggest blessing that I come to this today," she said.

Speaking to the Friendship International volunteers, she concluded, "I want to let you know that your faith, your time and your volunteer work means a lot to all of us." (WR)

Freedom Forever celebrates 15 years, honors volunteer

By Whitney Jones

Paducah—Freedom Forever Ministries celebrated its 15th anniversary this month, but it did so without its longest-serving volunteer.

Lee Rust started the women's prison ministry in 2000 after praying for a way to help women in prison and being approached by a chaplain to start the work. Four years later, Sue Evans began volunteering with the ministry, leading small groups in jails and prisons across the state.

Evans passed away suddenly March 16.

"Heaven has gained a woman who simply cannot be duplicated," Rust wrote for Evans' funeral. "It was a privilege and honor to work alongside Sue as she walked the talk of Christ's love and grace to all those she touched."

The Freedom Forever Ministries anniversary celebration March 17 quickly turned into a memorial for Evans with volunteers recalling memories of her service and friendship.

For years Lee and Evans, along with volunteers, have gone to McCracken County Jail, West Kentucky Correctional Complex and Kentucky Correctional Institute for Women in Pewee Valley, teaching women in those



A team of volunteers for Freedom Forever Ministries recently celebrated 15 years of teaching incarcerated women about Christ.

facilities about Christ.

Vickie Wurth is an administrative assistant for Freedom Forever Ministries. She said she's seen change in the many women she has talked with since she began working with the ministry in November.

"I feel that the inmates are a forgotten people," Wurth said. "And that anything that you do for them they are most appreciative, and it just makes you feel good to go into the prison and to know that they need what we're giving them, which is Jesus."

Wurth says after a "Good Grief" session she was a part of at one of the prisons, an inmate said she wouldn't have heard about Jesus if she had never been incarcerated.

Freedom Forever Ministries isn't

tied to one denomination, although Rust, who does the teaching, is a longtime member of First Baptist Church of Paducah. She says many of her volunteers are Baptist, but not all. In fact, Wurth attends St. John's Catholic Church, but she is happy that the ministry is an opportunity for people who believe in Christ—no matter their

denomination—to share the gospel.

"It is a good thing," Wurth said. "We Christians are going to have to stick together."

Freedom Forever Ministries continues to teach and pray with the inmates. Volunteers also encourage the women to memorize Scripture with a points system similar to AWANA. With those points the women can either use them as money in their commissary or for items like lined paper or candy that the ministry brings periodically.

If people desire to honor the longtime volunteer Sue Evans' life, they are encouraged to give to Freedom Forever Ministries. Her family is asking all donations go to the ministry. (WR)

Basketball Rivalry

Continued from page 1

"To me the best part of it all was he (Tucker) dressed them all in cardigans. I found out they were actually David's cardigans, and he's saying that cardigans are going to make a comeback," Mills chuckled.

"A lot of pastors like to do fun stuff—little lessons, little reminders, but I've never encountered anything like this before," he added.

Although this was not the first time that Second Baptist has done something like this, it's the first time it ever went to Sport's Illustrated, Tucker noted. The last time, the cutouts weren't there. But they did use "reserved seating" to get people toward the front for Wednesday night Bible study.

Each service throughout the revival week had a theme.

Wednesday, the last night of the revival, was dubbed "UK night." The church was encouraged to wear UK colors and told "there might be some interesting people in your pew."

People responded well, even those who support rival teams. "The idea that we want to be up front, we want to see what God is doing, we want to get in the middle of what's happening took hold," Tucker said.

Some accused the church of using this to draw a crowd. "I was surprised, but not shocked at the vehemence and anger that some folks had at what we did," he said.

Tucker shared two lessons from the experience: "Don't be surprised when people get upset, and don't be surprised if God takes something you're doing and makes it so much more than you ever would have imagined," he said.

"That's what God does, and that's what people do," he concluded. "We have to get used to both." (WR)



A cardboard cutout of Coach Rick Pitino at Second Baptist Church in Hopkinsville.

'All for You' focus of 112th Ky. WMU annual meeting

Louisville—A prayer rally at the Capitol and a missions block party are among the featured events of the 112th Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting, April 10-11, at Sand Spring Baptist Church in Lawrenceburg.

"All for You" will be the focus of the two-day event which begins at 9:30 a.m. Friday and concludes at 1 p.m. Saturday.

The program features Debby Akerman, president, National WMU; Sisterhood Christian Drama Team; and missionaries from Asia, Europe and Africa. The Mills Sisters will lead music throughout the meeting. Edwina Mills Rowell, Ruth Ann Mills-Moore, and Eleanor Mills Spry, are sister musicians from Campbellsville, Eminence and Murray.

A prayer rally in the State Capitol rotunda will be held on Friday afternoon at 3 p.m. Bus transportation will be provided by pre-reservation. A brief program and prayer time will take place in the rotunda followed by prayerwalking in the capitol building. A prayerwalking guide will be provided.

Ministry projects and conferences at the church will also be offered on Friday afternoon. Kentucky missionary Robin Reeves will guide participants in completing "salvation dolls." These dolls have been sent around the world and used in a variety of settings to share Christ with children. Participants will be able to complete a doll as a sample and take home a pattern for making additional dolls.

Two projects on behalf of the Veterans Administration Medical Center will also take place during the meeting. Participants are asked to bring items such as coffee, sugar and creamer packets, packaged cookies and crackers, puzzle books, pens and notepads. Volunteers will sort items Friday afternoon and also make activity bags for children who accompany parents to appointments at the VA.

A Kentucky Changers celebration will take place in the Friday evening session. Adult Kentucky Changers are doing several projects in the Lawrenceburg area in the days preceding the annual meeting. Homeowners will be invited to attend the celebration, which includes before and after pictures of the work completed.

The Kentucky Missionary of the Year Award will be presented in the Friday evening session followed by a commissioning service for new Kentucky missionaries. Debby Akerman and Susan

Bryant, Kentucky WMU president, will lead a panel discussion with international missionaries to close the service. A reception for missionaries will follow.

The Saturday morning session includes a focus on Baptist Campus Ministry at Kentucky State University. Following a closing presentation by the Sisterhood Drama Team, participants are invited to participate in a missions block party on the church grounds. Creative ministry performances, missionary speakers, and a variety of activities will take place during

the block party. Kentucky Raceway Ministries will be on hand with a race car and participants are invited to bring toy race cars to donate for children's activities at the ministry.

A boxed lunch will be available on Friday at noon. Baptist Nursing Fellowship will host a dinner at the church on Friday. Pre-registration is required for meals and preschool child care. Contact Kentucky WMU for information or download a brochure from the Kentucky WMU web site: www.kywmu.org/annualmeeting. Online registration is also

available.

Joy Bolton is executive director-treasurer of Kentucky WMU.

"Not only do we have a great program, but there will also be the excitement of going to the State Capitol for prayer, completing ministry projects at the church, and the fun of a missions block party to experience how creative ministries can be used in missions," Bolton said. "The Friday night session will be a time of celebration with Kentucky Changers and Kentucky missionaries."

"The sessions, prayer rally, ministry projects, conferences, displays, and all the activities offer something for everyone," she said. "Come see what the WMU tag line 'missions for life' is all about! (WMU)"



Debby Akerman



Susan Bryant

Louisville Acteen among national WMU panelists

By Julie Walters

Birmingham, Ala.—Hydiatu Konneh of Fern Creek Baptist Church in Louisville is among six Acteens selected by national WMU to serve on the 2015 National Acteens Panel. Girls were selected based on their commitment to missions and participation and leadership in their Acteens group, church, school and community.

Konneh will serve on the panel along with Grace-Ann Combs of First Baptist Church, Amarillo, Texas; Kiara Curry and Haley Harrison, both of University Hills Baptist Church, Charlotte, N.C.; Victoria Hernandez of Freeman Heights Baptist Church, Garland, Texas; and Ashley Johns of Tallowood Baptist Church, Katy, Texas.

Acteens is WMU's missions organization for girls in grades 7-12.

Through Acteens, girls grow in their relationship with God and each other as they learn about and participate in missions, develop leadership skills, and live a missional lifestyle.

"In reading this year's applications for the national Acteens panel, I was moved by the understanding these young women have of the value of Acteens and ongoing missions education," reflected

Suzanne Reece, national WMU's ministry consultant for students. "They recognize the importance of learning about missions, praying for missions, and being involved in hands-on missions experiences. They also see how Acteens prepares them to live as missional disciples in the world every day."

In her application, Konneh wrote, "Being an Acteen has taught me to be strong and resilient, to stand for what is right, and that I do not need to follow the crowd to be seen but I should set myself apart from the crowd and be a shining light that the crowd can follow."

Through Acteens, teen girls learn God can use them in His work in the world as they go forth as salt and light, Reece said.

Konneh largely credits her mother, who grew up active in Girls in Action and Acteens in Liberia, for instilling a love for missions in her at an early age. She said her mother told her real joy comes from knowing Jesus Christ and greater joy comes by sharing Christ's love and getting others to know Him.

"I understood that Jesus wanted us to teach others what He had taught us: to be kind, to love another as oneself, to feed the hungry, to care for the sick and dying, and most of all to let others know that He came and died to save us," Konneh shared.

"Learning this, I set my mind on doing this. I prayed hard for God to make me bold to do this. As I prayed, I became

eager to go anywhere and everywhere."

Konneh said sharing her faith through serving others is the most meaningful thing she learned in Acteens.

"Talking to others about God's love and care and giving them hope has strengthened my faith and has opened my eyes to more opportunities where I can be an instrument for God," she wrote.

Her Acteens leader, Becky Frizzell, said, "From the moment I met Hydiatu, I could clearly see she carries the joy and love of our Lord Jesus Christ in her heart. She shares the love of Christ in so many ways. It shows in her words, her actions, and in how she chooses to live her life. She has wisdom beyond her years."

The Acteens Panelists, who serve Feb. 1 to Dec. 31, receive \$1,000 from the Jessica Powell Loftis Scholarship for Acteens from the WMU Foundation.

These National Panelists will be featured during the WMU Missions Celebration and Annual Meeting in Columbus, Ohio, June 14-15, where they will also have opportunities to meet national and international missionaries and interact with missions leaders from across the country.

They will also write articles for The Mag, the Acteens missions magazine, and the Acteens website, wmu.com/acteens.

Churches, associations, and/or state Acteens and WMU groups may request the Acteens Panelists to speak to their group. (WMU)



Konneh

DR volunteers aid hundreds following winter storm in eastern Kentucky



Water delivery from North American Mission Board at First Baptist Church of Raceland. Volunteers with Three Forks and Greenup Baptist associations distributed more than 8,000 gallons of bottled water.

Hazard—Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers came to the aid of hundreds of residents in eastern Kentucky following the latest winter storm by offering clean water, free labor and the gospel.

Volunteers with Three Forks and Greenup Baptist associations distributed more than 8,000 gallons of bottled water to folks with compromised water lines, said Coy Webb, director of Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief.

Extended low temperatures resulted in ruptured water mains across the state, in some cases, contaminating the water supply of entire communities.

State officials estimated that the number of Kentucky households without water climbed to more than

45,000.

Webb said Baptist volunteers also came to the aid of 18 families by removing mud and debris from their flooded homes. Chainsaw units helped another 16 families by cutting down trees.

Volunteers also had the opportunity to share the gospel and distribute 22 Bibles.

"Disasters create opportunities to share about the good news of Christ," Webb said.

"As we reach a hand of help, it often opens the door for us to share our story of faith—and the result is that people often come to Christ."

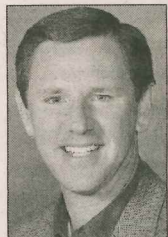
Webb said the volunteers are celebrating four decisions for Jesus Christ that were made during the disaster response. (KBC)

A visit with Pike Baptists

I was very encouraged by a recent trip to Pike Baptist Association. Preaching three times in two days, I was able to fellowship with three congregations and a host of ministers and laypersons from the association.

After a foggy drive through the mountains and along the swollen Russell Fork River, my first day began with joint Sunday School followed by morning worship at Elkhorn City Baptist Church. During the joint Sunday School hour, Pastor Jason Johnson asked that I teach on

Together We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

the Cooperative Program, an assignment I gladly accepted. Elkhorn City is a healthy church in a small mountain town. The church led the association in baptisms last year, with a total of 22. Considering the church averages just more than 100 in worship, the evidence of God's blessing and the evangelistic zeal of Pastor Jason and this church family is astounding!

Growth has the church positioned for renovation work on the building and continued

outreach to the community. In addition, I learned that the Johnsons are finishing training to become foster parents, answering the call to "Be the One" to provide a home to hurting kids in Kentucky. I praise God for this faithful couple, church, and God's faithful blessings upon their work.

Brian Horton invited me to speak at Grace Baptist Church on Sunday evening. Grace is another growing church, evidenced by the ongoing construction of a significant building addition. The year prior to Horton's arrival, the church reported one baptism. They have baptized a total of 19 during his first two years as pastor. I was able to use the Sunday evening discipleship hour to share with the church about the Cooperative Program. I was thrilled to have the opportunity and found church members eager to learn more about the Great Commission work of Kentucky Baptists and Southern Baptists.

Monday I had the privilege of speaking during Pike Baptist Association's semi-annual meeting at host church, Meta Baptist. Meta's bivocational pastor, Bill Staggs, was even bivocational at the meeting, in that after he welcomed everyone to the worship service, he made a quick exit to the nursery where he spent the rest of the evening taking care of children. Meta is a very active church with a great facility that includes a recently completed multipurpose addition the church uses as a ministry to the community.

Not only was I impressed with the local ministry of each of these churches and their pastors, I was impressed by their commitment to take the gospel to the nations. Each church gives sacrificially through the Cooperative Program as a means of obeying our Lord's Great Commission.

Though one of the youngest DOMs in the state, Jason Lowe is effectively leading Pike Association to help churches as they minister amidst difficulties. Lowe is also helping the association make intentional plans for the future in light of pressing financial challenges facing churches and, thus, the association.

With many communities in eastern Kentucky plagued by poverty, drug addiction, and an economy devastated by federal policies effectively dismantling the coal mining industry, some would think people in the region are hopeless. But where Bible-believing churches preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, hope is always close at hand. My prayer is that God will continue to use and bless those churches for the sake of the lost and the glory of His great name.

'Eye-opening' tour spotlights N.Ky.'s lostness, needs

This past weekend, I participated in the second Engage KY vision trip. While this tour's focus was on seeing various ministry sites and discovering outreach opportunities in northern Kentucky, perhaps the greatest benefits of the tours will turn out to be the connections made with associational leaders, area pastors and ministry leaders and a greater understanding of their unique regional challenges.

Jim Woolums, director of missions for Northern Kentucky Baptist Association since last April, pointed out that more than 576,000 people reside within a 10-mile radius of its building. With Cincinnati just across the river, it's a densely populated, bustling area with great human needs and tremendous ministry opportunities. Woolums introduced NKBA's new Hispanic ministries catalyst, Pavel Urruchi—only days on the job—who exudes a passion for reaching the 5,600 Hispanics who live within a few miles of Erlanger Baptist Church.



After Thought

By Todd Deaton

Boone is among the fastest growing counties, according to the North American Mission Board's research, and 68 percent of its residents are not connected to an evangelical church, Woolums noted. Yet, the number is significantly higher in Campbell and Kenton counties, he added. "That percentage creates a sense of urgency in my heart, and I hope it does in yours," Woolums said. He later showed us Bethesda, a house church on a beautiful acreage with a pond close to Independence. The congregation has rapidly outgrown its space and needs teams of skilled volunteers to build a sanctuary. Our route also included prayer for the outreach efforts of Erlanger, Elsmere, Ashland Avenue, Ludlow First and Newport First churches.

We visited Northern Kentucky University and its Baptist Collegiate Ministry Center, where we had dinner with international students and saw firsthand a ministry opportunity to over 16,000 students. Campus missionary Josh Skipper especially has a heart for reaching out to NKU's 600 international students, many of whom are from Saudi Arabia, India, Japan and Korea. "The vast majority have never heard the gospel," he said, "and the greatest burden on my heart is that many will leave without hearing it." Churches can help by offering ESL classes, inviting students into their homes for dinner; conducting soccer or basketball camps; planning camping trips or day

excursions, and hosting cookouts. The key, he emphasized, is building relationships.

Bob Young, DOM for Whites Run Baptists and a NASCAR chaplain, and Doug Eldridge, a chaplain at the Turfway Race Track, one of five horse tracks across the state, suggested ways for reaching out to race fans. RaceWay Ministries works in five campgrounds during the Sprint, Infinity and truck races, distributing Scripture and tracts at various activities for children and adults. Our group drove by Turfway, where we prayed for the 150 Hispanic, Irish and Russian workers who live year-round in dormitories on the backside. A weekly chapel service draws about 40, and the ministry offers game nights, faith-based movies and breakfasts.

Our group also visited Moore Activity Center of South Side Church, where its director, Amy Wilhelmus, related how a former pastor, Harold Pike, prayed for 30 years to purchase a bar, "The Salty Dog," that stood next door. Today, the bar has

been converted into a community center that offers Bible studies and activities for children and youth, tutoring, computers, clothes, Thanksgiving meals and Christmas toys. Recently, backpacks filled with school supplies were given to about 200 kids, she noted. A house on the other side of the church is being renovated to provide accommodations for youth mission teams.

At Ninth Street Baptist, Pastor Richard Fowler told our group about the work of OASIS, a non-profit organization located directly behind the church. The agency provides a link to community resources for food, clothing, rent or utility supplements, employment opportunities, adult education, youth programs, housing, alcohol and addiction recovery, holiday assistance and family issues.

"We need to take gospel throughout North America, but we can't forget our own state," urged Doug Williams, KBC's missions strategist. Engage Kentucky vision trips have three important objectives: 1) to raise awareness of Kentucky's lostness and its great human needs; 2) to stir affections toward partnering with area churches; and 3) to encourage churches to prayerfully consider sending missions teams. The next vision tour will be in Lexington on May 18-19. Pastors and directors of missions should make a point to bring deacons, youth ministers, WMU directors and other church leaders to what can best be described as an "eye-opening" experience.

He gave his blood; Let's give ours, too

The Red Cross is nothing if not persistent. Once they know your type (O+ for me), they are relentless. As soon as 56 days have passed, you are going to get a call. The message is always the same: "We are experiencing a severe shortage of blood and your type is in high demand. Please give."

I try to answer the bell, and so last spring I found myself sitting in the prep room at the Red Cross office in St. Matthews. That's when it dawned on me: it was Good Friday.

I asked my friend, Joe, "Do you have many Christians giving blood on Good Friday?" He said, "Not really."

My iron was good and my

temperature and blood pressure normal, so I moved on into the big room, got hooked up and started my donation. As I sat there, I began to think. Wouldn't it be cool if Christians gave blood on Good Friday? After all, blood was given for us on that day 2,000 or so years ago. An idea formed.

I understand that giving blood is not for everybody, and not everybody who wants to give can. However, if you are able, I would like to invite you to join me in giving

blood on Good Friday this year. Call the Red Cross today (800-723-2767) and make an appointment.

Let's flood the Red Cross with Christians giving blood on Good Friday in honor of Christ. And when you sign in, if there is a place that asks who you are giving for, write in the name 'Jesus.'

David Garrard
Louisville



To submit a letter to the editor, mail to Western Recorder, Attn.: Editor, PO Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253, or send e-mail to Todd.Deaton@WesternRecorder.org. Letters should be no more than 300 words.

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Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

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Preparing for Easter: Help children look to the cross

By Kristen White

Help your child experience the hope and promise of the cross more fully this Easter. Make time to focus on some special Scripture passages about what happened in the days before Jesus' crucifixion.

Read the passages, then use the object noted and the devotional thoughts and activities to help make the stories come alive for your child.

The woman's precious gift Matthew 26:6-13

LOOK: Rub a little essential oil, such as frankincense or myrrh, on your child's arm and look at some pretty perfume bottles. Explain that the perfumes people used in that time were strong and the woman's gift was very expensive.

THINK: Instead of being amazed by the generous gift the woman brought, the people at the dinner criticized her.

Jesus understood her heart. He saw that she wanted to give Him an extravagant expression of her love and gratitude. He accepted her gift and encouraged her.

People are still in the habit of criticizing one another. If you decide to live your life for Jesus, sometimes people will tell you that you are wasting your time and money. But Jesus will always understand your heart.

DO: Do something this week to express love to a neighbor, elderly or faraway friend, or missionary.

A big change Luke 19:1-10

LOOK: View different coins and different denominations of money. Explain that in Jesus' time, people paid taxes as they do today, but the person gathering the taxes often demanded more money than the governor or king required. The tax collectors kept the extra for themselves.

THINK: When Zacchaeus met Jesus, he changed completely. All his life, he had been greedy and had taken from people. Suddenly, he wanted to give. The opposite of taking is giving. The opposite of being selfish is serving. The opposite of being lost is being saved. Jesus came to give, to serve, and to save.

DO: Get a \$2 bill from the bank and give it to someone along with a card with Luke 19:10 written on it.

A cheerful welcome Matthew 21:1-11

LOOK: Pet a donkey at a petting zoo or find a palm branch to display at your house. Picture the scene of the Triumphal Entry with your child.

THINK: People often cheer for a popular celebrity one day and forget about him later. Jesus was not in the world to be a celebrity but a Savior. He heard the people cheering for Him, but He knew they would change their minds in less than a week and demand that He be killed. He did not live for the crowd's cheers. He lived to do His Father's will. Have you ever changed your mind about

what you wanted to do or what you knew was right to do because of what people around you said? Find the kind of courage Jesus had—courage to stand for God's ways.

DO: Make a list of things the crowd says you should do or treasure. Then make a list of things God says you should do and treasure.

A profound passover Luke 22:7-30; John 13:1-16

LOOK: Share a snack of matzo crackers or bread. Remind your child that every year the Jews celebrate the Passover, when God protected the Jews who were slaves in Egypt and then miraculously freed them (see the story in Exodus 12).

THINK: Jesus celebrated the Passover each year with His family and friends. This Passover meal was the most meaningful of all. All of the prophecies and symbols in the supper were fulfilled in Jesus Christ. In this amazing moment, the disciples should have sat in awe. Instead, they argued about who was the greatest person in the room. Each one wanted to be better than the others. Jesus settled their argument by washing their feet. He could have been impatient, but He modeled humility and taught until the very end of His life.

DO: During family worship, wash each other's feet. Serve someone this week.

Kristen White lives with her husband and four children in Shelbyville, where she is a member of First Baptist Church. This article first appeared in ParentLife magazine.

Identifying intimacy anorexia

By Valerie Vincent

I've been married 14 years, and I feel lonely in our marriage. My husband never has time for me. If I bring up our problems, he blames me and makes an excuse that he doesn't have time to talk. I don't want to try anymore.

Douglas Weiss has identified and described this problem in marriages as "Intimacy Anorexia." Weiss defines intimacy anorexia in a relationship as the active withholding of emotional, spiritual and sexual intimacy from a partner:



1. **Busy:** Intimacy anorexics stay busy and have no time for their spouse.
2. **Blame:** The intimacy anorexic will blame their spouse for the problems in the marriage.
3. **Withholding love:** The intimacy anorexic actively withholds love the

way the spouse likes to be loved.

4. **Withholding praise:** Intimacy anorexics do not regularly praise their spouse privately.

5. **Withholding sex:** Not all intimacy anorexics withhold sex, but most withhold intimacy during sex.

6. **Withholding spiritually:** Intimacy anorexics can be very religious by attending church and can even be a spiritual leader at the church. But at home they rarely pray with their spouse or worship or read the Bible together.

7. **Feelings:** The intimacy anorexic is someone who is unwilling or unable to share feelings with their spouse.

8. **Criticism:** Ongoing or ungrounded criticism toward their spouse is a characteristic of intimacy anorexia.

9. **Anger/Silence:** An intimacy anorexic can use anger or silence to control their spouse.

10. **Money:** The intimacy anorexic will use money to control the spouse.

Weiss offers resources that can help couples move into recovery. It is important for the withholding partner to explore his or her past to understand what fuels the need to withhold. God designed us for intimate relationships.

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

Giving without strings

By Laurie Valentine

If making a simple gift now without keeping for yourself any rights or interest in what you give sounds like something you want to do, an outright legacy gift to your church or other charitable cause is the type of charitable gift that will accomplish that objective.

An outright legacy gift is a gift of an asset to charity during your lifetime.

The charity becomes the full owner of what you give it and you have no further

right to income or anything else from the asset you give.

Any type of asset may be used—cash; stocks; bonds; mutual fund shares; real estate; cash value life insurance policies; and interests in

business.

Using appreciated assets to make an outright legacy gift can provide several benefits including a charitable income tax deduction based on the current market value of the gifted asset (if you've owned it for at least a year) and avoidance of the capital gains tax that would be incurred if you sold the asset.

Make a lasting difference for the cause of Christ in this world through an outright, "no strings attached" legacy gift to your church or other Christian cause.



Is it time for a youth ministry security checkup?

By Joe Ball

It is springtime and homeowners all across the country are doing their annual spring cleaning, and they are beginning their list of things that need to be done around the house.

There's a bathroom to be painted, shutters to be replaced, a garden to plow, repair projects that were carried to the garage over the winter, and that tree in the backyard needs to come down. At least that is part of my list. I see most of these things every day, but once I settle in my chair after supper all those things on that list disappear.

Unfortunately, the same may be said about our safety and security measures in our churches. We put them in place a few years ago, but have we updated them and held tough to them since the push to get them implemented? Here are a few areas to look at this spring:

Background Checks—Are they up-to-date? In the worst case scenario could we honestly stand in front of a judge in a courtroom and say that every adult who has contact with our students has had a background check run on them? What about every parent that helps, every teacher, church staff member, bus/van driver, softball coach, children's teacher that a youth helps out on Sunday

mornings, the sound booth guy, a new family that joined the church in the last year and are helping out on Wednesday nights? Have we run a background check on them, and do we know where the background checks are filed?

Pinch points—Are we ready for the pinch points? Here's what I mean. It's an hour before the lock-in and two of your chaperones call to say they have had an emergency come up, and they can no longer make it. Who do you call?

Do you have enough other volunteers that have completed background checks, application process, and have been through the training that you could call to step in? If not, do you run your event short-staffed, allow a couple young adult church members who are home from college chaperone—even though they've not had a background check run? Or, do you cancel the event? What are you going to do if Susie calls and asks if her new boyfriend can come with her? She is 16, but her boyfriend is 19 and no longer in school. He's an adult, so he can sign his own release form, but you don't know him. Can he attend?

Vans and Buses—Summer is coming and our vans and buses are going to be busier than any other time of the year. Is the maintenance up-to-date? Do we have the maintenance records to back it up? Have our drivers been screened, and are

they trained to drive the vehicle they will be driving? Do they have experience pulling a trailer? Do we have a written and enforced policy of number of passengers in a vehicle and safe speeds while driving?

Do we have a written policy on what to do if the bus/van has a flat tire or breaks down? Have vehicles been inspected, and are the appropriate safety triangles, flairs and a working fire extinguisher on board? Do we have a seatbelt policy and is it enforced?

Reporting—If something happens—an accident on the bus or on the property, a child reports abuse, or a worker suspects a child is being abused—do you have response protocol in place? Do your volunteers know what the steps are? Do they know which local agencies to call? Who do you report instances to both internally and externally?

When do you let the insurance company know and who is your insurance contact? Who has the authority to speak on behalf of the church, and how will you make them available to the media? Does the church have legal representation on retainer? No one wants to wade into the weeds with these issues, but someone has to. Are you prepared in case the unthinkable happens? The time for preparedness is before it is needed.

I need to go fix the shutters now.

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

Youth Ministry Corner



Joe Ball

Tears & Rejoicing: Congregation gives building to growing church plant

By Robin Cornetet

Bowling Green—It was a bittersweet celebration for Andrew Baptist Church as members met once more before handing the building keys, and their evangelism legacy in Bowling Green, to a multi-ethnic church plant a half-mile away.

"It has been a time of tears and a time of rejoicing," said Peggy Sharer, an Andrew Baptist member for more than half a century.

A handful of remaining Andrew Baptist members voted last September to give their church facilities to Christ Fellowship Church, a youthful ministry with a heart for the city's low-income and refugee population.

Brian Curtis, pastor at Christ Fellowship, called the decision a "tremendous blessing."

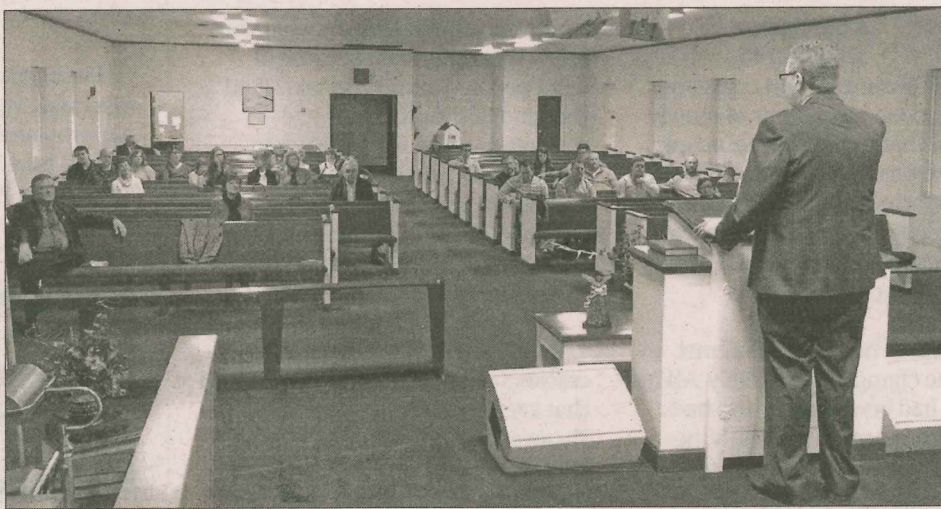
"How many times does another church offer you a building for free?" Curtis asked.

Andrew Baptist is located within the very neighborhood Christ Fellowship seeks to minister to and is so close to an elementary school, the two share a parking lot.

"Plus, it eventually allows us to get out from paying rent," Curtis said.

Since forming in 2009, Christ Fellowship has leased space in a strip mall alongside a grocery store, a pharmacy and a fast-food restaurant located near the city's low-income housing project.

Sixty-six years ago, Andrew Baptist had similarly humble beginnings, holding its first prayer meeting in a store



Jeff Crabtree, KBC regional consultant, joins members in celebrating the 66-year ministry of Andrew Baptist Church in Bowling Green. Members voted to disband and give their building to Christ Fellowship, a nearby church plant.

owned by Claude Sullivan. Worshippers brought their own chairs and song books.

A mission of First Baptist Church of Bowling Green, Andrew Baptist would later meet in a tobacco warehouse for a time before moving in the early 1950s to its present-day location.

"We have a beautiful church," Sharer said, as she reminisced about hayrides, revivals and being baptized into the church at age 10.

Membership at Andrew Baptist swelled to more than 300 at the turn of the century then began to decline, according to Annual Church Profile reports.

As Andrew Baptist shrunk in size, Christ Fellowship was growing.

Membership increased by 61 percent from 2011 to 2013, resulting in the need to rent additional space at the strip mall.

"We had been losing members since about 2003," Sharer said. "I did well to have six kids in Sunday school class."

Andrew Baptist reached out for help from Jeff Crabtree, a church regional consultant at the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

As one of six consultants statewide, Crabtree's job is to work with Kentucky Baptist churches and associations in the South Region by helping them develop plans to grow and fulfill their God-given ministries.

Crabtree offered Andrew Baptist several paths for revitalization, including a complete re-launch.

Members, many of whom are elderly, however, chose to let their legacy of serving God live on through Christ Fellowship.

"It's not the end of a ministry; it's the rebirth of a ministry," Crabtree said. "We're all standing on someone else's shoulders, and Christ Fellowship is just going to build off the shoulders of Andrew Baptist."

Christ Fellowship has big plans for the Andrew Baptist facilities.

To accommodate the church's growing children's ministry, Curtis said the sanctuary will be turned into classrooms.

A new sanctuary will be added to the back of the church, with the majority of the construction completed in July thanks to help from an Alabama-based construction ministry.

Curtis said Christ Fellowship will move into the building within a year.

"This has been a hard transition for them," Curtis said of Andrew Baptist's members. "A lot of these people have been there from the beginning, but clearly the kingdom means more to them than their building."

Sharer agreed the decision was a difficult one for the handful of remaining members.

"God's house needs to be full again," Sharer said. "Andrew's not really closing her doors because they will be open again and the Lord's work will be fulfilled."

"The church is the people, not the building. And that building is to be used for God's people." (KBC)

Mobilize Acts 1:8 church during Mission: One Day training in Berea

Elkton—Turn ripples into waves of change for the kingdom by learning how to mobilize the church at Mission: One Day.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention offers two opportunities for pastors, mission leaders and directors of missions to attend Mission: One Day. Elkton Baptist Church will host the first training event April 16. A repeat of the training will take place at Westside Baptist Church in Berea on April 17.

"Many pastors and mission leaders want to have a Great Commission

impact, but often feel overwhelmed at exactly how to go about it," said KBC Missions Strategist Doug Williams.

"Mission: One Day is designed to help put practical action on our desires to be faithful to the Great Commission, so that ripples of impact, indeed, turn into waves of change."

Participants will gain valuable insight as missions experts lay out the "Five Milestones of a Missional Church" and provide strategies for leading churches and associations.

The jam-packed event will offer eight

breakout sessions from which participants may choose three. Williams recommended pastors bring several people from their ministry team and exchange notes.

Breakout sessions include:

- Developing an intentional global missions strategy

- Marketplace professionals: Mobilizing a global missions force

- Effective long-term missions: Missteps & right steps

- Ministering mercy & the gospel: Sub-Saharan Africa and Baptist Global

Response

- Why church planting in North America? Being a part of NAMB's SEND City strategy

- Embracing European peoples with the gospel: Churches partnering to reach Europeans

- Engaging Kentucky with the gospel: Key areas in need of gospel partnerships

- IMB's 9 affinities: How your church can embrace the nations

Mission: One Day is a free event and lunch will be provided. Register at www.kybaptist.org/missiononeday. (KBC)

Selah Conference refuels weary worship leaders

Louisville—The Easter season can be a stressful time for music ministers, said Kentucky Baptists' worship consultant.

"Music ministers want to lead worshipers in experiencing the power and meaning of Christ's resurrection. There is so much prayer, and stress, and behind-the-scenes planning that when Easter is over, they just want to put life on pause for a moment," said Jason Stewart, worship/music consultant at the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

To serve worship leaders and their teams, KBC is offering Selah Conference on April 9.

The one-day event—named for the Hebrew word meaning a musical pause for pondering—will be held at the Kentucky Baptist Building in Louisville.

Worship specialist Stan Loyd has been assigned with leading the conference. He

served more than 13 years on the staff of LifeWay Worship before retiring in 2013. Loyd has also written, arranged and produced music for choir, handbells and orchestra, and has served as guest conductor and clinician for numerous choral and choir events.

Stewart said he hopes participants find encouragement at the event.

"Anyone involved with music and worship ministry in the local church is invited to join us as we dive into the deeper meaning of worship," Stewart said. "Selah will be a time of fellowship and learning as we explore practical ways to use music more effectively in weekly worship."

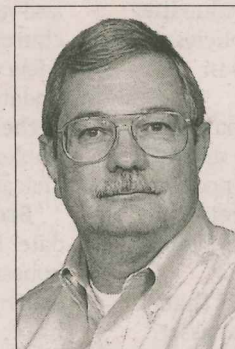
Selah Conference is free through the Cooperative Program. Lunch will be provided. Register by going to www.kybaptist.org/selah. (KBC)

Baker announces retirement as Bates Creek missions director

Richmond—Larry Baker has announced his intentions to retire as director of missions for Bates Creek Baptist Association.

He anticipates wrapping up his tenure with Bates Creek, one of the state's largest Baptist associations with 43 churches and two missions, by mid-August.

Baker and his wife Lou Anne have served in a variety of ministry roles over a long career, including missionaries to Peru. He also served the Kentucky Baptist Convention as head of the Missions Growth Team.



Larry Baker

"We're losing a good one," said Eric Allen, KBC's team leader for Missions Mobilization.

Baker also has served as director of missions in the Christian County Baptist Association, as IMB missionary to Peru and Ecuador, and as pastor of churches in Kentucky, Tennessee and Louisiana.

He has a bachelor's degree from Murray State University, a master's degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological

Seminary, and doctorates from Vanderbilt University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. (KBC)

Corydon: How a struggling church turned around

If church consultants would have visited Corydon Baptist Church 10 years ago, they may have concluded that this was a church headed toward closure and may have 10 to 15 years left before shutting their doors or giving the property to another congregation.

That conclusion would have come from observable evidence. Sunday morning worship attendance in 2004 averaged 35 people; average Sunday School attendance was 22; and, the church did not baptize one person or receive any new members.

Corydon's statistics for 2004 were not drastically different from other years. The church was over 100 years old and there was division in the congregation.

Today, the picture is quite different.

Sunday morning worship attendance runs between 125 and 150, and Sunday School is keeping pace. In 2013, they baptized 12 new Christians, and received 10 others by transfer.

While 2013 was a good year, it was not as good as 2012, when they welcomed 18 new members by baptism and 20 others by transfer. Financial receipts also have increased and mission giving is at about 10 percent of total receipts.

The church now has a full staff, including a bi-vocational pastor, full-time youth and children's minister, and part-time secretary.

Corydon recently completed construction of a \$1.2 million education

and fellowship facility, and they show every indication of being a unified congregation moving forward in Christ's mission for their location.

What happened?

In an interview with 12, mostly senior adult, members, I asked how things were in 2004. They said, "Things were awful. There was a lack of unity in the church, and there was division that had been there for many years."

So, what happened to turn the church around? Here is what I learned:

- They called a bi-vocational pastor, Rick O'Donnell, as interim and later as pastor.

- They received into the membership a family that helped the church minister more effectively to children.

- They began an AWANA program, which allowed them to minister to children of the community and brought new life into the church.

- The reputation of the church began to change from being a family-run congregation to a place where members believe "this is God's church and every person matters."

- Business meetings became less contentious and members began to be more reasonable in listening to one another and proceeding with an action only after people had a chance to unify.

- They grew more concerned about the community and gained a more outward focus regarding programs and ministry. One phrase that is continually

Regional SPOTLIGHT



Todd Gray
West



Corydon Baptist recently completed a \$1.2 million education and fellowship facility.

mentioned at Corydon is that this is "a unified church and members like it that way." They are not, however, a church that is just seeking unity for unity's sake.

They are unified around the Great Commission. While they may not use that term to describe themselves, it is evident this church wants to reach people in Corydon and around the world. They are willing to pray, work, give and sacrifice.

There is a sense that everyone is working together. An example is the building of their new education and fellowship facility. A \$1.2 million construction project is quite an undertaking for a church of 125-150 people located in a town with a population of 715 residents.

The pastor and membership felt the building was necessary to continue their mission. They saved some money and borrowed the remainder. When the building was completed in November 2014, they still owed \$800,000. An

anonymous member gave an unexpected gift of \$500,000, and today—just four months after moving into the building—they owe less than \$235,000.

Corydon Baptist is a great example of what can happen when a pastor and congregation seek to move forward together under the Lordship of Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit and focusing on the people outside the walls of the church building. Given the fact that in 2012 almost 60 percent of Kentucky Baptist churches, according to annual church profiles, reported having 100 or fewer people in worship attendance, Corydon is a model of church revitalization.

May the Lord continue to bless Corydon Baptist, and may other plateaued or declining churches be inspired by what God has done in that congregation, so that all Kentucky Baptist churches may see their best days of ministry effectiveness ahead. (WR)

River View Baptists form D-Groups devoted to making disciples

Chad Morrow, pastor of River View Baptist Church in Nelson County, has been involved in Southern Baptist churches since he was a child. He always thought that the Great Commission was primarily about winning people to Jesus. However, in recent months he came to realize that the Great Commission is about making disciples.

When Chad first came to River View as pastor, there was not a discipleship plan in place. Through prayer and the leadership of the Holy Spirit, he realized that something was missing. He began studying and researching how to make disciples.

He came across a book by Robby Gallaty, pastor of Brainerd Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tenn., titled "Growing Up." Gallaty had been discipled by International Mission Board President David Platt, and in his book he outlines a plan for making disciples using a small-group strategy.

Gallaty's book appealed to Morrow because it presented a plan based on how Jesus made disciples. It was a biblical approach that involved spending time

with people in small groups, investing in them spiritually, and building in accountability for spiritual disciplines, personal holiness and gospel sharing.

Morrow prayed about who needed to be involved. He was led to select men and women, both older and younger, and invited them to participate in a study of "Growing Up." Soon he was leading 12 people through a 13-week study and casting a vision for River View Baptists to begin making disciples.

After completing the study, the 12 people were presented with a challenge to select 2 or 3 people to meet with once a week. Thus "D-Groups" began to form.

Some D-Groups meet at the church; others, in restaurants; and others, in homes. The groups are gender specific and usually meet together for six months. Leaders are given a set of resources called "The Disciple Makers Roadmap." Each session focuses on a Bible-reading assignment, scripture memorization, encouragement and accountability. Topics covered include assurance of salvation, prayer, identity in Christ, worship, fellowship, how to study the Bible, evangelism, life in the Spirit, struggling



After completing a study at River View Baptist, people were presented with a challenge to select two or three people to meet with once a week to spawn new "D-Groups."

with sin, loving and obeying God, and missions.

After six months of meeting together, participants are encouraged to form new D-groups and invest in discipling others. The goal is to make disciples that make disciples.

Twenty-one people are currently involved in D-groups at River View. Spiritual growth and development is taking place among participants, and this is carrying over into the congregation as a whole.

The church, which in the past averaged 80 in Sunday School, has seen more than 100 in Sunday School in the last few

weeks. Since January, they have seen six people come to faith in Christ and be baptized. People are inviting friends and family to church. Two new families have joined recently. Sunday evening worship attendance has grown from 20 to 50. People are sharing public testimonies of their faith in Christ in the worship services weekly.

And, people are investing in each other outside the D-group time. One example is a group of ladies who invested in some younger women in their D-Group by teaching how to can fruit.

Most of all, disciples now are being developed at River View Baptist Church.

Regional SPOTLIGHT



Alan Witham
Central Region



Beach Reach

Continued from page 1

was greeted by a familiar face. It was Jonathan Clark, her Baptist campus missionary at Murray State University.

"I immediately felt embarrassed," said Hudspeth, now in her second year at college.

As a freshman, she had only attended a few BCM events, but enough to know that Clark was in town for Beach Reach.

Looking back, Hudspeth said she was living a double life. She would go to BCM events just to have something to tell her parents, then hide the fact she was hitting the party scene on the weekends.

"I was pushing God away and even stopped believing he existed," Hudspeth said. "I was trying to convince myself that living a lifestyle of sin was going to be okay, that I could handle it, that I would be happier."

After the encounter with Clark, however, Hudspeth said the Holy Spirit began convicting her. Hudspeth purchased the mixers, but spent the rest of the week sober.

"God just kept bringing me more and more people, especially through the BCM," Hudspeth said of the next several months. "They encouraged me to be vulnerable and honest with myself and with God."

Hudspeth later followed the Lord in believer's baptism on May 11, 2014.

As another Spring Break approached Hudspeth found herself packing for Panama City once again, but this time she would be the one reaching out to lost college students

"I really want to encourage and inspire Spring Breakers who are exactly where I was last year," she said. "I want to help reveal to them there is so much more to life than what they are doing. They are worth so much more than they are giving themselves credit for."

On an average night, Beach Reach provides free rides for about 1,200 college students many of whom are high, inebriated or both. During rides, BCM students attempt to quickly engage passengers in spiritual conversations.

"I've seen people get on the van who were drunk, stinking of alcohol, and within a 30-minute ride be able to comprehend a gospel presentation and be saved," said Jon Barron, UK's campus missionary. "I get God bumps just thinking about it."

A group of BCM students from the University of the Cumberlands were able to experience a similar salvation story on their first night of van ministry.

DJ., a tall athletic young man given three-days off by his university coach, found himself at the right hotel chain, but the wrong location. Alone and somewhat inebriated, DJ. asked for a ride.

Some may call it coincidence, said UC Campus Missionary Dean Whitaker, "but there's no such thing as random encounters.

During the 20-minute ride, DJ. prayed to receive Christ. Minutes later, the singing of "Amazing Grace" rose above the rumble of tires on the pavement.

"God is good. He is so good," Whitaker said as he drove the van back to camp with a wide smile.

While teams of Beach Reach students seek to engage Spring Breakers with the gospel through street and van



Above, Dana Ackerman, a Baptist student at the University of Maryland, writes words of adoration to the Lord while spending time in the prayer room at Beach Reach. Students are provided many avenues for prayer while seeking to lift up van and street ministry teams. Ackerman was using the ACTS model of prayer: adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication. Below, Spring Breakers arrive safely at their destination thanks to the free van rides provided by Baptist students during Beach Reach. While van and street teams attempt to engage Spring Breakers in gospel conversations, others back at camp are praying for individuals by name. (Photos by Robin Cornet.)

ministries, an equal number gather in the chapel to pray.

"I believe the power of Beach Reach is that everything is covered in prayer. It is the muscle that moves the hand of God," Barron said.

For hours at a time, students pray for individuals by name. Projection screens provide information about vans, their passengers and where they are going. Teams in the field text in prayer requests throughout the night.

"Pray for Willie. He lives in PBC and believes in pagan gods of nature."

"Just had Abby in the van and she confessed she was a cutter. Please pray for healing of her heart and that she comes to pancakes tomorrow!"

"Just had a conversation with Breon, a Muslim. He had lots of questions and doesn't know what to believe."

"Pray for Mike. He says he knows he is a sinner and he is tired of feeling empty. He wants to pray and receive Christ."

When someone makes a decision for Christ, the word "SALVATION" pops up in the prayer feed and the whole chapel erupts in applause. There were 40 decisions reported during the first week alone.

Beach Reach is about students serving students and free pancakes are one more opportunity to start conversations with lost people, Combs said.

BCM students sometimes arrange to meet people and continue van conversations from the night before over a plate of warm pancakes and syrup.

Volunteers with Georgia Baptist Disaster Relief made more than 27,000 pancakes during the two weeks of Beach Reach, a Lifeway event.

"We have some BCM students who go down there and have never shared their faith before," Combs said. "Beach Reach gets them out of their element and encourages them share their faith with total strangers in an intense environment."

Zach Kiser, a BCM student at



Left, After saying the prayer of salvation, the name of Spring Breakers are added to the wall in the prayer room. During the first week of Beach Reach, 40 college students made decisions for Christ.

Morehead University, described his life as anything but intense, and maybe even a little bit sheltered.

"I was so hesitant to go out and prayerwalk that first night that I was shaking," Kiser said. "I've never been around anything like this before, but it has been a good opportunity for me to grow."

And that push is what makes Beach

Reach so impactful, Combs said.

"When they go back to their campuses, where it's much less intense, they think 'Why can't we do this on our campus?' "It pushes them out of their comfort zone, helps them have an experience that comes back directly to campus and it positions our campus missionaries to plug them in," Combs said. (KBC)

'A.D.: The Bible Continues' series launches April 5

Nashville, Tenn.—Actress and producer Roma Downey and reality TV show producer Mark Burnett shared with media professionals about the making of "A.D.: The Bible Continues," their follow-up project to the popular series "The Bible."

The newest series is a 12-part continuation of The Bible that portrays the history of the early church according to the first 10 chapters of Acts. The series will air on NBC beginning Easter, April 5.

Filmed in Morocco, A.D. will delve into the book of Acts in an effort to show the humanity and true character of the apostles, as well as their devotion to take the gospel to the world no matter the cost. The persecution of the early church and its growth are also highlighted.

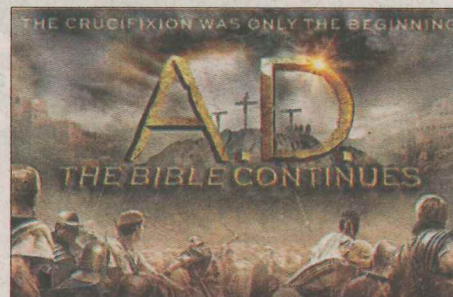
"We pulled from history and Acts using scholars from both areas and wove it together into a cool, relatable, true and compelling story so people can see what the early church was like," said Downey during the National Religious Broadcasters

convention in Nashville, Tenn., Feb. 23-26.

Jerry Johnson, NRB president, commended Downey and Burnett for their research and efforts to capture an accurate portrayal of the historical and political setting. Burnett noted the characters in A.D. look much like people in today's society. Acknowledging the Roman Empire was a melting pot in its day, Burnett said this cast is more diverse.

Burnett credited the opportunity for this latest series to the success of The Bible, which drew 100 million viewers. "In Canada, The Bible series even beat out hockey!" he said.

Southern Baptist Convention President Ronnie Floyd, who also spoke during the NRB conference, endorsed the new TV series in a statement. "A.D. is Biblically based, historically supported, and creatively integrated as an epic story that will captivate generations globally. This drama is powerful, engaging, and intense!" he said.



Burnett said, "Christians need to be noisier in regards to letting Hollywood know what we want."

Devon Franklin, a Hollywood producer who formed a company to make God-honoring films, echoed Burnett's sentiment during the conference. "The power of our unified voices (as believers) is important," he said. "The biggest way we vote is when you turn on your TV and pay for your movies at the box office. So choose those that honor God."

The series begins with the crucifixion

and resurrection of Jesus, and then chronicles an intense time in history. Downey refers to it as, "A time filled with enormous faith, persecution, brutal Roman oppression and the desperate Jewish revolt—a time when history would be changed forever."

Downey said she hopes God will use the new series for His glory. She said Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, Calif., and author of "The Purpose Driven Life," warned her, "The most dangerous prayer you can pray is, 'Lord, use me'—because He might just answer you."

Both Downey and Burnett encountered spiritual warfare last year as they worked on the new series. Their son Cameron collapsed while they were filming in Morocco and was diagnosed with a brain tumor. Burnett said the family continues to "covet the prayers of God's people."

For information, visit nbc.com/ad-the-bible-continues. (BP)

Church plants post 5% gain in 2014

By Kevin Ezell

Alpharetta, Ga.—Southern Baptists planted 985 new churches in 2014—a 5 percent increase over 2013 church starts.

This is very good news as Southern Baptists work toward diminishing the church-to-population deficit that steadily grew larger over the last century in the United States and Canada. It is also good because new churches, on average, reach people for Christ at a higher rate than existing churches.

These are churches like Mosaic in Alberta, Canada. They launched on Easter 2014 and have already seen 200 people give their lives to Christ, with 40 baptized. They started giving to the Cooperative Program shortly after they launched.

Southern Baptists also saw 208 new churches affiliate with our convention in 2014. That means 1,193 new congregations were added to the SBC.

And there are good reports in regions outside the South:

■ In Ohio, 37 churches were planted in 2014, up from 17 in 2013.

■ In New York, 42 churches were planted, up from 20 in 2013.

■ In the Northwest Baptist Convention, which includes Oregon, Washington and some parts of Idaho, 27 churches were planted, up from three in 2013.

More than 58 percent of churches Southern Baptists started in 2014 were non-Anglo. This must continue as our society grows more diverse—especially around large cities where more than 80 percent of North Americans live. Churches must reflect the communities they serve.

There is much more work to be done. We need many more churches and we must continue to make our existing churches healthier and more outwardly focused. My prayer is that the growth we saw in 2014 will be the starting point for a Southern Baptist church planting wave and that more churches and individuals will become personally involved in this effort to evangelize North America.

Kevin Ezell is president of the NAMB.



Three 40-foot containers packed with 83,723 Spanish-speaking Bibles to be distributed among Baptist churches in both Western and Eastern Cuba are expected to arrive in Havana March 25. While worshippers at Calvary Baptist Church in Havana proudly hold up their Bibles in this file photo, an IMB missionary says many more are needed. (Photo by Wilson Hunter/IMB)

80,000 Bibles shipped to Cuba for churches

By Barbara Denman

Miami—Three 40-foot containers packed with 83,723 Spanish-speaking Bibles to be distributed among Baptist churches in both Western and Eastern Cuba are expected to arrive in Havana March 25.

The shipment, slated to leave South Florida during the week of March 15, is the third Southern Baptists have sent to the island nation since 1999. This latest effort brings the total number of Bibles sent to nearly half a million, said Kurt Urbanek, IMB strategy leader for Cuba since 1997.

However, this represents the first time Bibles were shipped directly from the United States. The extensive process of seeking permission from the Cuban government to ship Bibles required a great deal of negotiation with government officials and the Cuban Bible Society, Urbanek explained.

Clearance for this effort was given

in late 2014.

"We are grateful the Cuban government opened the doors for the Bibles," Urbanek said.

In 1992 the Cuban government officially changed its status from an atheistic to a secular society, helping pave the way for the Bible distribution.

The shipment of the Bibles and Bible resources, coordinated by IMB, represents a collaborative partnership between IMB, LifeWay Christian Resources, Florida Baptist Convention, Church by the Glades in Coral Springs, Fla., and other individuals and groups.

LifeWay donated 60,000 Bibles. IMB provided \$100,000 for the project. Florida Baptists contributed \$2,000 from the Maguire State Mission Offering to purchase 600 leather-bound Bibles. Others provided funding for additional Bibles and resources, as well as the cost of shipment.

In the past, the Cuban government required Bibles to be distributed to all

evangelical denominations in the country.

But this time 75 percent—or 64,000—of the Bibles will be allocated to the Havana-based Western Cuba Baptist Convention and the Santiago-based Eastern Cuba Baptist Convention, resulting in each group receiving 32,000 Bibles.

With the Eastern Convention reporting 29,063 professions of faith in 2014, Urbanek said the Bibles potentially will cover the new Christians and only a few more. The eastern churches also will endure a logistical challenge getting the books across the rough Cuban terrain to Santiago, about an 18-hour drive from Havana.

Urbanek reported the Eastern Convention added 1,300 new house churches and missions in recent years.

"The growth is so incredible, that's why Bibles are so important," he said. (BP)

Is national CP showing signs of rebounding?

By Sing Oldham

Nashville—Despite a five-year decline in church membership and a corresponding decrease in per capita giving, the national portion of the Cooperative Program shows signs of rebounding through the first five months of fiscal 2014-2015.

Year-to-date contributions to the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program Allocation Budget through Jan. 31 totaled \$64,702,035, the highest amount since the Jan. 31, 2012, report. Though lower than the \$67.8 million received through January 2010, the \$65.6 million in 2011, and the \$65.1 million in 2012, this marks the first increase through the first four months of the fiscal year since 2012 and may be a harbinger that local churches are recovering from the lingering effects of the Great Recession.

As of Feb. 28, receipts totaled \$82,098,104, or 104.8 percent of the \$78,333,333 year-to-date budgeted amount to support SBC ministries globally and nationally. The total is \$2,371,418 more than the \$79,726,685 received through February 2014.

The two SBC seasonal missions offerings—Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions (LMCO) and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions (AAEO)—have also shown positive signs of rebound.

After plummeting from \$150 million in 2007 to \$141 million in 2008, offerings to the LMCO slowly edged upward through 2012 before reaching and surpassing 2007's previous high in 2013, topping \$154 million for a new record, though still short of the \$175 million goal.

Similarly, gifts to the AAEO declined from its record \$59 million in 2007 before beginning to recover in 2011 and reaching \$58 million in 2014, the third highest amount in history.

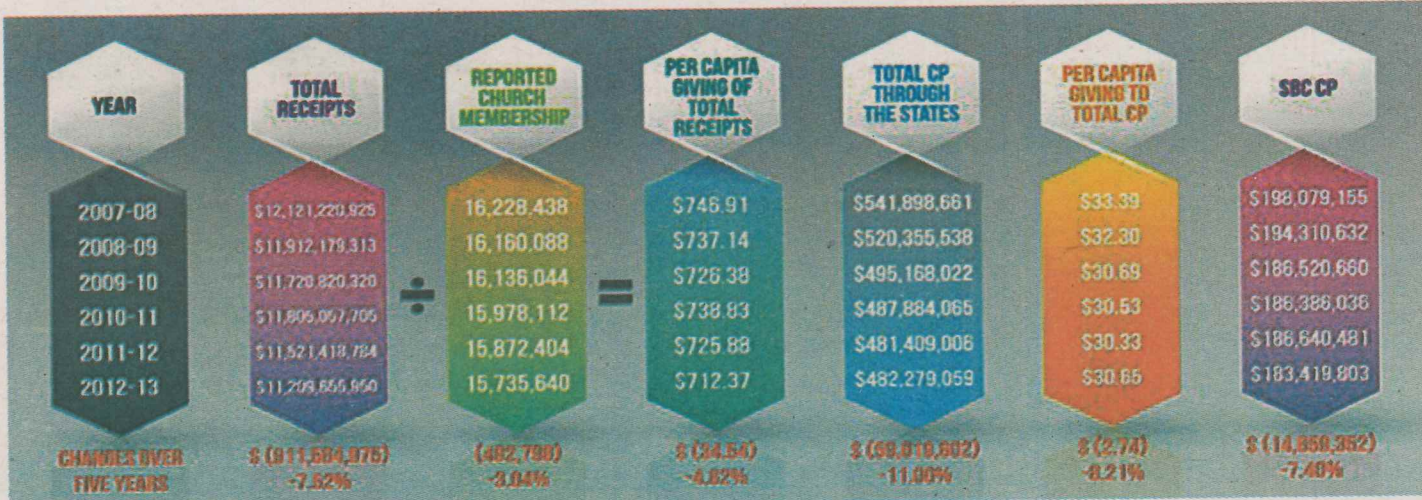
While monthly CP Allocation Budget reports often show significant swings based on the number of Sundays in a given month, the day of the month churches forward their CP contributions to their state conventions, and the timing of when state conventions forward the national portion of their CP contributions to the Executive Committee, this increase through five months, coupled with strengthening support for LMCO and AAEO, show signs that the long-term impact of the global economic crisis may be past.

Five years of decline

This positive report stands against the stark reality that giving to Southern Baptist churches for all causes—general budget gifts, missions offerings, missions trips, and other church ministry needs—declined by more than \$911 million from 2008 to 2013, a decline of 7.52 percent, according to the Annual Church Profile submitted by cooperating Southern Baptist churches.

Total membership declined by 3.04 percent during the same period of time, from 16,228,438 to 15,735,640, a decline of almost one-half million people (492,748).

Per capita giving also declined over the same period, from \$746.91 per



member in 2008 to \$712.37 in 2013. The combination of declining membership and declining per capita giving impacted the ability of local churches to do ministry in their communities and beyond and has been felt by both state Baptist conventions and the SBC.

For example, even though churches increased the percentage of their undesignated receipts forwarded through the Cooperative Program from 5.407 percent in 2011 to 5.414 percent in 2012 and to 5.50 percent in 2013, the actual dollar amount of CP continued to decline, hovering at a 14-year low the past two years.

Cooperative Program model

The Cooperative Program was established in 1925 as a collaborative effort between the SBC and state Baptist conventions to assist churches. Prior to that time, ministry leaders from scores of state and national ministries routinely asked churches for time in their worship services to promote their ministries and to receive designated offerings from the church members.

The churches being asked to fund the ministries of the SBC were, by and large, the same churches being asked to support the ministries of individual state Baptist conventions. Inundated with so many requests from so many legitimate ministries, pastors and churches alike grew weary.

Recognizing the drain these requests made on the churches, pastors and convention leaders hammered out a plan that sought to address the problem of so many special offerings.

Through a unified, cooperative program of giving, both sets of ministries could be funded—state ministry needs and ministry endeavors of the SBC. In 1925, this cooperative venture between churches, state conventions, and the SBC was given the name Cooperative Program.

The "50/50 ideal"

When the Cooperative Program was formed, a 50/50 division between the state conventions and the SBC (after shared ministry costs associated with promoting CP were deducted) was lifted up as an ideal goal. This target has been reemphasized at SBC annual meetings several times over the years, most recently in 2010 with the adoption of the Great Commission Task Force report.

The actual division, however, has never reached that suggested ideal.

During the CP's first five years, the division languished at the 80/20 rate (or

lower)—80 percent remaining in the state, 20 percent forwarded to SBC causes. The division finally surpassed 70/30 in the opening years of the 1930s before falling back to a more or less steady 74/26 rate during the remainder of the Great Depression.

During the World War II years and, indeed, for the majority of the CP's 90-year history, the division forwarded by the states to the SBC fluctuated between 33 percent and 37 percent per year, with three notable exceptions.

During the post-World War II growth spurt in Southern Baptist church attendance and baptisms (1946-1952), the division of CP funds forwarded by the state conventions to SBC causes exceeded 38 percent for the first time, reaching an all-time high of 40.5 percent in 1951.

During the first decade of the SBC's Bold Mission Thrust initiative, which corresponded with the height of the SBC Conservative Resurgence, both of which began in 1979, the division of CP funds forwarded by the state conventions again reached and exceeded 38 percent (1985-1991), reaching a high of 39.1 percent in 1988.

The third era in which the percentage of CP gifts from the churches forwarded by the state conventions to the SBC exceeded 38 percent is in the current post-Great Commission Resurgence time frame (2011-2013), reaching 38.8 percent in 2012 before falling back slightly last year. Figures for 2014 will be released later this spring.

State conventions take strides

Each of the first two periods when the CP percentage forwarded by the states to SBC causes exceeded 38 percent came at times of unprecedented economic prosperity, denominational optimism, and corresponding growth in church membership. The current era stands in marked contrast.

As noted above, the current economic realities faced by cooperating churches have been challenging.

The amount of CP funds contributed by churches to the state Baptist conventions has fallen from a high of \$542 million in 2008 to last year's \$482 million, a decline of 11 percent, putting significant strain on state convention budgets.

Despite the drastic drop in CP gifts to the state conventions, the states have increased the amount they forward to the SBC from 36.55 percent in 2008 to more than 38 percent each of the past three budget years. In order to meet

these demanding goals, states began streamlining ministries and reducing staff by hundreds of ministry specialists and support staff (from 1,750 to 1,350 in 33 state conventions that responded to an Executive Committee survey in 2013).

State conventions continued forward progress in sacrificial giving during their fall 2014 annual meetings.

Churches, CP, and why they give

Churches continue to believe in the ministry objectives their messengers have assigned to the Convention's entities. Cooperating churches forwarded, on average, 5.5 percent of their undesignated receipts through CP in the most recent year of record (2013). While the increase is modest, the 5.5 percent figure marks the second year of growth in average gifts through CP, reversing more than 20 years of decline.

This growth parallels the findings of a 2012 CP survey that asked pastors about the "1% CP Challenge" issued by Executive Committee President Frank Page in 2011. More than 7 percent of pastors reported their churches had accepted the "1% CP Challenge," increasing their CP contributions by 1 percent or more of the church's undesignated receipts in their churches' 2012 annual budget. A 2014 CP survey found that an additional 3,500 churches reported a similar commitment for their 2014 budgets.

The following highlights come from the 2014 SBC Book of Reports:

- IMB reported supporting more than 4,800 fully-funded overseas missionaries who, in conjunction with their work with national partners, reported nearly 6,200 new churches and more than 114,000 baptisms.

- NAMB reported more than 2,600 fully-funded, jointly-funded, and student missionaries, 3,514 endorsed chaplains, 169 church planting catalysts, and 936 new churches planted.

- The seminary presidents reported 15,993 Southern Baptist students among its 18,259 non-duplicating head count enrolled for ministerial training through the Convention's six seminaries.

- ERLC actively engaged hundreds of pastors, churches, elected officials, and the courts and had more than 1,200 "strategic media contacts" on numerous issues of biblical ethics, public policy, and religious liberty. (BP)

Roger Oldham is vice president for Convention communications and relations for the SBC Executive Committee. This story first appeared in the Spring 2015 issue of SBCLIFE.

Are evangelicals ready for immigration reform?

By Bob Smietana

Nashville—When it comes to immigration reform, American evangelicals appear to have high expectations, a LifeWay Research study shows.

Nine out of 10 (86 percent) want more border security. Six in 10 (61 percent) support a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. More than two-thirds (68 percent) favor both. And they want Congress to take action soon.

Those are among the results of a new survey of evangelicals from Nashville-based evangelical research firm. The study, sponsored by the Evangelical Immigration Table and World Relief, found widespread support for immigration reform.

"Evangelicals are united in their desire for significant immigration reform," Scott McConnell, vice-president of LifeWay Research, said.

A number of high profile evangelical groups have promoted immigration reform in recent years, including the National Association of Evangelicals and the National Latino Evangelical Coalition. Many evangelical pastors also support reform.

A November 2014 LifeWay Research study found many pastors want a mix of justice and mercy when it comes to immigration. More than half (54 percent) support a path to citizenship. Most (91 percent) evangelical pastors also say the government should stop illegal immigration.

In the February 2015 study, researchers found similar views among all evangelicals.

Nine out of 10 (88 percent) say reform should respect the rule of law and secure the national borders (86 percent).

They also want to protect the unity of immigrant families (72 percent) and to respect people's God-given dignity (82 percent).

More than two-thirds (68 percent) of evangelicals say it is important for Congress to take action on immigration reform this year. And half (50 percent) are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports border security and citizenship.

"Evangelicals care about immigrants and want immigration reform," said Leith Anderson, president of the National Association of Evangelicals. "We pray for Congress to stop waiting and start legislating."

Evangelicals have worries

Researchers found some differences by age and ethnicity among evangelicals.

Those over age 64 (84 percent) are more likely to want Congress to act than those 18 to 34 (59 percent). Those 18 to 34 are more likely (72 percent) to say reform should include a path to citizenship.

Hispanic evangelicals (79 percent) are more likely than white evangelicals (54 percent) to support a path to citizenship.

Some evangelicals are uneasy about the number of recent immigrants to the U.S., according to the survey.

Almost half (48 percent) say

immigrants drain the country's economic resources.

About a quarter (22 percent) say immigrants are a threat to law and order. One in five believe immigrants threaten traditional American customs and culture.

Others evangelicals view immigration as a chance to love immigrants (40 percent) or to share Jesus with newcomers (42 percent).

Few connect faith and immigration

Few evangelicals say their faith directly shapes their views about

□ See 'Immigration Reform ... Page 12

Ala. Supreme Court halts same-sex marriage licenses

By Art Toalston

Montgomery, Ala.—The Alabama Supreme Court has ordered a halt to same-sex marriage licenses in the state, posing a direct challenge to a federal court in Mobile that overturned the state's marriage laws.

The Alabama court, in a March 3 decision, stated:

"As it has done for approximately two centuries, Alabama law allows for 'marriage' between only one man and one woman. Alabama probate judges have a ministerial duty not to issue any marriage license contrary to this law. Nothing in the Constitution alters or overrides this duty."

This fact, the court stated, "does not change simply because the new definition of marriage has gained ascendancy in certain quarters of the country, even if one of those quarters is the federal judiciary."

The court issued its opinion as one body, "per curiam," rather than identifying judges who drafted the 148-page ruling regarding probate judges who are state officials responsible for issuing marriage licenses. Religious liberty firm Liberty Counsel, which filed a lawsuit on behalf of ALCAP and the Alabama Policy Institute and a county probate judge, said it was a 7-1 ruling by the nine-member court. One recused.

Chief Justice Roy Moore had issued an earlier administrative order to Alabama's probate judges and had spoken publicly about the standoff with the federal court.

Rick Lance, executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, and Travis Coleman Jr., president of the Alabama Baptist Convention and senior minister of First Baptist in Prattville, issued a joint statement March 4, noting:

"We affirm all those who seek to

restore biblical marriage to its rightful place of sole authenticity and legality in Alabama and elsewhere.

"We continue to pray for local, state and federal officials—in all three branches of government—who will make decisions in the months to come about this issue. We continue to pray that any actions and rulings will affirm biblical marriage as the only legally sanctioned form."

Russell Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, noted in a statement to Baptist Press, "The Alabama Supreme Court argument is right about what marriage is, and why the state has an interest in marriage in the first place.

"... The U.S. Supreme Court should reaffirm what they have already ruled: that states have the right to define marriage as the conjugal union of a husband and wife." (BP)

A Christ-centered will

Putting godliness above everything else

New Testament professor R.E.O. White taught the permanent value of Paul's letter to the Colossians is its value both as a theological feast and a spiritual tonic. Paul's purpose in writing was both to instruct a questioning faith and to enrich daily Christian life. Both the fullness of Christ and the Christ-filled life are affirmed by Paul. His fullness is affirmed in relation to God, the universe, the church and experience.

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we strive daily to reflect a Christ-filled life. In Colossians 1:16, Paul acknowledged "all things were created by Him and for Him" to fulfill His purposes and to promote His glory.

How we plan our estates very likely will be the single most important act of financial stewardship we will ever make. Therefore, it is vitally important we acknowledge and affirm His Lordship in our lives with a last will and testament that is Christ-centered. Through faithful estate stewardship we impact the world for Jesus Christ, we advance His kingdom and we acknowledge His Lordship. Furthermore,

obedience in this realm and writing a Christ-centered will enriches our daily lives as we find contentment in knowing the financial resources He entrusted to us in life will be used in fulfilling His purposes and promoting His glory beyond our lives on this earth.

A bequest in a will or revocable living trust for the benefit of your church and other Christian causes is the simplest and most popular way to have a Christ-centered will. The bequest can be a specific sum, percentage or asset; it can be undesignated or designated; it can be outright or for perpetual support through an endowment fund. The reason a bequest is so popular is it allows one to retain complete control and use of the financial resources until death when they are no longer needed.

In 1 Timothy 6:7 Paul reminds us financial resources are temporal; they provide for our basic needs, but we must put godliness above everything else: "For we brought nothing into this world and we can take nothing out of it." When you and I gain that truth, we gain something lasting.

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

Ky. Baptist Foundation



Barry Allen

EBO at Work on display

WMU Annual Meeting highlights ministries supported by EBO

The highlight of the Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting for many is meeting missionaries and ministry leaders. Join us April 10-11 at Sand Spring Baptist Church in Lawrenceburg where many different ministries that receive funding from the Eliza Broadus Offering will have displays. Ministries which receive EBO funding will have a special ribbon attached to their display.

Annual Meeting program guests include Debby Akerman, national WMU president; Sisterhood Christian Drama Team; and guest musicians, The Mills Sisters. Missionaries from Asia and Europe will share about their work on Friday morning. Friday afternoon activities include a prayer rally at the state capitol, making witnessing dolls and activity bags for children, and sorting items donated for use at Veterans Administration Medical Centers in Kentucky.

The Friday evening session will include a special focus on Kentucky and includes greetings from Tom James, KBC president; a Kentucky

Changers celebration; recognition of the Kentucky Missionary of the Year; and a Kentucky missionary commissioning service.

Following the commissioning, a panel of international missionaries will share their thoughts on All for You: Sacrifice. We will give an invitation at the end of the service and pray for God's Holy Spirit to move among us, calling others to mission service.

The Saturday morning session includes Brian Hinton, Campus Missionary at Kentucky State University; Ryan and Christy Campbell, missionaries to Ghana, Africa; and a closing presentation by Sisterhood. We will dismiss to a Missions Block Party which will include performances by creative ministry groups, clowns,

balloonists and missions learning activities. There will be special displays by Kentucky Raceway Ministry, Pit Stop Challenge, and BREAKTime Ministry.

Pre-registration is not required to attend, but meal reservations are due by March 31. For additional information and online registration, go to kywmu.org/annualmeeting.

Joy Bolton is executive director-treasurer of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union, P.O. Box 436569, Louisville, KY 40253; (502) 489-3534; kywmu.org

EBO at Work



Joy Bolton

Historic snow day

Foot of snow cancels classes, students enjoy rare 'free time'

Last March I told you about a two-hour delay we had to one of our school days due to ice, snow and the treacherous condition of our campus roads and sidewalks. That delay was unusual for us.

Although I am uncertain if we have had any snow days in our school's 115-year history, I do know the snow day we took on Feb. 17 was unusual.

Just after we began our school day on Monday, Feb. 16, the predicted winter storm began dumping snow on our campus. Our crew worked hard to clear our roads and sidewalks, but for the duration of the day they fought a losing battle.

As soon as they cleared an area and looked back over their shoulders, the area was nearly covered again.

All totaled we had over a foot of snow. Due to concern for the safety of our staff and students, I made the decision around 4:30 p.m. to cancel school for the following day.

As you can imagine, this was exciting news for our students and teaching staff.

The flip side of that is that this news meant a tougher day of work for our houseparents.

Since the kids would be in the dorms all day, our houseparents had to make some adjustments. They passed this test with flying colors.

Most of our kids slept late and later played in the snow. They also enjoyed

"free time," which is where boys and girls can hang out together under houseparent supervision.

Free time is quite the social experiment, but also a way for our students to unwind a bit.

Several of our kitchen workers had come to campus on Sunday evening so they could be at work after the storm hit. We were a little short-handed in the kitchen, but in spite of the challenges, our staff made sure we were all well fed.

When school commenced on Wednesday, more snow was pelting our roads and sidewalks. I watched as several of our staff assisted in areas in which they don't usually work.

As a matter of fact, I watched from my office window as our campus locksmith shoveled my van out from under the mountain of snow.

I am always amazed by God's provision for this place, and often times His provision is manifested through the work and spirit of his servants in this place.

Of course our students (and staff in more subtle ways) have continually begged for another snow day, which they will be hard pressed to find, but then again I did not ever imagine I would have cancelled even one day of school.

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

Born for missions (Part 2)

Student experiences mission at early age, stirs heart

First year student Joshua Kerr knew at a young age that a ministry of missions and evangelism would be a big part of his life. His early experiences with international mission trips really helped him to see the need to prepare for the calling God placed on his life.

"I am only in my second semester of classes at Clear Creek and they have all been fantastic," Kerr said. "I have learned a lot in class and through the assignments in the short time I have been here."

"The material we have covered has been interesting and relevant. Deep, good study of the Bible is always important, and I have really enjoyed the depth in the Bible classes."

"God has not called me to a specific ministry setting yet, but I know that these classes are preparing me for the future ministry setting that God has planned for me," he continued. "From learning about the Bible and Israel to the importance of evangelism and the importance of missions, I know these will be applicable to my ministry setting wherever God plants me to serve Him."

"The community at Clear Creek is

awesome as well. We really are one big family in Christ Jesus," Kerr said. "The upperclassmen are always willing to help the underclassmen. The professors really care about the individual students, and the friendships you will make here will be important for the rest of your life."

"If God has called you to the ministry, be obedient to His call on your life," urged Kerr. "Seek God's will and guidance for your life. Follow Him wherever He leads, just as He called Abraham in Genesis 12:1: 'Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:' (KJV)."

"Don't make back up plans but trust God fully," said Kerr. "It can be scary at times, but He is always faithful. If you are called here, be obedient to come here."

"God will provide, but trusting God requires steps of faith. There is a place for you here at Clear Creek. We hope to see you in the following semester. Come join us at Clear Creek!"

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



More than 60 Campbellsville University students and 17 CU faculty and staff led 13 Kentucky Baptist churches in Boyle County on March 1.

Campbellsville students, faculty, staff visit 13 area churches

By Joan McKinney and Linda Waggener

Campbellsville—What did 62 Campbellsville University student servant leaders, 17 CU faculty and staff, 13 Kentucky Baptist churches in Boyle County and 1,500 worshippers have in common Sunday, March 1?

"A Day of Kingdom Advance," according to Ted Taylor, director of church outreach. CU coordinated a day to lead churches in Boyle County's South District Baptist Association.

"As students led the worship services, they reflected the Christ-centered education received from the school," Choe Sergeant, a master of theology student at CU and pastor of First Baptist Church of Junction City, said. "Our churches initially set out to be a blessing to the students, but quickly discovered that we instead were the ones blessed by the passion, commitment and proficiency of the CU students toward the gospel ministry."

The day began at 6:45 a.m. with a charge to the group of 225 students, faculty and staff by Michael Carter, CU president, at Junction City First. Then teams went to their respective churches.

Leighton Lavey, a sophomore from Mayfield, led a service and Sarah Stults, a freshman from Hodgenville, and Lucas Humphrey, a freshman from Shepherdsville, gave their testimonies, among numerous others.

"They did a great job in leading worship and preaching. They were very mature and sensitive to God's leading."

They were certainly a blessing to us, and I hope that we were a blessing to them," Brent Rowe, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, said.

"I assumed I would be the one pouring into others this morning, but to my surprise, I was poured into just as much. I was very encouraged by Pleasant Run Baptist. I loved sharing my heart for CU and missions with them," said Taylor Ohlmann, a junior from Louisville.

Christian Naylor of Russellville, a sophomore, said, "It's great to get out into the community and do God's will—especially when you're with many of your own friends at school who share the same passion as you."

Doug Davis, pastor of Perryville Baptist Church, described the event as "warm, personable and focused on the Lord. They brought a fresh and vibrant relationship with the Lord into their worship."

"Today was a powerful day and a true blessing as I bore witness to God further uniting CU students and area churches for the advancement of His kingdom. I am humbled and thankful to have been a part of such an enriching experience," Wes Carter, assistant director of the office of church outreach, added.

Baptist churches involved included: Junction City First, Perryville Church, Perryville First, Parksville, Salt River, Southern Heights, Pleasant Run, Pleasant Hill, Calvary, Gethsemane, Mitchellsburg, North Rolling Fork, and Gravel Switch.

Taylor said CU's church outreach life teams will be in 50 churches this year. (CU)

Immigration Reform

Continued from page 12
immigration.

Researchers asked evangelicals to list which factor has most influenced their beliefs about immigration. About one in 10 (12 percent) chose the Bible, and only 2 percent named their church.

Among other influences: relationships with immigrants (17 percent), friends and family (16 percent) and the media (16

percent).

LifeWay Research also found many churches don't talk about immigration, and few take action on this issue. Two thirds of evangelicals (68 percent) say their church has never encouraged them to reach out to immigrants.

Still, evangelicals are interested in what their faith says on this topic. About half (53 percent) are familiar with the Bible's teaching about immigrants. Two-thirds (68 percent) say they'd value hearing a sermon about the Bible's views on immigration.

"The sad part of this research on immigration is that American evangelicals are more influenced by the media than by their Bibles and their churches combined," Anderson said. "We need to turn off our TVs and open up our Bibles." (BP)

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Campbellsville prof releases book about the history of Christianity

Campbellsville—The time of Christ and the rise of the Christian religion has been documented hundreds of times, but almost never from a Protestant, nor a Baptist, perspective. That is why Joe Early Jr., associate professor of theology at Campbellsville University, decided to write "A History of Christianity: An Introductory Study."

"The book is a history of Christianity from the time of Christ until today," he said. "I hope people will gain an accurate representation of Christian history."

According to the book's description, it "centers on key events, people, theological development and conflicts that have shaped Christianity over its two-thousand-year history."

Early "presents the development of Christianity within the social, political and economic challenges of the times. In doing so, he paints a clear, detailed, and balanced picture of the opportunities and struggles faced by the church and the contributions made by significant people, institutions, and



Joe Early Jr.

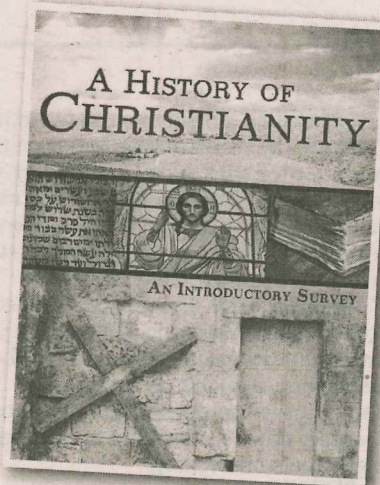
traditions."

"Too often academic presentations of the history of Christianity are a mere pile of bones containing the necessary facts and figures but without any life.

"Early's contribution has commendably assembled these bones and put life and flesh around them in a way that will inspire and instruct," Jason Duesing, provost at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and College, said.

Early has written about 20 academic journal articles and eight other books, including "Readings in Baptist History" and "The Life and Writings of Thomas Helwys."

"A History of Christianity" is 504 pages long and is available at all major book retailers, including Barnes & Noble, Amazon.com, Lifeway and Books a Million. (CU)



OBITUARIES

Tom Shelton, long-time DOM

Beaver Dam—Tom Shelton, retired director of missions for Ohio County Baptist Association, died March 10 at Beaver Dam Nursing and Rehabilitation Center following a lengthy illness. He was 76.

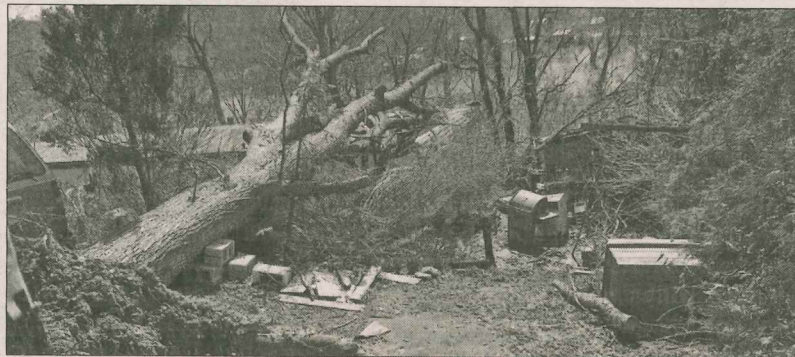
Shelton served as Ohio County Association DOM for 28 years. He was a member at Second Baptist Church of Greenville and former pastor of Bandana Baptist Church near Paducah. He was former treasurer of the Hartford-Beaver Dam Lions Club, an honorary member of Gideon's International and involved in prison ministries.

He is survived by his wife, Jo Anne; son, Thomas David; and daughter, Debra Jo.



Tom Shelton

A Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief team met with a woman in Greenup County after a large tree fell on her home.



Removing huge tree off home yields witness opportunity for DR workers

By Myriah Snyder

Greenup County—A Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief trip to help a Greenup County woman with a fallen tree on her mobile home ended with her being left with verses reassuring her, "once saved, always saved."

Bonnie Price, regional coordinator with Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief in Greenup County, and Bob Kerr, a long-time DR volunteer, were part of a team designated to help a woman who had an 80-foot tree fall on her home.

Although the lady had friends helping remove the tree, Price and Kerr checked on her to make sure everything was getting done.

"We got to talk to her about a relationship with the Lord, and she did inform us that she had asked Jesus into her heart many years ago and that she

was saved," Price said.

But she wasn't secure in her salvation, he added. "With this particular incident, we ministered to her spiritually. We led her through some reassuring verses in the Bible," Kerr said. "That was real comforting to her."

He continued, "My initial reaction was God placed me there especially since I did know this lady, but had not seen her in years. It was just a blessing to be used in that way."

The two left her with a Bible and some tracts.

Disaster Relief teams have completed 16 chainsaw jobs, 10 flood recovery jobs, and nine home repairs following recent winter storms and floods across the state. The help provided opened the door for 28 gospel presentations that saw four decisions for Christ. Additionally, 21 Bibles were distributed. (WR)

Smith, Toby named to SBC Committee on Committees

Columbus, Ohio—Garnetta Smith, of Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, and John Mark Toby, of Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green, have been appointed to the Southern Baptist Convention's Committee on Committees.

SBC President Ronnie Floyd, pastor of Cross Church in Springdale, Ark., recently announced the appointments.

The Committee on Committees will assemble in Columbus just prior to the SBC's June 16-17 annual meeting to



Garnetta Smith



John Mark Toby

nominate members of the Committee on Nominations who, in turn, nominate trustees for the boards of SBC entities.

The Committee on Committees has 68 members, two from each of the 34 states and regions qualified for representation on boards of SBC entities. Bryan Smith, pastor of First Baptist Church, Roanoke, Va., will be chair of this year's committee.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

BEREA—Valley Church has called **Chris Martin** and his wife, **Christina**, as youth leaders. **Evan Eckler** is pastor.

CAMPBELLVILLE—Saloma Church is hosting Palm Sunday Revival on March 29 with worship services at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. **Kenny Rager**, pastor of Life Community Church in Owensboro, will be preaching. A meal and fellowship hour will take place at 5 p.m.

MAYFIELD—Mount Pisgah Church has called **Christopher Hines** as pastor. Northside Baptist Church will host Legacy Men's Conference on April 18, from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Lunch is provided. RSVP to 270-247-4861 by April 9 to attend.

PAINT LICK—Good Hope Church welcomes **Charlie Lynn** as pastor.

Toyota grant assists YSC students

Program allows Sunrise to hire additional tutors, add computers

By John Shindlebower

Providing educational assistance is a vital part of the ministry at Sunrise Children's Services. Many Sunrise kids in our care face unique obstacles in their school work, the result of trauma experience from abuse, neglect or other family crises.

Toyota has assisted Sunrise in this effort in the form of a financial grant. Toyota Motor Manufacturing Kentucky awarded \$17,500 for use at Sunrise's Youth Support Center in London.

"This is our third year for this grant," said Claudia Eggleton, Sunrise's director of corporate and foundation relations. "It has made a tremendous difference in the education and in the everyday lives of children there."

The Sunrise ministry, which began in 1869, is an affiliate of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. The YSC program is a partnership supported by the Laurel County Fiscal Court, churches in the area and Sunrise Children's Services.

Mary Schild, YSC Director, said the Toyota Tutors program has allowed them to hire tutors to help with students who are academically behind, which describes most of the children they serve. The grant allows them to purchase computers that help students make up class work.

"When the students come in each

evening, they are able to work with the tutor and get the help they need, which can include their daily lessons, or get on the computer and work on credit recovery," said Schild.

A 17-year-old student will be graduating with her class in May because of this program.

"She is very grateful for all the help she received at YSC through the Toyota grant. She told us that she would not have been able to accomplish this without the help.

Her story is not unique. Schild said YSC has assisted more than 100 students through this program over the past three years.

"The need for this program is extremely high due to the high dropout rate," said Schild. "The population we serve is among the lowest socio-economic population in Laurel County due to poverty and the high rate of substance abuse. The majority of our youth are living with grandparents or extended family." Many of them have truancy issues because there is rarely anyone forcing them to attend.

"Without partners like Toyota, we couldn't do what we do," said Eggleton. "Toyota truly understands the importance of corporate involvement and demonstrates that to Sunrise through their generosity to us."

John Shindlebower is associate director of communications at Sunrise Children's Services, P.O. Box 1429, Mount Washington, KY 40047-1429; (502) 538-1000; www.sunrise.org.





CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April

7 April Power Lunch, Kentucky Baptist Building, Louisville

9 Selah Conference, Kentucky Baptist Building, Louisville

10 Ky. Missionary Commissioning Service, Sand Spring Church, Lawrenceburg

10-11 Ky. Woman's Missionary Union Annual Meeting, Sand Spring Church, Lawrenceburg

10-11 RISK: Changing the Channel, Capital Plaza Hotel, Frankfort

10-11 Ky. Baptist Disaster Relief Chaplaincy Training, Phases 1&2, Lancaster Church, Lancaster

10-11 Ky. Woman's Missionary Union Annual Meeting, Sand Spring Church, Lawrenceburg

16 Mission: One Day, Elkton Church, Elkton

17 Mission: One Day, Westside Church, Berea

18 Operation Inasmuch Training, Coral Hill Church, Glasgow; Parkway Church, Lexington

19 Ky. Baptist Women's Chorale Concert, Parkland Church, Louisville

24-25 All-State Children's Choir Retreat, Cedarvale Camp & Conference Center, Bagdad

24-25 Women's Regional Retreat, Laurel Lake Baptist Camp, Corbin

SEEKING: Clarkson Baptist Church in Clarkson, Ky., is searching for a part-time youth pastor with additional opportunities to work with AWANA children's ministry. Send resumé to: flfeezorj@hotmail.com. For more information call (270) 242-4567 or go to: www.clarksonbaptist.org.

SEEKING: High Street Baptist Church of Somerset, Ky., is seeking a FT minister of music/education and assimilation. Job description available on the website homepage www.highstreetsomerset.org. Resumes may be submitted to resumes@highstreetsomerset.org.

SEEKING: Plano Baptist Church, an established, family-oriented church in a growing community seeking our new leader. May be bivocational. Must be theologically conservative and willing to participate in community outreach. Able to partner with deacons, trustees, and other church leaders and represent the church in associational and civic matters. Parsonage, favorable compensation and benefit package included. Send resumé to planosearchcommittee@gmail.com or mail to P.O. Box 51712 Bowling Green, KY 42102. No resumes accepted after March 31.

To place an advertisement in the Western Recorder:

Rates available upon request

Call (502) 489-3428 or visit westernrecorder.org



SEEKING: Seeking a pastor of children and families. Should have a seminary degree, a minimum of 5-7 yrs. experience working with children and successfully leading children's ministries, must have a vision and passion for children, helping to equip and mobilize families in ministry. Send resumes to Children's Pastor Search Committee, Zion Baptist Church, 8158 Hwy. 351, Henderson, KY 42420 or email Mark Galloway, Pastor, at mgalloway@zionbaptist.org. Website: zionbaptist.org.

SEEKING: Northside Baptist Church in Science Hill, Ky., is searching for a full-time pastor. We average around 120-150 in worship service and 80-85 in Sunday School. We have varying numbers in our youth and children's groups ... maybe around 20-25 total. We are part of the Pulaski Baptist Association. Resumes may be sent to: Northside Baptist Church, PO Box 129, Science Hill, KY 42553.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister to lead traditional style worship for DeHaven Baptist Church in LaGrange, Ky. According to the applicant's gifts and skills, this position could also be full-time to include duties of associate pastor. Please send resumé via email to: dbcsearchteam@gmail.com or mail to DeHaven Baptist Church, ATTN: Search Team, P.O. Box 349, La Grange KY 40031.

SEEKING: Beacon Hill Baptist Church of Somerset, Ky., is seeking an associate pastor of youth and discipleship. M.Div. minimally required. Full description and compensation information is available at www.beaconhillbaptist.com. Resumes accepted via pastor@beaconhillbaptist.com.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Barlow, Ky., is seeking a full-time youth pastor. Job description is available on our church web-site, www.fbcbarlow.com. Please send resumes to youthpastor-search@fbcbarlow.com.

SEEKING: Highland Ave. Baptist Tabernacle Church in Fort Thomas, Ky., is prayerfully accepting resumes for the position of full-time pastor to lead a congregation with average worship attendance of 100. Experience and seminary degree preferred, but not required. Please send resumé and CD/DVD/Internet link for sermons to: Highland Ave Baptist Tabernacle Attn: Pastor Search Committee, 1080 Highland Ave, Ft. Thomas, KY 41075 or email to pastorsearchhbtcfuse.net.

SEEKING: The pastoral search committee, representing the membership of First Baptist Church of Portland, Tenn., is prayerfully seeking a pastor called by God to serve as the spiritual leader of the local body of Christ. FBC has been gathering together since 1890 and currently has an average worship attendance of 500. We affirm the BF&M 2000 and support the Cooperative Program. Candidates must have an accredited Southern Baptist theological seminary degree and a minimum of five years pastoral experience. Please submit resumes to P.O. Box 7672, Portland, TN 37148 or FBCPortlandTN-SearchCommittee@comcast.net.

SEEKING: Friendship Baptist Church, Oakland, Ky., is seeking a bi-vocational pastor to lead our congregation. Resumes may be submitted by mail: Bobby Williams, 2117 Smiths Grove Scottsville Rd., Smiths Grove, KY 42171, or by email to friendshippastorsearch@gmail.com.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Central City, Ky., is seeking a full-time pastor. Please send cover letter, resumes with references, along with a recent DVD to FBC Search Committee, POB 95, Central City, KY 42330. Electronic communications may be sent to Racer_1@comcast.net.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Hopkinsville, a regional church in a downtown location, is seeking a full-time pastor of students and missions. Pastor responsibilities include: 1) implement a well-rounded program that develops youth and their faith; 2) recruit and train volunteer leaders to work with youth; 3) develop mission opportunities locally, nationally, and internationally that involve youth and adult members; 4) jointly share responsibility with pastoral staff in an effective ministry to a diverse, multi-cultural, inner-city environment. Experience with inner-city, faith-based programs preferred. A 4-year college degree is required; seminary is preferred. Candidate review begins April 12. Additional information and application instructions are available at www.fbchopkinsville.com.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Somerset, Ky., is searching for a full-time middle school youth pastor with experience and passion. Grades 5th-8th. Send resumé to Attn: Middle School Pastor Search Committee—fcoleman@fbc Somerset.org.

SEEKING: Big Creek Baptist Church at Hazard, Ky., is seeking resumes for a full-time position of pastor. Please send resumes with references, CD/DVD or Internet link for sermons to Big Creek Baptist Church Box 3960 West KY 80, Hazard, KY 41701

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Rose Hill Baptist Church in Ashland, Ky. Active attendance 300 with a Christian school and day care. See our website at www.rosehillashland.com to submit a resumé.

SEEKING: Horse Cave Baptist Church is accepting resumes for a full-time associate pastor with an emphasis in worship and administration. Primary qualities are to have a pastor's heart, called to the music ministry, and gifted in administration. Go to horsecavebc.org for complete job description. Send resumé to kdenton.hcbbc@gmail.com or mail to 301 E Main St., Horse Cave, KY 42749

FOR RENT: Two condos for rent in Destin, Fla. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Book now for 2015. lbrammer@charter.net (423) 309-4422.

FOR RENT: Super Discount Rates for ministerial and Christian families at premier resorts—Myrtle Beach and Pigeon Forge. Hundreds of dollars below resort summer rates. Call now. (865) 210-1118.

TRAVEL: Make plans now to join Dr. Roy Lucas and Dr. John Ditty on an inspiring, heart-changing tour of the Holy Land. Dr. Lucas is chair of New Testament, and Dr. Ditty is chair of Old Testament at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College in Pineville, Ky. Both professors have dug at Tel Gezer, Israel. Dr. Lucas has hosted 6 tours and been to Israel 8 other times. Dates: June 4-12. For more information call (606) 337-1355 or (606) 337-1340; or email roy.lucas@ccbbc.edu or john.ditty@ccbbc.edu. Space is limited so call or email soon. Presented through Maranatha Tours.

TRAVEL: Join our senior adults for a tour to Branson, Mo. We have motor coach seats available for May 11-15. In addition to several music shows, our group will see the JONAH show at the Sight 'N Sound Theater. For pricing, to make a reservation, or to get a flyer about the tour, please contact David Dale at Broadway Baptist Church in Lexington. Call 859-276-2592.

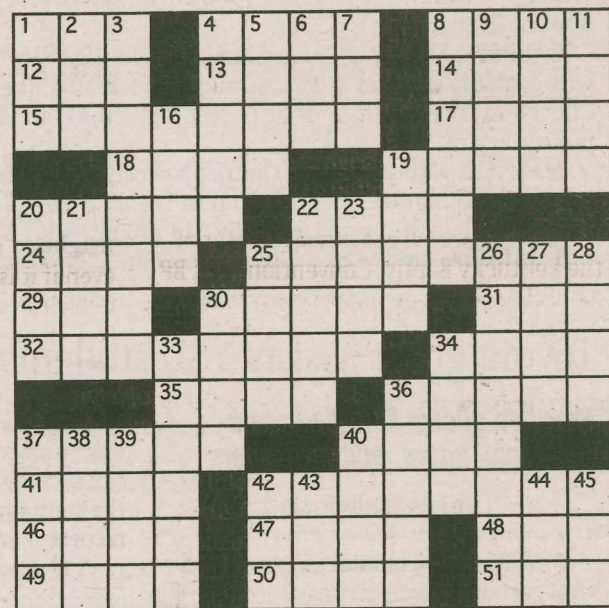
TRAVEL: SBC Hotel Accommodations. Convenient walking-distance, complimentary breakfast. Good hotels. ChristianTravelers.net or 1-800-972-8952.

Bible Crosswords

By Elaine Okupski

Across

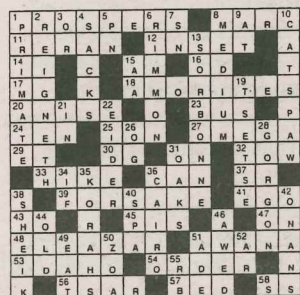
- 1 Son of Abijam (1 Kings 15:8)
- 4 Pull against the bit
- 8 Capable
- 12 Scottish cap
- 13 Jacob's brother
- 14 Narrow strip of wood
- 15 Representative
- 17 "If they drink any deadly thing, it shall not harm them" (Mark 16:18)
- 18 "Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a _____" (Psalms 84:3)
- 19 Large water birds
- 20 "Stand _____, and sin not" (Psalms 4:4) (2 words)
- 22 Unit of hay or cotton
- 24 Fathers
- 25 Son of Asa (Matthew 1:8)
- 29 "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but _____ candlestick" (Matthew 5:15) (2 words)
- 30 Challenged
- 31 Period of time
- 32 "The _____ is worthy of his hire" (Luke 10:7)
- 34 Irish girl's name
- 35 Thomas Hardy heroine
- 36 "And if someone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your _____ as well" (Matthew 5:40NIV)
- 37 "And four wagons and _____ oxen he gave unto the sons of Merari" (Numbers 7:8)
- 40 Slipped
- 41 "Then Jacob _____ his clothes" (Genesis 37:34 NIV)
- 42 Old Testament book named for the Jewish leader who supervised the rebuilding of Jerusalem's wall



#032

- supervised the rebuilding of Jerusalem's wall
- 46 "The children of _____ of Hezekiah, ninety and eight" (Nehemiah 7:21)
- 47 Region
- 48 Strong brew
- 49 Announces
- 50 "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath _____ out her seven pillars" (Proverbs 9:1)
- 51 Title of respect
- 1 "I _____ no pleasant bread" (Daniel 10:3)
- 2 Texas hero, _____ Houston
- 3 Son of Aram (Matthew 1:4)
- 4 Son of Obed (Matthew 1:5)
- 5 "And _____ astonished until the evening sacrifice" (Ezra 9:4) (2 words)
- 6 "Let them shut the doors, and _____ them" (Nehemiah 7:3)
- 7 Purchase
- 8 "As _____ before her shearers is dumb" (Isaiah 53:7) (2 words)
- 9 "And thou shalt make a veil of _____, and purple, and scarlet" (Exodus 26:31)
- 10 Swedish man's name
- 11 Diminutive suffix
- 16 Stitches
- 19 "I was _____ when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Psalms 122:1)
- 20 False god
- 21 Grandmother
- 22 Drills
- 23 Anna's tribe (Luke 2:36)
- 25 Containers
- 26 Herod's wife (Mark 6:19)
- 27 Operatic solo
- 28 Armored vehicle
- 30 Song for two voices
- 33 "If _____ be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather?" (1 Corinthians 9:12)
- 34 "And they came to _____, where were twelve wells of water" (Exodus 15:27)
- 36 "Create in me a _____ heart, O God" (Psalms 51:10)
- 37 Greek letters
- 38 An infinitesimal amount, a jot
- 39 "The beauty of old men is the _____ head" (Proverbs 20:29)
- 40 "I will _____ thee the bride" (Revelation 21:9)
- 42 Nope
- 43 Before
- 44 Boxer Mohammed _____
- 45 "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider _____ ways" (Proverbs 6:6)

#031



March Madness wagers, critics say, not harmless

By David Roach

Nashville—Putting \$10 in the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament office pool may seem harmless, but some contend it violates federal and state laws as well as biblical principles.

"Christians would be wise to refrain from gambling on the NCAA Tournament," said Barrett Duke, vice president for public policy and research at Southern Baptists' Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. "That is the best way to make sure they are not violating their responsibilities before God and their fellow man. They should share their convictions with others and encourage them to refrain as well."

The FBI estimates that more than \$2.5 billion is wagered on March Madness each year, exceeding the amount bet on the Super Bowl, according to the NCAA website. The American Gaming Association estimated that Americans have filled out 70 million brackets this year with the average bet per bracket coming in at \$29.

The NCAA "opposes all forms of gambling—legal and illegal—on college sports," according to the group's website. Betting on college sports provides children an entry point to gambling, prompts individuals involved in

organized crime to contact student-athletes and "threatens the well-being of student-athletes and the integrity of the game," the NCAA said in a statement on its website.

NCAA Tournament betting violates federal law and state gambling laws, professor Marc Edelman wrote in Forbes.

"Most participants who pay entry fees into NCAA Tournament pools will probably never stop to consider the legal implications of their actions," Edelman, associate professor of law at the City University of New York's Baruch College, wrote. "However, while the participants in NCAA pools are rarely prosecuted, there is a strong argument that pay-to-enter contests violate both federal and state law."

Biblical principles relate to betting on college basketball as well, Duke told Baptist Press in written comments.

"When we gamble, we misuse some of the resources entrusted to us by God, we set a dangerous example for others to follow, and we

lend credibility to a practice that destroys millions of people every year. First Corinthians 10:31 reminds the Christian of his stewardship responsibility. The Christian must use all the resources at his disposal in a manner that glorifies God. This includes the little things as well,"

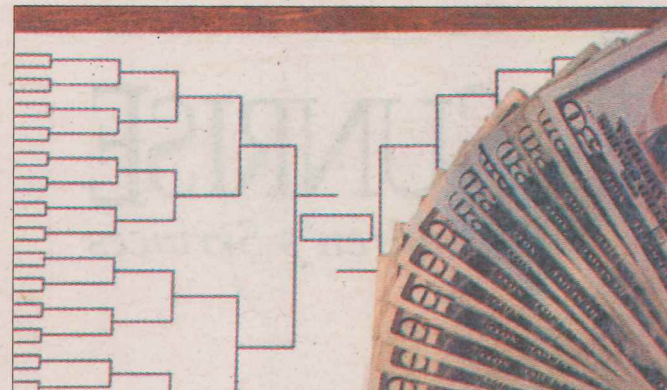
Duke said.

"Also, the principle of neighbor love is important. Jesus illustrated the principle of neighbor love in Luke chapter 10 with the story of the Samaritan. Neighbor love puts the needs of others first. The Christian must bear in mind that he has a responsibility to help others flourish. Engaging in an activity that takes what belongs to another is not putting others first," Duke said.

High levels of chance and significant potential for repetition "are not as prominent in an activity like betting on a sports bracket that occurs once a year," Duke said. Nevertheless, casino gaming, buying lottery tickets and betting on March Madness "are all forms of gambling since they depend ultimately on varying degrees of chance. The faithful Christian would be wise to refrain from any form of gambling."

"The Christian must understand, however, that gambling is not a harmless form of entertainment, like going to the movies," Duke said. "A Christian should do all he can to avoid empowering gambling organizations to continue to prey on people."

Paul Chitwood, executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, told BP gambling "is a growing problem in our nation as well as in Kentucky"—where the



University of Kentucky is the overall number one seed in this year's tournament and the University of Louisville is a four seed.

"When we stop to consider that organized crime is the big winner when people gamble, that the integrity of the games and athletes we love is threatened and that countless thousands of children suffer the consequences of their parents' gambling addiction, one could hardly call gambling a harmless endeavor," Chitwood said in written comments.

Placing even minimal wagers on basketball games violates biblical principles, Chitwood said.

"The Bible warns us repeatedly against the sins of greed and covetousness, both of which are the essential motivations in gambling," Chitwood said. "Moreover, Christ followers are called to love our neighbor. Taking our neighbor's money, even if it is the person in the neighboring cubicle at work, is a poor expression of the love of Christ." (BP)

Psalter for 'Treasury of David' commentary discovered at Midwestern

By Patrick Hudson

Kansas City, Mo.—Scholars at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary have discovered, within the institution's Spurgeon Library collection, a Psalter that 19th-century Baptist pastor Charles Spurgeon used in the compilation of his commentary on the book of Psalms, "The Treasury of David."

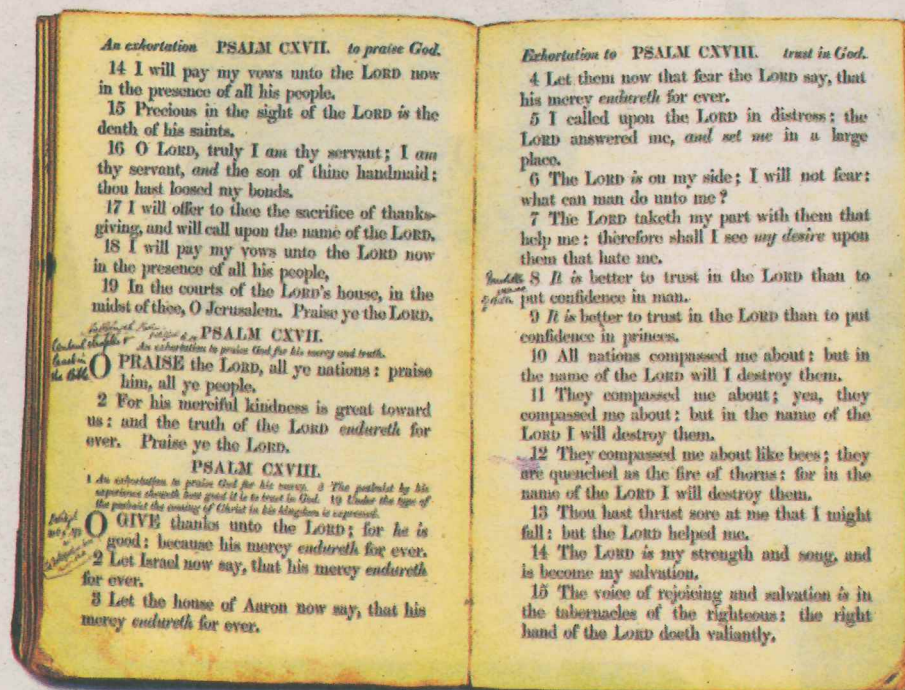
"One of the purposes for the existence of the Spurgeon Library at Midwestern Seminary is to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ for the church and the academy by preserving the personal library of Charles Haddon Spurgeon and fostering a deeper appreciation of his life, legacy, theology and preaching," said Jason Allen, president of Midwestern Seminary.

In recent months, Brian Albert—pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Lenexa, Kan., who is also a research assistant at the Spurgeon Library—has dedicated one day a week to combing through the library's books.

Upon his discovery of the Psalter, published in 1864, Albert brought the work to the attention of Christian George, curator of the Spurgeon Library. George analyzed the book and concluded that much of the handwriting in its margins belongs to Spurgeon and that it was, in fact, a working Psalter that Spurgeon had used.

"Every once in a while," George said, "you get a glimpse of what God has accomplished in the past."

"This Psalter, along with other works in our collection, gives us a window through which God illuminates his amazing work



Brian Albert, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Lenexa, Kan., discovered a Psalter that 19th-century Baptist pastor Charles Spurgeon used in the compilation of his commentary on the book of Psalms.

in the life and ministry of Charles Spurgeon."

In proving its authenticity, Albert noted that the publication date of the Psalter corresponds with the writing of the "Treasury of David" (1865-1885). Each year (1804-1900), this particular Bible was printed by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

"There were hundreds printed annually so it would be easy access for the public to purchase," Albert said. "This fact told me

that the Spurgeon Bible was not an heirloom or family Bible, but was more 'usable.' The fact that this Bible was only on the Psalms also struck my curiosity as to the relationship with the 'Treasury of David.'"

Many of the 50 sources used were also in the Spurgeon collection. Albert said many had personal notations of the specific Psalm passage.

"This indicated to me that at least Spurgeon's personal books were used for

the source material, which verified that this Bible was used by Spurgeon as a 'working Bible.'"

Finally, putting all the pieces together, Albert was led to research "The Treasury of David."

"When I began to correspond the text of Scripture with the notations in the Bible, next to the text with what appears in the 'Treasury of David,' the data was conclusive," Albert said. "This Bible belonged to Spurgeon, was noted by Spurgeon (in part) from much of Spurgeon's personal books to help write the 20-year work 'Treasury of David.'"

In an effort to further verify the authenticity, George sent samples from the Psalter to Malcolm Yarnell, director of the Center for Theological Research at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, for a forensic examination of handwriting.

Yarnell compared samples and concluded that, of the six samples provided, four belonged to Spurgeon, and one "probably" belonged to him.

"This is an important find," Yarnell said, "primarily because Charles Haddon Spurgeon remains the single most important preacher to have ever graced Baptist history."

In 2006, Midwestern Seminary purchased the personal library of Charles Spurgeon, which contains about 6,000 books. Many are heavily annotated with Spurgeon's handwriting. The collection is being archived and analyzed.

The Charles Spurgeon Center for Biblical Preaching is under renovation but slated for completion in August. (MWBS)



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