

WESTERN Recorder

May 5, 2015

Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

Volume 189, Issue 9



Many buildings around Kathmandu are reduced to rubble in the aftermath of the 7.8-magnitude earthquake April 25. (Photo used with permission)

Nepal's quake prompts Baptist response

By Susie Rain

Nepal—Notes of a praise song carried from one end of the field to another. As the song ended, another started from a different direction. The two singing churches provided a sense of peace amidst the screams of neighbors sitting in open fields seeking a safe place from the aftershocks and tremors a day after Nepal's 7.8-magnitude earthquake.

The quake hit April 25 just 50 miles outside the capital city of Kathmandu and reached as far as India, Bangladesh

and the Chinese region of Tibet. It was the strongest in the region in more than 80 years, killing more than 4,000 people, injuring more than 7,000 and leveling buildings and homes. The death toll continues to rise as rescue efforts expand from the cities to the countryside.

Aftershocks continued to rock the area. The largest hit the afternoon of April 26, registering 6.7 in magnitude and causing panic and fear for thousands of locals and tourists packing the streets and open fields of Kathmandu. Government officials

advised everyone to stay outside until their homes and buildings can be checked.

International Mission Board President David Platt shared in a statement to Baptist Press, "My heart immediately broke the moment I heard about the earthquake in Nepal," he said. "Over the last several years, God has given me a unique burden for the peoples of this country. Just over a year ago, I found myself walking amidst the villages in those Himalayan mountains, and as I see reports from

See Nepal's quake ... Page 6

Justices weighing same-sex marriage arguments

By Tom Strobe

Washington—The U.S. Supreme Court debated at length April 28 whether the Constitution requires states to license or recognize same-sex marriages in a landmark case that could produce a nationwide revision of the institution legally and elevate already existing concerns about religious liberty.

In two-and-a-half hours of oral arguments, the nine justices questioned and listened to advocates on both sides of the issue. It's the next step toward a decision that the justices are expected to issue in late June or early July.

The court has at least three options. It could: (1) Legalize same-sex marriage throughout the country; (2) enable states to maintain their authority to define marriage as only a heterosexual union; or (3) require states to recognize gay marriages from other states without prohibiting them from licensing only male-female marriages. Potentially, the justices also could rule in such a way as to deliver a wider victory for the rights of gays and lesbians.

Russell Moore, the Southern Baptist Convention's lead ethicist, said in a statement April 28 he doesn't think the Supreme Court "should redefine marriage, because I don't think the Court invented marriage in the first place."

"The action of finding some illusory 14th Amendment right to same-sex marriage in the Constitution—a right unknown not only to the Constitution's drafters and ratifiers but to every

See Same-sex marriage ... Page 9

Board selects Carnes as Foundation president

By Todd Deaton

Louisville—The Kentucky Baptist Foundation's Board of Directors has picked its next president.

Richard Carnes, vice president and senior client advisor for PNC Bank in Louisville, was unanimously selected April 23 by board members to become KBF president. If approved by members of the Mission Board of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, when they meet May 4-5 in Louisville, Carnes will return to the helm of the agency he previously led for seven years.

"The board of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation strongly believes that Richard Carnes has the qualifications and experience to be an outstanding leader

See Carnes selected ... Page 3



Richard Carnes

Baltimore violence needs 'a better way'

By Art Toalston

Nashville—Racial turmoil in Baltimore commanded the nation's attention April 27-28.

"While we watch on the screen and read what is happening in Baltimore," Southern Baptist Convention President Ronnie Floyd said, "we need to pray for our pastors and churches in Baltimore as they rise up together, calling Baltimore to a better way to live personally and collectively."

"This better way is God's way, the gospel way," Floyd, pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, said in a statement to Baptist Press. "In this critical hour in our nation, the greatest hope for Baltimore and for all of America is a mighty spiritual awakening."

Rioting, looting and arson broke out in Baltimore after the funeral of Freddie Gray, a 25-year-old African American who died of a spinal injury while in police



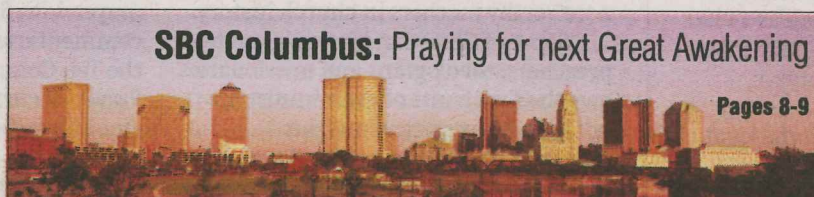
Riots took place in Baltimore April 27 after the funeral of Freddie Gray, a 25-year-old African American who died in police custody 15 days earlier.

custody 15 days earlier.

In Baltimore, dozens have been arrested and injured, including more than a dozen Baltimore police officers.

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SBC Columbus: Praying for next Great Awakening

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Chaplain ministers behind the scenes at Churchill Downs

By Andrew J.W. Smith

Louisville—As a chaplain, Chris Wong is used to talking to people he's never met. As a chaplain at Churchill Downs, sometimes that gets you on TV.

After last year's Kentucky Derby, Wong struck up a conversation with a woman on the grounds. That woman turned out to be the wife of Steven Coburn, owner of the winning horse, California Chrome, and they just happened to be in the background of NBC's post-race interview.

Wong, a Master of Divinity student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, immediately received a text message to let him know he was on national television. Wong laughs about it now, saying the whole event was a unique experience.

"To see it live and right there on the track was really exciting," he said.

As the Kentucky Derby was set to run last Saturday for the 141st time, the national sports media was focused again on Churchill Downs for just one day. But activity is ongoing, and not just during the race season. Jockeys, exercise riders, hot walkers, horse grooms, blacksmiths, security staff, and countless other vocations are among the 1,000 people who work at the Backside of Churchill Downs throughout the year. Indeed, 700 of them live there.

It's these people to whom Wong ministers as associate chaplain with the Kentucky Racetrack Chaplaincy, a role he's filled since January 2014. When Daniel Hatfield, senior pastor at Louisville's Audubon Baptist Church where Wong attended at the time, heard from the chaplaincy that they were looking for a



Wong is a bilingual chaplain from Miami, and ministers to the 75 percent of residents at Churchill Downs who speak Spanish as their first language. Wong prays with an employee on the Backside of Churchill Downs.

bilingual minister, he immediately thought of Wong.

Wong, who is from Miami, Fla., and whose parents are originally from Peru, is a native Spanish speaker, an important part of the ministry since 75 percent of residents at Churchill Downs speak Spanish as their first language.

Wong said that although he wasn't planning on a job like this, he quickly realized his passion for face-to-face ministry had perfectly prepared him for such a role.

"I never had the intention to be a chaplain," Wong said. "I didn't look for this job, it just kind of came to me, and God was already preparing me for it."

One of the ministries of the chaplaincy at Churchill Downs is the weekly chapel service on Monday evenings, which during the race season attracts 100 attendees.

Either Wong or Ken Boehm, the senior chaplain at Churchill, will preach for a half-hour and impart the Christian gospel

to people who don't typically hear it.

The rest of Wong's ministry is entirely interpersonal. Wong says he enjoys studying and preaching like any other seminary student, but he really values building relationships with people.

"I really love sharing the gospel in one-on-one contexts," he said. "I don't want to discourage people from sharing the gospel right off the bat, but I think the gospel speaks through a full-embodied life too, through the way you are, the way you look at people, the way you talk to people. They can tell there's something different about you."

Each morning, Wong arrives at Churchill Downs just before 8 a.m. After praying, he gives a one-minute devotional in Spanish over the intercom, which is broadcast throughout the Backside. He then walks through the barns, talking to anyone he can find. Since they're all working, Wong can usually only manage to greet them or sneak in a brief

conversation and maybe a short prayer. Many invite him to birthday parties for their children or other celebrations. When crisis strikes, they also call Wong.

Last year, one worker was beaten so badly in a fight that he required facial reconstruction. Wong would visit him regularly, bringing meals to him in his apartment on the Backside, talking with him and praying. He also makes hospital visits and is a phone call away for people going through hard times. Wong says his main goal is to have a regular presence and give a voice of hope to the residents.

"I'm becoming much more convinced that you can't be happy without being in a relationship with God," he said. "People need someone to follow, and that isn't a chaplain, that's Jesus Christ."

Many jockeys will arrive at Churchill Downs with dreams of glory and fame, but it doesn't always work out that way, Wong said. One jockey called him just to ask why Wong is "always so happy." Wong said that's humbling to hear, especially when he's upset at the time or not in a good mood. He believes he's called to be a minister of peace in their lives by pointing them to a source of lasting hope.

"A lot of people come with the weight of expectations," he said. "Their dream has been shattered and their hope in life is crumbling before them. I tell them this is an opportunity to draw near to God, to see there's more to life than merely the things before you."

So when watching the Derby and the winning owner beams on your TV screen, maybe look past all the glamor and realize that, in background, God is working in the hearts of people. (SBTS)

'Stay in the race,' Perdue urges seniors

By Myriah Snyder

Bardstown—"Enlisted and still in training" was the message delivered at the 2015 Senior Living Celebration.

Over 270 senior adults attended the event hosted by Parkway Baptist Church in Bardstown on Tuesday, April 28. Similar events were held in Lexington and Eddyville last week.

"Enlisted and still in training—does that describe you?" Tim Perdue, pastor at First Baptist Church of Eddyville and keynote speaker for the conference, asked.

"God has called me and He has called you to a race that really matters," Perdue said, connecting attendees' lives to Paul's in 1 Corinthians 9:22.

"From the very moment that Paul met Jesus, he began a journey with the Lord where Paul realized he was called to run and to run well," Perdue explained.

"Are you running your race well?" he asked.

He emphasized three motives behind Paul's race: "for the sake of the gospel," "for the sake of the sinner," and "for the sake of a crown."

"I've heard folks in my church say stuff like, 'It's time for the younger folks to do the work,'" Perdue said. "I have one question for you, if that's your philosophy: What Bible did you read that in? It's not in my Bible."

"Bailing out on the race is never an option or characteristic that a Christian should have," Perdue said.

"Don't give up! Stay in the game! Finish



the race!" he pleaded.

"You're not finished. Stay enlisted. Stay in training," he continued. "God's not through with you. God's call is still on your life."

"To me, the biggest value in something like this (event) is that we are all approximately the same group," said Carol Heizer from Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, who led a workshop on grief.

She continued, "As senior citizens, we're dealing with issues that other age groups aren't. We're focused on that. ... We get to associate with people going through the same things we are. There's a sense of camaraderie there."

"This event gives our senior adult population spiritual encouragement and confirms that the KBC sees them as a vital part in and of ministry," said Shelly Johns, the KBC's women's and senior adult ministry consultant.

"I believe that we work with the local

□ See Senior living ... Page 11

Great mothers in church history

By David Roach

Augustine of Hippo is known by Christians the world over for standing against heresy in the fifth century and laying a foundation for the Protestant Reformation a thousand years later.

Lesser known is the fact that Augustine might never have become a Christian if not for his mother Monnica, who prayed for his salvation for years before eventually sailing from North Africa to Italy to beg her son to attend church. He honored her wishes and was saved when he heard the gospel under the preaching of Ambrose of Milan.

Monnica—as her name is spelled on her tomb despite commonly being rendered as "Monica"—is one of many noteworthy mothers in church history.

"Some of Christian history's greatest preachers, theologians and missionaries owe the first fruits of their ministries not to their exegetical insights, homiletic abilities or spiritual zeal, but instead to the faithful prayers of their

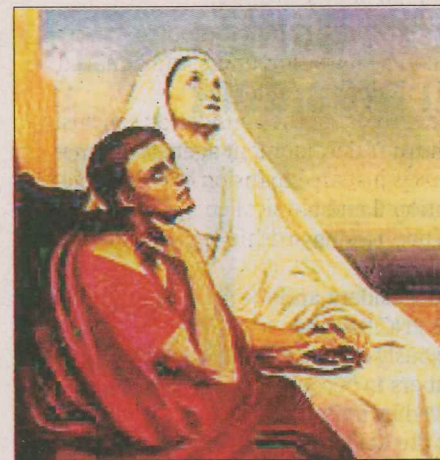
godly mothers," Christian George, assistant professor of historical theology at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, told Baptist Press. "In the lives of countless Christians throughout the ages, God has often granted second births as a result of those who gave them their first."

Susanna Wesley

Susanna Wesley was another Christian mother whose witness and love for her children helped alter the course of church history. Born in England in 1669, Wesley oversaw the spiritual and educational development of her 19 children—10 of

whom survived to adulthood—while her husband Samuel was away from home for lengthy periods.

On a rotating basis, each child had a night for individual conversation and prayer with Susanna. She wrote commentaries on the Apostles Creed, the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer as curriculum for her children. One of her sons, John, led thousands to



□ See Great mothers ... Page 12

Crossings takes on oversight of Baptist Haiti Mission

By Robin Cornetel

Louisville—Baptist Haiti Mission, a historically independent Baptist outreach, has transitioned fully into the Southern Baptist Convention as a subsidiary of Kentucky-based Crossings Ministries.

"This is an exciting move because it will strengthen BHM, a vital ministry to a very poor island country," Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Director Paul Chitwood said. "It's especially exciting for Kentucky Baptists who have long been supportive of BHM and who have been

participants in mission trips to Haiti with Crossings."

Crossings President and Chief Executive Officer David Melber said his organization has been working with BHM since 2011. That's when Crossings started a youth camp in Haiti. It was an instant success.

BHM, founded by Wallace and Eleanor Turnbull, has started more than 360 churches in Haiti, 355 schools with 68,000 students, a hospital, self-help ministry, master's program, trade school, youth camps and various other endeavors.

The BHM board of directors, of which

Melber is a member, decided to take the ministry "in a new and exciting direction with SBC involvement."

"When the old BHM board sensed that turning it over to a new entity was the best plan, we wanted BHM to be its own 501c3 corporation, but to have a tie to SBC identity," Melber said. "We created a new corporation in Kentucky, and the old Michigan corporation was merged."

About 900 people have done short-term missions to Haiti through BHM. About 150 more will go this summer.

"Haiti has largely been rebuilt since the

earthquake," Melber said. "The greatest need now is for solid Bible-believing and Bible-teaching pastors to lead churches to do the same."

BHM's transition means Crossings will expand gospel initiatives in Haiti, while also developing youth camps there.

"Basically, all will be focused on the ultimate goal of seeing effective churches, pastored by theologically sound pastors, that all combined together are focused on proclaiming the gospel, making disciples and reaching the whole nation," Melber said. (KBC)

Carnes selected

Continued from page 1

for Kentucky Baptists.

"We look forward to working with him to financially undergird the Kingdom work of KBC churches and related ministries, if elected by the Mission Board," said Chairman Charles Barnes, a member of Louisville's Hurstborne Baptist Church.

Carnes will succeed Barry Allen, who retired from the post Feb. 1 and now serves as executive director of the Gheens Foundation in Louisville. He begins duties June 1.

"What gets my spiritual heart churning in excitement is the opportunity to sit around the kitchen table with folks who are really trying to be obedient to their calling (as disciples) of growing Christ's kingdom," he said. "That's what the Foundation does."

"The great thing about the Foundation," Carnes said, "is that it gives you an opportunity to deal with the most wonderful stewardship-hearted people. They are thinking about legacy support to their local church and to other Christian ministry causes. They are making decisions to benefit people's lives, with whom they may never personally connect, but they are able to see beyond themselves."

After serving as president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation from 1988-1995, Carnes served as president of the national Woman's Missionary Union Foundation in Birmingham, Ala., for two years. Earlier, he had been director of the KBC's Administrative Services Department for five years.

He also has experience as an account executive in Birmingham for E.F. Hutton & Co. and Merrill Lynch.

With PNC for 18 years, Carnes led a team of seven staff members in serving non-profit charitable organizations with assets under management of \$2.4 billion. He personally managed NPO client portfolios for 48 relationships with assets under management of \$596 million.

Speaking of his return to the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, Carnes said he feels "fortunate and honored that God has opened this door again for me."

In describing the heartbeat of the Foundation's ministry as being "the local church's development agency," Carnes said that for him, "this is just an expansion of being able to fully engage his emotional and physical energies in serving Christ's kingdom through a stewardship legacy kind of ministry."

A member of Highview Baptist Church's East Campus, Carnes earlier served as an adult Sunday School teacher and deacon at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville.

Born and raised in Horton, Ala., a rural community about 45 miles east of Huntsville—where his family attended Bethany Baptist Church—Carnes made a public profession of faith at age 11 during a Vacation Bible School and was baptized in a local fishing pond.

Carnes attended Snead State Community College in Boaz, Ala., where he met his future wife, Karen. They both graduated from Samford University with business degrees, and he later attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, earning a master's in Christian education. She is an associate financial representative for Northwestern Mutual Wealth Management.

They have two adult sons: Jay, who is assistant director of Residence Life at Bellarmine University in Louisville; and Chip, a music teacher and church planter in Portland, Ore. (WR)

'The Call' conference slated May 18-19 in Louisville

Campbellsville—Campbellsville University will host Robert Smith, professor of Christian teaching at Beeson Divinity School of Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., as keynote speaker in a two-day evangelistic preaching conference "Called to One Hope" May 18-19 at the Louisville Education Center.

Smith will lead with Joel Carwile, pastor of Valley View Church and member of the CU Board of Trustees; Eric Johnson, senior pastor of Greater Galilee Baptist in Louisville; and Jeff Eaton, lead pastor of Hope Community Church in Lawrenceburg.

Smith teaches Christian Preaching and other electives in

homiletics. He received Beeson Divinity School's "Teacher of the Year Award" in 2005.

Smith, an ordained Baptist minister, has served as pastor of the New Mission Missionary Baptist Church for 20 years. He is a contributing editor for a study of Christian ministry in the African American church, "Preparing for Christian Ministry," and co-editor of "A Mighty Long Journey."

In addition, he has served as an editor of "Our Sufficiency Is of God: Essays on Preaching in Honor of Gardner C. Taylor." He wrote,

"Doctrine That Dances: Bringing Doctrinal Preaching and Teaching

to Life," winner of the 2008 Preaching Book of the Year Award by "Preaching Magazine" and "2009 Preaching Book of the Year Award" by Christianity Today's preaching.com. In 2010, "Preaching Magazine" named "Doctrine That Dances," one of the most influential books in the last 25 years.

He served as the Carl E. Bates Associate Professor of Christian Preaching at Southern Seminary and Southern's 1996 Findley B. Edge Award for Teaching Excellence. (CU)



Robert Smith

Longtime Somerset music minister retires

Somerset—A Kentucky Baptist treasure is set to retire, marking 50 years of faithful gospel ministry. Stephen Hall, the full-time minister of music and education at High Street Baptist Church in Somerset, capped off 23 years of ministry at the church April 30.

Ed Amundson, pastor at High Street, hails Hall's faithful ministry contributions through the years, calling him "one of the key factors in the current growth, new construction and overall gospel success at HSBC."

During his career, Hall has

served churches in both Tennessee and Kentucky, and he has been an integral member of the Kentucky Baptist Men's Choral.

Hall was recognized with an award from several of his peers by Jason Stewart, worship/music consultant for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, who was on-hand to present the award at Hall's retirement party.

Hall and his wife, Claudia, served on the mission field in Brazil through the International

Mission Board.

Though he is a competent churchman in every aspect, his passion has always been music.

A graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Hall has served in many key roles in Pulaski Baptist Association, the Kentucky Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist

Convention.

He and his wife, Claudia, have three adult children and six grandchildren. (WR)



Stephen Hall

Baltimore violence

Continued from page 1

Frank Page, president of the SBC Executive Committee, in comments about the upheaval in Baltimore, called on Southern Baptists to pray for the city. "Specifically, I ask us to pray in earnest for the ministers of the gospel who are standing in harm's way trying to provide spiritual leadership in a divided city."

"But let's also pray for the Gray family in their grief as well as the police officers who were wounded by a lawless group who took advantage of the situation," Page told Baptist Press. "Pray for peace in Baltimore and, yes, justice for all

those who have broken the law. It is a very sad day."

Baltimore was the host city for the SBC's annual meeting and Crossover evangelistic emphasis in 2014 in which volunteer teams worked alongside Baptist church members across the metro area. Baltimore also is one of the key cities in the North American Mission Board's cornerstone church planting strategy, Send North America. It is the hometown of the missions pioneer for whom the SBC's Annie Armstrong Easter Offering is named.

Russell Moore, president of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, called on churches to be agents of peace and reconciliation.

"There's no question that Baltimore needs order and restraint of violence," Moore said. "There's no question that Baltimore needs investigation and justice in the untimely death of Freddie Gray. There's no question that Baltimore suffers from poverty, racial injustice, family breakdown, illegal drugs, gang activity and a thousand other ailments. Government, civil society, law enforcement, and community organizations must confront all of these. But I would argue that the primary need Baltimore has is for the church," said Moore, who convened a national summit of Southern Baptist leaders in March on the gospel and racial reconciliation. (BP)

A prayer for our pastors

The Bible says, "Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life." While the phrase "all days of his life" may not seem terribly significant, I contend it is remarkably significant. Staying committed and faithful in ministry, over the long haul, can be incredibly challenging.

Year after year, studies indicate that the number of ministers who resign their ministry positions each month hovers around 1,500. Surveys reveal that more

Together We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

than half of seminary graduates have left the ministry within five years of graduation, and less than 20 percent of those who begin serving as pastors will continue in that role until retirement. The reasons for such high attrition rates in vocational ministry are many but, regardless of those reasons, the numbers are startling.

A New York Times article summarized the plight of many in pastoral ministry: "Members of the clergy now suffer from obesity, hypertension and depression at rates higher than most Americans. In the last decade, their use of antidepressants has risen, while their life expectancy has fallen."

Every Sunday I have the privilege of preaching in a different church in Kentucky. The pastor is usually present. While a few minutes of interaction before worship and casual discussion over lunch afterward does not provide the opportunity to see deeply into any man's heart, what I have seen gives me a growing love and appreciation for those who serve as undershepherds of the Good Shepherd.

I see men who love people and have a God-given desire to serve others. I see men who love the Lord and want desperately to please Him with their lives. I see men of conviction, who would be willing to lose all of their worldly possessions before they would stop "speaking about what they have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20). I see men who eagerly proclaim the gospel with the confidence that God will use even their stuttering to bring the lost to Himself.

I also see men who carry heavy burdens. They help carry the grief of those who grieve and the pain of those who hurt. They help carry the brokenness of children whose parents are divorcing, the confusion and sorrow of parents who must bury a child, the emotional devastation of a man whose wife has been unfaithful, the fear of a young mother diagnosed with cancer, the regret of a man who looks back on the wasted years of his youth, and the concern of a grandmother for her lost granddaughter.

Yes, they cast their cares upon the Lord (1 Peter 5:7), but they do not have the privilege of turning off their love and concern for His sheep when they say "Amen" and close their eyes hoping for sleep. Why? Because God has called them to be pastors.

God, thank you for our pastors. Bless them. Use them. Protect them. Reward them.

Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Distressing news abounds; World desperate for Good News

Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds," an inscription on the James Farley Post Office in New York City boasts. But no one said anything about spiders!

This past week, the Spencer Magnet reported: "Poisonous spiders shut down post office." The alarming story announced that the Fisherville Post Office would be closed until further notice because of "an invasion of potentially deadly spiders."

Brown recluse spiders, whose bite inflicts serious pain, open sores, illness and sometimes death, had been discovered inside. Local mail is being rerouted to another post office branch. "No bites have been reported nor were spiders discovered in any mail," a postal employee sought to reassure folks. Good thing! ... But I'm still not taking any chances. If mail should arrive at Western Recorder offices with a Fisherville post mark, don't expect us to open it.

As disconcerting as this bit of local news was, though—and I get "the willies" just thinking about creepy-crawlies—it doesn't compare to the distressing national and international headlines over the past few days.

A 7.8-magnitude earthquake rocked Nepal April 25, killing at least 4,000 people, injuring more than 7,000, and leveling buildings and homes. David Platt, president of the International Mission Board, wrote, "As I thought of the massive physical need that was already there on top of the massive spiritual need, and realized that an earthquake of this magnitude would have devastating effects across the region, I was drawn immediately to my knees. I cried out to God for His mercy and His might to be made known among the people in that area."

In addition to challenging Southern Baptists to use our resources to help the situation in Nepal through Baptist Global Response, Platt said the tragedy might serve as "a wake-up call in your life to realize in a fresh way that there are urgent physical and spiritual needs around the world."

The U.S. Supreme Court began hearing arguments April 28 about whether the Constitution requires states to license or recognize same-sex marriages. Andrew Walker, director of policy studies for the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty

Commission, said during a prayer gathering for the preservation of marriage: "We pray this as Christians who believe that marriage is something uniquely beautiful that somehow mysteriously unveils the gospel. But we also pray for marriage for the sake of the common good."

SBC President Ronnie Floyd told Baptist Press his church, like so many across the nation, had "asked God for a miracle" in the form of the high court's nine justices upholding the traditional definition of marriage.

Other Baptist leaders also encourage us to pray that the Lord will raise up lawmakers and judges who fear Him and who will pass and uphold God-honoring legislation.

Racial turmoil erupted in Baltimore April 27-28. Rioting, looting and arson broke out following the funeral of Freddie Gray, an African American who died from a spinal injury while in police custody.

Joel Kurz, pastor of The Garden Church, reported, "The CVS Pharmacy that was looted and set on fire is the place where our sick and elderly people go for their medicines. As you walk up and down the street, every strip of stores has broken glass."

Kurz started Tuesday morning in prayer with fellow pastors before they head out into the streets to join in cleanup efforts and help begin a process of healing. Baltimore pastors asked Southern Baptists to join them in prayer for the city. Meanwhile, the unthinkable happened in Major League Baseball, the Orioles pitched a shut-out—to their fans—by holding a game against the White Sox without a soul in the stands. The silence spoke volumes about civic unrest and concern for public welfare and player safety.

One thing is apparent: Our world desperately needs Good News. Jesus tells us that we can find true peace in Him: "Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows; but cheer up, for I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). David Gaines, an African American pastor in Baltimore, reminds us, "I'm sure the only solution for this problem as well as any other cultural, social or personal problem is Jesus Christ. The only thing that's going to change that is the Gospel of Jesus Christ changing hearts" It's also apparent: We have a great deal of work to do in bringing His hope and healing to the masses.



After Thought

By Todd Deaton

Western Recorder reader guide

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WESTERN Recorder

Box 43969
Louisville, KY 40253

DR. TODD DEATON
Editor

THOMAS C. TOWNSEND
Marketing & Business Consultant

Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

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Letters to the editor:

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

You are a woman of great influence

By Katie McCoy

In a study on biblical womanhood with a group of student wives last fall, we looked at everything the Bible has to say about being a woman. Within the pages of their stories, they had one thing in common: influence.

Pick a woman in the Scripture who is known for anything and you'll find she was a woman of influence.

Think about Deborah (Judges 4-5).

She stirred up a military leader to faithful action when he wanted to run away from a problem. She exhorted him to trust the Lord in the face of overwhelming odds. She was a true leader. She never made their success about her—in fact, she pointed out the strengths of others. Influence.

What about Esther (Esther 4-8)? She was planted in a pagan palace so she could influence a king to spare her people from ethnic cleansing. No military intervention. Just one woman submitted to God. Influence.

And her predecessor, Vashti? She was de-throned after digging her heels in against the king's request. Why? Because even pagan politicians knew women had influence.

Don't forget about Abigail (my favorite). She was the picture of grace under fire, defusing the temper of a future king and thwarting what

would have been an out-of-control conflict (1 Samuel 25). Quick-witted and sharp-minded, she spoke with wisdom, diplomacy and skill.

It isn't all good influence.

Sarah (Genesis 16) convinced her husband, Abraham, to fulfill God's promise his own way instead of waiting on God to work.

Remember Jezebel? She influenced her husband Ahab to deal treacherously with a landowner and

the nation of Israel to serve the pagan gods (1 Kings 19, 21).

And it all began with Eve—she pulled her husband Adam into doing the thing he knew he wasn't to do, persuading him to disobey (Genesis 3).

Eudora and Syntyche must have had strong personalities for Paul to tell them to get along. (Philippians 4:2).

Then there's Miriam. She influenced all of Israel's women to celebrate their deliverance after crossing the Red Sea. (Exodus 15). But she helped instigate a rebellion against her brother Moses about who was going to be in charge (Numbers 12).

Because of it, God struck her with leprosy, stalling the nation from moving forward. (Thankfully, she is remembered on a positive note—see

Micah 6:4—Aren't you glad we aren't known for our worst moments?)

These women weren't in great positions of power or wealthy. They used their influence where they were.

The woman at the well in John 4 went from hiding her past to using it as the introduction to telling her town about Jesus, all because she met the Messiah. Huge influence!

Priscilla was uprooted from her home in Rome and started over in Corinth but that didn't stop her from nurturing a young preacher named Apollos (Acts 18). Influence.

These were ordinary women. Much like us, they probably didn't feel like they had extraordinary lives. But they all had influence. The question was how they chose to use it.

Maybe you find yourself in the middle of interpersonal conflict like Abigail or discouraged by the lack of faith-filled action like Deborah. Maybe you're starting over in a new city, school or ministry like Priscilla. Perhaps you feel stuck in a scenario that seems irredeemable like Esther. Or maybe you've experienced the Messiah like the woman at the well and are ready to start telling the people around you about Him.

Whoever you are, wherever you are, you are a woman of influence. And the question for you and me is, how will we use it? (BP)

FIRST PERSON

How do parents hurry children?

By David Garrard

I decided to devote my 2015 columns to David Elkind's 1981 book, "The Hurried Child." I am certain what he said then is even more true now. Think about the dynamics of your family as you consider:

The Child as Surrogate Self

We see this in sports and academics. Parents live vicariously through children and become consumed with the idea that kids be the best. Sports end up losing playfulness and pleasure and school becomes a source of stress.

The Child as a Status Symbol

The child becomes a status symbol when their success brings attention to parents. Children are pushed to be "mini-achievers." Elkind mentions what he calls the "school admissions sweepstakes" as parents push kids to an Ivy League track as early as kindergarten.

The Child as Partner

Parents force children to keep an adult pace, up at the crack of dawn, dressed, fed and taken to day-care or preschool so mom or dad can get on with their day. Parents treat children as partners when they allow them to become decision makers in circumstances they are not equipped to handle.

The Child as Therapist

Children are hurried when parents treat them as confidants, discussing problems and asking for advice that children are not ready to think about.

The Child as Conscience

This occurs more often in single-parent families. It looks like the therapist role, with added burden of expecting children to approve decisions that society frowns on—n short, to be the moral arbiter. This is "an impossible psychological burden of conflict."



Is debt controlling you?

By Don Spencer

Debt continues to be one of the major financial problems for many people today. If you do not control debt, you become a slave to debt. You can never have financial freedom as long as you are a slave to debt.

Accumulating debt is easy. You can get a five-year car loan and owe more than the car is worth. Home equity loans make easy debt. Pre-approved credit cards are easy to obtain. I've heard of people doing debt consolidation involving their mortgage and they owe 125 percent of their house value. This sets one up for a major financial disaster.

Many people continue to add debt as long as they feel they can handle the monthly payments. Have you added a debt based on looking at the monthly payment without looking how that debt affects your total financial picture?

In today's world, you can easily get over your head in uncontrolled debt. If you cannot control the debt, then it will control you. Remember that borrowing money carries with it many potential financial dangers:

1. Buying on credit increases the cost of the items we purchase.
 2. Buying on credit assumes future ability to repay the debt.
 3. Buying on credit can create a bonded relationship to the lender—a relationship never to the advantage of the person borrowing.
 4. Repaying debt can lower your future lifestyle.
 5. As debt takes increasing control, it creates more stress which can cause health problems and affect your ability to earn. This decreases your ability to repay debt, which adds stress.... It's an endless cycle.
 6. Excessive debt can damage your credit rating restricting your ability to borrow in the future.
 7. Loans with a variable rate create substantially higher future payments—more than planned.
- Avoid the debt trap and avoid being another statistic.



Mother's Day: Gratitude, sacrifice, humility

By Gayla Grace

As a young mom, I thought Mother's Day should be all about me. Surely I deserved recognition for my never-ending sacrifices as a mom and stepmom to five children, right?

However, after driving away from my parents' home not long ago with tears spilling down my cheeks, I sensed God asking me to honor my mom with the time we have left.

Dementia is consuming Mom's every fiber. This is the last Mother's Day she'll know me as her daughter.

I'd never considered how to truly honor my mom. Honoring our moms starts with a thankful heart for the role they've played in our lives. I wouldn't be the person I am today without the influence of my mother.

Perhaps you struggle with a thankful heart. Many adults have anger and disappointment from childhood that makes it almost impossible to honor Mom. If so, I challenge you to examine your heart and consider making amends.

Honoring your mom doesn't mean you agree with past behavior; it acknowledges her place in your life. It might require professional help to deal with feelings and set appropriate boundaries for your relationship, but I encourage you to move forward.

I'm not saying it will be easy, but holding a grudge keeps us in bondage and poisons other relationships.

We experience many blessings when we choose to honor our parents. We allow family legacies to be passed down as we make time for our children to get to know their

grandparents. We bask in knowing we've done the right thing, preventing regrets later of what can't be changed. We reap the rewards of deeper relationships and meaningful memories we can savor long after they're gone. And we more likely receive the same respect and honor in return as our children watch our actions.

Honoring our moms on Mother's Day doesn't have to be extravagant. A simple gesture is often more meaningful. Here are three suggestions to consider:

Express gratitude

As someone who'd rather write words than speak them, I don't naturally express appreciation. I'm making an effort to show gratitude toward my mom for the investment she's made in my life.

I'll never forget when I asked Mom's opinion on a career decision I faced. As she relayed her thoughts, with tears in her eyes, she said, "I wish I'd done more with my life." I was surprised at her regrets of only small advances in the career world, not recognizing the invaluable occupation she'd chosen as a devoted mom. Realizing her need for affirmation of sacrifices the world considers insignificant, I began to give examples of how her work at home had influenced my life.

Gratitude can also be expressed in a written tribute, detailing childhood memories and appreciation for positive qualities and values your mom has passed down. A tribute depicts specific ways she's influenced

you and the value of her role in your life. It doesn't have to be long to be meaningful.

Give time sacrificially

My youngest sister lives several states away, stays busy with a family and a demanding career, but makes time to call, send notes and plan extended visits to my parents' house. Her priorities show honor and allow time with Mom to reminisce about years past, make memories with grandchildren, and help Mom adjust to her new stage of life, while conveying the significant position Mom holds in her life.

If you live far away, it's hard to commit to frequent visits, but extended stays provide valuable time. It takes intentional effort.

Walk in humility

Parenting roles reverse as our moms age, forcing us to assume additional tasks. Laundry, grocery shopping, bill-paying, doctor visits or becoming a caregiver demonstrate ways to walk in humility through aging. Mother's Day is the perfect time to show honor and love to your mom, without attaching expectations to her response. If you're a mom, it's natural to savor the appreciation you receive on this special day.

As I watch my mom's last season drawing to a close, I want to show her honor and gratitude, creating special moments in the process, without regrets. (BP)

Gayla Grace, on the Web at StepparentingWithGrace.com, writes on family and stepfamily issues. This article originally appeared in *Home Life* magazine.

FIRST PERSON

Why should Christians care about politics?

By Rick Hardison

Whenever I hear a preacher start talking about politics, I get nervous. Really nervous. A flurry of concerns race to mind: "Just preach the gospel." "Stay close to the text." "Don't assume Jesus was a Republican." "I hope non-Christians aren't turned off right now."

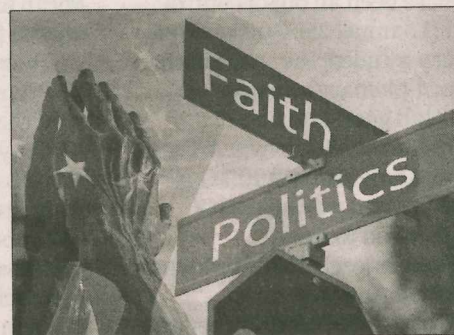
These fears emerge because some pastors blur the line between sound doctrine and political opinion, using the pulpit to promote a partisan agenda. They are cozy with some candidates and disrespectful of others. They have used their spiritual platforms to galvanize a certain demographic in support of their causes while at the same time alienating an even larger group.

In response, the conventional wisdom for the preacher sometimes is "Don't go there. Don't touch anything political with a 10-foot pole." This applies not just to pastors but also to how church members want to spend their energy.

Many Christians seem content to disengage from the public square altogether, arguing that our time is better spent just trying to win people to Jesus. We are aliens and strangers in a foreign land and should not expect a biblically-informed view to be accepted, so why try?

Conservatives are particularly worried, because anything that smells of political activism recalls the pitfalls of the social gospel to which they are committed never to return. And Christians want churches to grow. Spending any time in the divisive political arena does not seem to put you on the fast track to success.

The result of this disengagement often leads believers to take libertarian stances on some of the greatest moral issues of our day—arguing that, say, abortion, is a sin, but it's not the government's role to restrict it. The same could be said about gay marriage or prostitution. This you-can't-legislate-morality approach



seemingly gives the Christian the best of both worlds: he still gets to call sin "sin," but he is off the hook from taking embarrassing cultural stands.

But the Christian should avoid this pitfall. The very role of government is to reward good and punish evil (1 Peter 2:14), and the church is uniquely qualified to articulate what good and evil actually are. Jesus' familiar call to be salt and light implies that the remnant has a preserving effect on the larger culture. While the primary purpose of the law in

Scripture is to highlight our need for a Savior, a secondary function is to restrain evil. The law—whether in ancient Israel or 21st-century America—informs the conscience of the next generation.

Those who preach the glories of a libertarian view on moral issues seem to quickly forget that sin hurts people. Love of neighbor demands that believers have a measure of political concern. This is not to say that the Christian goal is to enshrine all Christian ethics in a grand piece of righteous legislation. But if Christians are called to pray that God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven, Christians should also desire government to be influenced by a biblical worldview. (WR)

Editor's Note: This article is part of a series on "How and why should Christians engage the public square?" for the Western Recorder provided by the Kentucky Baptist Committee on Public Affairs. Rick Hardison, pastor of Great Crossing Baptist Church in Georgetown, is committee chairman.

Nepal

Continued from page 1

those areas now, I cannot get the people I met or faces I encountered out of my mind.

"Along with many others, I now found myself crying out to God and pleading for His power, mercy, rescue and redemption to be manifest in unmistakable ways during these days.

"In light of the lack of gospel access in so much of Nepal, seeing urgent physical and spiritual needs collide like this is overwhelming," Platt said.

"Like the falling of the tower of Siloam in Luke's Gospel, this earthquake is a fresh reminder of the urgent need for God's people to hasten in getting the gospel to peoples all around the world. ... I want to exhort the global church to seize this opportunity to pray more fervently, give more sacrificially, and go more urgently to the peoples of Nepal."

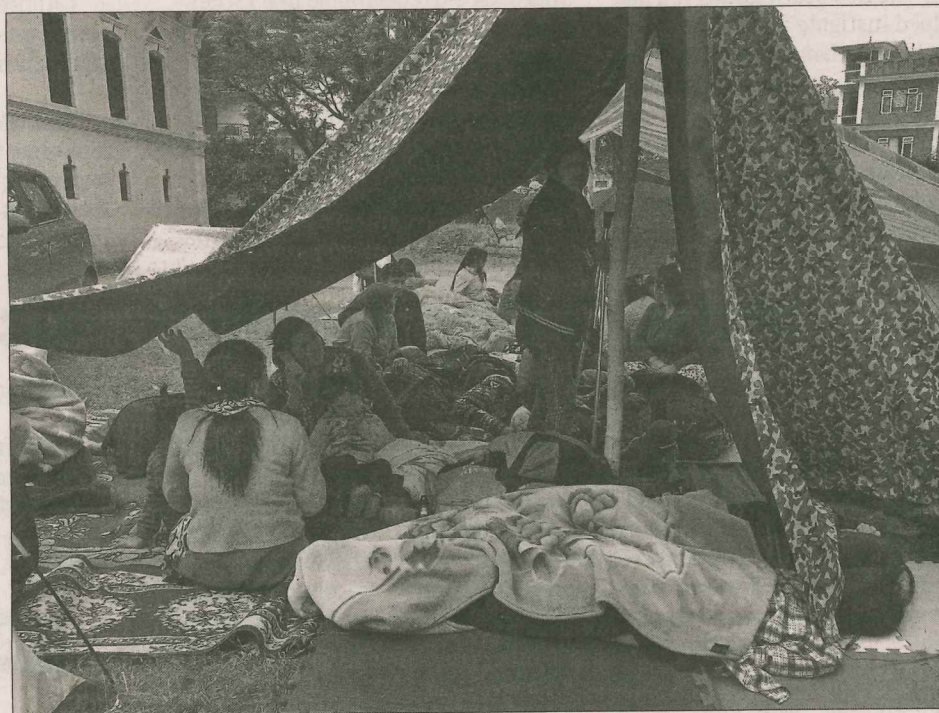
A Christian worker said local churches and believers are responding as the "hub" for the communities by providing access to shelter, clean water and food. People constructed tents from poles and tarps or anything that would provide protection from the cold night and possible rains.

Even a group of volunteers from a North Carolina Baptist church joined the ranks of those sleeping outside their hotels. The volunteer team is reported to be "shaken up, but fine" and helping with immediate needs around them.

"Some pastors and discipleship trainers' homes were damaged and even destroyed, yet they are taking care of their community," the worker said. About 30 people are staying in the field near the area where their team pitched tents. "Each time there is a tremor, everyone screams. We had earthquakes all night and much of the day."

Like most of the Christian population in Nepal—about one percent of a 28.8 million mostly Hindu nation—the worker and her husband were at church when the earthquake hit at 11:56 a.m. local time. The power went out, followed by a long and violent tremor.

Panic ensued, and people in the



Afraid to return to their homes after strong aftershocks hit the area, residents of Kathmandu stay in a temporary shelter. IMB Photo

church began to pray and cry out to the Lord for their protection and safety. The congregation ran to the one and only exit.

"We stood up and had time to hang onto each other but were then thrown to the ground," she said. "I would describe trying to get out like being on a trampoline with people carrying it and you're trying to walk from one side of it to the other—completely off-centered and unsettling, nearly impossible. We both prayed, 'Lord, please let us get out of this building.'"

Another Christian worker compared her exit from the building to surfing on waves, instead of walking on solid ground.

In a rural church gathering miles away, the same thing was happening. The quake hit in the middle of the closing prayer, but the outcome was not as good as it was for those in the other church.

In addition to massive damage, injuries and fatalities were reported.

"I just got an update that 17 dead bodies have been found in this church

which we have trained and supported," a local discipleship trainer said via Facebook. "We appreciate your prayers for this church. ... Pray for the pastor, his family and the whole church family. The pastor lost three of his own family members."

BGR assessing needs

Baptist Global Response, the Southern Baptist humanitarian organization, is sending a team to assess and meet the needs of victims in Nepal. The first response is expected to include basic survival needs like water, shelter, food and healthcare.

Volunteer groups that work with BGR received Sphere Project Training in February, focused on meeting victims' needs during humanitarian crises.

The damage to rural areas has yet to be added to the news reports and death toll. Roads are damaged, and getting to these areas is difficult.

Government officials estimate 80 percent of the houses in rural areas have been destroyed. The quake occurred at a depth of 9.3 miles, which is considered

How to help Nepal

Louisville—Kentucky Baptists brokenhearted by the devastation in Nepal can help earthquake survivors by offering prayers and financial support through Baptist Global Relief, said Coy Webb, Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief director.

"Our Southern Baptist partners have teams on the ground making assessments and meeting basic needs," Webb said. "By contributing to the relief efforts, Kentucky Baptists are helping to shine the light of Christ on a very dark situation."

Baptist Global Response, a humanitarian partner of the International Mission Board, has focused initial efforts on helping the now-homeless survivors with shelter, food and water.

Webb said contributions toward the relief effort in Nepal can be made through the KBC's Disaster Relief website at www.kybaptist.org/DR by clicking on the link under "Donate Now."

"One hundred percent of what is donated through the KBC will help Southern Baptists help the Nepalese people," Webb said. "Donations will not be used for administrative costs." (KBC)

shallow and more damaging than a deeper quake.

News from remote areas near the quake's epicenter, where many more may have died, has been scant.

International Christian workers warn that the days to come might be the hardest as reports continue to come in.

"The rural village homes will be damaged far beyond repair, and the death toll at this point is probably limited to the city centers," a Christian worker said. "All of the places where we work in ... it's devastating to think about what they are experiencing." (BP)

Hurricane Sandy survivor's home rescued from demolition

By Laura Sikes

Freeport, N.Y.—Hurricane Sandy survivor Cecelya Morsby faced near eviction in March from her flood-ravaged home.

More than two years after the superstorm's onslaught, Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers learned of her circumstances and came to her aid in the coastal Long Island town of Freeport.

Morsby's home of 16 years was one of about 4,000 damaged by ocean waters that moved inland for about one mile during the hurricane, flooding almost every structure in the town of 50,000.

Morsby, a retiree from a major car company, evacuated her home and lived with her daughter in Manhattan for most of the time after the storm. Afflicted with chronic illnesses, Morsby also underwent vascular surgery and was unable to tend to her home for needed repairs.

In June 2014, she returned to live alone in her deteriorated home. Like many homeowners had done for months after the storm, she lived upstairs, having only partial power, little heat and no hot water while waiting for repairs.

Morsby said she had not reached out for help early on because she thought her insurance would cover the damage. In early March 2015, her daughter, Monisha Mapp, contacted Nassau County's Department of Aging for assistance and her mother's case was referred to Southern Baptist Disaster Relief.

"The day I called her, (inspectors had red tagged the house)," Sandy Rebuild project coordinator Bill Johnson said. The home was immediately being condemned.

Johnson immediately called city inspectors, whom he had built



Dressed to attend a Good Friday service, Hurricane Sandy survivor Cecelya Morsby of Freeport, N.Y., surveys her newly-painted dining room. Southern Baptist Disaster Relief collegiate teams, including some volunteers from Kentucky, have been helping to restore her home, which had been flooded by the storm more than two years ago. (NAMB photo by Laura Sikes)

relationships with, to notify them that SBDRL would begin working on Morsby's house right away.

Because of her absence, Morsby had no idea that Southern Baptist volunteers were serving on Long Island. SBDRL teams volunteers had been based just blocks away from her home—at Calvary Protestant Evangelical Free Church in Baldwin, N.Y., through last December. Currently, Sandy Rebuild works out of the New York Institute of Technology in Central Islip, N.Y. The college has housed SBDRL volunteers in its dormitories since

January 2014.

At Morsby's house in March, SBDRL collegiate teams and other volunteers from Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Oklahoma and South Carolina tore out and repaired ceilings, hung sheetrock and painted the rooms downstairs.

One of the first teams sent to Morsby's home consisted of Baptist Collegiate Ministry students from Mercer University and Wesleyan University in Macon, Ga.

Morsby seemed hesitant to answer the door when the team first knocked, BCM director Chris Fuller said.

"When we showed up that first day, she had obviously lost all hope," Fuller said. "She was extremely reserved, shy and quiet."

The six inches of water from the storm—combined with water pipes freezing and bursting—had left the home's interior in shambles.

Water leaks had ruined the ceilings in her living room and dining room. Students began removing china and glassware from large china closets on top of the soggy, moldy carpet, which they removed.

Tory Aina, 18, helped clean out the kitchen. Morsby joined in the labors and started talking with them, later sharing about her life and showing her family pictures.

"Everything was such a mess, debris was everywhere," Aina said. "I couldn't believe that she was still living there on the top floor. ... Something that seemed so minor as washing dishes really helped her."

The team bonded with Morsby and gave her a Bible signed with personal notes and favorite verses.

Fuller said he noticed Morsby's transformation during the students' time with her. He said he will never forget what she told them as they left: "My house is starting to look like a home again."

"By the end of the week she had started to smile," Fuller said.

Dressed to go to church on Good Friday, Morsby said, "Everyone has been so professional and nice. They worked so fast and were so diligent. I am so thankful for them."

For information about Sandy Rebuild, email sandy@namb.net or call 770-410-6075. (BP)

James: Sunrise making difference in lives of children

By Ken Walker

Mount Washington—Kentucky Baptist Mount President Tom James is so impressed with the work done by Sunrise Children's Services, his church is thinking of launching a special missions offering to benefit the agency.

"I am convinced that, on this side of heaven, we will not know the full impact that Sunrise has had in the lives of the children it serves," James said.

"That impact could be even greater if we could see more pastors, churches and Baptist families involved in this ministry."

Prior to accepting an appointment to Sunrise's board of directors in 2013, James went on a fact-finding mission to learn about the ministry's impact.

The extent of the care Sunrise provides for hurting children and families across Kentucky surprised the pastor of Bowling Green's Eastwood Baptist Church.

Currently, the ministry helps more than 600 children, including 135 in residential centers, 250 in foster homes, and 220 in other, community-based services.

James said a fuller awareness of Sunrise's Christ-centered outreach will help Kentucky Baptists appreciate the profound difference it makes in so many lives.

"In fiscal 2014 alone, Sunrise cared for nearly 1,200 children—or one in six children in the custody of the commonwealth during that period," James pointed out.

Founded in 1869, Sunrise originated as the Louisville Baptist Orphan's Home, organized by women from Walnut Street Baptist Church. Later known as Baptist Children's Homes, it gradually expanded and now is Kentucky's largest nonprofit organization.

Serving residents from all 120 Kentucky counties, Sunrise operates residential treatment facilities in Danville, Dixon, Elizabethtown, Mayfield, Morehead, Bronston and Mount Washington.

James encouraged more Kentucky Baptists to get involved in serving these children, saying it will only take one trip to a center or Sunrise headquarters to develop the desire.

"One look into the precious faces of these children would do that," James said. "At one of our recent board meetings, I heard how Sunrise was called out to receive four children who had been living in a car with their mother.

"They were neither clean nor well fed. They have been loved on, fed, clothed and cared for by Kentucky Baptists through Sunrise."

James said he comes away from each board meeting impressed with the team of leaders God has placed at Sunrise Children's Services.

The pastor calls interim president and CEO Dale Suttles a "high-energy" figure with a passion for what he does. That observation is borne out by Suttles' actions. He and his wife, Libby, have adopted a boy who had been in foster care.

The Sunrise leader returned the compliment. Suttles described James as "a man of high integrity"

who knows the only way to reach children suffering from adversity is for them to see the love of Christ expressed through caring individuals.

"To have Tom as a supporter means so much to Sunrise, because he is respected across the Baptist community," Suttles said. "His passion for the ministry of helping hurting children is undeniable, and he truly inspires others to reach out to the orphans of the living."

Suttles said the dedicated Sunrise staff

is determined to make a difference in the lives of children "who have faced unimaginable situations."

"We are excited to show God's love to these children," he said.

James said he hopes Sunrise's "Be the One" campaign will persuade more Kentucky Baptists to serve as foster parents. The pastor said they may not face the same kind of possible restrictions on church attendance and sharing the gospel as a residential program.

Whatever form this assistance takes, James said he is glad the Cooperative Program funds given through Eastwood Baptist—the third-leading giver in the state convention—helps support Sunrise.

Since the ministry's special Thanksgiving Offering comes during Eastwood's preparation for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions, the church is considering a "Christmas in August" appeal for Sunrise.

James said there is a biblical basis for other Kentucky Baptists to consider such a gift, such as Christ's rebuke of His disciples in Matthew 19:14 when they tried to hinder people from bringing children to Him.

"When we love children who need the touch of Jesus and, through our efforts, attempt to bring them to Him, I think we are being obedient to what Jesus told us to do," the KBC president said. (KBC)



SBC Columbus: Praying for next Great Awakening

By Shawn Hendricks

Columbus, Ohio—As this year's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting approaches, SBC President Ronnie Floyd urges fellow Baptists to gather June 16-17 in Columbus, Ohio, to cry out to God and expect great things to follow.

This year's annual meeting theme is "Great Awakening: Clear Agreement, Visible Union, Extraordinary Prayer," based on Romans 13:11. Floyd hopes Southern Baptists of all ages and ethnicities will attend and "rise to this moment in our nation calling out to God for the next Great Awakening in our nation."

"We've got to understand that we need everybody," Floyd, pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, said. "I know historically and biblically there is no great movement of God that ever occurs that is not first preceded by the extraordinary prayer of God's people."

Floyd pointed to the Tuesday (June 16) evening worship service, which he has described as having the potential to be an "epic night of prayer." Floyd has called on 11 pastors, representing a variety of backgrounds and ages, to help lead the service, which also will feature music by the Cross Church band and choir.

"It's going to be a tremendous night," he said. "It's one that I would just pray to God that every Southern Baptist could participate in."

Amid the many challenges in the U.S.

and abroad, Floyd noted that God is using them "to create a desperation. This is a tremendous time. ... It's a moment of great season. It's a significant moment. And it's a moment Southern Baptists cannot pass on." He said he hopes the evening also will spark repentance and reconciliation.

"We need to model before this country what it's like for the men and women (of the SBC) to walk together in unity," he said, "and that's what I'm committed to leading us to do."

Crossover Columbus

With more than 140 projects, activities and opportunities lined up, metro

Columbus director of missions Rich Halcombe said Columbus will be ready for this year's Crossover on Saturday, June 13—the annual evangelistic outreach by Southern Baptists in the host city of the SBC annual meeting.

Seventy-three local Metro Columbus Baptist Association (MCBA) churches are involved in the effort and will be leading local outreach in their communities, Halcombe said in an April 22 BP article.

"With the local church as the lead, follow-up is built into the designed system for Crossover Columbus," said Halcombe, noting the city's Linden neighborhood will be an area of focus during Crossover.

The North American Mission Board and the MCBA are partnering together along with churches throughout the host city as well as volunteers from churches

throughout North America.

Halcombe said Crossover could have a positive impact on the association, which has already grown with the addition of 63 new churches in the past decade. For information, visit www.namb.net/crossover or www.crossovercolumbus.org.

Proposals

Messengers gathering at the Greater Columbus Convention Center will consider a variety of recommendations during the annual meeting. Among them:

- a new name for Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. Prompted by its decision to relocate its primary campus to the Los Angeles area from the San Francisco area, the seminary has requested that its name be changed to Gateway Seminary of the Southern Baptist Convention.

- an amended North American Mission Board ministry statement to include planting churches overseas in cooperation with the International Mission Board. Messengers approved a similar amendment change to the IMB's ministry statement in 2011 to allow it to assist with unreached people groups in the U.S. and Canada. The amended NAMB statement is expected to relate particularly to military chaplains stationed at bases overseas.

- SBC bylaw amendments to allow for the potential use of electronic voting devices in the convention hall, after this year's meeting in Columbus, and to establish a quorum for voting on all matters of SBC business as those present at the time of a ballot.

Other highlights

- This year's annual meeting will feature a "Sending Celebration," a joint commissioning service Wednesday, June 17. The International Mission Board and North American Mission Board will celebrate commissioning overseas missionaries and North American church planters. Keynote speakers will include Floyd, IMB President David Platt and NAMB President Kevin Ezell, with Shane & Shane as the featured worship leaders.

- During its Send North America luncheon, NAMB will highlight its partnership with Southern Baptists to push back lostness throughout North America.

The event will be held Monday, June 15, at noon, in the convention center's Battelle Grand Ballroom. Tickets are available at snaluncheon.com.

- Ministers' wives attending the SBC annual meeting will be able to attend a variety of women's events based on the theme, "Radiant," from Exodus 34, including a Ministers' Wives Luncheon, Pastors' Wives Conference and a Women's Expo.

Registration

Register online at sbcanualmeeting.net under the Messengers tab. After completing online registration, each messenger will receive an eight-digit registration code to present at the annual meeting's Express registration lane. There, the registration code can be entered into a computer and a nametag will be printed. (BP)

SBC Pastors' Conference to spotlight Christ, not fads

By David Roach

Columbus, Ohio—Though this year's Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference will feature a diverse array of speakers—in terms of both race and age—conference president William Rice hopes they won't be the gathering's focus.

He hopes pastors will turn their attention to Jesus, setting the stage for the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting's emphasis on prayer and awakening. Hence the theme of this year's Pastors' Conference: "He Must Increase."

"In ministry, we get distracted by so many things," said Rice, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Clearwater, Fla. "And some of those are good things," like methodologies, leadership, strategies and worship styles.

"... But at the end of the day, what we need most of all is this movement which focuses upon Christ—His glory, the mission to make Him known among the nations and in our own country."

The June 14-15 Pastors' Conference will feature preaching, worship and prayer to undergird the ministry of pastors and their wives. Sessions at the Greater Columbus Convention Center will take place prior to the SBC's annual meeting.

"We really wanted to have guys who were strong preachers and teachers of the Word," Rice said of the anticipated conference speakers. "My focus wasn't the latest methodological fad or the latest

gimmick that somebody has, but guys that are going to preach from the Word."

Speakers for Sunday (June 14) at the Pastors' Conference include Dean Fulks, pastor of LifePoint Church in Columbus, Ohio, and Russell Moore, president of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. Monday (June 15) will feature messages from Vance Pittman, pastor of Hope Church in Las Vegas; Paul David Tripp, executive director of the Association of Biblical Counselors' Center for Pastoral Life and Care; and David Uth, pastor of First Baptist in Orlando, Fla.

Afternoon speakers include Clint Pressley, pastor of Hickory Grove Baptist in Charlotte, N.C.; H.B. Charles, pastor of Shiloh Metropolitan Baptist in Jacksonville, Fla.; and Steve Gaines, pastor of the Memphis-area Bellevue Baptist in Cordova, Tenn. Evening speakers include J.D. Greear, pastor of The Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham, N.C.; James MacDonald, pastor of Harvest Bible Chapel in Rolling Meadows, Ill.; and David Platt, president of the SBC's International Mission Board.

The leadership team includes Jeremy Westbrook, pastor of Living Hope in Marysville, Ohio, as vice president and Drew Landry, pastor of Spotswood Baptist in Fredericksburg, Va., as treasurer.

"Our prayer is that every single pastor (who attends) would really be strengthened and encouraged, and that God would speak to them," Rice said. (BP)

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Call To Prayer: Marriage & the Supreme Court

By Russell Moore

Nashville—The Supreme Court will soon decide whether states can legally choose to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman. It is a watershed moment in our nation's history.

The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission has filed briefs with the court; argued in public and in private about why marriage, defined as the union of one man and one woman, matters as a social good; and more than there is space to list here.

But beyond all this we as Christians and churches need to pray—because marriage is not just another culture war issue.

As Christians we know that it is not even possible for any government to actually redefine what God has defined from eternity. Marriage is about more than registering relationships at a courthouse.

Marriage is about the common good and flourishing of society, but is also an icon of the union between Christ and his church, embedded in the creation (Ephesians 5:22-31). Without a Christian vision of marriage, we have no Christian vision of the gospel.

VIEWPOINT

As a church we need to pray that marriage will not be treated as if it were a tattered house standing in the way of government construction—there to be plowed out of the way in the name of progress. And yet, on the other hand, we must pray and ask God to give us wisdom so that moving forward we would be able to spell out with convictional kindness why marriage matters, in light of who we are as men and women and in light of the gospel mystery of Christ and His church.

We ought to pray that Jesus would overcome the atrophy that we've allowed

our own marriages and families to fall into for too long. The belief in our churches that culture was enough to keep marriages intact has been exposed as a disastrous folly. With chaos like adultery, abandonment and divorce running rampant in our pews, how did we fail to see that we were then, in that moment, outsourcing our marriages and our families to culture?

But most of all, we must pray that, regardless of whether our land's highest court recognizes the unchangeable or not, we will hold steadfast. We must love our neighbors enough to have the confidence of people who have heard a word from God and the compassion of a people who are on a mission with God.

We must learn from our Savior, who was neither shocked by the Samaritan woman's sexual sin nor afraid to speak a word of repentance to her conscience.

"Woman, go get your husband and come here" is our model: an unashamed assessment of sin and an unrestrained invitation to come to Jesus.

The stakes are high. The price of getting marriage wrong is steep, and as in the rest of the sexual revolution, children will foot much of the bill. It matters tremendously to our nation and to future generations that we agree with God on this.

Let's pray that the Supreme Court gets this right and stays within the limits of its authority—recognizing that the state did not create the family, and it cannot recreate it. And at the same time let's pray with confidence, knowing that regardless of how the court decides, on the other side of our culture wars there is a sexual counter-revolution waiting to be born again. (BP)

Russell Moore is president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

Same-sex marriage

Continued from page 1

generation of this country and every other until the most recent years—will have deep and wide consequences, for the stability of families and for freedom of religion," said Moore, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. "I hope the Court does the right thing and stays within the limits of its authority—recognizing that the state did not create the family, and cannot recreate it."

The questioning by the justices during the arguments proceeded in predictable fashion. Chief Justice John Roberts and Associate Justices Antonin Scalia and Samuel Alito—some of the more conservative members of the court—seemed to express misgivings about the plea to change the marriage laws of all the states.

At one point, Roberts challenged Mary Bonauto, representing same-sex couples, when he questioned if they were "not seeking to join the institution" of marriage but to "change what the institution is."

Meanwhile, Associate Justices Anthony Kennedy, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan voiced skepticism about the arguments in defense of states maintaining the traditional definition of marriage. Some described marriage as a "fundamental right" in which the states in question prohibit same-sex couples from participating.

As is his norm, Associate Justice Clarence Thomas did not speak.

The arguments took place at a time when same-sex marriage is legal in 37 states and the District of Columbia. The state total nearly triples the 13 states where it was legal in mid-2013. Court rulings have produced legal gay marriage in more than two-thirds of those states.

The expansion of same-sex marriage has resulted in a growing clash between the rights of gay couples and the religious freedom of individuals and organizations. Florists, bakers, photographers and other business owners who have conscientious objections to providing their services for same-sex ceremonies have been penalized or are facing penalties for their refusal.

The most recent example came April 24, when an Oregon judge recommended



a fine of \$135,000 for former bakery owners Aaron and Melissa Klein for refusing to bake a cake for a lesbian couple's ceremony.

The April 28 arguments—which were 90 minutes longer than normal—came in a case, *Obergefell v. Hodges*, from the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. In a 2-1 decision in November, it became the first federal appellate court to rule states have the authority to define marriage as only between a man and a woman. Five other appeals courts have invalidated state laws that prohibited gay marriage.

The opinion by the Sixth Circuit Court, based in Cincinnati, took place in challenges to laws in Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Tennessee—states where voters approved constitutional amendments between 2004 and 2006 that limit marriage to a man and a woman.

Courts have overwhelmingly issued opinions in favor of gay marriage since the Supreme Court struck down a section of the federal Defense of Marriage Act in June 2013, saying it violated "equal protection" under the Constitution by refusing to recognize same-sex marriages. Though the high court refused to say states could not limit marriage to heterosexual couples, most courts have used the decision as a basis for striking down state laws that define marriage as only between a man and a woman.

In the January announcement that it would review the Sixth Circuit's opinion, the justices said they would consider two questions: (1) Does the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution require a state "to license a marriage between two people of the same sex?" and (2) does the 14th Amendment require a state "to recognize a marriage between two people of the same sex when their marriage was lawfully licensed and performed out-of-state?"

In the 90 minutes allotted to the first question, Bonauto—longtime director of the Civil Rights Project at Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders—and U.S. Solicitor General Donald Verrilli argued on behalf of same-sex couples challenging the state laws. John Bursch, former solicitor general of Michigan, advocated for the states.

On the second question, the Supreme Court heard from Douglas Hallward-Driemeier, a Washington lawyer who formerly served as an assistant to the U.S. solicitor general, in behalf of gay couples and Joseph Whalen, associate solicitor general of Tennessee, for the states.

Among the 148 friend-of-the-court briefs filed in the case, at least three involved a Southern Baptist entity or

leaders.

The ERLC endorsed a brief with 18 other religious organizations that defended the biblical, traditional definition of marriage and warned a ruling that mandates states recognize gay marriage "would generate church-state conflicts that will imperil vital religious liberties."

The ERLC's Moore signed onto a brief with other academic scholars that contended states that have restricted marriage to a male and a female have not denied "the equal dignity of self-identified members of sexual minority groups" while protecting "a child's entitlement to a mother and father."

Southern Baptist leaders—including Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President Albert Mohler Jr. and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary President Daniel Akin—joined in a Liberty Institute brief defending male-female marriage.

The arguments came after a Sunday on which SBC President Ronnie Floyd had encouraged churches to pray during corporate worship for the court and its proceedings. The ERLC called for Southern Baptists and other Christians to pray for the justices during the arguments. (BP)



As attorneys presented their arguments on gay marriage to the U.S. Supreme Court April 28, believers across the nation gathered to pray God would lead the justices to uphold the traditional definition of marriage. Above, staff members of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and LifeWay Christian Resources gathered in Nashville to pray "for the preservation of marriage." Leaders of Southern Baptist Convention entities and Baptist state conventions also convened for prayer via conference call while various churches prayed corporately on Sunday and during the week. (Photo by Laura Erlanson)

Grateful friends mark Blackaby's 80th birthday

By Lee Weeks

Jonesboro, Ga.—How do you celebrate the life and ministry of an "ordinary" man used by God to launch church planting movements around the world, disciple Christian denominations, counsel internationally-renowned ministry leaders, mentor CEOs of billion-dollar companies, and reform the culture of one of America's most violent prisons?

You do what that same ordinary man has done daily throughout his ministry—draw near to God through prayer and Bible study.

Such was the emphasis during a two-day celebration of Henry Blackaby's 80th birthday at First Baptist Church of

Jonesboro, Ga., as hundreds of people recommitted themselves to God's call on their lives while also paying tribute to the author of the widely influential "Experiencing God—Knowing and Doing the Will of God."

Since its debut in 1990, the discipleship study has been translated into more than 45 languages and sold more than 7 million copies. And yet the miraculous multiplied effect of its influence worldwide finds its roots in the early morning devotional time of an obscure Canadian Southern Baptist pastor whose own teenage daughter was battling cancer.

"This is an ordinary person who rises early to meet an extraordinary God," said Richard Blackaby, the eldest of five

children, president of Blackaby Ministries International and coauthor of the revised edition of *Experiencing God*, released in 2007.

Frank Page, president of the SBC Executive Committee, called Blackaby "a prophet of God" who has "taught millions and millions (of people) to say, 'Speak Lord, Your servant is hearing.'"

"And he's taught us how to position ourselves where we can hear the call of God and experience the call of God on our lives."

Burl Cain, warden of the Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola for the past 20 years, credited *Experiencing God* with setting hundreds of death row inmates and "lifers" spiritually free.

More than 2,000 inmates at the prison near Baton Rouge, La., have completed the 12-week study—helping spawn a 73 percent decrease in prison violence. "Experiencing God changed the culture of the prison," Cain said. Now, hundreds of inmates are part of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary's extension program within the prison.

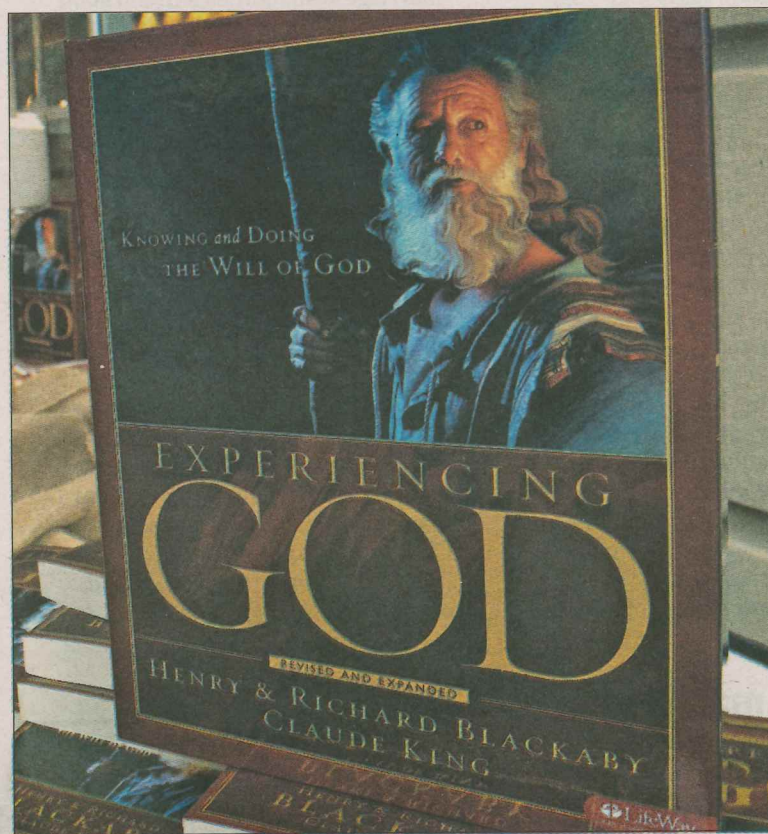
Claude King, who coordinated the editing of *Experiencing God* for its publisher Lifeway Christian Resources, recounted that assimilating

Blackaby's pre-dawn devotional writings and teachings for publication revolutionized his biblical worldview.

"I realized so much of what I said was man-centered rather than God-centered,"



Henry Blackaby, author of "Experiencing God," and his wife Marilyn enjoy a lighthearted moment during a two-day celebration of his 80th birthday at an Atlanta-area church where his son Mel is pastor. (Photo by Turner PhotoDesign)



"Experiencing God," first published in 1990, opened doors for international ministry for Henry Blackaby. (Photo by Turner PhotoDesign)

King said.

Blackaby said he was never interested in simply writing another Bible study course. "I told Claude King, God's people don't need another course book," he said during the April 17-18 gathering. "Is there another way we can write this so it won't be just another course, but will become a deep experience with God just in the process of studying?"

"That's the one comment I hear more than any other—'This study became the deepest experience with God I've ever known.' Please understand that's what we prayed."

Johnny Hunt, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of First Baptist Church in Woodstock, Ga., said Blackaby is one of his heroes.

"I am a byproduct of your life and your ministry," Hunt said. "Thank you, Henry, for giving to the Lord. I am a life that was changed."

Hunt cited an *Experiencing God* principle he's employed over the last 28 years at First Baptist Woodstock: "God is not our servant to bless our plans and desires. He is our Lord and we must adjust our lives to what He is doing and to His ways."

To that end, Hunt said the Atlanta-area church he leads had commissioned its 136th family to the international mission field and has started 120 new churches.

"When you labor where God is already at work, He accomplishes His purposes through you," Hunt said in citing another principle from *Experiencing God*.

Mel Blackaby, Henry and Marilyn's

third son and pastor of First Baptist of Jonesboro, said his parents' track record in ministry reflects the biblical principles taught in *Experiencing God*.

As in 1970, when Blackaby resigned as pastor of a large church in Downey, Calif., to become pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Over the next 12 years, the once-dying church grew from 10 members to a thriving congregation that launched 38 mission churches as well as the Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary and College.

In the early 1980s as a director of missions in Vancouver, British Columbia, Blackaby led an evangelistic initiative that resulted in 20,000 people professing faith in Christ during the World's Fair.

Before retiring at the age of 65 as director of the North America Mission Board's Office of Prayer and Spiritual Awakening, Blackaby had also served as an adviser to the presidents of the International Mission Board and LifeWay Christian Resources.

And over the last 15 years through Blackaby Ministries International, he has provided spiritual counsel to countless pastors, missionaries and corporate executives around the world as well as former President George W. Bush.

"The most profound contribution of Henry Blackaby may not be what he has already written or spoken but what will be done in the future because of his life," Richard Blackaby said.

At the birthday celebration, Richard Blackaby announced the establishment of the Henry Blackaby Legacy Fund which has a goal of \$2 million of which \$250,000 has already been pledged.

"His five children and 14 grandchildren will continue to serve the Lord and Blackaby Ministries International will continue to promote biblical teaching on the Christian life to churches around the world," Richard Blackaby said.

"God has mightily confirmed BMI's global plans to sustain my dad's legacy as we continue to challenge church and marketplace leaders in joining God where He is at work." (BP)

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Former NAMB missionary's legacy continues through condolences

By Myriah Snyder

Radcliff—Dianne Boulware's three-and-a-half year battle with cancer ended, but through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, her legacy lives on.

Boulware, a former NAMB missionary, mother and military chaplain's wife, died in January, but not before she and her husband, James, made arrangements that condolences be made to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering through Mill Creek Baptist in Radcliff, the church where James grew up.

To date, more than \$4,000 has been donated in her honor, according to Dianne's sister-in-law, Bonita Boulware.

"It hit me one day that people give to different things in lieu of flowers, and I

just thought to myself that it would be great for us to give to Lottie Moon," James said.

"Dianne was very much inspired by Lottie Moon when she was younger," James said. "She had a world mission view for evangelism and outreach. Lottie Moon had a great impact on her and was one reason why she went to the mission field."

Dianne, originally from Tennessee, met James, a Kentucky native, at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. At the time of her death, the two had been married for 27 years.

After seminary, James accepted the call as a church planter in Pennsylvania.

While serving as a pastor there, he also worked as a National Guard chaplain.

After some time in Germany, he and



Dianne, originally from Tennessee, met James, a Kentucky native, at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Dianne felt the call to full-time military chaplaincy.

"She served in every capacity possible. She taught. She played the piano. She just had a heart for missions, specifically

women's ministry," James said. "When I came onto active duty, she became very active in teaching classes. She also had a great voice, and she loved to sing in churches and for groups.

"... Dianne's story reminds Christians that our testimony and the impact of our lives can echo long after our audible voices are silenced, by pointing those we leave behind to what we most value, Christ and those He came to save," Bonita said.

She added, "Often, we hear of including charitable donations in our estate planning, but perhaps less often about the simple gesture of asking for memorial gifts to the furtherance of the gospel."

James serves now at the Redstone Arsenal. He is a member of Willow Creek Baptist Church in Huntsville, Ala. (WR)

Floyd to be nominated for 2nd term as president

Columbus, Ohio—Arkansas pastor Ronnie Floyd will be nominated for a second term as president of the Southern Baptist Convention, North Carolina pastor J.D. Greear announced April 20.

Floyd "is a leader God has raised up for us at this crucial hour, and sensing God's hand upon him, I want to see him lead us for another year," Greear, pastor of The Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham, N.C., wrote in a statement to Baptist Press announcing his intention to nominate Floyd at the June 16-17 SBC annual meeting in Columbus, Ohio.

Floyd, pastor of the multi-campus Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, has focused on calling the convention to pray for spiritual awakening and for advancing the gospel globally during his first term as SBC president, while also championing the Cooperative Program, Southern Baptists' unified method of funding missions and ministries internationally and in North America.

"I believe Ronnie Floyd is the man whom the Holy Spirit has chosen for this moment, and urge you to lend your continued support to him for a second term as president of the Southern Baptist Convention," Greear said.

Floyd, who has led Cross Church for 28 years, also serves as general editor of the Bible Studies for Life curriculum published by LifeWay Christian Resources and as lead pastor and strategist with the North American Mission Board he played an instrumental role in encouraging churches to adopt one of NAMB's 32 Send Cities.

Floyd served as chairman of the SBC's Great Commission Task Force in 2009-10 that set forth wide-ranging recommendations for expanding the SBC's missions outreach. He is a former president of the SBC Pastors' Conference and chairman of the SBC Executive Committee.

He also was a member of the SBC's Program and Structure Task Force during the mid-1990s that produced The Covenant for a New Century restructuring. (BP)

Senior living

Continued from page 2

churches, as we partner to recognize, affirm and provide a place for our seniors to reconnect with God (or connect for the first time if they do not have a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ) and each other," Johns said.

Music was provided by Alma Randolph, of Owensboro, and Jim Booker, of Louisville. Lyndia Fuller, of Paducah, provided a drama and music. After the main session, several workshops were offered. "Suddenly Single," "Experiencing Grief-Finding Your Way," "Islam: Beginning and Development," and "Wisdom Literature" were just a few of the workshops provided.

"It is my privilege to work with local churches and associations in providing the Senior Living



Senior Living Celebrations have been held by the Kentucky Baptist Convention for more than 10 years.

Celebrations," Johns said. "The KBC recognizes this team effort, and we celebrate our Lord for the great things that He continues to do through and with our seniors."

Senior Living Celebrations have

been held by the Kentucky Baptist Convention for more than 10 years. Each year, the Kentucky Baptist Foundation sponsors a breakfast, and the event is coordinated by Johns. (WR)

Kentuckians to serve on tellers, credentials groups

Columbus, Ohio—Members of the Tellers and Credentials committees for the June 16-17 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Columbus, Ohio, have been named by SBC President Ronnie Floyd.

Five Kentuckians have been appointed to the two key committees.

James Forbis, of Sovereign Grace

Church in Louisville; Choe Sergent, of First Baptist Church of Junction City; and Derek Simpson, of Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, will serve as tellers.

Shawn Edwards, of Valley View Baptist Church in Vine Grove; and John Flores, of La Respuesta, Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, are members of the

Credentials Committee.

David Galvan, lead pastor of Primera Iglesia Bautista, Nueva Vida (New Life Church) in Dallas, will serve as chairman of the Tellers Committee; and Hayes Wicker, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Naples, Fla., will be chairman of the Credentials Committee.

Southern trustees elect faculty, celebrate historic enrollment

Louisville—Trustees of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary elected two new faculty members and received President Albert Mohler Jr.'s report summarizing historic student enrollment during the board's April 20-21 meeting.

Elected to the faculty, effective Aug. 1, were Douglas Blount, professor of Christian philosophy and ethics, and Joseph Crider, professor of church music and worship.

Blount has taught since 2008 at Dallas Theological Seminary, with prior teaching posts at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Criswell College. He earned Doctor of Philosophy and master's degrees from the University of Notre Dame, and

master's and bachelor's degrees from Baylor University.

Crider has taught since 2011 at Southern Seminary as Ernest and Mildred Hogan Professor of Church Music and Worship and executive director of the school's Institute for Biblical Worship. He is pastor of worship at La Grange Baptist. Crider earned a Doctor of Arts in performance from the University of Northern Colorado, as well as master's and bachelor's degrees from Bowling Green State University.

Mohler reported the seminary had a record enrollment of 4,792 and full-time equivalents of 3,425 for the 2013-2014 academic year. Further, the Master of

Divinity headcount of 1,952 far outpaces peer institutions accredited by the Association of Theological Schools, he said. Noting that training pastors is "the central reason the institution exists," Mohler said the unparalleled strength of M.Div. enrollment is "deeply, deeply humbling." Also in 2013-2014, Southern welcomed 1,639 new students. "That's massive," he said.

Trustees voted to revoke its prior acceptance and decline the gift of a Wisconsin Christian university campus, as well as to decline to establish an extension campus of Boyce College, the seminary's undergraduate school.

Mohler said he has "great

disappointment" that the gift of Northland International University campus in Dunbar, Wis., had to be declined.

"We had entered with energy and hope in anticipation that we would be able to have a successful transition in terms of receiving the campus and then opening a Boyce College Northland campus this fall," he said. "We knew from the beginning that it would be a difficult challenge, but we also saw it as a great opportunity."

The board also recognized six outgoing trustees whose terms of service end in 2015, including Frank Broadus, from Louisville. (SBTS)

A wonderful Easter Sunday

Worship, games, homemade ice cream & a passion play

I have often wondered why we do so much more in terms of the celebration of Christmas than we do for Easter. The birth of Jesus meant and still means so much. The cross and empty tomb also mean so very much.

I had a great day on Easter Sunday. I was somewhat lazy and did not make it out of bed for a sunrise service.

Angie was sick that day, and I didn't have a choir trip or speaking engagement, so I decided the day would be about the Lord and my three children. That morning my two youngest children were singing at a local church that I had been pastor of from 1998-2001.

It was a great service, and time to reconnect with old friends. After church and the egg hunt, we returned to our cafeteria for lunch. After arriving back home, the kids and I played cornhole and basketball. We also made some homemade ice cream.

After an afternoon of fun, we went to a local church for their passion play.

A childhood friend of mine had invited me to the event last year, but I didn't make it. He called that Sunday afternoon to remind me of the play. My friend played Jesus in the play.

Although from a great Christian family, my friend battled drug addiction after high school.

As I sat and watched my friend offer his talent as worship to God, I couldn't help but be overjoyed and blessed. I was so proud of him.

My friend's journey made me think of the journey many of our students and their families are on. Although there were many sad days, I know my friend's parents did not give up on him.

They continued to pray for him and committed his life to the Lord.

In an administration meeting the morning after the play, I encouraged our school leaders to never give up on our students. There are times we want to give up on the people we love, but we cannot and should not give up on what the Lord can do.

We face challenges every day with our students, and sometimes we do ask students to leave our campus.

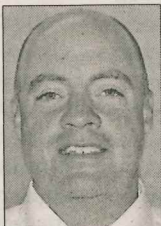
We do, however, almost always give a student another chance to return to our campus at a later date. Sometimes students return and make the turnaround we all hope for, but not always.

Even when we have to exercise tough love, we still continue to love our students. Young people face so many challenges today.

Twenty years ago, a seventh-grader's toughest challenges were homework and acne. Today they are confronted with decisions on drug use and sex.

Pray for our young people and pray for us as we try to share that Easter Sunday love with them on a daily basis.

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

Train them up

Clear Creek student thankful for influence of godly family

Student Rachel Allen, from Dayton, Ohio, is thankful for the many godly influences from her family that has given her a foundation for God's calling on her life.

"I grew up in a Christian family as an only child," said Allen. "Both my mom and dad raised me in church and taught me about the Bible. I was also strongly influenced by my grandparents who were great godly role models in my life. I was saved at the young age of 6 years old, when I came to the understanding of my need for salvation."

"My dad helped lead me to the Lord at our home after church on a Wednesday evening. My parents sat down with me and we talked about what it meant to be saved, and I accepted the Lord as my Savior."

"I first felt called to missions during my time at church camp when I was 15 years old," said Allen. "The Lord has confirmed that call continually in my life and has allowed me to use it already through working as a missionary intern after high school in Haiti from 2011-2012."

"After moving home from Haiti, I

began seeking to further my education so that I can better serve the Lord. I heard about Clear Creek from my father who has had several friends

connected with the school in the past. After finishing my education at Clear Creek, I feel that the Lord is calling me to return to the mission field as a church planter/children's minister. If He allows, I will return to Haiti, but I am open to go wherever He calls."

"I have honestly loved my classes at Clear Creek," said Allen. I especially enjoy the Bible classes I've taken so far.

They have deepened my understanding and appreciation of the Scriptures significantly and challenged me to further my knowledge of the Bible. I believe this will help me tremendously in my future ministry as I teach others about God's word."

"I would definitely encourage anyone who is interested to come to Clear Creek," said Allen. "I believe that God is definitely at work here and will use the education you can receive here to well-equip you for ministry."

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

Great mothers

Continued from page 1

Christ and organized what became known after his death as the Methodist Church.

Another son, Charles, wrote more than 6,000 hymns, including "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing" and "Rejoice, the Lord Is King."

Susanna has been called the "Mother of Methodism" though she never preached and published very few writings.

"Susanna patterns for us a mother who worked tirelessly to provide for her children," George said.

"She shows us the power and influence that a mother can have over the development of a child's theology, spirituality and worldview. She proved to be a woman of great resilience in the face of a domestic life riddled with difficulty, illness and loss."



Two of the earliest inspirational mothers in church history were a Roman noblewoman named Perpetua and her slave Felicity.

Anna Maria Moon

One of Southern Baptists' heroes similarly owes part of her success to her mother. When Anna Maria Moon's husband died of a heart attack in 1852, she was left to manage the Virginia family plantation alone and raise four surviving children, including a daughter named Lottie.

Believing strongly in the value of education, Moon sent Lottie to the Baptist-affiliated Virginia Female Institute, where she became one of the first women in the South to earn a master's degree.

"Anna's belief that her daughter should receive a higher theological education placed Lottie on a trajectory that, in 1859, would intersect with a revival led by John Broadus at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary," George said. "It was during this revival that Lottie experienced a spiritual awakening that would later result, in 1873, in her decision to move to China and join her older sister Edmonia as a missionary through the Foreign Mission Board."

The annual Christmas offering for international missions named after Lottie Moon generated \$154 million for the International Mission Board in 2013, the most recent year for which a gift total is available.

Perpetua and Felicity

Two of the earliest inspirational mothers in church history were a Roman noblewoman named Perpetua and her slave Felicity. Both were mothers of infants when they were martyred in A.D. 203 for refusing to recant their faith in Christ.

According to an ancient account of their deaths, the women were beaten and thrown to wild animals before finally

being killed with the sword.

"Though still nursing her newborn, Perpetua refused to recant despite her father's pleading," Rick Durst, professor of historical theology at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, told BP. "Felicity was pregnant when arrested and thereby temporarily ineligible by Roman law to be put to death in the arena."

"She prayed that her delivery would come quickly that she might experience martyrdom with her companions, and that is exactly what happened. This story of these courageously faithful young mothers spread rapidly through the churches and encouraged many to stand firm for Christ in times of trial."

Helena

Another ancient Christian mother is responsible for some of the Middle East's most famous Christian landmarks. Helena met and married a high Roman official named Constantine who later divorced her to marry another woman.

Their son Constantine became the first Roman emperor

to profess faith in Christ and granted Christianity newfound acceptance throughout the empire during the fourth century.

Constantine's loyalty helped lead Helena to faith in Christ, and upon becoming a believer she took an interest in the geography of Jesus' earthly life.

Constantine "underwrote Helena's desire to make a pilgrimage to Palestine and to fund the construction of churches at the sites she identified as the birthplace of Christ in Bethlehem and of His ascension in the Garden of Olives," Durst said.

"When the Church of the Holy Sepulcher started construction in 326 A.D., Helena was the architect. She accomplished these journeys in her 70s. Many a modern tourist to Israel owes appreciation to this mother who did much to preserve the sites described in the New Testament."

These and other believing mothers have "staked out some high ground in Christian history," Durst said.

"Believing mothers have rocked cradles with their own 'Magnificats' of trust and truth in Christ, as did Mary in Luke 1:46-55," Durst said, referencing the first word in the Latin translation of Mary's song of praise.

"Mothers have been God's first line of discipleship down through the ages as God raised up the next generation of church leaders."

"Mother's Day technically may have started in the U.S. in 1910 in West Virginia and then moved nationally in 1914 under President Woodrow Wilson, but God has empowered and honored mothers as His way of providing life, safety and courage in new each generation of children," Durst said. (BP)

UC gives student cancer survivor new outlook on life

By Lydia Huggins

Williamsburg—Sierra Jones, of Pine Knot, a University of the Cumberlands sophomore public health and human services major, has a tattoo above her scar that says "Survivor" with a cross next to it to represent her faith and that she defeated cancer.

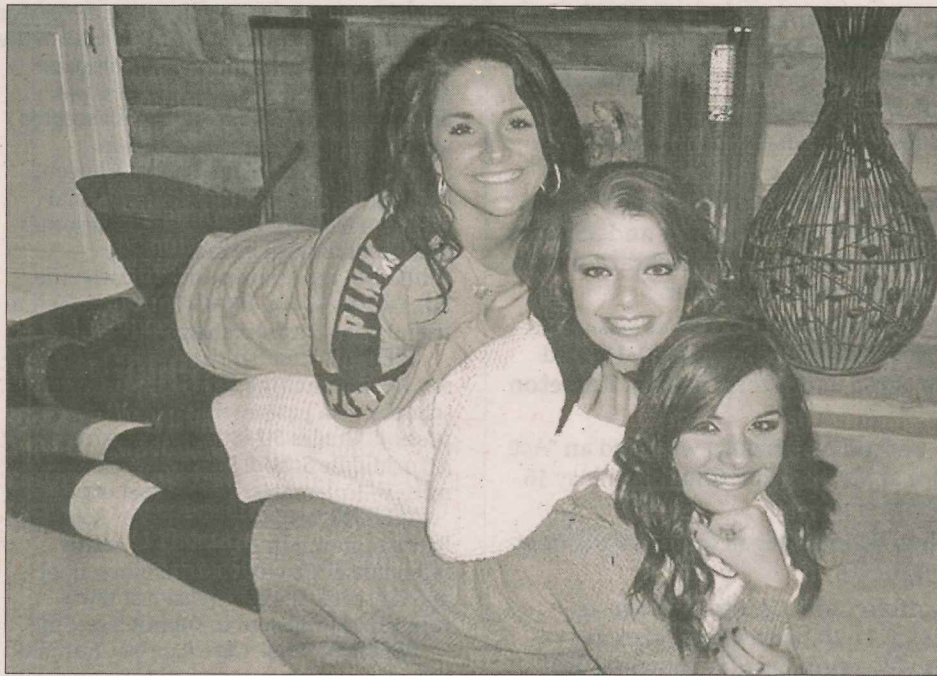
When Jones was 15, she was diagnosed with Myelodysplastic Syndromes (MDS), a type of leukemia that attacks the red and white blood cells, specifically in the bone marrow.

"Whenever you're young, you don't think stuff like that could happen to you," said Jones. "You think you're invincible. I never thought something like that could happen to me. Whenever it did, it was life changing but I didn't let it get me down. I just went on with my life and I continued living the way I was. I still tried to do everything that I could."

Jones was admitted to Cincinnati Children's Hospital to be treated for a six-month period. She was put in isolation and couldn't see her siblings, friends, or go to school or church. Everything that she loved to do was now a part of her past. She went through numerous rounds of chemotherapy and received several different medications.

"It seemed like an eternity," said Jones. "During this time, I received a bone marrow transplant. This transplant was the very thing that granted me another shot at life which allowed me to return back to school, attend senior trip, prom, graduate high school, and give me the ability to stand here where I am today. It has been a struggle, but I've managed to deal with it. It's made me want to work harder and be the best person that I can be."

When Jones finally received a bone



Sierra Jones (middle) with UC students and friends Kailee and Bailee Jarboe, of Williamsburg.

marrow transplant, which she had been waiting for because the donor was from Germany, she knew that God had given her a second chance at life. She was no longer scared. She knew that she was going to survive.

In February 2011, Jones was put in remission. She's now a four-year cancer survivor and sees doctors regularly because even though the MDS can't come back, she's at high risk of other cancers.

However, this doesn't worry her. Jones has a positive outlook on life because her faith became a lot stronger during her experience. She now prays day-in and day-out because she knows that God is there to help her no matter what.

"I was very independent, so it just changed me completely," said Jones. "... It's

made me who I am today and it's made me a lot stronger, and it's given me a passion to do what I want to do with my future."

Her friends and family have been a great support to her and a part of making her faith stronger. Especially because of the faith-based campus at Cumberlands, her friends at UC have helped tremendously in strengthening her relationship with God. Even through all of the stress that the Jones family has experienced because of her health issues, they have grown stronger and closer together because of it. It was really difficult for her to be in isolation from her five younger siblings.

"I'm just glad it was me and not one of them," said Jones about her siblings. "I could not imagine it. I would go crazy

because seeing those children in the hospital broke my heart."

Particularly, one young girl named McKenzie, who was down the hall in the hospital, inspired her and gave her a passion to be a child life specialist. McKenzie confided in Jones and called her a big sister. Even after she got out of the hospital, McKenzie would call her whenever it was time for her to take her medicine or something else came up.

Jones has always had a compassion for working with children. A child specialist goes to the different floors of a children's hospital and does activities with children in the hospital to get their minds off of what's going on. She desires to work in this field after getting her masters in clinical social work.

The professors in human services and public health at UC have helped Jones to prepare for her future as a child life specialist. Her professors mentor for her career and her faith. The continued support has been so important to Jones.

Linda Carter, dean of student life, has been understanding of Jones' situation and makes sure Jones has everything that she needs, including rides to doctors' appointments. Jones has given back by speaking at UC's Relay for Life.

"During this time of trial, my family and doctors stuck by my side and never let go of hope, they never gave up on me," said Jones. "Without the support I had from my family, doctors, and the American Cancer Society and my faith in God, I wouldn't have been able to overcome all I have throughout the years."

"UC has definitely helped me find who I am. It's helped shape me, along with my cancer, and be who I am today. It's given me new hope for my future," she said. "Being at UC has given me a whole new outlook on life." (UC)

Source of encouragement

Fellow Christ followers provide care, guidance, comfort & strength

The church body is a source of great encouragement. While I like to think I am middle aged (47), some would say I am a little too old to claim that status.

One of the benefits of increasing years is the history that contributes to who we are at any given point. This history is comprised of the many people that God puts in our lives each and every year.

Some people may be more enjoyable than others, but God in His sovereignty places them all for His purposes in our sanctification.

I was born and raised in Paducah and God's call on our lives to go to seminary moved us from Paducah in January 1999.

Since that time I do visit Paducah on a regular basis to see my parents, brother-in-law and sister (niece included), and a host of other friends and various business connections.

It seems that literally any place I go in Paducah I see someone I know and many from a local church family.

Recently, my father has had health-related issues and we have spent a good

deal of time at Western Baptist Hospital. I cannot tell you how many people connected to his care are from churches in that city.

It seems each day the Lord is gracious to us to provide a fellow Christ follower at just the right time for our family's care, guidance and comfort.

Throughout all of life's challenges, we are continually strengthened by God's grace through the local body of believers.

I simply do not understand how people cope with life apart from Christ and His local body of fellow believers.

Even now, some 16 years after leaving my hometown, I still have many family members due to the fellowship we have in Christ.

As we seek to be a witness in this lost and hopeless world, may we realize the blessings of the local church and be thankful for how God provides for our needs through the Body.

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

Crossings Ministries



David Melber

Inheritance: what kind are you bequeathing?

Parable teaches what you leave in them is more important

The matter of inheritance is a crucial concern in the dynamics of family life today. Parents consider at length what kind of inheritance they want to pass on to their children. And children, in turn, when they attain a certain age, ponder what they are going to inherit from their parents. The familiar and favorite parable of the wise father and the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-24) is the finest example I know of the kind of inheritance I would like to give as a parent and receive as a son.

To clarify what this parable teaches us, two common misconceptions must be addressed and set aside. The first is an inheritance is something parents leave children after they have died. However, if you think about it, this is far too limited a concept because parents begin bequeathing an inheritance to their children the moment the child is born in the sense of passing on certain life experiences and values that surely will shape that child's existence. So, the request of the prodigal was not as rash as it first appeared. Like any young adult leaving home he gathered the

inheritance, had been shared with him and began transacting with life out of that legacy. It is imperative we not wait until the end of life to consider what kind of inheritance we want to leave.

The second misconception is an inheritance consists only of money or physical property, which also is a too restricted view, because an inheritance stands for all that parents transfer to their children in terms of opportunities, values and a vision of life. This is not to imply the economic side is unimportant, because it is important. But it is not everything, and a child is poor indeed whose parents do not realize this and bequeath only a monetary estate. A child needs more from parents than money bequeathed at death, and this is

why the father of the prodigal is worthy of our attention. And, what makes it doubly important is this father is a reflection of our Father in Heaven.

So, remember, it's more important what you leave in them than what you leave to them. "Instill your values before you give them your valuables."

Ky. Baptist Foundation



Barry Allen

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



May

- 13** International Mission Board Commissioning Service, Highview Baptist Church, Louisville.
- 13-15** Directors of Missions Leadership Retreat, TBA.
- 16** Encounter WOW 5K Run/Walk, Kentucky Dam Village State Resort Park, Gilbertsville.
- 16** SALT, Kentucky Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 18** Encounter WOW, Kentucky Dam Village State Resort Park, Gilbertsville.
- 18-19** Engage KY Vision Tour, Lexington.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

BEREA—Conway Church will hold its Spring Revival May 10-13, with **Tony Shelton** joining May 10 at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. **Jason Brown** will be the evangelist Monday-Wednesday at 7 p.m. **Bobby Turner** is pastor.

CADIZ—Maple Grove Church has called **Mike Rust** as pastor.

ELIZABETHTOWN—Severns Valley Church will honor **Linda Polley** on her upcoming retirement and 35 years of dedicated and faithful service. The celebration will be May 17 at 6 p.m. in the worship center.

HARDIN—**Eury Tynes** accepted the call as pastor of Aurora Church in Marshall County April 19. He and his wife, Kelly, have three daughters: Keeton, Kameron and Keris.

HARRODSBURG—Central Association will hold an "Act Like Men" conference at Mt. Freedom Church on May 16 at 10 a.m. **Jamie Chesser** is pastor.

LEBANON—**Jonathan Bennett** began duties as pastor of Woodlawn Church April 13.

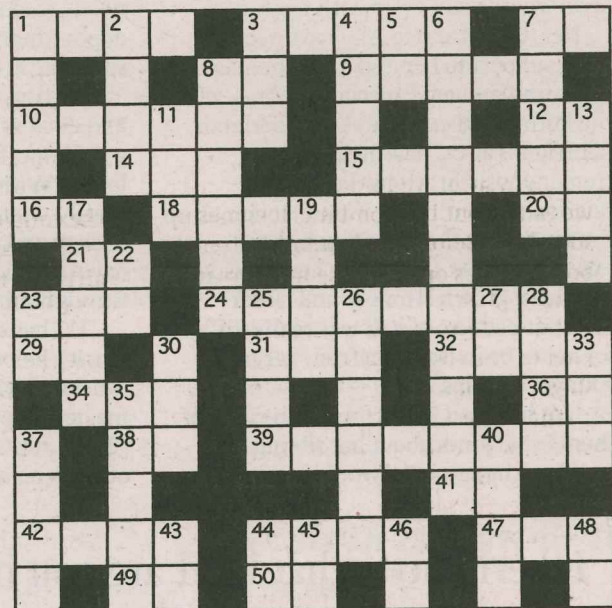
MT. VERNON—Scaffold Cane Church has set its Spring Revival for May 17-20, with Greg Lakes as evangelist. Services will begin Sunday morning and run through Wednesday night. **Chris Cobb** is pastor.

Bible Crosswords

By Carole Stengel

Across

- 1 "With the ____ angels" (Mark 8:38)
- 3 "The Holy ____ shall teach you" (Luke 12:12)
- 7 "They went ... from ____ ... into Canaan" (Genesis 11:31)
- 8 A short laugh
- 9 Moses and ____ went before Pharaoh (Exodus 5:1)
- 10 "____ is the way, which leadeth unto life" (Matthew 7:14)
- 12 Des Moines' state, abbr.
- 14 One of the twelve tribes (Numbers 1:38)
- 15 David reigned there (2 Samuel 2:1)
- 16 Substantive, abbr.
- 18 "The ____ of thy life shall be many" (Proverbs 4:10)
- 20 Northeastern area of the U.S., abbr.
- 21 Earned runs, abbr.
- 23 "Mine ____ is as nothing before thee" (Psalms 39:5)
- 24 "Our ____ is grown up" (Ezra 9:6)
- 29 Graduate degree, abbr.
- 31 A poem
- 32 Some were clay and some iron (Daniel 2:42)
- 34 "These are the ____ covenants" (Galatians 4:24)
- 36 "Being reviled, ____ bless" (1 Corinthians 4:12)
- 38 "God saw that ____ was good" (Genesis 1:10)
- 39 An unclean thing (Leviticus 11:29)
- 41 Santa Fe's state, abbr.
- 42 A city belonging to the tribe of Naphtali (Joshua 19:38-39)



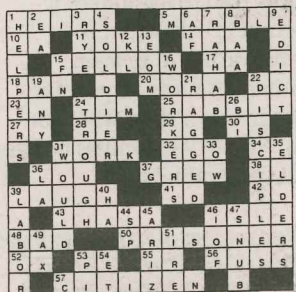
#036

- 44 A mongrel
- 47 "By faith they passed through the ____ sea" (Hebrews 11:29)
- 49 Warrant officer, abbr.
- 50 News agency, abbr.
- 25 "I am the ____ and the offspring of David" (Revelation 22:16)
- 26 "He revealeth his ____ unto his servants" (Amos 3:7)
- 27 "____ I opened my mouth" (Ezekiel 3:2)
- 28 Stitches
- 30 "One ____ or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law" (Matthew 5:18)
- 33 "When we shall ____ him" (Isaiah 53:2)
- 35 "If any ____ have children" (1 Timothy 5:4)
- 37 "The noise of a ____, and the noise of the rattling of the wheels" (Nahum 3:2)
- 40 Zaccur's father (Nehemiah 3:2)
- 43 "To be sin for us, who knew ____ sin" (2 Corinthians 5:21)
- 44 Pa's wife
- 45 "He was taken ____; and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9)
- 46 "Given ____ hospitality" (Romans 12:13)
- 48 "Without me ye can ____ nothing" (John 15:5)

Down

- 1 "With his ____ spread up to heaven" (1 Kings 8:54)
- 2 "Confess that Jesus Christ is ____" (Philippians 2:11)
- 3 Guaranteed annual wage, abbr.
- 4 "Perform unto the Lord thine ____" (Matthew 5:33)
- 5 Salvation Army, abbr.
- 6 "Deliver me out of all ____" (1 Samuel 26:24)
- 7 The joining of two or more things into one
- 8 "Provide things ____ in the sight of all men" (Romans 12:17)
- 11 Man's name, for short
- 13 Over again
- 17 "Abraham ____ Isaac" (Genesis 25:19)
- 19 "A bruised ____ shall he not break" (Matthew 12:20)
- 22 Do, ____ mi
- 23 I ____. God's name given to Moses

#035



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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: 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 friendshipbaptistsearch@gmail.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 resume to Attn: Middle School Pastor Search Committee—fc Coleman@fbc Somerset.org.

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 resume.

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 resume to kdenton.hcbc@gmail.com or mail to 301 E Main St., Horse Cave, KY 42749.

SEEKING: Pianist position available, Lexington Avenue Baptist Church, Danville, Ky. One service & one practice for \$100 weekly. Experience necessary. Call Philip Quinn at (859) 329-7056.

SEEKING: McDowell First Baptist Church is seeking a full-time pastor to lead and shepherd a congregation of 150 active members in reaching community for Christ; blended worship service with worship leader, choir and audio visual media assistance; volunteer staff leading in established vibrant and growing ministries in Sunday School, outreach and mission groups for children, women and men; a caring, friendly family-oriented church in rural area of approximately 2,500 people with many unchurched; modern three-bedroom parsonage on church lot. Mail resume and sermon DVD or CD to Paul Little, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 241, McDowell, KY 41647.

SEEKING: The Tates Creek Baptist Association, located in Madison and Garrard Counties in Kentucky, is seeking a DOM. Qualifications include 5 years of significant experience and preferred seminary degree. Resumes can be sent to TCBA, DOM Search Team, P.O. Box 69, Berea, KY 40403.

SEEKING: Winnwood Baptist Church seeks a senior pastor. For further information check web page, www.winnwood.org.

SEEKING: Olivet Baptist Church (Avg. 70 S.S. and 100 W.S.) in Paducah, Ky., is prayerfully accepting resumes for the position of full-time pastor to lead our congregation. Experience and seminary degree preferred, but not required. Please send resume and CD/DVD/Internet Link for sermons to: Olivet Baptist Church, Attn: Pastor Search Committee, 5186 Hinkleville Road, Paducah, KY 42001 or email to office@obcpaduah.org.

SEEKING: Evergreen Baptist Church in Frankfort, Ky., is accepting resumes for an interim part-time music minister. Please submit to Evergreen Baptist Church, Attn: Personnel Committee, 2698 Evergreen Road, Frankfort, KY 40601.

Would you or someone you know be concerned about beginning a mission to Jewish people in Louisville?

Call: Jim Hendricks (540) 525-4116

SEEKING: Fairview Baptist Church, Lincoln County: Our church is seeking a part-time associate pastor with duties including fill-in for pastor, home & hospital visits, and outreach. Please call the search committee at 606-669-8771 or church office at 606-365-2116.

SEEKING: FBC Cold Spring, Ky., is currently hiring a full-time minister of children, youth, and their families. This position will oversee the strategic vision for children's and youth ministries (nursery through high school), work with pastor to integrate family-oriented discipleship and parenting initiatives throughout the church, and help to cultivate community development across generational lines. Applicants should send resumes or questions to Angie Davis, Search Team Committee Chair at First Baptist Church, Cold Spring, Ky., via email: YouthSearchTeam@fbccs.com by May 15.

SEEKING: Highland Baptist Church in Shelbyville, Ky., is prayerfully searching for a full-time Minister of Worship and Discipleship. Experience and a Masters Degree preferred, but not required. The job description is available on our website www.hbc-ky.com. Resumes may be submitted to hbcworshipministry1@gmail.com.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Forest Hills, Ky., is prayerfully seeking candidates for the position of full time senior pastor. Experience and education is preferred. Resumes or CD/DVD may be sent to First Baptist Church, P.O. BOX 157, Forest Hills, KY 41527 (Attention: Pastor Search Committee) or email to 1stBaptistForestHills@gmail.com.

SEEKING: Big Creek Baptist Church in 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 4170.

SEEKING: Hawesville Baptist Church (Hawesville, KY) is seeking a full-time Pastor of Worship and Discipleship. Please forward your resume to the following address: Hawesville Baptist Church PO Box 57 Hawesville, KY, 42348 attn: Karen Basham www.hawesvillebaptist.com info@hawesvillebaptist.com.

AVAILABLE: For interim pastorate. Dr. Craig Loscalzo recently finished as interim at East Frankfort Baptist Church. Contact: Craig.Loscalzo@gmail.com or 859-230-4002.

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

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SERVICES: The family and employees of JCA Media would like to thank you for the outpouring of support displayed during the passing of Jim Cottrell. Your cards, calls, visits, and presence during this difficult time were a testament to how many people Jim touched. We are saddened by his absence in our daily lives, but know Jim's presence remains within the honesty, integrity, quality of workmanship, and fairness upon which he built his reputation. We look forward to continuing to help you enhance your worship experience. For information/references, please visit JCAMedia.com.

1995 bombing made them grapple with forgiveness

By Bob Nigh

Oklahoma City—Although Oklahoma City police chaplains Jack and Phyllis Poe weren't inside the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building when a truck bomb exploded at 9:02 a.m. on April 19, 1995, the aftereffects of the tragedy pushed them to grapple with forgiveness.

"One of the things we really didn't understand is, as caregivers, we want to make a difference, but we didn't realize that you can give yourselves away. And, Phyllis and I gave ourselves away," Poe said, reminiscing about the tragedy as its 20th anniversary approached.

"The two weeks before it happened, we had (attended) seven funerals," Phyllis recalled. "We were in the office and I started crying. I said, 'God, please, no more funerals, we can't do this, we're too tired.' So, we were spent before we ever got to the bombing."

On April 19, they were getting dressed to go to yet another funeral when the bomb went off. "Our house was 8.5 miles away," Jack said. "I thought something in our house had exploded. Then I thought an airplane crash had caused that massive boom."

"So, I went to the car and checked our (police) radio and finally someone said they thought it was the federal building downtown."

"I left, and Phyllis said she would follow me later. I pulled in behind one of our (police) units and followed him downtown."

The Poes would spend the next 21 days at the bomb site.

The first damage Jack saw was a Lincoln dealership about four blocks from the Murrah Building, "and the cars looked like they had been beaten with sledge hammers," he said. "There was glass all over the place from the big plate glass showroom windows that had been blown out."

"When I got to the Regency Towers Apartments, I parked my car and ran up the street. ... (W)hen our police officers who had been in Vietnam smelled the ammonia, they knew exactly what happened and that it was a bomb. The sight of the building was devastating."

The police chief sent Poe to the initial command post, then to First United Methodist Church.

"They said, 'We have some bodies there and you are needed,'" Poe said. "... (One) of our veteran homicide detectives had gone in there and he had left, saying, 'I can't take this.'"

At the church, the "lasting image in my mind is walking in there and seeing three adults and five children laid out in the vestibule," Poe said. "The bodies eventually got moved to the back of the church, where they set up the temporary morgue before they sent them to the medical examiner's office."

People also were crying about children. "Finally, an officer told me there was a day care in the federal building," Poe said, "and that was what the people were crying about."

Poe next started searching for police officers who walked a beat in the area.

"I was afraid we had lost some of them, especially one named Bob," Poe said. "He was a big man, kind of a private, shy guy. I finally found him about 10:30 a.m. and he grabbed me and gave me a



Jack Poe, at the Oklahoma City National Memorial, prays beside the memorial chair for Secret Service Agent Mickey Moroney who was killed in the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. Poe and his wife, Phyllis, Oklahoma City police chaplains, spent 21 days at the bomb site. (Photo by Bob Nigh)

big bear hug.

"He said, 'Chaplain, I have coffee in that building at 9 a.m. every morning, and I got up to go to work this morning, and the kids had the car last night and, like most kids do, they brought it home empty. I was filling the car up with gas this morning when the bomb went off.'"

"I told him how happy I was that he wasn't in the building at the time, and I turned to leave, but he grabbed me again and said, 'That's not all of the story.'"

"He said, 'I have two grandkids who stay in that nursery.'"

"My knees almost buckled at that point after having seen those children at the church. But, he said, 'They weren't here this morning. They woke up sick, and their momma kept them at home.'"

Poe then worked in the damaged federal building and checked on other people until concern broke out over the structure collapsing. "... (T)hey started having people run out," he recounted.

"I joined with our officers helping people get out, and I thought this might be it, and I prayed, 'Lord, if this is it, please take care of Phyllis and the kids.' ... If the building had come down, there was no way I was going to make it out."

Phyllis, meanwhile, had been assigned to help coordinate the chaplain response to the tragedy. Setting up a "Chaplain's Corner" in the parking garage of One Bell Central, she eventually compiled a list of 255 chaplains—including 27 military chaplains since Jack also was the National Guard's state chaplain—who showed up to minister to the victims, survivors and first responders.

"Working for the state fair all those years really prepared me," said Phyllis, who had managed the fair's Chaplain's Corner since 1990.

The Poes worked tirelessly in the weeks, months and years after the bombing, pouring their hearts and souls into the lives of others.

The smiles on their faces and the ubiquitous hugging, however, masked the struggle to forgive the perpetrators of the bombing, eventually leading to an unstable marriage.

"I didn't know where to put my anger,"

Phyllis said. "I had a lot of anger. Anger that people were hurt; that people died. Anger that our lives were changed within seconds, because you'll never be the same."

"No matter where we go, what we do, we talk about the bombing. It comes up somehow. Before the bombing, after the bombing. It's one of those markers in your life."

Phyllis' parents had tended to be passive and hadn't allowed anger to be showed at home, so Jack received the brunt of the anger. "I couldn't take it out on anybody else. ... It got to the point that we were fighting a lot."

"Finally, we were going to a survivors' meeting at the state capitol one night, and I didn't want to go and said, 'I just feel like the first person who asks me for

another hug, I'd just as soon slap them.'"

"I knew then I was in trouble, because I love people and I'm a hugger."

Jack also struggled with forgiveness "because I didn't like (convicted bomber Timothy) McVeigh and I didn't like (co-conspirator Terry) Nichols."

At a church service in Texas during a break in Nichols' trial in 1999, the preacher was speaking on forgiveness.

He mentioned the bombing and McVeigh and Nichols, "and he said if they had repented, God would forgive them. I got up and walked out," Jack said.

"I sat outside and my 15-year-old grandson came out and knew something was going on. He came out and just let me cry on his shoulder."

"I finally had to come to the realization that forgiveness is not for McVeigh or Nichols, it's for us. Booker T. Washington, I think it was, once said, 'I'll never permit a man to reduce me to hate, for the moment I hate him, I become his slave.'"

Forgiveness "would allow me to minister to those who haven't forgiven," Jack said. "And I knew that if I didn't let it go, it would continue to eat at me."

Things came to a head in 1999, and the Poes' marriage was "saved" by Joe Williams, the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma's chaplaincy and community services specialist and a chaplain with the FBI, who arranged for the couple to attend a seminar in Florida.

"Joe came to the house and had airplane tickets to Florida for us to go see Charles Figley," Phyllis said of a leading specialist for emotionally traumatized people.

"We thought we were going to a big conference on something called Compassion Fatigue."

But, when we got there, the conference was just the two of us.

"Joe, along with the Lord, saved our marriage by coming over and loving us." (BP)

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COOPERATIVE PROGRAM:

RESPONDING TO THE GREAT COMMISSION



THOUSANDS OF MISSIONARIES SENT OUT

The Cooperative Program is how Kentucky Baptists respond to the Great Commission, joining together with more than 46,000 congregations nationwide to support some 10,000 missionaries who are sharing the gospel of Christ every day.

The Cooperative Program is also how 750,000 Kentucky Baptists in 2,400 congregations support the work of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and its many agencies and institutions that do so much for the cause of Christ. It's through the Cooperative Program that orphaned children are given safe haven, future church leaders are educated, aging congregations are revitalized, pastors are taught effective evangelism strategies, church members are encouraged to be on mission, and so much more.

THOUSANDS OF SOULS BEING SAVED

Kentucky Baptists, working cooperatively in communities from the mountains of Appalachia in the east to the banks of the Mississippi River in the west, have had great success in reaching out with the gospel over the past year. The latest figures from the KBC show 14,223 baptisms across Kentucky in 2014, an increase from 13,975 the year before. That's enough people to populate a mid-sized Kentucky city. But the news gets even better. Thanks to your support of the Cooperative Program, missionaries from the Southern Baptist Convention's International Mission Board reported another 190,957 baptisms last year.

The Cooperative Program isn't just a line on your church budget. It is the primary means through which Southern Baptists support the work of missionaries in the state, across the country and around the world. The Cooperative Program allows your congregation to make an impact literally around the world.

