

WESTERN Recorder

May 19, 2015

Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

Volume 189, Issue 10



Highview Baptist Church choir leads congregational singing during an IMB appointment service of 34 new missionaries in a service at Highview's East Campus in Louisville May 13. (IMB photo by Paul W. Lee)

God's greatness compels us, Platt tells new missionaries

By Tess Rivers

Louisville—Monica Morley* grew up in a Muslim home. She had many spiritual questions as a child and young teen. For a time she attended a mosque, seeking answers from the religious leaders.

"I wanted to know God and was curious about how sin can be forgiven," Morley said. "I did not find the answers I was looking for."

Because education in her language was outlawed in her country at the time, Morley attended high school in secret and later began studying law at a local university. War ended her studies, however, and took her and her family to Europe, where they lived as refugees.

There, Morley said, "I was befriended

by a Christian girl who cared for me and my family."

When she returned to her country after the war, Morley met a group of international Christian workers, including D'Angelo,* who would eventually become her husband.

"D'Angelo shared the gospel with me and helped me read and understand the Bible," Morley said.

On May 13 at Highview Church in Louisville, the Morleys were two of 34 candidates appointed as missionaries by IMB trustees.

"Because D'Angelo came to my country, I had the opportunity to hear the gospel and believe in Jesus," Morley told the congregation. Together, the

□ See IMB Missionaries ... Page 8

Foundation leader chosen, 'realistic' KBC budget adopted

Louisville—The Kentucky Baptist Convention's Mission Board elected a new foundation leader during their May 4-5 meeting, and they approved the KBC's smallest Cooperative Program budget in 15 years.

Carnes elected KBF president

Richard Carnes, a vice president of one of the nation's largest banks, was unanimously elected by the Mission Board to serve as president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation. A member of Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, Carnes rose through the ranks during his 20-year stint with PNC Bank.

"He brings two things to the position that very few people have," KBF Board Chairman Charles Barnes said. "He's called to ministry and, at the same time, he thoroughly understands the financial side of what the foundation is all about.

That's a rare combination. We see this as a new day, a new era and a new opportunity."

Carnes, who served as KBF president from 1988-95, will resume the role June 1. He also served as director of the KBC's administrative services department from 1983-88.

"We kind of built a picture frame of what we were looking for, and his picture fits that frame," said Willis Henson, who chaired the KBF's search committee. "I am totally 100 percent convinced we have hit a home run."

Carnes, a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, said he intends to work closely with Kentucky Baptists, spending most of his time visiting in homes and churches.



Richard Carnes

The Mission Board approved Carnes' hire on the recommendations of the KBC's administrative committee and the KBF board of directors.

"It's a blessing to be able to come back into vocational ministry, and to know what you do everyday advances God's kingdom," he told administrative committee members.

\$21.25M budget adopted

The Mission Board also approved a detailed \$21,250,000 Cooperative Program budget that will continue to finance ministries and initiatives to help churches reach Kentucky and the world for Christ.

Reflecting a continued decline in CP contributions, the 2015-16 budget trims \$750,000 from the current year's budget of

□ See KBC Budget ... Page 6

Former KBC staffer seeks help to reach Brazil's largest city

By Robin Cornet

São Paulo—Scott Pittman is a missionary commissioned with the task of sharing Christ with millions of people living in São Paulo, Brazil, and he could really use the help of Kentucky Baptist churches.

"São Paulo presents the greatest challenge I have ever faced in my career as missionary, with such an incomprehensible concentration of lostness," said Pittman, the International



Mission Board megacity strategist for Greater São Paulo.

Pittman estimated more than 18 million people (90 percent) are lost. He and

his wife, Joyce, who formerly served on the staff of Western Recorder, have been tasked with starting church planting movements amid a crowded city so heavily burdened by crime and homelessness.

"The association I am presently working with is about the size of Shelby County, Ky., but with 57 times more people," Pittman noted. "It has 52 churches, many of which are weak. That area alone needs more than 200 new

□ See Brazil Bound... Page 2

Student stabbed during pizza delivery forgives his attacker

By Craig Sanders

Louisville—A Boyce College student who was stabbed and carjacked outside of an emergency room while making a pizza delivery says he forgives his attacker while he continued to recover in the hospital May 6.

Josh Lewis, 19, has been employed at Spinelli's Pizzeria since last August and is a sophomore at Boyce, the undergraduate school of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. While delivering a pizza to the emergency room at downtown Louisville's Norton Hospital on a Sunday afternoon, he says a man confronted him outside of his car and demanded his keys.

When Lewis noticed the man had a knife, he dropped the keys and ran toward the hospital, but he said the man caught up with him and stabbed him in the back before taking off with his Jeep Cherokee and the pizza inside the car.

"I'm not really holding a grudge against him," said Lewis, who is from Detroit. "If he was in the same room as me right now, I would tell him what he did isn't okay, but I would tell him that I

□ See Boyce student ... Page 3



Josh Lewis

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Western Recorder 5-19-2015

South District Baptists collect 50,000 food items

Danville—The churches of the South District Baptist Association collected a total of 49,306 food and housekeeping items and distributed them during their 2015 "Souper Bowl" Food Drive.

The tally was almost double last year's total of 26,543 items. Total value of the items collected exceeds \$25,000.

Part of the motivation for this incredible total came from Jason Gray's song, "With Every Act of Love" as well as the biblical text of 1 John 3:18-19: "Little children, we must not love with word or speech, but with truth and action."

South District Association has been conducting its Souper Bowl for six years and has collected approximately 140,000 items. Goods are collected in exciting ways.

Sometimes churches challenge each other. For example, First Baptist, Danville, and Parksville Baptist competed. Sometimes, men compete against women or different age groups compete within a church.

One of the most innovative ways of obtaining food in the "2015 Food Bowl" was done by Parksville Baptists. The church adopted a "Fill the Van" activity at the Danville Wal-Mart Super Center. Wal-Mart customers purchased food and donated it to the food drive.

By utilizing this tactic, Parksville Baptist was able to beat First Baptist. Parksville collected over 135 items per person.

Another incentive was the use of two "Golden Can Awards." One award goes to a large church that collects the most items. This award went to Parksville, which collected more than 20,000 items.

Another "Golden Can Award" goes to a small church that collects the most per capita items. This year's winner was Gravel Switch Baptist Church.

The items collected were distributed to an East Kentucky food bank as well as to several area food banks. God's Appalachian Partnership in food insecure Eastern Kentucky received more than 19,000 items.

John Morris, director at GAP stated, "God provided two to three months of food for distribution, thanks to our faithful partners from South District."

Just recently during distribution day, a GAP client accepted Christ.

New Hope Food Bank in Danville received in excess of 18,000 items.

Victoria Murphy, director of New Hope said, "Our walls are swelling from the wonderful donations. Thank you so much, South District."

The balance was divided among



Workers at First Baptist, Danville, load a truck with donations. The churches of the South District Baptist Association collected a total of 49,306 food and housekeeping items and distributed them during their 2015 "Souper Bowl" Food Drive.

pantries at Gethsemane Baptist and First Baptist churches in Junction City and pantries in Garrard and Casey counties.

Joan Mann, who serves as director of the South District Baptist "Souper Bowl" Food Drive, invites churches of other

denominations to join in collecting food for the Souper Bowl.

For additional information, contact Mann at (859) 236-4314 or Jim Clontz, director of missions for South District, at (859) 238-7624. (WR)

Brazil bound

Continued from page 1

churches by 2020 in order to get the ratio down to at least one Baptist church per 10,000."

Pittman, a former Kentucky Baptist Convention staffer, said the KBC has about one church for every 1,800 Kentucky residents.

"What we need are church partners to embrace this great need," he said, "and Kentucky Baptists can do this through 'Adopt São Paulo.'"

Vision trips planned for June 8-13 and November 9-14 will allow Kentucky Baptists to see firsthand how their churches' missions strategies can assist the Great Commission work being done in São Paulo.

Pittman said there are numerous ministry opportunities for churches of all sizes, interests and at every level of engagement, adding that prayer is needed as much as partnering churches.

"I have years of experience with Kentucky Baptist volunteers working in different parts of Brazil, and I've always known them to be a dedicated group of people eager to take on the challenges God has for them," Pittman said.

Ministry opportunities in addition to the vision tours include:

- Become a prayer partner and adopt one of the more than 140 districts in the city, an existing Baptist church or a people group within the city.
- Become a volunteer church that commits to a one-time mission project.
- Become a partnering church that makes a long-term commitment to work with missionaries in a particular area or with a people group.
- Become a strategy coordinator church that is a partnering church with the goal of planting a self-sustaining church.

To learn more about Adopt São Paulo, send an email to adoptsaopaulo@pobox.com.



Scott Pittman



Joyce Pittman

'Everybody needs shoes' inspires church shoe drive

By Myriah Snyder

Lawrenceburg—Churches across the state are partnering with Soles4Souls, funds2orgs and other ministries to collect shoes to help fight poverty.

The donations "have been able to help folks with shoes in Kentucky as well as worldwide," said Rick Clark, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Lawrenceburg.

"I went to Kenya on a mission trip, and my translator gave me a pair of his shoes that were made out of tires," Clark said, explaining what inspired him to get involved.

"I brought those back with me, and when I heard the story about shoes going all over the world, I thought, 'Everybody needs shoes; this is a way to help people,'" he explained.

In the five years that Central Baptist has collected shoes, members have donated over 10,000 pairs of new and slightly used shoes.

"We just ask people to take collection boxes into their work places, to their school, to their community," Clark said.

Additionally, the church gives out brochures about the program.

"The church shares that with other churches and other places, and shoes begin to come in," he said.

Central Baptists' shoe collection will last until the end of May. Shoes may be dropped off at the church 24 hours-a-day.

For more information contact (502) 829-5013.

West Side Baptist in Berea has held an ongoing shoe drive for the past year and a half.

They donate shoes through



In the five years that Central Baptist has collected shoes, members have donated over 10,000 pairs of new and slightly used shoes.

funds2orgs. Since they started this program, approximately 10,000 pairs of shoes have been donated.

"They help sort of microbusiness for the people in Haiti and Togo and some other places, and it was just a way for us to give back and support other ministries, too," program coordinator Kim Matthews said.

"I started realizing that shoes were a huge issue in poverty-stricken areas around the world, including the United States," she added. "Shoe drives are a way we can assist those who can't get shoes."

"When I looked in my closet and saw how many shoes I had, the guilt was terrible, so I started with my own closet," she said.

"There's a lot of people who don't even donate things; they just throw them away. I don't think that is

being a good steward of what God has given us," Matthews added.

Some associations also are getting involved in similar initiatives.

Rockcastle Baptist Association, under the leadership of Director of Missions Randy McPheron, collected more than 1,200 pairs of shoes that were delivered to an Alabama warehouse.

Other churches participating with Soles4Souls include Crestwood Baptist in Frankfort, Sand Spring in Lawrenceburg, and Mt. Moriah in Mt. Eden.

Ministries with the same purpose that Kentucky Baptist churches are participating in include the WaterStep program, Sports Reach shoe drives and other outreach programs. (WR)

Go online, voice your faith, reach thousands for Christ

By Erin Roach

Nashville—In a digital world, Baptist state conventions are providing a way to be personal through online testimony-driven evangelism tools that give people confidence to share the gospel in everyday life.

Kentucky, Louisiana, Texas and Oklahoma are some of the states where Southern Baptists can upload their personal salvation stories and then share links to those stories on Facebook or on a card as they pass through a store check-out line.

"People carry technology with them, so what we've done in creating evangelism tools is given people an opportunity to carry the gospel with them at all times, always being ready to share the Good News of Christ," Nathan Lorick, director of evangelism for the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, told Baptist Press.



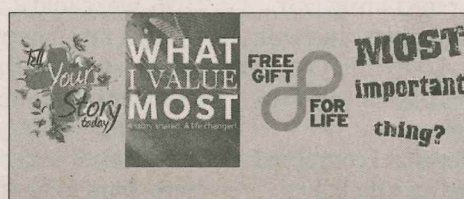
Nathan Lorick

Tell Your Story

In Kentucky, www.tellyourstory.today is averaging 750 unique visitors a day, encompassing people in at least 40 states and 12 countries.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention is asking people to write out their testimony and then call a toll-free number to record their three-minute story audibly. Within 24 hours, participants are texted a unique Web address they can share with others on social media or on business cards to point people to their stories.

Andy McDonald, an affinity evangelism strategist with the KBC, told Baptist Press the Tell Your Story tool has been popular in the state since it launched



last fall, and around 400 people have recorded their testimonies for others to hear.

People don't have to live in Kentucky to upload their stories. McDonald emphasized the need for everyone—even those who think they may not have interesting stories—to share what Christ has done in their lives.

"Maybe you were raised in a home where you were in church before you were born and you had awesome parents who loved the Lord, so you didn't get beat up and scarred up in life," McDonald said. "Praise God for that. But you still have a story."

"God will waste no stories. He uses them all. Your story is going to connect with someone that mine won't, and vice versa. He uses every story for His glory and to bring people to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ," McDonald said.

When a visitor to tellyourstory.today indicates a salvation decision, both the KBC's evangelism team and the storyteller have an opportunity to reach out to the person and connect them to a local church.

What I Value Most

In Louisiana, more than 2,000 testimonies have been uploaded since the



Andy McDonald

What I Value Most evangelism tool was launched a few years ago.

Keith Manuel, an evangelism associate with the Louisiana Baptist Convention, reported that testimonies have been read nearly 100,000 times by people in 156 countries on the website whativaluemost.com.

On the site, believers—from any state, not just Louisiana—are prompted to write in 200 words or less what their lives were like before Christ and in another 200 words or less what their lives are like after receiving Jesus.

"Our anticipation was that it would greatly impact Louisiana," Manuel said. "We had no idea it would impact the world."

When someone indicates a salvation decision, they are directed by the website to the North American Mission Board's Evangelism Response Center, where someone talks with them about following Jesus.

Free Gift for Life

The Southern Baptists of Texas Convention emphasizes Free Gift for Life, freegiftforlife.com, where people anywhere can upload testimonies and then share the Web address so others can read them.

[Freegiftforlife.com](http://freegiftforlife.com) also gives people an opportunity to upload videos of themselves talking about Christ, which is an additional outreach tool in a video-driven age.

As an example of the kind of traffic the site has seen since it launched in 2007, the first testimony listed has been viewed more than 5,500 times.



Keith Manuel

"God is really using technology to connect people's hearts to Christ through personal stories of how Christ has impacted their lives," Lorick said.

Lorick likened modern technology to a net cast out, "but what draws them in is people's stories and how God has connected with them where they are and changed their lives for the better."

"It's exciting to see as technology progresses how not only does it make life more convenient, but it actually is serving as a larger platform to share the gospel than we've ever had before," Lorick said.

The Most Important Thing

The Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma developed an online, testimony-driven evangelism tool several years ago called The Most Important Thing, mostimportantthing.org.

The tool also is used by the North American Mission Board, and the site is hosted there.

More than 2,300 salvation stories are on the site and, like the others, people can upload their testimonies and then point others to them. Also like the others, if a seeker happens upon the site, that person can start clicking on testimonies and also find a clear gospel presentation.

"Our story has power," Mike Napier, a personal evangelism specialist with the BGCO, told Baptist Press. "The Holy Spirit takes our story and uses it to draw people to God. It is an amazing process to be a part of and so exciting."

Witnessing tools change with technology, Napier noted, "but the gospel is the same. The saving power of Jesus is the same." (BP)



Mike Napier

Boyce student

Continued from page 1

forgive him and try to share the gospel with him and show him Christ."

After checking into Norton's emergency room, Lewis was transferred to the University of Louisville Hospital where he was treated for a collapsed lung and torn muscles.

Doctors later realized that the knife also punctured part of Lewis' liver. Lewis' mother flew in from Detroit and says the stabbing could easily have killed him.

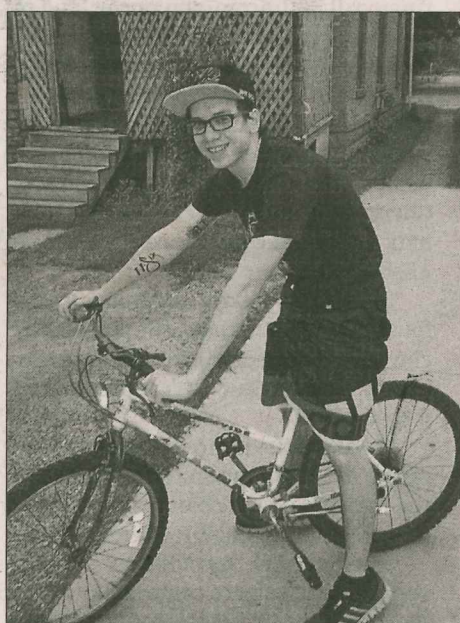
"We don't look at this as an accident or a fluke, but God's grace working in difficult situations," said Terri Lewis. "God spared him, and we have no doubt about it."

Since the story was first reported last Sunday evening, Lewis has made headlines around the world, including major news aggregation sites like BuzzFeed, USA Today and BBC.

Lewis worries his story may have become a viral sensation solely because it was erroneously reported that he delivered the pizza after he was stabbed.

"I'm doing my best to catch up behind the mess that all the news stories made and explain that what they posted wasn't true," Lewis said, noting he is "bothered" that false information may have made him "famous."

While Lewis is receiving recognition



Josh Lewis, sophomore at Boyce College, has a "116" tattoo on his right arm, which is a Christian hip-hop slogan drawn from the Bible verse, Romans 1:16. (Photo from Spinelli's Facebook page.)

from celebrities and social media sites, the attention he is receiving from friends at Boyce College and Sojourn Community Church, where he is a member, is generating the most support for his recovery.

"Josh is always an upbeat young man, you can tell he has a great mind. He's likeable, well-respected," said Boyce Dean

Dan DeWitt, who has visited Lewis in the hospital several times.

"I've been thankful for all the Boyce students who have expressed their support of Josh. There was a small group of students huddled in the waiting room when I got there, and most of that small group stayed until 3 a.m. the first night he was in the hospital. We've had students there in the hospital literally around the clock, supporting him, supporting his family."

"The support from Boyce has been fantastic," said Terri Lewis, who called it a "great comfort" to receive care from DeWitt, Lewis' classmates and local churches. She said Southern Seminary President Albert Mohler Jr., who was traveling on Sunday, called the family to express his support.

"I did not realize at all how many people were willing to set aside time in their day to spend time with me," said Josh Lewis. "It's just been really overwhelming almost the amount of support from Christian communities I've had, coming here and praying with me and letting me know that they're supporting me."

Many of those students supporting him are also members at Sojourn, either involved in the college ministry or his community group.

John Mike McGuire, a Boyce graduate and Lewis' former hall mate, was the first person at the hospital and has supported him throughout his hospital stay.

"Because of the strength of our community here at Sojourn, it's not unusual to hear that someone from his Care Group was immediately there and has been by his side the entire time," said Clif Roth, the pastor of groups and Connect at Sojourn Midtown.

Roth and Josh Rothschild, a Southern Seminary Master of Divinity student and Sojourn's deacon of college students, brought Lewis his favorite ice cream and talked about his new and unexpected platform.

"He's a funny guy and made a few jokes. We talked a lot about his interactions with people and how it's become a platform for him in a way he couldn't even fathom or anticipate because of how viral this has gone."

"He talked about wanting to use this for God's glory and to share the gospel with his coworkers," Roth said, noting that Sojourn will record a video of Lewis sharing the gospel later this week.

Because his car was stolen and he needs reliable transportation for his job, Lewis' church and employer are raising funds for a new car, as well as medical expenses.

A GoFundMe account created by Mack Welsh, Lewis' community group leader, has raised more than \$4,000 since Monday.

On May 6, Spinelli's Downtown held an all-day fundraiser, designating 50 percent of its sales to benefit Lewis, and Norton Hospital confirmed that it has agreed to match all donations from that event. (SBTS)

Celebrating victories

Winter may have brought some brief interruptions to life in Kentucky, but with the exception of a few days of unusual snowfall, the work of your KBC staff was not hindered. I want to give you an update on that as we look back over the past year.

As we embraced our new mission statement three years ago, one of the things I stressed to our staff was the need to get out of the building and into the churches. A convention created by churches for churches to help churches had better employ people who are ready to call on churches.

To that end, your KBC staff members drove 465,000 ministry miles last year, for the most part, en route to visit churches and their pastors and staff. For perspective, that's enough miles to circle the globe almost 19 times or, to bring it closer to home, that will get you from Pikeville to Paducah nearly 1,200 times or from Covington to Corbin 2,800 times.

As to the ministry accomplished while traveling all those miles, here is a brief synopsis: Your Mission Board staff members preached and spoke more than 1,000 times. We made presentations and consultations to more than 12,000 people, not counting congregational sermons. Ministry events overseen by Mission Board staff and Kentucky missionaries yielded more than 6,000 professions of faith. We have helped churches start 29 new churches. Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief yielded 20 percent of the professions of faith of all the disaster relief ministries across the Southern Baptist Convention. KBC Communications staff members created 126 news releases, 121 videos, sent 1,300-plus tweets, 1,100-plus Facebook posts, which yielded more than 100,000 interactions.

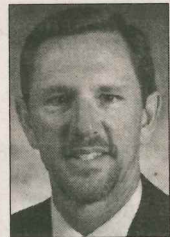
These statistics, among others, give only a snapshot of the vital work funded by the Cooperative Program and carried out by your Mission Board staff members. To understand the full impact of Cooperative Program ministries, I would need to add to the report the work of our agencies and institutions in Kentucky, as well as all of the ministries of the Southern Baptist Convention boards, agencies and seminaries.

The most celebrated statistics, however, are those appearing on the Annual Church Profile. Looking back to the most recent reporting year gives us much cause for celebration. In three key categories, KBC churches saw increases for the first time in years. Most importantly, baptisms were up over the year before. Total church membership and undesignated giving also were up. God is blessing the work of Kentucky Baptists and giving much fruit.

As I am soon to begin my fifth year as your executive director, let me say that I could not be more pleased by the progress we have made and the victories God has given us. Serving churches is among the highest privileges of my life.

Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Together We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

Graduation dreams—for the rest of us

This May and June are big months for my family. Our daughter, Laura, just graduated from college and will be starting a nursing career, here in Louisville. Our son, Caleb, graduates from high school and soon will head off to college to study aviation. They have big dreams.

On Laura's wall hangs an acrostic prayer that I composed from the letters of her name when she was an infant. In a column shortly after our son was born, I shared why we had named him Caleb, and every time I visit my parents in Greenville, S.C., I still see that column on a dresser in their guest bedroom. Both remind me of the excitement and joy Michelle and I felt at their births. As parents, we have big dreams.

Debby Akerman, the national president of Woman's Missionary Union and a former nurse, in her new book, "Secrets to Surrender," highlights Numbers 14:24: "But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it."

Most parents wish for their children to become doctors, lawyers, governors, actors, accomplished musicians, star athletes. Laura is experiencing the anxiety that comes with a first "real" job at a hospital. At the moment, Caleb desires to become a pilot. I hope they both achieve their dreams.

But, whatever they do, what Michelle and I most desire is that they will be servants of the Living Lord. Like Paul, a slave to Christ, they will follow His word wholeheartedly, refusing to compromise their values—no matter the cost.

Greater still, we rejoice that one day they will receive the promised land, a heavenly reward, and we hope their descendants—our grandchildren, great grandchildren, and generations to come—will too.

Scripture teaches that the promises of God and blessings flow when we follow Him wholeheartedly, Akerman observes. Caleb was different from the others, who chose to disobey God. He and Joshua were the only ones who received the blessing—a land to call their own—where others had faltered. Why is Caleb remembered millennia later? In Deuteronomy

1:36, we're told it is because "he wholly followed the Lord."

Like any parents, we long for our children to be big "HITs" in life—to leave their marks, to make great impressions on whomever they meet along the way.

Honor—Bring glory to God; honor to your family; respect for yourself. You are a child of God, for whom His Son died to save. Dare to have a different spirit than the rest.

Integrity—Be courageous! Don't be swayed or led astray by the crowd—or a friend. Dare to stand for what you believe in and for what you know is right. Let others see the difference Christ can make in their lives.

Truthfulness—Be full of Truth, God's word. Live in a way that can readily be described as "all for God." Dare to believe the Truth—live it, share it.

In her book, Akerman shares the "epiphany" of Tommy Moore, then a college student and minister at Ocean View Baptist Church in Myrtle Beach:

"Driving home from college one day, I had an epiphany of sorts, a grand realization that was as real and as tangible as an actual lightbulb going off over my head. Maybe God had called me to something great—something greater than me. Maybe God had called me—maybe God calls each of us—to join in the story of His glory, a glory that started long before we got here and will continue long after we leave."

Moore realized that his own glory was far too small a thing to live and die for. It brought anxiety and fear about making the right decisions and of failure. Plagued with thoughts of arriving at the end of his life defeated, he worried that one day he'd conclude that he had wasted his days.

"But living for God's glory, a much greater thing by far, involved laying down my life in complete surrender to Him," Moore said. "I realized the only way I could arrive at the end of my life with no regrets, with no feelings of defeat or nothingness, would be ... living a surrendered life that allows Him to live through me."

Now, that's a great graduation dream for our children—and for the rest of us: Live "wholeheartedly" for Him!

After Thought

By Todd Deaton



Jack Graham: It's 'crying time in America'

By Diana Chandler

Washington—Pleas for revival and religious freedom were heard repeatedly at the National Day of Prayer service May 7 in Washington, including the keynote address by Pastor Jack Graham.

Graham, pastor of the 40,000-member Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, Texas, and a former Southern Baptist Convention president, served as honorary chairperson of the National Day of Prayer Task Force.

"We are facing a crisis in America. These are desperate days," Graham said to the hundreds gathered at the Canon House Office Building. "This is a crying time in America. It's a time for tears."

Graham called for extraordinary prayer, emphasizing the theme "Lord, Hear Our Cry," taken from I Kings 8:38.

"There's a time for ordinary prayer," Graham said. "But there is a time for what Jonathan Edwards the great revivalist

called extraordinary prayer. Uncommon times call for uncommon prayer, and so we cry out to God. We cry out to God."

Graham prayed for Saeed Abedini, imprisoned three years for his faith in Iran, where officials have threatened to extend his current eight-year sentence to life imprisonment, unless he renounces Christianity and embraces Islam. The national prayer observance coincides with Abedini's 35th birthday.

"We should always remember to pray for suffering Christians, the persecuted church, martyred believers around the world," Graham said. "We must never forget them."

Abedini issued an open letter from prison to Christians on the occasion of the national prayer observance, which Graham read during his address.

"The National Day of Prayer is a great opportunity for us to come out and use the freedom that we have been given. So many Christians around the world are

imprisoned and martyred for their faith in Jesus," Abedini said. "You have the freedom to gather across the United States at your state capitol to pray. Please use this opportunity. Please use your freedom for the Kingdom of God."

Graham referenced an arrogance among Americans that makes us blind to God's will, and said society's moral decay is happening under the watch of Christians living today.

"Sin which used to hide in the shadows has now come out into the light. I heard it said a few years ago that when some people get out of their closets, it's time for Christians to get into theirs and pray. We need to pray in our closets and to pray openly as we're doing today," he said.

"God doesn't need America. It's a great nation. God has given us our life and our liberty. But God doesn't need America to do what God will do in the world. But America desperately needs God and we need Him today.... And may God give us the third great awakening in our nation." (BP)

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Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

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Letters to the editor:

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

Managing transitions in youth ministry

This time of year brings two natural transitions in youth ministry. We gain a new crop of sixth or seventh graders, bringing tons of enthusiasm in those wide-eyed, naïve students. There is nothing like that first summer trip for a student. The first time at camp, or helping with the "little kids" in Bible School, or playing on the church softball team can make a major impact on a student.

We also lose seniors that we have poured six years of our lives into. We wonder:

■ Did they really get this Jesus thing?

■ Will they still be involved with the church when they leave the safety of youth group? Or, will they be a part of the large percentage of students that graduate church when they graduate the youth ministry?

■ Did we teach them how to feed themselves spiritually or have we spoon-fed them the Bible?

So what can we do to help students in our ministry in these points of transitions in their lives?

New students—New students need specific attention. I remember one year talking to our graduating seniors and asking when they felt like they were a part of the youth group. It was humbling and eye opening when one

of them said, "During my freshman year." She had been on youth council, was there for every event we did, and was a leader in our group. After that conversation, we made changes.

We assigned a junior or senior to every incoming middle school student to make sure new students are personally invited to every event, included in group conversation and feel a part of the group.

Six years later when that group of sixth graders graduated, we had the best retention rate of any group. They helped integrate the students that came after them—without being prompted. It was the model they knew and practiced.

Some churches have started a separate fifth and sixth grade ministry to help with the transition from the children's ministry to the youth ministry. For some churches, this is a year-round arrangement; for some, it is one service/program a week just for them; and for others, it is special events throughout the year.

Graduating seniors—Studies have told us that a huge percentage of the students that graduate our youth ministries also graduate church. That is disheartening, unacceptable, disgusting, and a thousand other

adjectives. It would be easy to blame churches as boring, irrelevant, out of touch, etc. While some may be true, churches cannot be our scapegoat.

We need to ask ourselves, as student ministers, if we have done all we can to help in this transition. Have we helped our students to develop significant relationships with adults in "big church"? Have we made much of Jesus, or just provided games and food? Have we taken our students to the colleges that they will attend and introduced them to the campus ministers, or do we send them off and hope for the best? Have they been given opportunities to lead events outside the student ministry, or have we kept our best and brightest all to ourselves? Students should be involved in leading worship on more than special events. They can lead in prayer; serve as ushers, decision counselors, greeters and musicians.

Nothing guarantees a student will stay connected after graduation. But by having a plan to help them transition into the next phase of their discipleship journey, we can reduce the rate of their departure. Let us not miss prime opportunities to connect with and minister to students as they transition through life and our ministries.

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

Youth Ministry Corner



Joe Ball



Give & receive growing income

By Laurie Valentine

A charitable remainder unitrust ("CRUT") is legacy giving plan that provides you and/or other family members a potentially growing distribution stream during the term of the trust, with the remainder set up to benefit one or more charities at the end of the trust term.

You set up a CRUT by creating an irrevocable trust and transferring cash, appreciated securities or real estate to it.

The CRUT will pay you and/or others an amount each year equal to the payment rate designated in the trust agreement multiplied by the value of the trust assets, as revalued on January 1 each year. The minimum payment rate is 5 percent.

The trust term can be for the lives of the non-charitable "income" beneficiaries or a fixed term not to exceed 20 years.

The payment out to you and/or other non-charitable beneficiaries each year will vary. If the trust assets increase in value from one year to the next, the payment amount will increase; if the value goes down, the payment amount will decrease.

The goal is to select a payment rate that will allow some growth in the value of the trust assets from year to year so that the payments grow, thereby creating a hedge against inflation over time in what you are receiving from the trust.

When the trust term ends, whatever remains in the trust is distributed to the charities you have named in the trust agreement.

The wounded spouse

By Valerie Vincent

After the Fall when God began asking questions, Adam pointed to Eve, and Eve pointed to the serpent. It is our sinful nature to point to another when we experience blame or feel defensive, when we are afraid or prideful, when we are uncertain or hurt. When we spend significant amounts of time with another person, we will inevitably cause hurt or pain. Hopefully it is unintentional. At times it is not.

When we experience hurt or pain, it grieves us. In that grievance, we may feel the desire to grieve the offender. And so we react, speaking hurtful words out of our own pain or behaving in ways that cause injury. The more pain we experience, the more we may seek to

cause injury. If there is a history of injuries from neglect, criticism, lack of kindness, attention or caring, or failure to value, the wounds grow deeper.

Wounds do not heal when the injuries cease. Injuries must stop to heal. Yet it is God that brings the healing. It is from God we must seek healing. Our error is

that we want the healing touch to come from those who have wounded us. We can feel anger and hurt with the person who has injured us and want that person to make it better. It is our responsibility to acknowledge and apologize. It is our task to stop injuring and diligently work on preventing more injury. But it is God who binds up wounds. It is God who brings wholeness to brokenness.

A couple cannot heal themselves. They can seek God's power to help them stop wounding and introduce behavior that protects and nurtures the marriage (such as gentle words, kind actions, caring gestures, grateful hearts, words of thanksgiving and appreciation, honest sharing, intimate moments, and affirming behavior). To break free is to seek healing from God rather than from one another and seek the strength and courage to stop injuring even when injured.



Is there any problem too big for God?

By David Jeremiah

"Houston, we have a problem."

When NASA flight directors heard those words from Apollo 13, it was like an invitation: "You are hereby invited to solve a life-or-death problem"—and they did. Flight director Gene Kranz sprang into action: "Okay ... stay cool. Work the problem, people.... Failure is not an option!" (Excerpt from the movie, "Apollo 13.")

Work the problem! With no heat, no light and little communication with the ground, the astronauts drifted back toward earth in darkness—helpless.

Work the problem! Ground engineers had to conserve enough power to fire the engines and direct them safely into the earth's atmosphere. And they did!

Lost in space

Ever felt lost in space, drifting along, helpless, wondering if even God is stumped by your situation? We know God can solve problems, but in your darkest moments you wonder if He is even working on it.

Friend, God is working your problem!

Look at the Apollo 13 situation in a split-screen format: three astronauts on the left screen huddled in their freezing spacecraft, speaking little to conserve energy, fighting to stay awake, with only a flashlight—dark, cold, silent. On the right side of the screen, just the

opposite, a beehive of brightly-lit problem-solving is taking place.

Given instructions that a plan was in the works, the astronauts had to be patient. They couldn't work the problem, so they had to believe someone else could.

FIRST PERSON

That's exactly what we as Christians have to do when we have a problem with no solution in sight. We can't work it but we have to believe that God can—and He is working on our behalf.

Problem solving in the image of God

Sometimes, using the gifts and abilities God gives us, we can solve serious problems, as in the Apollo 13 mission. But other times, we have to call upon God. When we are stretched beyond our human limits, we find ourselves in His limitless domain. He welcomes our cries and loves to provide solutions to our problems.

When asking God to help us solve problems, we have to remember that His ways are not our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9). God provided "surprise solutions" to people facing problems in the Bible:

■ Big problem, small solution. The Israelite army had a giant problem named Goliath. God's solution was a teenager about 3 feet shorter. No armor or sword, but David had giant faith: "The Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands" (1 Samuel 17:47).

Sometimes God's solutions are smaller than our problems in order

to create faith in us.

■ Physical problem, spiritual solution. Hindered in ministry by a physical problem, the apostle Paul called out to God three times for healing. Instead of bringing a physical one, God brought a spiritual one: "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9). God may allow a problem to be its own solution when it forces us to rely more on God for grace to endure.

■ Personal problem, corporate solution. When Paul was journeying toward Jerusalem to deliver relief monies to the church, he was well aware of the danger from opponents of the gospel. He shared his personal problem with the church at Rome, asking them to pray for his safety: "I beg you, brethren ... that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from those in Judea who do not believe" (Romans 15:30-31). God may want to use others to be a partial or total solution to your problem—but you have to ask!

The Bible, church history and hopefully your life are filled with examples of how God has solved problems His way, in His time, according to His purposes. There is no problem too big for God. Be encouraged as you trust Him to get involved in whatever problem you are facing today.

David Jeremiah is the founder and host of Turning Point for God and pastor of Shadow Mountain Community Church in El Cajon, Calif.

Why I must engage public issues

By Hershael York

Ministry has taken me to several "closed" countries, nations whose governments consistently silence Christianity. I have seen how routinely and brutally those in power attempt to intimidate Christians into silence. I have returned from each of those experiences with a greater appreciation of the democratic and representative republic in which I live, but also with a deeper resolve to exercise rights and responsibilities of my citizenship.

Participation in our government is not merely a right, nor even a high privilege, but a sacred and inevitable responsibility for Christian—and especially, Baptist—citizens. My silence on the moral and social issues of the day is a desecration of every drop of blood shed by every American soldier who fought in defense of that right. If I cower now in the face of public pressure and popular sentiment, I betray bold Baptists before me who built the wall of separation between church and

state that ensures the government cannot muzzle or mute my message.

I have the unique privilege to pastor in the state's capital. Consequently, my congregation is inherently political because the majority of them work for the state in some capacity. The Scripture has often led me to positions that are at odds with one or both political parties. I have had reporters show up at my house to ask my response to unflattering things a governor has said about me. And yes, I have had members whom I loved and cared for deeply leave our church over my position on one issue or another.

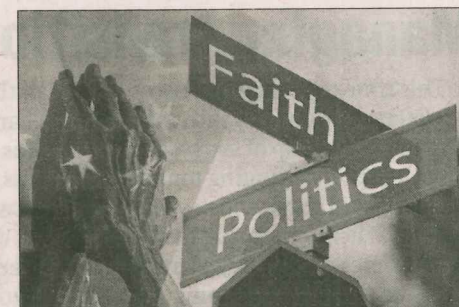
The consequences of truth should never become a factor in some complex calculation of whether or not we preach it. Nothing I ever preach will be more controversial or more objectionable than the gospel of Jesus Christ.

If I am bold enough to preach that God created the world and made man in His own image, how could I possibly keep silent about abortion? If I dare proclaim that Jesus is the Son of God and the only

way of salvation, how could I fear to preach the truth of His words, "He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?'"

While I earnestly desire to preach the truth with grace, humility, and patience with those who are struggling or even rejecting it, my great desire is to preach in my church and to engage the public outside my church under the anointing of God's Holy Spirit. Spirit anointed preaching avoids no subject, compromises no truth, and fears no reaction.

Under the authority of Scripture and the anointing of the Spirit, no preacher can keep silent as the culture around him rushes headlong toward hell. If we understand that sin causes misery and sorrow—and it does—and that sin cost the life of our Savior—and it did—how can we sit silently and fearfully when our culture attempts to normalize sin and stigmatize those who expose it? We must speak the



truth in love, to be sure, but we must speak. Exodus 4 tells not only the story of Moses at the burning bush, but also the strange truth that God nearly killed Moses as he travelled back to Egypt to lead the Israelites out of slavery. God wanted Moses to fear Him so he would not fear Pharaoh. If we fear God—failing Him, disobeying Him, misrepresenting Him—we cannot fear man. If we spend time with Him and saturate ourselves with His Word, we will never fear to stand before the King and speak the truth. (WR)

Hershael York is pastor of Buck Run Baptist Church in Frankfort. This article is third in a series, "How and why should Christians engage the public square?" for the Western Recorder, provided by the KBC's Committee on Public Affairs.

Orange called as DOM for Henry County Association

Pleasureville—A longtime pastor and retired Mid-Continent University professor has been called to serve as director of missions for Henry County Baptist Association.

Larry Orange, a founder and former pastor of His House Ministries in Mayfield, has already started in his new role.

"Larry brings a wealth of experience and a passion for the local church to this new role, so I'm excited for the association," said Eric Allen, Missions Mobilization team leader with the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

"Henry County Association has been without DOM leadership for quite some time, so I'm very thankful that Larry will be filling that void."

Orange led more than 500 worshippers each Sunday while pastor of His House from 2003-10.

At the same time, he juggled several roles at Mid-Continent University, including professor, dean of the College of the Bible, and director of the Christian Ministry Center and regional bivocational center. He also initiated the campus ministerial association.

Orange has experience serving an association, having been director of missions for Gasper River Baptists in the mid-90s.

Prior to serving at His House, Orange spent four years as a pastor in Illinois and 11 years at West Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville. Orange holds a doctorate degree in ministry from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife reside in Shelby County. (KBC)



Larry Orange

KBC Budget

Continued from page 1

\$22 million. It is the lowest budget adopted in 15 years.

"The last time we had a budget this low was in 2000-01, when the Cooperative Program goal was \$21 million and the overall budget total was \$22,875,050," Lowell Ashby, leader of the KBC's Finance and Business Services Team, told the Mission Board. After reaching a high in fiscal year 2007-2008 of \$23,867,431 with the exception of a small spike in 2011-2012, total CP receipts from churches have fallen by \$2.46 million to a current level of \$21,404,469.

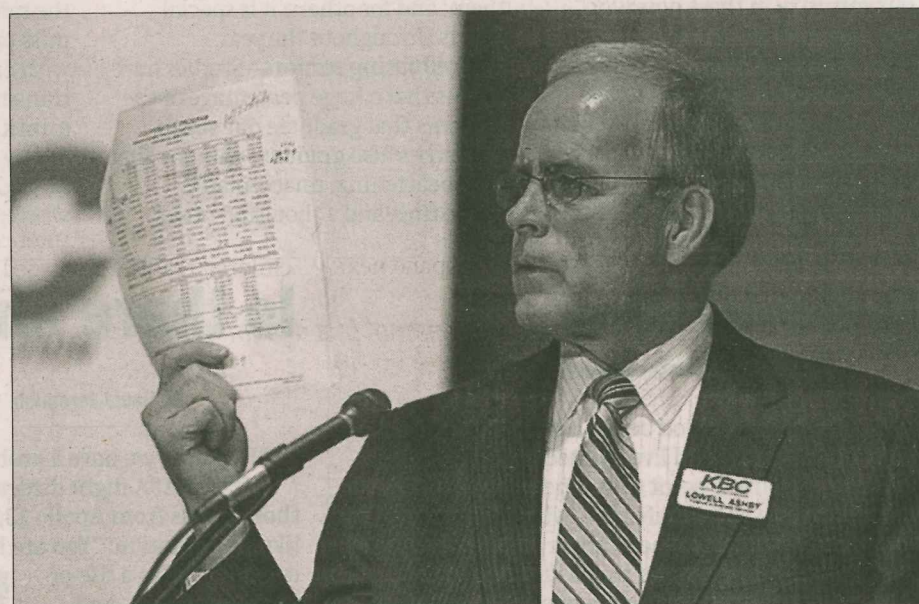
Calling the CP revenue projection in the budget "realistic," KBC Executive Director-Treasurer Paul Chitwood said, "We're introducing a budget that, for the first time in a long, long time, we'll be able to meet."

"We're grateful for the support of Kentucky congregations as we join together to spread the gospel to our state, nation and world," he said. "We're bent on being good stewards of every penny."

Fifty percent, or \$9,881,250, of the budgeted revenue is allocated to the Southern Baptist Convention causes. Fifty percent will remain in Kentucky to be divided up among KBC programs, initiatives, agencies and institutions. Seven percent is shared between the KBC and SBC for promoting and administering the Cooperative Program.

Detailing the distribution of CP funding, projected 2015-16 state allocations for KBC agencies and institutions 2015-16 include:

- \$994,444 to University of the Cumberlands, an increase of \$16,665 from last year's amount;
- \$555,278 to Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, an increase of \$32,167;
- \$385,278 to Oneida Baptist Institute, an increase of \$38,168;
- \$259,722 to Western Recorder, a decrease of \$9,167;
- \$221,944 to Kentucky Baptist Foundation, a decrease of \$7,834;
- \$415,556 to Woman's Missionary Union, a decrease of \$14,666;



"The last time we had a budget this low was in 2000-01, when the Cooperative Program goal was \$21 million and the overall budget total was \$22,875,050," Lowell Ashby, leader of the KBC's Finance and Business Services Team, told the Mission Board.

- \$283,333 to Sunrise Children's Services, a decrease of \$10,000;
- \$311,667 to Crossings Ministries, a decrease of \$11,000.

The total projected distribution of CP funds to KBC agencies and institutions is \$3,431,944, a decrease of \$943,613 from 2014-15 budget figures. (Campbellsville University, which previously had been allocated \$997,779 does not appear in this year's budget.)

Projected 2015-16 state allocations for KBC Mission Board include:

- \$656,539 to Mission Mobilization Team, an increase of \$46,815 from last year's amount;
- \$2,378,027 to Church Consulting and Revitalization Team, an increase of \$131,481;
- \$1,805,450 to Evangelism and Church Planting Team, an increase of \$191,427;
- \$1,577,603 to Executive Office Team, an increase of \$61,143;
- \$1,022,102 to Business Services Team, an increase of \$60,455.

The total projected distribution of CP funds to the KBC Mission Board is \$7,439,727, an increase of \$491,321 from 2014-2015 figures.

The total project distribution of CP funds to SBC causes is 9,881,250, a decrease of \$401,250.

Meanwhile, the KBC reported that Kentucky Baptist churches gave more than \$2.1 million through the Cooperative Program in April, continuing an upward trend that began last summer. Total CP receipts through eight months of the 2014-15 fiscal year stood at about \$14.5 million. The \$2,148,844 given in April puts CP contributions about \$300,000 ahead of the same point last year.

In his report, Chitwood noted that ministry events overseen by Mission Board staff and missionaries this past year yielded more than 6,000 professions of faith and helped churches start 29 new churches, he reported. Meanwhile, Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief ministries yielded 20 percent of the professions of faith of all the DR ministries across the Southern Baptist Convention combined.

"God is blessing the work of Kentucky Baptists, and He is giving fruit to our labors," he said. (WR)
Robin Cornelet, of KBC Communications, contributed to this story.

Centershot hits gospel bull's-eye

By Robin Cornetet

Louisville—Tiffany Heath noticed her son's peculiar habit soon after he joined the church archery team.

"He sleeps with his Bible," Heath said.

Unphased and rather proud, Heath talked about other unexpected changes, like how Cody, 7, couldn't wait to tell her about the Bible stories he heard at Centershot practice.

Cody was one of 70 Kentucky Baptist students who competed in the Centershot National Championship May 6. A big part of the affinity program's mission is to point kids to Christ.

President John Rickenbach said he was pleased with the number of students from across the country who participated.

The inaugural event in Louisville drew 180 students from as far away as Alaska for a day of Christ-centered fellowship and friendly competition.

But it was the response to an invitation by Kentucky Baptist Convention Evangelism Team Leader Chuck McAlister, Rickenbach said, that struck at the core of Centershot's purpose: to advance the gospel.

"We had four people give their lives to the Lord, and two of them were adults," Rickenbach said.

Plans are already in the works, he said, to expand next year's program in hopes of sharing Christ with the more than 50,000 people who will be in town for the National Archery in the Schools Program.

"We've got to give it a shot," Rickenbach said.

As the tournament drew to a close, Heath watched as her son gave one of his teammates a double fist bump for a job well done.

She expressed gratitude for a program that blends good sportsmanship with the gospel and described Centershot as a "wonderful organization."



Above, archers of all ages participate at the May 6 Centershot National Championships in Louisville. Right, Cody Heath (right) gives a double fist bump to a Centershot teammate. The archery program blends good sportsmanship with the gospel. (Photos by Robin Cornetet)

"Centershot is a dynamic ministry for the local church. It teaches the life skill of archery so we can build relationships with men, women, boys and girls and share the gospel of Jesus Christ with them."

Ryan Coffey, student pastor at First Baptist Church of London

"It keeps the kids' interest, builds friendships, and the children really are engaged and learning the word of the Lord," said Heath, a member of Campbellsburg Baptist Church.

Weekly Centershot practices include a 30-minute Bible study after archery lessons.

Making Jesus the target of young lives is what Centershot is all about, said Ryan Coffey, student pastor at First Baptist Church of London. His church has introduced about 50 students to the curriculum.

"Centershot is a dynamic ministry for the local church," Coffey said. "It teaches the life skill of archery so we can build relationships with men,



women, boys and girls and share the gospel of Jesus Christ with them."

Those relationships led to a number of salvation decisions and several new families attending First Baptist, he said.

As a basic archery instructor, Coffey said he would love to see more churches incorporate Centershot as part of their affinity outreach strategies.

To learn more about how your church can start a Centershot program, visit www.centershot.org. (KBC)

Meador announced as Pastors' Conf. nominee

Columbus, Ohio—John Meador, pastor of the Dallas-area First Baptist Church in Euless, Texas, will be nominated for president of the Southern Baptist Convention Pastors' Conference, according to an announcement by Tennessee pastor Steve Gaines.

Gaines, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn., stated in a May 5 announcement to Baptist Press: "John Meador is a man of God and a very capable leader in his church, his state and in the SBC. In this crucial day when our Southern Baptist churches are seeking to be a catalyst for revival in America, John Meador brings seasoned leadership as a veteran pastor. He has led the historic First Baptist Church, Euless, Texas, to be an epicenter for prayer, personal evangelism and spiritual awakening. He loves the Lord, He

loves people and He loves Southern Baptists."

Gaines said Meador will lead pastors from various streams of Southern Baptist life to unite for the cause of evangelism.

Meador "is rock-solid in his commitment to keeping 'the main thing' of evangelism/revival as the focal point of his tenure as president of the SBC Pastors' Conference," Gaines said. "Our culture is running away from Jesus and is in a state of moral and spiritual decline. Meador will help lead Southern Baptists to engage our culture with the gospel of Jesus and will follow SBC President Ronnie Floyd's lead by focusing on spiritual awakening and fulfilling the Great Commission."

The Pastors' Conference, which features messages from key leaders and inspirational music and

worship, will be June 14-15 in the Greater Columbus Convention Center preceding the SBC's June 16-17 annual meeting there.

St. Louis will be the site of next year's Pastors' Conference and SBC annual meeting.

Meador, who preached the convention sermon at the 2014 SBC annual meeting, has pastored First Baptist since 2006, leading the congregation to "launch a gospel-centered compassion organization that has become a model across the nation for partnering with businesses, schools and churches in meeting the community's needs," Gaines said. That ministry, known as the 6 Stones Mission Network, recently helped renovate nearly 400 homes.

Meador is a trustee for the International Mission Board and previously served as chairman of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention's executive board. (BP)



John Meador

Vann represents Cumberlands at Warren Association event

By Amanda Kelly

Williamsburg—University of the Cumberlands' Barry Vann, director of the Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership program and professor of higher education and geography, was recently invited to speak at his book, "Puritan Islam: The Geoexpansion of the Muslim World" at a Warren Association of Baptists meeting in Bowling Green.

Vann discussed Islamic and Christian differences in religious views and culture. According to Vann, the topics discussed ranged from describing Islamic visions of the self in relation to God and salvation to population shifts in and among Muslim, Christian and Jewish areas of the world.

He also contrasted Protestant views on salvation with those of Muslims. The Five Pillars of Islam and juristic traditions in Islam were covered. Most of the information delivered in the presentation was drawn from Vann's latest book.

"I think the feedback on it was positive," Vann said. "I would say that there were a host of reasons for inviting me; those reasons ranged from geography and Israel to evangelism."

Vann graduated from Western Kentucky University in 1989 with a degree in geosciences. (UC)

IMB opens new pathways for missions service

By Anne Harman

Louisville—Citing urgency for reaching a lost world and unity with the Baptist Faith & Message, International Mission Board trustees streamlined guidelines for appointing new personnel to fulfill their missionary calling.

Trustees voted to approve the proposal during the IMB's May 12-13 meeting in Louisville. God is worthy of the worship of all people, yet billions have yet to hear the good news of the gospel. In February 2015, trustees approved a simplified structure with the goal of empowering limitless teams of missionaries to make disciples and multiply churches among unreached people, said IMB President David Platt.

Toward this end, IMB aims to provide multiple pathways in which missionaries may serve on these teams, and each will involve specific qualifications. The newly revised policy creates a unified statement of qualifications that will characterize every missionary serving through any pathway created by IMB to mobilize Southern Baptists to share the gospel with

unreached people.

"When you hear 'pathway,' think 'possibilities'—all the possible ways that people in the pews of Southern Baptist churches might serve overseas: as doctors, teachers, accountants, lawyers, fitness instructors, rickshaw drivers, students, retirees," Platt said. "We're talking about limitless possibilities that God has providentially arranged for His people to go around the world with the gospel. And as the IMB, we want to send Southern Baptists through as many pathways as possible, which necessitates that we open up the pipeline for people to come through those pathways."

Prior to the May board meeting, miscellaneous policies existed for career, apprentice, Journeyman, ISC and Masters program missionary appointees. Specific policy regulations covered issues of faith and practice such as levels of education, history of divorce, teenage children in the home, the practice of a private prayer language, and greater specificity around baptism than the Baptist Faith & Message.

"As we look toward the future and the

limitless number of missionaries we want to mobilize from Southern Baptist churches, we want to give Southern Baptists a simple, clear statement of qualifications that unifies not only the missionaries serving on one of those teams on the field, but unifies the IMB with the whole of the SBC," Platt said, noting the revised policy serves as the standard for all IMB missionaries, regardless of their role.

"To be as clear as possible, this is no lowering of the bar for potential IMB missionaries," he said. "This is a raising of the bar in all the areas that matter most. ... We will continue to train our missionaries and work as missionaries in ways that faithfully represent Southern Baptist churches and Southern Baptist conviction."

IMB will begin a process of implementing the revised policy—which opens the possibility for new sending pathways—in the days to come, said Sebastian Traeger, IMB executive vice president. During the meeting, IMB trustees appointed 34 new missionaries to serve around the world, joining a total

missionary force of 4,800. The missionaries were commissioned May 13 at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville.

In announcing a global cities initiative, Platt acknowledged God has given IMB a 170-year history of taking the gospel to people and places around the world, including extreme places such as deserts, jungles and war zones. He said God also has uniquely given believers opportunities to work, study and retire in global cities, and that God has brought the peoples of the world to these cities (see Acts 17:26-27).

Thus, IMB is developing and launching a five-city strategy—including London, Dubai, Shanghai, Mumbai and Kuala Lumpur—that starts with work already being done in those cities, and then explores opportunities in integrating fully-supported church planters, Great Commission partners, professionals, students and retirees into that work.

The next IMB trustee meeting is Aug. 25-26 in Richmond. The next missionary appointment service is Aug. 26 at Spotswood Baptist Church in Fredericksburg, Va. (BP)

IMB Missionaries

Continued from page 1

couple will share the gospel in Central Asia.

"Why are they doing this?" an impassioned IMB President David Platt asked the congregation. He asked another new missionary couple, "Why are you taking seven kids to Zimbabwe?"

"Because we have an incomprehensibly glorious God," Platt said.

Preaching from Isaiah 6, Platt offered four reasons why every Christian must say, "I will pray whatever You want me to pray; I will give whatever You want me to give; I will go wherever You want me to go"—because we have an incomprehensibly glorious God, because we are a sinfully lost people, because we have a scandalously merciful Savior willing to die in our place, and because we have an indescribably urgent mission.

With nearly 2 billion people without access to the gospel, Platt stressed the urgency of taking the gospel to unreached people in hard places, regardless of the cost.

Based on this urgency and with support of IMB trustees, Platt plans to open new pathways to send more missionaries to unreached people and places around the world. On May 13 IMB trustees approved streamlined guidelines for appointing new missionary personnel through the 170-year-old organization (see related story.)

The group of 34 new missionaries appointed in Louisville included pastors and worship leaders as well as nurses, teachers, an actor, a farmer, an engineer and a software consultant. Ten previously served with IMB as journeymen or through International Service Corps. Many first sensed God's call to missions as children or teens. Through short-term trips, many already understand the cost of missionary service but are convinced the cost is worth it.

Several Kentucky Baptist couples were commissioned.

■ Nick Moore, pastor of Redemption Hill Church in Fisherville, said God is sending him and his wife, Kyndra, to Zimbabwe. The couple, along with their seven children, plan to train the next generation of Sub-Saharan Christian leaders to take the gospel to their countrymen and to the ends of the earth.

■ Phil and Laura Metcalfe, members of Immanuel Baptist Church in Louisville, said God is sending them to Oaxaca, Mexico. There, with their two young children, the Metcalfes will seek to "share God's glory with the spiritually poor."

Metcalfe was on a summer missions trip to Southeast Asia through his university's Baptist



Collegiate Ministry when he first sensed God calling him to full-time missionary service.

"We lived in tents and did a lot of evangelism and in-home Bible studies in remote villages," Metcalfe said. "An IMB missionary taught me about God's heart for the nations and what it looks like to be committed to God's global purpose."

Metcalfe's wife, Laura, was 8 years old when missionaries spoke at her church. "I remember thinking 'I would like to help like that one day,'" she recalled. Over the years, God continued to refine her call.

■ Ethan and Shelby Sterling*, with ties to Marion Church, will be working in an undisclosed location which cannot be identified because of potential security risks.

The tear-filled eyes of loved ones fixed on the 34 new missionaries as they spoke of hearts broken for people in Africa, Asia and Europe. And, Highview Baptist Senior Pastor Les Hughes recognized the emotional tension likely felt by many of their family members as the missionaries head off for "dark places."

"There will be generations that will be changed because of the gospel they will hear from ones who are sent," Hughes said. "It's better for your loved one to go to a very difficult place on the other side of the world if they are in the center of God's will than to live across the street from you and be out of God's will."

Platt asked the congregation, "Is there anything



Top, friends and family pray for Phil and Laura Metcalfe, new IMB missionaries who will serve in Mexico. Above, new missionaries Adam and Hannah Sharick, who will serve in Japan, talk with a former journeyman during a reception at Highview Baptist Church for the new missionaries. (IMB photos by Paul Lee)

greater to give your life to than this: Declaring the glory of this God among the nations?"

"This gospel beckons us to abandon plans and dreams and possessions and priorities and treasures and pleasures in this world," he declared, challenging members of the congregation, regardless of their age or stage in life, to "rise before this God and say, 'Here am I, send me.'"

Robin Cornet, of KBC Communications, contributed to this story.

*Names changed.



Nepal was hit with second major earthquake in 17 days. Southern Baptists and local believers are already on the scene to help. (Photo by Chris Carter/IMB, taken after the April 25 earthquake.)

Second quake rocks Nepal

By Susie Rain

Nepal—A powerful new earthquake rattled Nepal on May 12, killing at least 36 people and sending thousands more rushing to the streets.

The 7.3-magnitude quake came just 17 days after a massive earthquake killed 8,046 people and destroyed hundreds of thousands of homes. Tuesday's tremor set off a series of landslides at the epicenter, Namche Bazar, which is near Mount Everest.

The second earthquake will add to the dismal statistics as rescue workers once again begin the arduous task of digging out.

Southern Baptist relief teams were already on the ground in Nepal from the earlier quake, and are well-positioned to investigate the new damage and emergency needs. The teams have been providing aid for a country still picking up the pieces from the 7.8-magnitude quake that hit April 25.

Baptist Global Response, the Southern Baptist humanitarian organization with which IMB partners in disaster response, is coordinating the efforts. BGR's Nepal Earthquake Response will continue to help hurting people with basic survival needs—like water, shelter, food and healthcare—in the coming days.

Francis Horton, who is coordinating the earthquake response for BGR, said one of his teams was on the mountain when the quake hit. As they descended in their truck, they found a house newly collapsed on the side of the road. They stopped to offer help. Thankfully, the family was outside their home when it fell, and the team was able to provide some comfort for scared villagers.

"This quake really brought back nightmarish memories for many people," Horton said. "Immediately, businesses shut doors and buildings emptied into the streets."

The second quake hit 47 miles east of the capital of Kathmandu on the way to Everest Base Camp. It could be felt as far away as Delhi, India, and Dhaka, Bangladesh. Landslides cut off roads to the main town in this isolated, conservation area near the border of Tibet.

One local Nepali pastor asked for prayer as reports of two major landslides have caused havoc in the area on top of damage from the second earthquake.

Strong tremors were felt in the capital of Nepal, Kathmandu, and the other areas affected by last month's quake. Rumors of another large earthquake circulated the country for weeks.

With more than 100 aftershocks the first week, hundreds of thousands slept outside in tarps or under the open sky as they feared buildings would come crashing down around them. That same fear is now magnified.

Within an hour of the 12:35 p.m. quake, survivors of the last disaster had reset their tents outside and planned to sleep under tarps and tents again.

"Looks like it will be another night outside," a local Christian posted on Facebook. He was in the exact same building as when the April 25 quake hit. He said the building in Kathmandu shook and swayed; then, everyone ran out to the streets in a panic.

"Everyone is too frightened to sleep inside tonight," he wrote. His family will be sleeping under a tarp provided through BGR relief funds. "The aftershocks are still going and we have no idea if buildings are safe."

The scale of loss of buildings is still not clear from the April 25 quake. Nepal's National Emergency Operations Center estimates around 299,588 homes were destroyed and 269,107 were damaged in the first earthquake. They still had thousands more to check out for stability before this May 12 tremor hit.

BGR is working with a Southern Baptist partner from Colorado to check out as many homes as possible. The volunteer, who is an architect, was caught in the first earthquake with a Colorado team up in the mountains. He opted to extend his stay to work with local believers in assessing homes—one of the greatest needs to help Nepalis start to

"People in the hills are already beginning to construct shelter... We want to help them along in this process so they can attend to other issues, such as farming the crops that will be food security for next year."

Francis Horton, coordinating BGR's Nepal Earthquake Response

rebuild.

Horton said BGR will continue its plan of "Disaster to Development," with added attention to the immediate needs generated by the earthquake.

"We are seeking to meet needs as we find them and to implement a plan that will be a six-to-12 month response," Horton said, adding that BGR is partnering with local churches in this response.

"People in the hills are already beginning to construct shelter that will get them through the rainy season. We want to help them along in this process so they can attend to other issues, such as farming the crops that will be food security for next year."

"They are determined to reconstruct. They need to get family life back to normal," he said. "We want to help them do that. We want to be the hands and feet of Christ." (BP)

July 1 deadline looms for some churches

By Roy Hayhurst

Dallas, Texas—Churches and ministries that reimburse their employees for individual health coverage may soon find themselves facing stiff penalties of up to \$36,500 per employee, per year, under the federal health care law commonly known as Obamacare, as a grace period expires June 30.

The penalties on employers who maintain employer payment plans were to begin in January, but the IRS granted a six-month reprieve.

Organizations that offer GuideStone health plans are not at risk of these penalties. GuideStone's health plans—both its personal and group plans—are church health plans and are considered group health plans under federal law and thus are not affected by these penalties.

"Fortunately, GuideStone health plan participants and the churches and ministries that employ them can rest assured that they can continue to pay for coverage as they have in the past and will meet the guidelines under the current law," said Donna Lively, managing director of insurance plans at GuideStone Financial Resources.

"Organizations that don't utilize GuideStone should consult with their legal and tax advisors to determine how to comply with the letter of the law."

GuideStone has developed new health coverage options that may be appropriate for smaller churches.

Additionally, churches with only one employee can apply for coverage for that lone staff member during the employee's first 60 days of employment.

For more information on how GuideStone may help churches with their health coverage needs, call 1-888-98-GUIDE (1-888-984-8433).

GuideStone encourages churches and ministries to remain vigilant about the Affordable Care Act and the related administrative policies that can create significant challenges for churches.

"This is just one of the myriad challenges facing all Americans, but especially churches and ministries thanks to the health care reform law," GuideStone President O.S. Hawkins said. "While we continue to wait for Congress or the courts to provide relief, the churches and ministries we serve can remain confident that GuideStone will advocate for them with legislators and regulators and will provide useful information to help them comply with this law."

GuideStone has made available resources on its website to help churches and ministries understand the health care reform law and its requirements on employers and employees.

More information can be found at GuideStone.org/HealthReform.

Also, GuideStone has updated its popular resource, Reimbursement Vehicles and the ACA: Impacts for Employers. It is available free online at GuideStone.org/HealthReform/ReimbursementVehicles. (BP)

Kentuckians among 56 emeriti

Missionary retirees embark on new phase of service

By Kate Gregory

Richmond, Va.—Most of the 56 missionaries the International Mission Board honored May 2 upon their retirement from full-time overseas service to emeritus status in the U.S. didn't start out as pastors or ministers on church staffs.

Most were church members from diverse career fields who felt called to spread the gospel around the world: an accounting clerk, advertising manager, attorney, beef producer, carpenters, critical care nurse, environmental control chemist, funeral home chaplain, house parents in a children's home, insurance agents, librarian, maintenance workers, physician, psychologist, radio announcer, rehabilitation counselor, teachers, truck driver and social workers.

IMB President David Platt told the new emeriti that retirement isn't meant to mark the end of missions service but rather the beginning of a new phase of it in their home churches.

"God, in His grace, has used the witness and testimony of these choice servants in a powerful way across the globe," Platt said of the emeriti.

"Now, we eagerly anticipate how God is going to continue to use them for His purposes as they transition back to life in the United States. We know that our mission does not cease because of a change in position or location."

Guiding churches

Previously with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Jack Hamptin* from Tennessee became an agriculture evangelist in West Africa.

"We found our rural background allowed us to relate well to subsistence farmers and Muslim herdsman in ways that opened their ears to hear the Good News of Jesus," said Jack of his and his wife Lynn's 25 years of missionary service.

"Guiding volunteers from various occupations to use their gifts and knowledge for God's glory among unreached peoples ... led to some of our most rewarding experiences."

Preparing the way

After 20 years of teaching music and theology in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, Jerry and Carol Robertson, from Kentucky and Louisiana, embarked on a new mission to reach a people with a different language than what they had learned.

"Our greatest struggle became our greatest joy as we were able to translate and tell Bible stories to people who had never heard about Jesus in their own language," including a 125-year-old village chief, Jerry recalled at the recognition service.

Jerry, a native of Owensboro and graduate of Western Kentucky University, said he felt led by God that he and Carol should walk, instead of drive, the five miles to the chief's village. The chief later told them he had a dream that one day two people would come walking into his village with a message from God for him.

At age 125, the chief accepted Christ. He helped open the way for the Robertsons to share 130 Bible stories in three villages. The Robertsons served in Ivory Coast a total of 37 years.

Walking in their shoes

After being placed in Arkansas Baptist Children's Home at age 12 to escape an alcoholic, abusive home environment, Ron Greenwich became a case worker and then spent 32 years in south Brazil with his wife, Alana, mentoring young people to become Christian leaders.

"I never dreamed God would use those painful childhood experiences to lead me to help churches in Brazil open two orphanages, two community centers in poor neighborhoods and two drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers," Ron said.

Counseling alcoholic parents took on a deeper meaning for Ron, who knew what they were putting their families through, but he also knew by personal experience that Jesus' restorative power knows no bounds.

Serving 46 years

Lana Oue was an expectant mother in her mid-20s when she and her husband Tak, who had been a pastor in Kentucky,



Jerry Robertson, a Kentucky native who served in Ivory Coast for 37 years, leads a recessional at the conclusion of an IMB service honoring 56 new emeriti. Sharing a baseball anecdote during his sermon, IMB President David Platt told attendees to cheer for these missionaries returning home from the international missions field as loudly and exuberantly as they would their favorite sports team. (Photo by Thomas Graham/IMB)

sailed for two weeks to reach Japan in 1970. They served there for 46 years, the longest tenure of the group being recognized for having at least 15 years of service to qualify as emeriti.

Tak Oue, a graduate of Western Kentucky University, served as pastor of Big Spring Baptist Church in Big Spring and Gethsemane Baptist Chapel (Lighthouse Baptist Church) in Louisville.

Lana, who was born in Buffalo, Ky., repeatedly quoted Isaiah 26:3 during their sea journey to help calm her nerves and her stomach. The verse describes the peace of mind that Christ gives to those who trust in Him.

"In the ensuing years, when facing death, challenges, fears or disappointments, this verse brought me back to focus on Christ, which led to peace, joy and victory," Lana said.

The child she was carrying on their voyage to Japan now is a missionary there as well.

Trusting in God's plan

Holden and Leanne Ohler* were empty nesters approaching their 50s when they decided to relocate from Georgia to South Asia in 1999.

"We are so glad that God called us to international missions," the Ohlers wrote of their 16 years of service, "and we thank Southern Baptists for their prayers and gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Please consider that you can also go and serve! If it's God's plan, it's a good plan. Trust Him to work out the details. He did it for us!"

IMB President David Platt also encouraged the service attendees to consider stepping into the shoes of the emeriti by sharing the gospel with unreached people around the world.

Basing his message on Hebrews 11:29-12:3, Platt said heroes of faith revere God and point people to Him (Hebrews 12:2), continue to run the race of sharing the gospel with those who haven't heard it (Acts 20:24) and rejoice in looking forward to spending eternity worshipping God with people from every nation, tribe and language (Revelation 7:9).

The missionaries honored at the recognition service held in conjunction with IMB's Emeritus Recognition Conference, April 29-May 3, served a cumulative total of 1,550 years on the international mission field. (BP)

*Name changed

Immigration award presented to ERLC's Duke

By Tom Strode

Houston—To receive an award for working on behalf of immigration reform proved a double blessing for Southern Baptist public policy specialist Barrett Duke.

The National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference presented the inaugural Robert Gittelsohn Immigration Advocacy Award to Duke April 29 during its national convention in Houston.

"It was a tremendous honor to receive an award named after my good friend Robert Gittelsohn," Duke said. "That honor was multiplied many fold because it was given to me by the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference."

Duke has advocated for a just immigration reform plan for years in his

role as vice president for public policy and research with the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. Samuel Rodriguez, the NHCLC's president, presented Duke with the award, which was named in memory of another persistent advocate for immigration reform.

Gittelsohn, 54, died in August after years of traveling from California to Washington, D.C., to promote a legislative solution to the country's illegal immigration problem. He formed an organization, Conservatives for Comprehensive Immigration Reform, and served as the NHCLC's vice president for government affairs.



Barrett Duke

Rodriguez commended both Gittelsohn and Duke for their work on behalf of an issue that is a priority for the NHCLC, the country's largest Hispanic evangelical organization.

"Robert Gittelsohn was a tireless advocate on comprehensive immigration reform, always thinking about the political ramifications, the moral consequences and the personal stories surrounding this vital issue," he said.

"Barrett Duke, through his work at the

Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, has championed these same ideals and worked to educate others on the need for comprehensive immigration policy that offers dignity, compassion and shows respect for the law." (BP)

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Nelson Association's 'holy discontent' spurs renewal

By David Roach

Bardstown—Ten years ago, Nelson Baptist Association was “unhealthy and unhelpful,” as pastor Matthew Spandler-Davison puts it. The central Kentucky association’s 40 churches could only muster 50-60 messengers for annual meetings, and it was a strain to populate the body’s 15 committees.

But a group of local pastors began meeting, praying and dreaming about a more vibrant form of local cooperation. A decade later, 600-700 people attend the Nelson Association’s annual meetings and the average church’s yearly giving to the association has increased by nearly \$1,000.

So what happened?

“We just threw everything out and said, we’re going to almost start over, re-launch this association,” Spandler-Davison, pastor of Redeemer Fellowship Church in Bardstown, told Baptist Press. “Let’s get rid of all the committees, all the leadership structure—everything’s up for grabs. ... Let’s instead just evaluate who our churches are, who wants to associate with each other and why they want to associate.”

An intensive study of the association’s structure and the needs of its churches led in 2009 to the adoption of new bylaws, a new vision statement and a new structure consisting of three teams focused on ministries where churches saw the greatest need for local cooperation.

The church evangelism team focuses on helping churches partner to share the gospel and plant churches locally, across

North America and internationally. The church equipping team focuses on building healthy churches through training and consultation. The church and community ministries team focuses on meeting needs locally through a crisis pregnancy center, a biblical counseling ministry and homeless ministries.

In addition to forming ministry teams, the association streamlined its administrative ministries.

“We said, we can do those things far better together as an association of 42 churches (now 45) than we ever could do individually,” Spandler-Davison said. “There was very little opposition because no one looked back and said, ‘This old structure is worth fighting for.’”

Stan Lowery, the director of missions who led Nelson association through its transition, said one problem under the old structure was that about 100 people took turns serving in a host of associational positions that were not meeting churches’ needs. A lack of enthusiasm among churches contributed to lackluster giving and a constant struggle to meet the budget.

Change was sparked by a confluence of “holy discontent” and leaders willing to dialogue about a better way to impact the community, Lowery said.

“There was kind of a holy discontent,” Lowery told BP. “We were not satisfied and were looking for ways to do it better to have a bigger Kingdom impact.”

In addition to consulting with Nelson association leaders, Lowery sought advice from other associations and national

ministries that help associations. The resulting recommendations for change garnered support from a diverse array of the association’s leaders—in terms of age, church size and socioeconomic level.

The recommendations also had an economic impact. Between 2005 and 2013, the average church’s annual gift to the Nelson association increased from \$1,822 to \$2,727, with the total amount received from churches increasing 68 percent during the same period. The association experienced a 12.5 percent increase in its total number of churches over that time.

Johnny Rumbough, a team leader with the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders, told BP the Nelson association represents a trend in associations across the Southern Baptist Convention.

Directors of missions are talking “in a fresh, new way,” said Rumbough, executive director of missions for Lexington Baptist Association in South Carolina. “Most associations understand the importance of being relevant and realize that offering the programs we’ve offered for a long, long time is no longer the conversation we need to have. Instead, it is exactly what the Nelson association is (talking about)—being relevant to the churches, because our reason for existence is to serve those churches.”

Associations, Rumbough said, should position themselves alongside state conventions, the North American Mission Board and the International Mission Board as one of four Baptist entities that help churches engage in missions. Among the

tasks of associations he noted: to help congregations partner to plant churches through NAMB’s Send Cities initiative and adopt unengaged, unreached people groups worldwide through the IMB.

“A lot of DOM friends are deciding like me that we’re missionaries,” Rumbough said. “You’ve just got to get out of the office and get into the mission field and do what missionaries do.”

The Lexington association offers online training for associational leaders across the country. Currently, some 25 DOMs are involved.

Based on the Nelson association’s experience, Spandler-Davison said “the purpose of associationalism is still something worth contending for”—even in associations that aren’t fulfilling that purpose well. He urged pastors who may be discouraged about their associations not to disengage, but to get involved.

“A strong local association of Baptist churches is more critical now than ever and more viable now,” Spandler-Davison said. Young pastors are involved, he said, in “affinity-driven networks” uniting people with similar theological convictions, “but what we don’t have is relational, organic networks, which I think we’re all craving—guys that can really speak into my life from a different perspective, but where we can really partner together on the ground. That’s where associationalism steps in and fills that gap.”

David Roach is chief national correspondent for Baptist Press. This week is Baptist Association Emphasis week across the Southern Baptist Convention.

Kan. pastor Dighton to be 1st VP nominee in Ohio

Columbus, Ohio—Kansas pastor Steve Dighton will be nominated for first vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention, Texas pastor and former SBC president Jack Graham announced May 12.

Dighton is senior pastoral advisor at the Kansas City-area Lenexa Baptist Church in Lenexa, Kan., a church he founded 25 years ago and where he served as senior pastor until this past spring.

Previously, he pastored two churches in Oklahoma after being called to ministry out of the men’s clothing business. When Dighton founded Lenexa in 1990, the church had less than 100 members. It has since grown to more than 6,000, with satellite campuses in Missouri and Kansas.

Dighton served as president of the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists and as vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention Pastors’ Conference.

Lenexa, which was named a “breakout church” in Thom Rainer’s 2005 book of the same title, cooperates with both the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists and the Missouri Baptist Convention. The congregation is among the top givers through the Cooperative Program in both conventions, according to a news release from Graham. The church’s total missions expenditures exceeded \$1 million in 2014.

Dighton holds both an associate of divinity degree and a master of arts in religious education from Southwestern Baptist Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Dighton is the first announced nominee for first vice president. Ohio pastor Cad Keck has been announced as a second vice presidential nominee. President Ronnie Floyd and Recording Secretary John Yeats both will be re-nominated. (BP)



Steve Dighton

Evolving ‘dignity’ doctrine looms in marriage ruling

By Mary Reichard/WORLD News Service

Washington—For Justice Anthony Kennedy, considered the Supreme Court’s swing vote on the issue of same-sex marriage, “dignity” looms as a key factor after oral arguments over same-sex marriage at the Supreme Court.

Kennedy and John Bursch, attorney for states wanting to make their own marriage laws, got into an exchange about dignity during the two-and-a-half-hour session at the Supreme Court on April 29.

“What they are asking you to do,” Bursch said, “is take an institution which was never intended to be (dignity)-bestowing and make it (dignity)-bestowing. That’s their whole argument.”

“I don’t understand this is not dignity-bestowing,” Kennedy responded. “I thought that was the whole point of marriage. It bestows dignity on both man and woman in a traditional marriage.”

Kennedy, who used the word “dignity” numerous times, almost single-handedly has turned it into a doctrine, starting in the 1990s when he wrote that dignity was a basis of why the abortion decision *Roe v. Wade* should be upheld in another case.

He used it in 2013’s *United States v. Windsor* case striking down the federal definition of marriage. The result was a domino effect of judges

overruling voter-approved marriage definitions in the states. Lawyers started using it as the basis for their arguments.

Solicitor General Donald Verrilli picked up on it, and the word “dignity” came up in his opening statement on behalf of the federal government: “The opportunity to marry is integral to human dignity.

Excluding gay and lesbian couples from marriage demeans the dignity of these couples.”

The problem is that dignity isn’t a

constitutional concept.

It’s the court’s job to interpret the Constitution, not bestow dignity. The court doesn’t define the term. Yet Kennedy’s emphasis on it has caused other judges to hold it up as a right, like equality and liberty.

This is new territory. If dignity is the basis for granting a new right, the chain of logic could allow any group to claim dignity violations. Jeffrey Rosen, writing in *The Atlantic*, used the examples of Obamacare violating the dignity of Americans who don’t want to be forced to buy something they don’t want, tobacco lovers feeling undignified by no-smoking rules or gun owners losing dignity when gun laws are passed.

Driving the redefinition of marriage are the personal stories of the petitioners, some already-married same-sex couples with children.

“In terms of the question of who decides, it’s not about the court versus the states. It’s about the individual making the choice to marry and with whom to marry, not the government,” attorney Mary Bonauto

for same-sex marriage advocates, said, meaning each person gets to decide what the government should recognize as marriage.

But if that is so, then rules against incest, against the number of people in a marriage, and age restrictions are in jeopardy as well.

Justice Antonin Scalia predicted this expansion of individual rights more than a decade ago. In 2003, the court’s majority overturned a state sodomy law in *Lawrence v. Texas*. Scalia’s dissent then stated that the decision was the beginning of the end of all morals legislation.

So what’s next in that progression? Where does it end? What legal argument props up laws against bigamy, against adult incest, against prostitution? That question has never been answered, but don’t be surprised when it is. (BP)

'Lock the door, trust God and go'

Retired educators tell their Oneida story

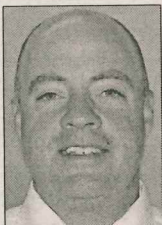
One Sunday morning, an announcement was made that our church was putting together a mission trip to Oneida Baptist Institute, where we could volunteer our services and skills to do whatever our abilities would let us do. I looked at Nona and she looked at me, and we raised our hands to indicate we would be willing to go. As we drove those winding mountain roads, we had no idea what God had in store for us at the end of the road in a place called Oneida Baptist Institute. In less than a week, we knew we wanted to return to OBI as soon as possible to serve God. We went in to see the Oneida president and made arrangements to return as quickly as we could.

We headed the motor home back to OBI in October, thinking we would serve until Thanksgiving and then return home. Before we left Oneida, however, we had made plans to return and would stay until Christmas. Again we found ourselves planning to return to OBI after Christmas. On our way back to Oneida, we decided this was where God wanted us to serve. When we got back to the campus, we sat down with the president and explained to him that we felt this was where God wanted us to serve. We asked if he could use us, and he said, "I would like to have you teach."

In March, we became teachers again

(on a trial basis) and it didn't take long for us to fall in love with teaching at OBI. My largest class had 14 students, and Nona had nine. How could any teacher not love that teaching assignment? We

This is Oneida



Larry Gritton

have had eight wonderful years here at OBI, and we are in the process of giving up our full-time service. We are not quitting, just moving over to part-time.

We were retired educators and Oneida can often use teachers, whether it is for a school year or a temporary replacement for a maternity, medical, or bereavement leave. Make yourself available to OBI,

and if it is the place God has for you, they will find a place to put your skills to use. I have found this to be true; whenever and wherever we have made ourselves available and willing to work, God has used us. God can always use you. Be still and listen for His voice.

It is not possible to explain Oneida Baptist Institute and our time here. I will close, therefore, with this simple answer which we have given to friends and family over the last few years when asked, "How can you just leave your home and go off up there?" You just lock the door, trust God, and go. He will do the rest.

Written by Dean Wilson, OBI Middle School principal

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

417 graduate from Campbellsville

By Joan McKinney

Campbellsville—Campbellsville University graduated 143 master's students, along with 274 graduates, during May commencement ceremonies, for a total of 417 students receiving their diplomas.

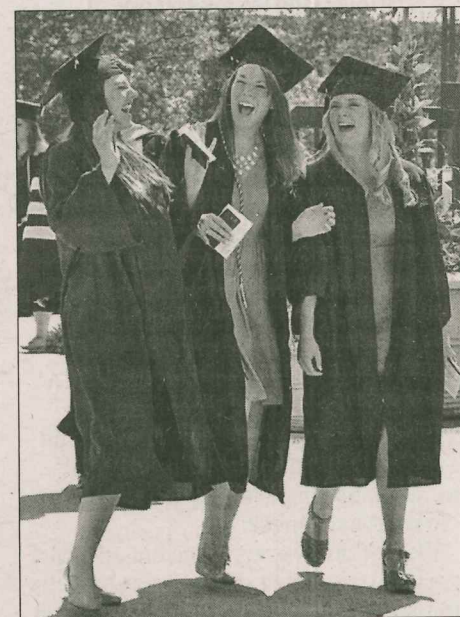
Bruce Heilman, chancellor of the University of Richmond and a member of Campbellsville's Board of Trustees, told undergraduates of his hardships of growing up in the Depression and his experience in the Marine Corps. Heilman, a 1949 graduate of Campbellsville, shared about World War II.

Heilman received the Campbellsville University Leadership Award and was called an "American hero" by Michael Carter, president of Campbellsville University, and Frank Cheatham, senior vice president for academic affairs.

Cheatham, who is retiring this month after 42 years of service, received an honorary doctorate. Co-valedictorians of the May graduating class were Sarah Louise Johnson of Belleville, Ill.; Lena Ann Morrison of Paducah; and Kari Danielle Salyers of Frankfort. Salutatorian was Emily Grace Hatley of Somerset.

Lauren Goodin Willis, a member of the 2015's graduate class from Columbia, told the graduates, "You are what makes Campbellsville University what it is. Make an impact—make a difference in each and every life. We need Christian educated people in the workforce."

Michael Billy Jennings of Edmonton, who served as Student Government Association president, said, "Don't forget



Bethany Thomaston, of Campbellsville, Julie Smith of Frankfort, and Courtney Hunt, of Campbellsville, from left, celebrate before their commencement. They received associate of nursing degrees.

who you are; don't forget how far you have come from where you once were." He urged the graduates to "go and do" with grateful hearts.

Mark Joseph Bomia charged his classmates to be men and women of integrity. "Always seek to do the right thing. Be a voice of reason. Be co-workers who are respectful and friendly," he urged. "Stay committed. Take responsibility for your actions. Be confident in who you are as a person. Don't let anyone trick you into thinking you can't do great things." (BP)

Memories

Graduates share favorite memories from the "Creek"

It is graduation time at Clear Creek! This is always a special time to celebrate what God has done in the lives of our graduates. I know you will enjoy reading about some of their favorite memories:

"I truly love and appreciate all of my teachers and the staff of CCBBC—for their showering of love, hugs and knowledge in their calling.

"They are heavenly angels from God sent to the body of CCBBC to teach and preach the gospel. They are humble, loving, kind, understanding, and they were my earthly parents when I was attending CCBBC. I do love them with my soul."—*Mary Baker*

"My fondest Clear Creek memory would be good times with friends at Kelly Hall. And good times on the mowing crew."—*Cory Count*

"I will always remember my days on the mowing crew. Fun times such as the endless bouts of poison ivy, almost dying on a zero turn mower and my retirement from skate boarding.

"I am also grateful for my walking and accountability partner and friend, Dr. Lucas, and for the best faculty shepherd Clear Creek has to offer, my friend and mentor, Dr. Helton.

"Not to mention the Gondoliers cakes Dr. Fox and I had delivered to

each other as graduation gifts."—*Benjamin Everly*

"My most fond memory would have to be travelling to Israel and Egypt. We went with Dr. Lucas and family, and a group from CCBBC. I grew close with the Lucas family and learned an enormous amount from the trip."—*Berwin Hall*

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

"My fondest memory at Clear Creek would be studying for exegetical papers of any kind—as an online student."—*Charles Marvin Keese*

"My fondest memories of Clear Creek were talks with Mrs. Lucas and learning to call things for what they are. My times of prayer with Mrs. Carmela Bartels and learning that God really does want to hear about your feelings.

"Fun times with the single ladies; and learning perseverance. I know that all of this has prepared me for future ministry."—*Caitlyn Benefiel*

"My fondest memories at Clear Creek are the long talks with the guys at Kelly Hall at 1 a.m. about God and how He has worked in our lives."—*Williamson Deavours*

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.

7 Reasons to Support Sunrise

Sunrise is transforming how the Commonwealth cares for children

As a number, seven represents wholeness and completion. It is a prime number. There are seven days of the week, seven notes in an harmonic scale. Shakespeare wrote about the seven ages of human existence. The phases of earth's moon last about seven days. Here are seven reasons to support Sunrise:

1. We'll know in heaven the full impact that Sunrise has had—and before that, Kentucky Baptist Children's Homes did have—on children in need. That's how Tom James, the KBC president, describes this ministry. So his reason to support us is a heavenly one.

2. Sunrise cares for this century's neediest of needy children, the orphans of the living, according to Dale Suttles, Sunrise's president, who also emphasizes: "Sunrise will lead the way, transforming how the state of Kentucky cares for children."

3. God placed a burden on the hearts of Michelle and Paul Chitwood (who is KBC executive director). They completed 12 weeks of foster care training with Sunrise, and now, they work as Sunrise foster parents. Their reason to support us is personal and redemptive.

4. A Louisville businesswoman is now working with Claudia Eggleton, director of corporate and foundation relations, on ways to help Sunrise. This

compassionate entrepreneur, who employs 200 people, said when she drove past Sunrise's Mt. Washington campus, God whispered to her: "You need to turn in there!" She has a God-led reason to support us.

5. A Jessamine County couple and a Northern Kentucky couple—all of whom have already gone to Heaven—plus a spirit-filled Bardstown couple

who remains active in their church and community: These are six among many faithful Sunrise donors who regularly say: "God told us, years ago, to give to Sunrise." They have a providential reason to support us.

6. On May 8, 616 children were in Sunrise Foster Care, in a Sunrise Residential Treatment Center or were receiving some form of community-based service. Each girl and boy has a name, a future and talents that will benefit our world. They represent 616 singular reasons to support us.

7. When you give to Sunrise, yes, your gift helps this ministry. Yes, your gift helps the children we serve. Your gift also helps the families who brought these children into this world; and it helps families who care for these children now, or who will care for them. But your gift will help to transform you, too.

Randy Greene is vice president for marketing and advancement at Sunrise Children's Services, P.O. Box 1429, Mount Washington, KY 40047-1429; (502) 538-1000; www.sunrise.org.



OBITUARIES

Jim McKinley, former missionary

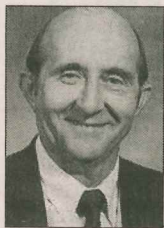
Louisville—Jim McKinley Jr., a retired missionary and former president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, died May 3.

In 1958, McKinley and his wife, Betty, were appointed as missionaries to East Pakistan (present-day Bangladesh), where they served for 34 years. He went on to serve as a consultant for the Cooperative Program and, in 1998, was elected president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

McKinley attended Campbellsville College (now University) and Wayland Baptist University, as well as Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. After graduating, he served as pastor of Central Grove Baptist Church in Albany and Mount Moriah Baptist Church in Mount Eden. He was director of missions for Henry County Baptist Association from 1998-99.

Toward the end of his life, McKinley remained active at Louisville's Westport Road Baptist Church and Long Run Baptist Association.

He is survived by his wife and their five children. A



Jim McKinley

memorial will be held June 27, 11 a.m., at Westport Road Baptist.

Winfred Moore, two-time SBC pres. nominee dies

Amarillo, Texas—Winfred Moore, a Texas pastor and two-time moderate nominee for the Southern Baptist Convention presidency, died May 8 in Amarillo, Texas. He was 95.

Pastor of First Baptist Church in Amarillo from 1959-89, Moore was defeated in SBC presidential elections in 1985 by Charles Stanley and 1986 by Adrian Rogers during conservatives' battle to gain control of SBC entity trustee boards. Moore believed requiring "doctrinal uniformity as a prerequisite for missions" was neither "Baptistic" nor conducive to reaching the world for Christ, as he put it in a 1986 statement announcing his willingness to be nominated for the presidency.

At the 1985 SBC annual meeting in Dallas, which garnered a record 45,000 messengers, Moore allowed his nomination for first vice president in an apparent gesture of graciousness toward conservatives after falling short in his bid to prevent Stanley from winning reelection. He was elected first vice president with 66 percent of the vote in a three-candidate race.

Before pastoring in Amarillo, Moore served congregations in Mississippi, Alabama and Texas. Following his retirement from the pastorate in 1989, he taught religion at Baylor University. Educated at Lambuth College and Union University in Jackson, Tenn., and George Peabody University in Nashville, Moore was elected president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas in 1984 and 1985. He was an ex-officio member of the SBC's Peace Committee by virtue of his service as first vice president. (BP)

John Lott, Louisville pastor

Louisville—John Lott, senior pastor of Eastern Parkway Baptist Church in Louisville, died May 11. He was 61.

Lott also was director of marketing and admissions of Green Meadows Healthcare and was on the patient advisory council at Norton Audubon Hospital. He also served as a regional chaplain for the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

He is survived by his wife, the former Sharon Hines; a step-son and a grandson.



John Lott

National WMU convention to focus on surrender, sacrifice, service

By Julie Walters

Columbus, Ohio—Prior to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Columbus, North American and international missionaries will share how God is at work around the world during the Woman's Missionary Union Missions Celebration and Annual Meeting, June 14-15.

This year's theme, "All for You," focuses on surrender, sacrifice and service as a follower of Christ.

This devotion to Christ and a passion for sharing Him with others will be a consistent theme of featured speakers, including Michael Coleman, a military chaplain with the North American Mission Board; Terry Dorsett, executive director of the Baptist Convention of New England; Earl Hewitt, a doctor who serves in West Africa; David and Alicia who serve in Southeast Asia; and Bud Fray, a retired missionary who served in Africa. Fray's new book, "Both Feet In," a story of God at work through His missionaries,

will be the next emphasis book for WMU in 2015-2016.

General sessions are 3:30 p.m. and 6 p.m. June 14, and 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. June 15. In addition, 20 different conferences will be offered Monday.

Topics range from creative ways to engage preschoolers, children, youth and adults in missions, to understanding post-traumatic stress disorder and learning ways your church can minister to those living with PTSD.

Additional elements this year include:

■ A reception in honor of Debby Akerman as she completes her fifth year of service as president of national WMU. A new president will be elected during the business session on Monday.

■ Missions Monday, June 15, hands-on missions experiences for children in grades 1-6 onsite at the church from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Advance registration is required.

Visit wmu.com/columbus for more information, including a complete schedule. (BP)

Connect the dots

Formative experience in missions important in answering God's call

The recent International Mission Board Missionary Appointment Service held in Louisville was a reminder of the importance of missions education and various missions experiences in preparing missionaries to say "yes!" to God's call on their lives. Even in the short statements each missionary was able to give about his or her calling, the importance of formative experiences was evident.

For some, the calling to missions began as children in missions groups like Girls in Action and Royal Ambassadors. Hands on missions contributed to an understanding of what it means to serve others. Mission trips and short-term service helped a number of the new appointees to grasp what it means "to be radically involved in the mission of God."

To connect these experiences in the lives of each appointee is like a "connect the dots" activity where a picture emerges as one draws a line from dot to dot. The importance of each dot cannot be underestimated in creating the finished picture.

So it is with missions education. Missions education that is done well includes many missions experiences of learning, doing, praying, giving and going. Each learning experience lays a foundation of understanding. Each

hands-on service opportunity is a window to the work of God. Each mission trip expands the horizons. Praying for the lost and for missionaries creates a heart of compassion. Sacrificial missions giving puts the priorities of God on material possessions.

What if we miss adding dots to the picture? What if we are too busy to teach children about God's mission around the world? What if we cannot be bothered to chaperone teenagers on a mission trip or Kentucky Changers? What if we fail to teach our students to pray? What if we skip teaching Biblical stewardship of time, money, and personality? What if we fail to equip our children and youth to witness?

Without the dots, there is no picture. EBO makes dots, too. EBO will provide dots of missions experiences all summer through Kentucky Changers, Mission Adventure for Kentucky Kids, GA and Mother/Daughter Overnights, Camp Courage, and Creative Ministries Festival 2.0. Perhaps one day we will hear a new missionary appointee cite one of these dots that you have provided through praying and giving for state missions.

Help us connect the dots. Learn, pray, give, go, send!

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

EBO at Work

Joy Bolton

Ready to serve

Carnes returning to KBF helm, eager to serve churches again

The Foundation's new president, CEO and treasurer, Richard Carnes, will assume leadership of its ministry on June 1, 2015.

The Board of Directors strongly believes that Richard has the qualifications and experience to lead the Foundation's stewardship ministry in an outstanding manner.

I want to take this opportunity to better introduce him to all Kentucky Baptists.

First, it should be noted that it takes a special combination of ministerial and financial training to lead the Kentucky Baptist Foundation.

Richard is a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary with a servant's heart.

He loves people and the gospel. He understands the financial side of the Foundation's mission by his experience and professional training.

From 1988 to 1995, he was president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation before going back home to Alabama to start the national WMU Foundation.

For the last 18 years, he has been a vice president and senior advisor to non-profit investment clients at PNC Bank.

Second, Richard has the natural ability to relate to all Kentucky Baptists who are potential clients and need

guidance in making a legacy stewardship commitment to undergird the future Kingdom work of the local church, Cooperative Program, Baptist institutions, and other Baptist causes.

Third, Richard will have a very competent staff and team on board June 1 supporting him.

Led by Laurie Valentine, trust Counsel and chief operating officer, the other members of the team are Barbara Spencer, administrative/public relations assistant; Janet McIntosh, accounting manager; and Katrina Umphrey, office assistant.

Over the last 90 days as Interim CEO, I have personally seen how dedicated and effective these team members are each day.

In summary, with the leadership of Richard Carnes, the Foundation is positioned very well to serve you.

I ask that you pray about your legacy giving opportunity and consider allowing the Kentucky Baptist Foundation to assist you in making your commitment.

Richard and the staff will be ready to serve.

Ky. Baptist Foundation

Charles Barnes

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

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

CADIZ—Little River Baptist Association is hosting a retirement celebration for **Lavina Marlowe** on Sunday, June 7, from 2-4 p.m., in the Baptist Center, in recognition of her 23 years of dedicated service.

CAMPBELLVILLE—The Exie Boys will present a gospel concert at Saloma Church on Sunday, May 31, at 6 p.m. Concert is free. The church is located at 1505 West Saloma Rd., Campbellsville. **John Chowning** is pastor.

CRESTWOOD—Ballardsville Church is hosting The Landmark Boys Quartet on June 10, from 6-7:30 p.m. **Tony Wolfenbarger** is pastor.

LAGRANGE—**Clay Sommer** has accepted the call as minister of music/associate pastor at DeHaven Church. He and his wife, Lisa, have two adult sons. **Ross Bauscher** is pastor.

MAYFIELD—Oak Grove Church hosted the spring meeting of the J.H. Spencer Historical Society. **Don Houston** spoke on "The Life and Legacy of J.M. Frost" and **Gary Frizzell** spoke on "What Kentucky Baptists Used to Believe about the Church." **Don Houston** is pastor.

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: 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: 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@obcpaducah.org.

To place an advertisement

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

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: 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 resumes to the following address: Hawesville Baptist Church, P.O. Box 57 Hawesville, KY, 42348 attn: Karen Basham www.hawesvillebaptist.com info@hawesvillebaptist.com.

SEEKING: Calvary Baptist Church in Franklin, Ky. is accepting resumes for the position of full-time pastor. Please send resumes and CD/DVD/Internet Link for sermons by June 15, 2015 to: Calvary Baptist Church Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 1064, Franklin, KY. 42135 or email to pastorsearchcalvary@gmail.com.

SEEKING: Part-time adult choir leader for First Cedar Creek Baptist Church, Bardstown, Ky. Email resume to bcurtsinger@bardstowncable.net.

SEEKING: Crofton Baptist Church in Crofton, Ky., is prayerfully accepting resumes for the position of full time pastor to lead our congregation. Experience is preferred. Please send resume to Crofton Baptist Church, Attn: Pastor Search Committee, 155 College Street, Crofton, KY 42217 or email to office at croftonbaptist@bellsouth.net.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of New Tazewell, Tenn., is accepting resumes for a full-time director of student ministries. Email resume to fbcnewtazewell@centurytel.net

SEEKING: Camp Pleasant Baptist Church in Frankfort, Ky. is seeking a senior pastor. Please send resumes to campoffice@camppleasant.org.

SEEKING: Jordan Baptist Church, Sanders, Ky., is seeking a bivocational pastor to lead our congregation. Resumes may be sent to the search committee by mail in care of: Obie Hunt, 321 Grobmyer Avenue, Carrollton, KY 41008.

SEEKING: Olive Branch Baptist Church in Hanson, Ky., is prayerfully accepting resumes for a bivocational director of

music ministries. Please send resumes to 400 Olive Branch Church Rd., Hanson, KY 42413, Attn: Personnel Committee, or email to olivebranch552@bellsouth.net.

SEEKING: Part-time music director position available to serve at FBC Cold Spring. Coordinating and administering an effective music program by blending contemporary and traditional music at the 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Sunday and Wednesday evening service. Please send resumes to Music Ministry Search Team, 4410 Alexander Pike, Cold Spring, KY 41076. Job description available at <http://fbccs.com>.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Ashland, Ky., is seeking a pastor. We are looking for someone with vision and experience, who can revive our church and reach the gospel of Christ to our community. They must feel God's direct call. Seminary degree preferred, organizational skills and self-motivated. Salary based on education and experience. Forward resume to: Pastor Search committee, FBC of Ashland, KY, P.O. Box 787, Ashland, KY 41105-0787 or lvincent@mccu.net. Inquiries confidential.

SEEKING: Freedom Baptist Church in Lawrenceburg, Ky., is accepting resumes for the position of pastor to lead our congregation of 65 to 70 in reaching the community for Christ. Please send resumes to Freedom Baptist Church, P.O. Box 557, Lawrenceburg, KY 40343, or email to DouglasCaldwell@bellsouth.net.

SEEKING: Minister of music/worship pastor job description. Bethlehem Baptist Church located in Louisville, Ky., is seeking a part-time minister of music/worship pastor. The successful candidate will lead a blended style of music worship, working with the sanctuary adult choir, praise team and instrumentalists. If interested, submit resume to Vic Peek at vicpeek@gmail.com.

SEEKING: Director of weekday ministries, Baptist Fellowship Center. Engaging with clients, crisis counseling & assistance; coordinating activities & events for clients; working with churches & mission groups who desire to serve BFC community; Recruiting volunteers. Degree in social work or equivalent preferred. Two years' experience in related ministry. Deadline May 30. Mail to 1351 Catalpa Street, Louisville, KY 40211, Attn: Search Committee or email m.zielberg@twc.com. (828) 442-4455.

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: Discounts for 5-star condos in TN Mountains, or SC beach. \$100's below resort prices. Call and mention this ad: (828) 442-4455.

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

SERVICES: D K Insurance Services LLC. Experienced in church business insurance. Christian agency that understands the needs of the modern church and the exposures that exist. Can write business anywhere in the state of Kentucky and Indiana. Call Douglas Slaughter at (502) 533-4423(c) or (502) 968-9874(o).

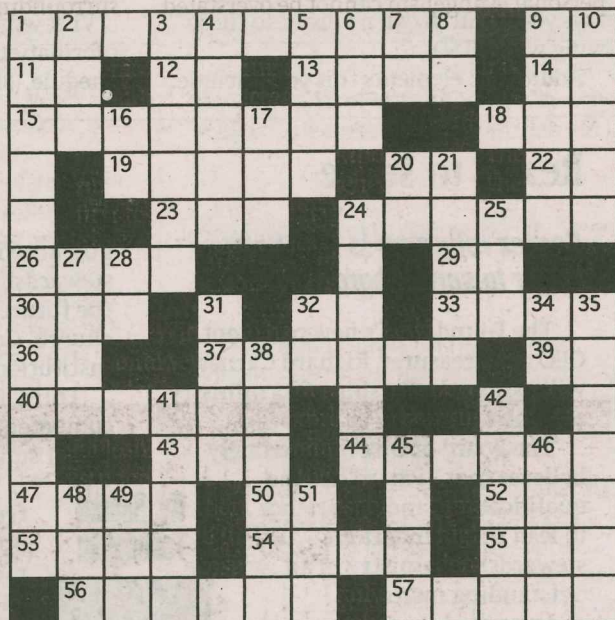
SERVICES: The family and employees of JCA Media would like to thank you for the outpouring of support displayed during the passing of Jim Cottrell. Your cards, calls, visits, and presence during this difficult time were a testament to how many people Jim touched. We are saddened by his absence in our 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 JCAMediaky.com.

Bible Crosswords

By Cheryl Keiser

Across

1. Formal request for one's presence
9. Preposition
11. Sodium, chem. symbol
12. Nickel, chem. symbol
13. Man's name
14. "___ it with thy might" (Ecclesiastes 9:10)
15. "The Lord knoweth the ___ of the wise" (1 Corinthians 3:20)
18. "___ hath he quickened" (Ephesians 2:1)
19. Worries
20. Belonging to
22. Nurse, abbr.
23. Belonging to Judah's firstborn (Numbers 26:19)
24. The Anointed One
26. Frigid
29. Indefinite article
30. Flightless bird
32. "For God ___ loved the world" (John 3:16)
33. Concept
36. Twelfth-grader, abbr.
37. Frightened
39. Article that precedes a vowel
40. "Phebe our ___" (Romans 16:1)
43. Anger
44. Floss
47. "That have the rule ___ you" (Hebrews 13:17)
50. Atomic energy, abbr.



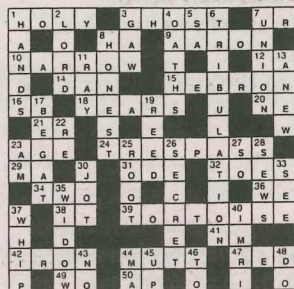
#037

52. Not, prefix
53. "Ye might have life through his ___" (John 20:31)
54. Shut noisily
55. Bristle
56. "Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot ___?" (Isaiah 50:2)
57. Light wood

Down

1. "Who also maketh ___ for us" (Romans 8:34)
2. Slang negative
3. Accustomed to something unpleasant
4. Big cat
5. Small children
6. "Groweth of ___ own" (Leviticus 25:5)
7. Writings that Jews and Christians have in common, abbr.
8. "I will fear ___ evil" (Psalms 23:4)
9. Smells
10. Spring of water
16. Preposition
17. Altitudes, abbr.
20. Exclamation
21. Scared, for short
24. Group of singers
25. India, abbr.
27. Son of Becher (1 Chronicles 7:8)
28. Lutetium, chem. symbol
31. Someone who takes advantage
32. Southern continent, abbr.
34. Apiece, abbr.
35. Feelers
38. Wrinkle
41. Exhausted
42. Trite
45. "A ___ without blemish" (1 Peter 1:19)
46. Promises
48. Various, abbr.
49. Suffix
51. Shade tree

#036



Pew: Christians declining while 'nones' increasing

By David Roach

Nashville—The number of Christians in America has dropped nearly 8 percentage points since 2007, while the number of religiously unaffiliated adults has increased by nearly 7 percentage points during the same period.

That's the finding of the Pew Research Center's 200-page study of "America's Changing Religious Landscape" released May 12. The survey of some 35,000 adults drew a variety of reactions from Southern Baptist leaders.

"The results of the survey communicate growing evidence that the greatest need in America is a spiritual awakening," Southern Baptist Convention President Ronnie Floyd told Baptist Press. "The time is now and the hour is urgent; our churches in this nation must come together in clear agreement, visible union and extraordinary prayer for the next Great Awakening and to reach America and the World for Christ.

"Simultaneously, we need to rise with the same urgency, having a vision to reach our communities, towns and cities for Christ, returning to the priority of evangelizing, disciple-making and planting gospel churches exponentially," said Floyd, pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas.

Pew's survey—conducted by phone June 4-Sept. 30, 2014, in Spanish and English—estimated a net decline of between 2.8 to 7.8 million Christians since a comparable

survey in 2007. That translates to a drop from 78.4 percent of the population to 70.6 percent.

Most of the decline occurred among mainline Protestants and Roman Catholics, with each decreasing by approximately 3 percent as a portion of the population since 2007. For every convert to Catholicism in America, there are six former Catholics, according to the report.

Historically black Protestant denominations held steady between 2007 and 2014, and evangelicals decreased 0.9 percent as a portion of the population while increasing by some 2 million in terms of raw numbers.

"Generational replacement" as Americans from predominantly Christian generations died and "religious switching" were two primary causes of the decline among Christians, the survey found. A full 42 percent of Americans have a different religion than they did in childhood—a percentage that accounts for switches between evangelical, mainline and historically black Protestantism.

Non-Christian religions have increased by 1.2 percentage points since 2007 to encompass 5.9 percent of American adults.

But the increase of the religiously unaffiliated population—dubbed the "nones"—was the "most dramatic" change, a Pew senior adviser told journalists during a conference call.

"This trend towards the unaffiliated has occurred among all age groups to some extent and among all the major



racial and ethnic communities as well," said John Green, a Pew senior advisor and distinguished professor of political science at the University of Akron. "In this regard, of particular note is a sharp increase in the percentage of Americans who self-identify as atheists and agnostics."

While 25 percent of the nones claimed to be atheists or agnostics in 2007, 31 percent claimed those designations in 2014. And the percentage of Protestants who identify with Baptist denominations dropped from 41 percent to 36 percent.

"This research reveals that which many of us have been suspecting for quite some time," said Frank Page, president and CEO of the SBC's Executive Committee. "We have seen the ever-increasing secularization of our culture and know that this is affecting those who call themselves Christians.

"Pastors and evangelists for years have said that we are always only one generation away from becoming a pagan culture," Page told BP. "The importance of personal evangelism cannot be overstated.

Our world needs Christ, and He has commissioned us to be the sharers of the gospel. Let us recommit to telling those in our sphere of influence about the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Ed Stetzer, president of LifeWay Research, underscored the survey's finding that evangelicals now constitute a majority (55%) of American Protestants. He highlighted the steadiness of "convictional Christianity" amid the decline of liberal Protestantism.

"Christianity isn't dying and no research says it is," Stetzer wrote in a blog post. "The statistics about Christians in America are simply starting to show a clearer picture of what American Christianity is becoming—less nominal, more defined, and more outside of the mainstream of American culture.... If there remains a relatively stable church-engaged, convictional minority, and there is a big movement on self-identification, that means that the middle is going away."

Russell Moore, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, said he sees hopeful signs amid Pew's report.

"This study makes it clear ... that people who don't want Christianity don't want the almost-Christianity offered to them by traditions that jettison the historic teachings of the church as soon as they become unfashionable," Moore said. "...The churches that are thriving are the vibrant, countercultural congregations that aren't afraid to not be seen as normal to the surrounding culture." (BP)

Google update could decrease churches' website traffic

By David Roach

Nashville—A change in Google's formula for search results could keep churches without mobile-friendly websites from being as visible online to potential visitors.

Google updated algorithms April 21 for searches done from mobile devices to give higher placement in the results to websites that are compatible with such devices. That means churches with older, more basic websites may not appear among the top results when, for example, mobile phone users search for "Baptist church" and their city.

"Why is this a concern?" asked Michael Magruder, director of LifeWay.com for LifeWay Christian Resources. "Google estimates that over 60 percent of search queries currently originate from mobile devices. The biggest question businesses and organizations ask is, 'How do I know if my website is mobile optimized?'"

Tony Boes, the Missouri Baptist Convention's webmaster, said there are simple ways a church can determine whether its website qualifies as mobile-friendly. First, pull up the site on a mobile phone. If it fits the screen well and has buttons that are a clickable size, the site likely is mobile-friendly. Or visit Google's "Mobile-Friendly Test" website, Boes said.

Mobile-friendly sites, according to Google's Webmaster Central Blog:

- Avoid using software that is not common on mobile devices, like Adobe Flash Player;

- Use text that is readable without zooming;

- Size content to the screen so users don't have to scroll horizontally to view

the site; and

- Place links far enough apart that the correct one can be tapped easily.

Because as many as 40 percent of websites fail to meet Google's mobile-friendly criteria, some experts predicted the algorithm change would have a major impact, a scenario they dubbed "Mobilegeddon." But Baptist tech experts said several facts mitigate the change's effect on churches. Churches in small towns with unique names should still be easy to find online. In addition, the change only affects searches done from smart phones and some tablets. "If you are searching from a desktop or most tablets, the search results are not expected to change," Magruder said. Apple and Google Maps still display results by proximity.

Chris Thurman, a Kentucky-based web designer who works with the Kentucky Baptist Convention and churches across America, told BP he has "not noticed a huge difference in the (Google) rankings from some of our clients in the business world who did not optimize for mobile." He speculates Google may be rolling out its update gradually.

Still, experts agree that some congregations will be affected by the change and church websites ought to be mobile-friendly. Boes said a staff member or volunteer should be able to make a site mobile-friendly "relatively fast."

Churches that used a content management system like WordPress to design their websites need to make sure they chose a mobile-friendly template, Boes said. With LifeWay's Twenty:28 content management system, all themes are mobile optimized.

Regardless of the change to Google's search algorithm, Boes said it is important for churches to optimize for mobile traffic. Since the Missouri Baptist Convention made its website mobile friendly in October, Boes said mobile traffic to the site has doubled and the number of users who

leave without clicking links has decreased.

Becoming mobile-friendly "is only going to get more important for any website that's out there, whether or not you're a church, as more and more people look to the cell phone as their primary Internet device," Boes said. (BP)

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- ♦ MARRIAGE - Pathological gamblers have a 54% rate of divorce.
- ♦ FAMILY - 90% of gambling addicts have issues with family.
- ♦ JOB - Only 20% of gambling addicts are successful at maintaining employment.
- ♦ HOME - 20% of homeless persons list gambling as the cause for their situation.
- ♦ FINANCES - The average debt of problem gamblers is about \$40000. More than 20% of gambling addicts are forced into bankruptcy.
- ♦ FREEDOM - 30% of gambling addicts admit to engaging in illegal activities to pay their gambling debts, often resulting in prison time.
- ♦ HEALTH - 75% of problem gamblers also have problems with alcohol abuse. 38% have problems with drug abuse. Most suffer a combination of hypertension, cardiac disease, chronic stress, sleep deprivation, anxiety, and depression.
- ♦ LIFE - 20% of compulsive gamblers will attempt suicide.

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