

WESTERN Recorder

February 9, 2016

Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

Volume 190, Issue 3

New LifeWay location gets trustees' nod

By Carol Pipes

Nashville—Trustees of LifeWay Christian Resources authorized the purchase of land and construction of a new corporate headquarters in Nashville and elected new board officers.

In their semiannual meeting, trustees approved a resolution to authorize LifeWay's administration to purchase property in downtown Nashville for its future headquarters.

"This property is not just a location—it's a new community in which we can invest ourselves for the future," President and CEO Thom Rainer told trustees during Feb. 1-2 meetings in Nashville.

The property is five blocks north of LifeWay's current headquarters with frontage on Interstate 40/65. LifeWay administration will continue its due diligence on the 2.7 acres of land in Capitol View, a new mixed-use development site in Nashville's central business district.

Rainer told trustees the Capitol View development would be a great location for employees and provide convenient access to hotels, restaurants and meeting space for LifeWay visitors and conference attendees.

Trustees also approved a recommendation for the construction of a new corporate headquarters. The recommendation included the authorization to enter into a contract with Gresham, Smith and Partners for the design of the facility and "to execute other contracts and documents as necessary for LifeWay to complete the new campus."

"We are designing a building that will

□ See New LifeWay location... Page 2

Kentucky Disaster Relief volunteers win national awards

By Myriah Snyder

Hendersonville, Tenn.—Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers received two of the 12 national awards for their service with the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief.

The awards were presented to the surprised volunteers during an award banquet at the National Roundtable, the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief meeting of all state convention DR, NAMB DR, and Baptist Global

Response DR leadership in Hendersonville, Tenn. on Jan. 27.

The Kentucky recipients were Keith Stinson and Karen Smith.

"The dedication and compassion shown by these volunteers is a great witness of the love of Jesus Christ," said Coy Webb, Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief director.

"We are pleased to have them represent our more than 5,000 disaster relief volunteers across the state, each willing to drop everything and help

hurting people at a moment's notice," he added.

Stinson, a member of First Baptist Church of Richmond, received a Distinguished Service Award for his work in 2015 disaster responses. He was one of seven award winners. Stinson has been serving with Kentucky Baptist DR for more than 10 years.

"There are a lot of great people who work with disaster relief all over the

□ See Disaster Relief awards... Page 6

First pro-life bill enacted in Kentucky in 12 years

By Todd Deaton

Frankfort—As soon as it arrived in his office, Kentucky Gov. Matt Bevin signed a bill Feb. 2 amending the state's informed consent law to give women patients and doctors the option of consulting in person or by video conference.

Since 1998, Kentucky law has required women to meet with a doctor, or a doctor-designated representative, before having an abortion, but some physicians purportedly have been circumventing the rule by using pre-recorded phone messages.

The measure, Senate Bill 4—the first Bevin signed since taking office and the first pro-life

measure in 12 years—requires women seeking abortions to be informed of medical risks and benefits at least 24 hours prior to consenting to a procedure. A delegation of lawmakers, including the bill's sponsor, Sen. Julie Raque Adams of Louisville, walked the bill to Bevin's office.

Bevin indicated he will sign the bill again ceremonially at an upcoming right-to-life rally at the Capitol, according to the Lexington Herald Leader.

The new pro-life law was met with enthusiastic support from Kentucky Baptist leaders, who applauded the legislative action as "a step in the right direction."

Kentucky Baptist Convention

President Kevin Smith cited Genesis 1:27, stating "Kentucky Baptists believe that all life is created in the image and likeness of God. Therefore, I am thankful that the legislature of this commonwealth has passed this measure, and the governor expressed his eagerness to sign it."

"Prayerfully, this will provide helpful information for mothers and save lives," said Smith, teaching pastor at Louisville's Highview Baptist Church.

Neal Thornton, chairman of the KBC Committee on Public Affairs, said the bill is "a victory for every woman and child of Kentucky."

□ See Pro-life bill... Page 2



Republican Sen. Julie Raque Adams, left, hand delivers an abortion bill to Gov. Matt Bevin Feb. 2. Bevin immediately signed the bill, his first as governor. (AP Photo/Adam Bevin)

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Pro-life bill

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"Pregnancy represents the stewardship of a life made in God's image," said Thornton, pastor of First Baptist Church in Mount Vernon. "This bill will provide mothers with the knowledge needed to make an informed decision on behalf of their unborn child."

In passing the bill, Kentucky lawmakers ended a stalemate by agreeing to allow live video consultations as an option to fulfill "informed consent" requirements. In January, the Republican-controlled Senate passed the bill requiring face-to-face consultations. After the Democratic-controlled House voted 92-3 to pass the bill in late January but proposed the option of allowing video consultations, the Senate accepted their compromise language voting 33-5. The bill maintains a 1998 provision allowing doctors to be represented by a licensed nurse, physician assistant or social worker.

The addition of a live video option potentially paves the way for Kentucky to be among the first states to incorporate a telehealth component in its informed consent law.

Senate Majority Floor Leader Damon Thayer of Georgetown told Associated Press, "It is my hope that (with) the information provided to these women, these mothers who are considering an abortion, that they will think twice about the action they are about to take."

Paul Chitwood, executive director of the Kentucky convention, noted, "Information is vital in all decision making, and providing women with information about the little child inside them would most certainly cause many to rethink their decisions to have abortions."

The new law comes on the heels of a "cease and desist" order directed at a Planned Parenthood facility in Louisville that began performing abortions in January. Shortly after approving the informed consent bill, the Senate passed a bill that would prohibit state funds from being used to provide abortion services. Planned Parenthood currently receives no state funding.

The Planned Parenthood facility "brazenly set out to conduct abortions without a license in clear violation of Kentucky law," Bevin said. "The commonwealth acted swiftly to end these unlawful procedures, and we will continue to investigate the matter thoroughly."

State officials said the Louisville facility's application in November to perform abortions was deficient, lacking agreements with an acute care hospital and an ambulance service in the event of unforeseen complications. Planned Parenthood of Indiana and Kentucky, however, maintained it was working to correct the problems and had been given permission in December to provide abortions.

A top lawyer for Bevin's administration, though, disputed Planned Parenthood's claim that it followed state guidelines in opening the clinic while its application was pending. Planned Parenthood has since said the clinic will refrain from performing any abortion procedures until it has been issued the appropriate license. (WR)



With the downtown Nashville skyline behind him, LifeWay president Thom Rainer announced tentative plans to build a new headquarters building five blocks from LifeWay's current campus which was sold late last year.

New LifeWay location

Continued from page 1

reflect LifeWay's culture both now and for the future," Rainer told trustees. "It will be a building conducive to collaboration, innovation and fun."

During a Feb. 4 news conference, Nashville Mayor Megan Barry joined Rainer to announce LifeWay's decision to remain downtown. She said, "I know LifeWay had many options, and we are excited they have chosen to remain a part of the fabric of Nashville."

About 1,100 LifeWay employees are based in the downtown offices and will move into the new building. Rainer estimated the completion of the new building could be as early as November 2017.

During his report to trustees, Rainer talked about the many changes that have occurred at LifeWay over the last 10 years. "We have faced headwinds again and again. But God has worked through these times. It is amazing to see what God has done through LifeWay."

"We are here for such a time as this," Rainer continued. "And it's time to move forward." (BP)



This waterlogged scene from Eureka, Mo., was a familiar site throughout Missouri after torrential rains fell between Christmas and New Year's. Disaster Relief volunteers from Missouri and 17 other state Baptist conventions have responded with assistance. (Photo by Mike Hubbard/The Pathway)

DR volunteers still serving after Midwest flood

By Tobin Perry

St. Louis—A month after heavy Midwest rains created historic flooding that damaged hundreds of homes and killed at least two dozen people along the Mississippi River, Southern Baptist Disaster Relief wrapped up relief jobs this past week and began to consider the need for long-term rebuilding efforts.

SBDR volunteers from 18 state conventions, including Kentucky, served at sites throughout Missouri last month in a variety of flood-response roles. Volunteers completed about 400 relief jobs, according to Dwaine Carter, state director for Missouri Baptist Disaster Relief.

"I hope (the people of Missouri) see that we've been 'help, hope and healing' as we come," Carter said. "The help is physical. We give them hope that things are going to be okay. Then we trust that God will bring the healing in their lives."

Carter also says that SBDR volunteers presented the gospel 110 times. And 13 people expressed a desire to commit

their lives to Jesus. Southern Baptist volunteer hours totaled 2,908 days during the flood response.

Carter says volunteers served throughout the southern part of the state from the Arkansas/Oklahoma border north to the I-44 corridor. Disaster relief units focused much of their efforts in the St. Louis area. Units worked out of First Baptist Church of Arnold, Central Baptist Church of Eureka, and First Baptist Church of Ellisville.

While Missouri took the lead in the efforts, the North American Mission Board supported the work by providing equipment, funding and personnel, according to Mickey Caison, interim director of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief.

Caison notes that in addition to all the physical work provided by SBDR volunteers, Southern Baptists provide spiritual support as well.

Chaplains made more than 550 chaplaincy contacts in the past month in Missouri.

"(We let) them tell their story," Caison

said. "They get to share what happened to them with someone who cares about them, someone who is sympathetic to them. The hope is the gospel of Jesus Christ. We care enough to want them to know the God that we serve, the God who loves us. We want them to know that God as well."

Illinois volunteer Butch Porter served during a week of the flood response in Missouri. He said he enjoyed being a part of SBDR because it gives him an opportunity to help others.

"I can't preach and I can't sing. But I'm good with people," said Porter, a member of First Baptist Church of Galatia, Ill. "My wife and I feel like this is a great way to serve. When the Lord walked this earth, He helped people."

Other state conventions that participated in the effort included Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Baptist General Convention of Texas, the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, Kansas-Nebraska, Iowa, Utah-Idaho, Colorado and New Mexico. (BP)

A group of college students fellowship before the centennial service.



Ashland Avenue celebrates 100 years

By Myriah Snyder

Lexington—Ashland Avenue Baptist Church in Lexington celebrated 100 years of ministry Jan. 31.

A call to worship based on Psalm 126 was given through a recording of Clarence Walker, Ashland Avenue's first pastor, who served for 50 years.

Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Director, Paul Chitwood, delivered the keynote address. Heather Payne and Boyce College, the undergraduate school at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, provided music, and testimonies were shared.

Additionally, Albert Mohler, president of the Southern Seminary, and David Platt, president of the International Mission Board, sent words of encouragement through video.

"God has made us chronological creatures. We think necessarily in terms of past, present and future. That's why history is so important to us. That is why I am so honored to celebrate with Ashland Avenue Baptist Church, your 100th anniversary, past, present and future," Mohler said.

"Few churches not only have the history of your church, but few actually have the intentionality in that history as well," he continued. "There is a very clear identity to Ashland Avenue Baptist Church, committed from the very beginning to the faith once for all delivered to the saints."

Ashland Avenue Church began in

1916 by members of First Baptist Church, Calvary, Porter Memorial and Felix Memorial. The new church began with 30 members, but quickly grew to 250 within the first five years. The church, which has only had five pastors, has planted a church in an unreached people group in Cordova, Peru.

"I praise God for 100 years of faithful ministry as a local church there in Lexington," Platt said. "All glory be to God for the way He has led and guided this church, and how you have faithfully as a body of believers spread throughout generations held fast to the word of God and preached it and followed it and proclaimed it, not just there in Lexington, but the way this church has resounded to the glory of God far beyond Lexington," Platt said.

He noted the church's mission work as well as their "sacrificial giving" to the IMB.

David Prince, Ashland Avenue's pastor for the past 13 years, said that for the next 100 years, "I hope that we are as faithful as the church has been in the past." He exhorted members to stay focused on three things: a commitment to the Word, a commitment to God-centered worship, and a commitment to world missions.

Prince charged the congregation, "We want to keep planting churches, sending missionaries around the world, and keep trying to impact our city. We love Lexington, and we want to impact it for the sake of Christ." (WR)

Shepherding conference encourages ministry teams

By Myriah Snyder

Lexington—Around 330 pastors and their spouses from across the state gathered Jan. 28-30 for the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Shepherding 2016 conference—three days of marriage renewal and ministry encouragement.

Featured speakers for the weekend included Allen Bonnell, of Immanuel Baptist Church in Corbin; Eric Geiger, a vice president at LifeWay Christian Resources; KBC President Kevin Smith; and Chuck Lawless, vice president for Graduate Studies and Ministry Centers at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

"We have to live in a balance," Lawless told attendees. "If you've been in the valley too long, you'd better get back to the mountain. If you've been hanging out on the mountain too long, you've lost connection with lost people, you'd better get back to the valley."

Lawless shared that "we need the mountain" (Mark 9:2), "the valley needs us" (Mark 9:14), and "we need a balance" (Mark 9:28).

"If we find ourselves hanging out where the glory seems most real and we never get back to the valley, the devil wins as we seclude ourselves among the people of God," he said.

Staying in the valley too long can "wear you down and cost you your wonder," he reminded attendees.

Lawless also cautioned that those who are hanging out in a safe place are robbing Jesus of His glory.

"Maybe God is calling you tonight to get back down from the mountain, to reconnect with your lost community, to grieve over a dying world," he said. "We constantly have to live in that tension."

Bonnell told the couples, "God cares less about where we've been and more about where we're going."

Just as Adam and Eve tried to cover themselves with fig leaves, "we try and cover ourselves with good works," Bonnell said. "We preach longer, we preach more days, we read our Bible more. We pray and it's none of that. It's the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses



us, that heals us, that redeems us, that will lift any marriage out of the muck and mire that we find ourselves in."

He posed several questions: "Where are you (hiding) today? What are those fig leaves that you attempt to sew? Do you try to hide and cover your sin, all the while Jesus just wants for you to bring your wreckage, your junk, and those misspoken words to Him that He might bring help?"

"There is definitely something about Shepherding that resonates with the hearts of pastors and their wives," Steve Rice, KBC team leader for church consulting and revitalization, said.

"It was important for us to learn and to hear from our elders," Jake McPherson, worship leader with Touch of Hope Evangelistic Ministries and member at Immanuel Baptist of Corbin, shared. He and his wife Emmalee were among the youngest of the couples in attendance.

Emmalee said, "The important thing for me was getting surrounded by all those pastor's wives. I got poured into by a whole bunch of other women who have been married for years and have been in the ministry for years."

Rice said, "It fills an all-too-often unspoken need for ministry couples, who many mistakenly view as having it all together, all the time. But away from the demands of the church, they look a lot like ordinary husbands and wives."

The KBC sponsored Shepherding, which was held at Griffin Gate Marriot Resort and Spa in Lexington, through the Cooperative Program and Baptist Health. (WR)

WMU Foundation blanket drive warms communities, overseas refugees

By Candice Lee

Birmingham—This Valentine's Day, the Woman's Missionary Union Foundation hopes to spread love and warmth to Syrian refugees living in Jordan. The Foundation is asking people to donate \$25, which supplies a blanket to a refugee family. They are also encouraging people to donate blankets in their communities to help meet local needs.

"We want to do everything we can to meet the physical and spiritual needs of refugees in Jordan, but we also can't forget about those in our backyard," explains David George, president of the WMU Foundation. "There have been many cold nights in Birmingham this winter and we want to make sure no family is without warmth."

For a number of years the WMU Foundation has partnered with Arab Woman Today, a Christian ministry in Jordan. AWT has been sharing Christ's love in the Arab world for many years and the Syrian refugee crisis is not new to them. Providing blankets is one important way of assisting refugees who are not receiving aid

from the Jordanian government.

"We've had three snowstorms in Jordan this season. It's been very cold," reports Ruba Abbassi, founder and director of AWT. "Because of the increase in the number of refugees from Syria, we are seeing many families who are not being taken care of and have nowhere to turn."

A gift of \$25 to the WMU Foundation's AWT Fund will provide a warm blanket to a refugee family and will also help meet the spiritual needs in Jordan. The Foundation is also asking people to donate new blankets to a local ministry or homeless shelter.

"Whether it's a blanket given to a refugee or to someone in need in your community, it's a small way to show the love of Christ," said George. "It's also a fun and affordable way to involve your family in local and international missions."

The WMU Foundation is encouraging people to make their blanket donations by Valentine's Day so they can be used while it is still cold outside. Your tax-deductible donation of \$25 can be made online at wmufoundation.com or through the mail to the WMU



Blankets collected at the WMU Foundation office in Birmingham will be donated to The WellHouse, a local ministry rescuing victims of human trafficking.

Foundation at 100 Missionary Ridge, Birmingham, AL, 35242.

To give locally, find a ministry or homeless shelter that needs donated blankets. The WMU Foundation will collect blankets at their office building until Friday, Feb. 12. The blankets will be given to The WellHouse, a Birmingham-based shelter for victims of human trafficking. (WMU)

Advancing the gospel

Most Kentucky Baptists are aware that the Cooperative Program offerings given through their churches provide support for missionaries who serve overseas through the International Mission Board, as well as other Southern Baptist Convention ministries and missions. What many Kentucky Baptists may not realize is the extent to which the CP is funding

Together We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

mission work and ministry here in the commonwealth. When churches give through the CP, they not only invest in the advance of the gospel in other countries, they invest in the advance of the gospel in their own communities and in neighboring counties and churches.

For example, through the Cooperative Program, ministry couples in Kentucky are encouraged and equipped during the annual Shepherd conference and return to their churches re-energized for the work to which God has called them. Churches are spurred on in the area of evangelism by the annual RISK conference. Through the consulting work of our KBC Mission Board staff, provided by the CP, every Baptist church in Kentucky has the opportunity to receive advice and training in any area of their ministry and mission outreach programs. And university students across the state are engaged by campus missionaries whose salary and ministry budgets are funded through the CP.

The cost of sending children and teens to summer camp is reduced because of the investment KBC churches make in the Cooperative Program, as is the cost of study in our boarding school, Bible college, Baptist university, and Baptist seminary here in our state. James 1:27 ministries are carried out day and night as the CP helps fund the work of our children's homes and assist Kentucky Baptists called to foster or adopt. State missionaries receive ministry funds, church planters receive financial support, and associational missionaries are equipped for their work, all because churches give through the CP. Disaster Relief teams stand ready to deploy, bringing help and hope to people in the midst of life-changing crises, help made possible by the CP. A foundation ministry is available to help churches and individual donors secure the financial future of a particular church or any form of Baptist work in Kentucky or beyond, a ministry funded by the Cooperative Program. The Baptist story and Baptist news are heralded through our state newspaper and missions education is promoted and facilitated through our Woman's Missionary Union, funded in part by—you guessed it—the CP.

See The Cooperative Program... Page 13

The presidential election: things to keep in mind

During this pivotal year of electing the next president of the United States, we need to be wise with our words and actions.

These are serious times. Much passion is rising in America during this season. It is in the air. We sense it, feel it and know it in our heart. Much is at stake. This is undeniable.

Yet, it would be well for each of us to remember these five things during the election season:

1. Keep everything in perspective.

God is sovereign over all human affairs. Regardless of who wins the nomination of your preferred party or who wins the election, God is ultimately in charge.

I am not advocating passivism. I am calling for each of us to keep everything in perspective. Our hope and trust is ultimately in the Lord.

2. Be involved in the process.

Each Christ-follower needs to be involved in the processes of electing our next president. We need to know about the candidates, understand what they believe, measure it by the Word of God, and vote as we believe God is leading us. We need to vote not only in the general election, but also in the

primary of our choice.

It is incumbent upon us to be involved in the process at whatever level afforded to us. If you get a chance to meet one or more of the candidates, meet them. If you get a chance to speak into their lives and

"People are watching and listening to us. We represent our Lord everywhere, so we need to live up to this wisely."

platform, step up and represent the Lord and His Word honorably. If you are never afforded this privilege, learn what you can by listening, watching and reading.

I say it again; it is incumbent upon us to be involved in the process of electing our next president. Quite honestly, America cannot afford for us to stay at home.

3. Watch what you say and how you say it.

Passion is rising over these matters. In our respective places and positions, each of us will be asked our opinions. Therefore, we need to be deliberate in what we say and how we say it.

People are watching and listening to us. We represent our

Lord everywhere, so we need to live up to this wisely. This does not keep us from providing insights and speaking up when appropriate, but it does call us to weigh every word we say and the way we say it.

Do not lose your testimony and influence with others for the sake of pontificating, as if you are trying to win an

argument or promote your preferred persuasion. This is difficult for each of us, but we must be wise with our words and gentle in our spirit.

In our congregations, we have people from all backgrounds with all kinds of opinions. This should not call us to silence or intimidate us into fearfulness. Yet, it does call us to be wise with our words and clear in every way, exhibiting at all times the spirit of Christ.

Guest Viewpoint

By Ronnie Floyd



4. Refuse to be categorized.

Election season usually pushes us into categories and labels. It is now more than obvious by what we read that even evangelicals are broken into various categories.

These categories are labeling different groups and how they will vote with different candidates.

I hope each of us will strive not to be categorized by anyone.

We are one thing ultimately: followers of Jesus Christ. This is our badge of honor. If we abandon this by our actions or opinions, we will begin to lose our prophetic voice during this critical hour in America.

5. Pray for God to raise up His next leader for our nation.

Daniel 2:21 says, "He changes times and seasons; he deposes kings and raises up others. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning" (NIV).

God does have a will for our nation and He has the power to raise up whomever He desires to lead our nation.

As followers of Christ, while we work in the processes afforded us as Americans, we need to also pray for God to raise up His next leader for our nation. May He raise up such a leader where His mercy will extend toward us. And, regardless of this leader, I pray for the mercy of the Lord to be upon us.

When we know we have worked in the processes and prayed for the Lord's will to be done, when all is concluded, we have the peace to trust the Lord who is sovereign over all affairs.

Finally, let's pray for one another to remember these five things during the presidential election season.

Ronnie Floyd is president of the Southern Baptist Convention and senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas.

Put Baptist in name

I have been a Southern Baptist pastor for over 54 years, and presently I am the pastor of Oak Level Missionary Baptist Church in Marshall County.

Recently in the Western Recorder, I, along with other members of our church, have noticed there are several "churches" who are not Baptist in name, or practice, yet our convention has accepted them into our fellowship. We are disturbed that the name "Baptist" is disappearing from many churches and institutions that we have used Baptist money to build and support.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Our church is a supporter of the Cooperative Program (5 percent), but we have cut it to 3 percent to make a statement, that we are not in favor of supporting non-Baptist churches.

They all say they are Baptist, but are ashamed to put the name Baptist on their sign. They like Baptist support, but they do not support the Baptist name.

There was a school in western Kentucky that took the name "Baptist" out of their name. Many of our Baptist churches stopped supporting the school, and some leaders said they didn't care. Today the institution is closed.

Baptists have a tremendous history, and many of the greatest institutions in the world, both at home and abroad, but we had better be careful how we treat the Baptist name.

Oak Level Missionary Baptist Church is a new work, and it started with no members, and no money. The KBC supported us in the beginning, for which we are grateful. Now 12 percent of our budget goes to missions, but we are not in favor of any of our mission money going to churches who are ashamed of the name "Baptist."

—C.C. Brasher, pastor
Oak Level Missionary Baptist Church
Benton

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Shine Like Stars Philippians 2:15

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Religious liberty: An endangered Baptist distinctive

A passion for religious liberty and freedom of conscience runs in the veins of Baptists. It is actually in our DNA! Our forefathers and mothers fought and suffered for this inalienable right because they understood to truly love and worship God is to love and worship Him freely.

Coerced love is an oxymoron. It is nonsensical. We must be free to love our God without intimidation because it is a divine right granted to us by our Creator as His imagers. This is why we persuade others to trust Christ with the Word—and not the sword!

Southern Baptists are firmly committed to this proposition for all people. Indeed, we are willing, like those who have gone before us, to fight for and even suffer for every person's right to believe or not believe according to their conscience.

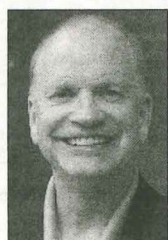
So important is religious liberty to us that we have an article in the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message specifically dedicated to this conviction. There we read:

XVII. Religious Liberty

"God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church

and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being

First Person



Danny Akin

ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7, 24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1, 13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19."

This is a wonderful statement of faith and conviction. God alone is

Lord of the conscience. Not any man. Not any government. The government is to keep its nose out of the church's business and we will honor and obey the government as long as what it requires is not contrary to the will of God revealed in Holy Scripture. All men should have "the right of free and unhindered access to God ... and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion"

What we ask for ourselves we gladly grant as a right to others.

George W. Truett, renowned pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas from 1897-1944, said, "Freedom of conscience, unlimited freedom of mind, was from the first the trophy of Baptists" (citing American historian George Bancroft).

I fear this trophy is in serious danger of being snatched away in our day. Rumbblings in our governments and courts signal that a "religious liberty tsunami" is at hand. For the sake of our nation and the nations, we cannot sit on the sideline or be silent.

My friend Russell Moore, president of the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, says, "We (Baptists) have a history of being irritants" when it comes to religious liberty. Irritants, let us rise up and seize the day! (BP)

Danny Akin is president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

Review homeowners insurance

People often take a laissez-faire approach to insurance. The bill arrives and you pay it with little or no thought. This may not be good stewardship. Below are a few things to consider when you get your next home insurance bill.

A typical home insurance policy covers three areas: Structures, Contents and Liability. Unfortunately it takes a large loss before most people get in touch with these issues:

1. Some things are excluded from coverage. Home insurance provides protection for loss or damage due to an emergency or disaster. Make sure you know what's excluded before there is a loss.

2. The amount of coverage has limits. Too often, insurance consumers look at the benefits without seeing the reality of the limits.

3. There is a major difference between "Actual Cash Value" vs. "Replacement Costs." Typically, a clause in the policy describes your coverage. For example, it may state as long as the dwelling is insured for at least 80 percent of the actual value, losses will be covered for "replacement costs"—up to policy limits.

Are damages from earthquakes, floods, power failure, war, nuclear hazard, earth movement, pets, etc. covered? If not, should they be? If so, many of these coverages can be added through a "rider." High value items often need a "rider" as well.

When you experience a loss and have a possible insurance claim, KNOWLEDGE is your best defense. Knowing exactly what your policy covers and excludes is critical, and it helps you determine whether you need to purchase additional coverage for your circumstances.



Don Spencer

Time spent on sports, hunting?

Q: My husband and I disagree about how much time he should spend each week on sports and hunting. I say he should ask my permission before agreeing to lots of extra activities, while he says he'll do what he wants. How can we resolve this?

A: Joyce Meyer once wrote, "If selfishness is the key to being miserable, then selflessness must be the key to being happy!" Every person must make a decision at some point in his or her life about core values.

Persons who claim to be followers of Jesus Christ will also adopt His values as their own. Speaking to his closest disciples, Jesus once said, "A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher" (Luke 6:40).

Assuming you are both believers, you follow a teacher known for His sacrifice. He was less demanding

and more inviting, less desirous of getting His own way and more known for giving to others.

Following His lead, your marriage is not meant to be a battle ground for two selfish children, but a training ground for growing adults. Make no mistake; you are in a battle, but your spouse is not your enemy. Let me encourage you both to consider whether or not you believe the distinguishing mark of a mature man or woman is that they become less selfish as they age.

This means you won't demand that your husband "ask permission" as if he were a child and you were his parent. Second, your husband will be more concerned with your input about how his activities affect you and your children. He will be more interested in who he is in the home than who he is in the woods. Paul reminds us in I Corinthians 13 that "love is not selfish" and "does not demand its own way."



Scott Wiggington

Are you ready for summer?

As I write this, big snowflakes are falling outside the window. It's barely above freezing, and the last couple of nights the temperature has been in the teens, so it may seem odd to be talking about summer now. But it will be here before we know it. Summer is primetime in student ministry and should never sneak up on us.

This month, we are going to look at the two big things on the summer calendar in most youth ministries: camp and missions. Here are some items we need to do now to make sure this summer is a great one in our student ministry.

Camp—Most camps—be it Crossings, 'fuge, student life or a myriad of other camps out there—may already be sold out for some camp weeks, but it is still possible to get some days. If you haven't made reservations yet, do it now before the rest of the weeks fill up.

If you have made reservations, the day of reckoning is coming—the day when you have to guarantee spots and pay deposits for that magic number of participants you will be bringing. For me, that was always a delicate balance between the number of students I already had deposits for and the number I thought would actually be going. I wanted to have room for last minute students, but didn't want to be footing the bill for unused spots.

Don't let the deposit date slip by you. It is amazing how many churches lose their week at camp because they let the deposit day pass, and their spots were given to churches on a waiting list.

Promote Camp—Do a camp promotion day, especially for the families of new students.

They are making a huge financial investment and may need some reassurance that it is worth the sacrifice to send their child to camp. Download or livestream the highlight and testimonial videos from the camp you're attending, have students that have been to camp in past years talk about their experience. Have parents talk about

the difference camp has made in the life of their child.

You need to also have a list of all forms they need to complete and key dates camp stuff is due or available for parents. If the forms need to be notarized, having one at the meeting to help parents get them in on time.

Missions—For most churches it seems to be an either/or for every year between camp and mission trip. Finances are the main reason. If parents have multiple kids doing multiple events in the summer, it can quickly become a major drain on the family budget.

While both camp and missions are a vital part of a youth ministry, they must be done with the overall

vision for the ministry in mind. At the most, we will have seven summers with a student. If they have the exact same experience every year and are never challenged to grow in their faith, we have failed them in ministry.

There may be a need in our ministries to provide multiple opportunities, and we shouldn't expect every student to attend everything. We need to see the seven summers we have with them as part of the progression of a student's discipleship process. Our juniors and seniors may be better served in our ministry by a missions/leadership experience, rather than another year of camp.

The trip may consist of only a couple of students, and in churches with bivocational/volunteer youth leaders who don't have enough vacation time to take more than one trip, it would be a great opportunity to have other adults in the church invest in those key students.

There will also be a time when we need to challenge some of our older students to serve for the summer. Most camps and missions agencies have programs where students who are at least 16 years-old can serve in various capacities. Encourage those in your ministry that are ready to give their summer in service to the gospel. It will be life changing for them.

Joe Ball is a former staff member of Crossings Ministries and the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Youth Ministry Corner



Joe Ball

Disaster Relief awards

Continued from page 1

country, all different states. They're very generous with their time and energy," Stinson said. "It was humbling to receive (the award)."

Smith, a member of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Shepherdsville, received the Phillips Award, an MVP-type award for Southern Baptist Disaster Relief that recognizes an individual who exemplifies Christ during crisis and their service to others. She was one of three to be recognized.

"It's an honor to be awarded this, because it came through your peers," said Smith, who also shared her passion for feeding people through disaster relief efforts.

Smith has been serving with DR for about 20 years. She is a feeding leader on the state leadership team, was a

member of a medical and children's trauma team in Iraq, and was a key leader in flood response to Eastern Kentucky.

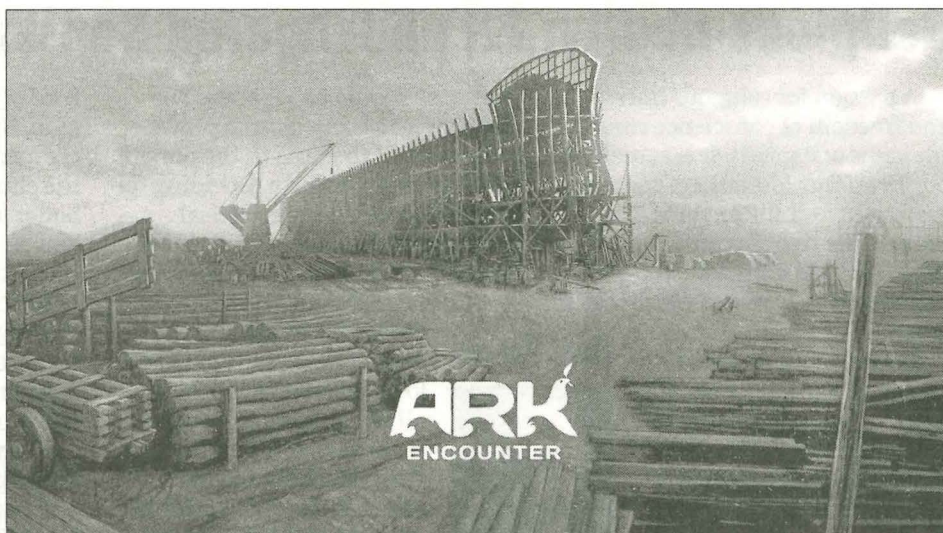
"None of us do any of this work for any kind of recognition or awards," Smith commented.

"That award is for every disaster relief worker in the whole commonwealth of Kentucky," she said. "We are only as good as our leader (Coy Webb), and the people who surround us."

Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief consists of over 7,000 trained volunteers.

DR teams respond in times of crisis to help remove debris and mud from homes after floods, provides food via feeding trucks, and a host of other services. They are part of more than 65,000 Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers.

For more information on how to get involved with KYDR, email dr@kybaptist.org or call (502) 489-3401. (WR)



Answers in Genesis, which is building a Bible-themed tourist attraction in northern Kentucky, has won a legal battle in federal court.

Judge OKs tax break for Ark park

By Bob Allen

Louisville—A federal judge has ruled that Kentucky officials were wrong to deny tax incentives worth \$18 million to a Christian ministry building a theme park featuring a life-sized replica of Noah's Ark.

U.S. District Judge Gregory Van Tatenhove ruled Jan. 25 that state officials could not deny sales tax rebates for tourist attractions—in the past granted for projects like Kentucky Kingdom theme park in Louisville and a visitors centers at bourbon distilleries—to Answers in Genesis simply because of its religious affiliation.

State officials were initially enthusiastic about approving the Ark Encounter, a \$90 million attraction due to open in July, for tax incentives granted to private businesses that create jobs that would not otherwise exist.

After groups including Americans United for Separation of Church and State raised concerns, the Kentucky Tourism Cabinet reversed course, saying the park's purpose had appeared to evolve from a tourist attraction "to an extension of AiG's ministry" and participation in the Kentucky Tourism Development Act would amount to impermissible state funding of religious indoctrination.

Van Tatenhove disagreed, reasoning that while the project's character "is undoubtedly religious in nature," it is "also a for-profit business and entertainment facility with an undeniable effect of generating revenue for the

Commonwealth."

Denying a project that has a secular purpose but is excluded solely because of its religion, the judge said, implies the law is "not being applied neutrally" and pressures Answers in Genesis "to give up its religious beliefs, purpose, or practice in order to receive a government benefit."

Answers in Genesis hailed the decision as "a victory for religious freedom in America."

"The law is crystal clear that the state cannot discriminate against a Christian group simply because of its viewpoint, but that is precisely what happened here," said Answers in Genesis President Ken Ham. "The decision today is a victory for the free exercise of religion in this country, including in hiring."

Rob Boston of Americans United for Separation of Church and State said the judge's ruling misses the point.

"The incentive program may be neutral, but the Ark park is not," Boston said in an AU blog. "Its purpose is to convince people that AiG's interpretation of the Bible is correct and that they should adopt it."

"Americans United has said repeatedly that Ham and AiG have every right to promote their religious views, and that includes the right to buy land and build a copy of what Ham believes is Noah's Ark," Boston said.

"But they must pay for this themselves. Ham and his allies should have no right to compel the taxpayers, even indirectly, to support their evangelistic efforts." (BNG)

Hunsinger Lane back in sanctuary after August fire

By Myriah Snyder

Louisville—Hunsinger Lane Baptist Church in Louisville met in its sanctuary on Jan. 31 for the first time since an August fire damaged the sanctuary and destroyed the children's ministry area and second floor.

The newly renovated sanctuary was rededicated on Jan. 31 and in expressing thanks to the workers who repaired the building, the church hosted a dinner.

The church's first service after the fire was held on the lawn. That service proved to be a blessing, members recall, bringing visitors to the church and seeing six baptized in a horse trough.

Soon after, Watson Memorial Baptist Church began sharing their sanctuary with the Hunsinger Lane congregation.

Although it was an emotional time for the church, "Our congregation understands that the church is not the building; the church is the people, and they understand that there are blessings in trials," Brian Nichter, minister of administration at Hunsinger Lane, told Kentucky Today.

"Everybody has been hanging in here and praying, pulling together, and we've gotten through this," Charlie Davis, pastor of Hunsinger Lane, told WDRB. "It's turned out to be a blessing. It really has." (WR)

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'Snowmageddon' doesn't thwart pro-lifers at March for Life

By Sharon Mager

Washington—Pro-life supporters from across the country braved the elements in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 22, the anniversary of the historic Roe v. Wade decision in 1973 to legalize abortion, to make the annual March for Life from the Washington Monument to the U.S. Supreme Court building.

Couples, women with babies snuggled against their chests, students, grandparents, Catholics, Protestants, representatives from the Jewish community, and those with no faith, braved the biting cold, waving signs, cheering and clapping for speakers while covering their faces, rubbing hands together and stamping their feet to stay warm at the starting rally near the Washington Monument. Legislators, pro-life and religious leaders urged marchers to continue their commitment to the pro-life cause.

On the platform was Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission President Russell Moore, who led the march's final charge and a closing prayer, beseeching God to make the march unnecessary for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

"We pray ... that we will receive all people regardless of stage of conception, or disability, as made in the image of God.

"Lord, as we march, we pray for confidence ... not in our numbers ... not in our strength, but in the confidence that the light shines in the darkness, the darkness has not, the darkness will not, the darkness cannot overcome it. And we are here of many faiths, and some of no faith but I pray this in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ."

Thousands of anxious marchers were already on their way before Moore's "Amen," a huge sea of people, all bundled up for the cold, carrying signs, some chanting, some holding hands, priests' and nuns' robes flying behind them as they moved. With the snow continuing to fall, and the rest of Washington scurrying to gather last-minute supplies, a state of emergency called, the crowd appeared upbeat and spirited. As Washington,

"Someday soon America will protect the weakest and most vulnerable, and into eternity each and every one of you will have played a critical part in this human rights struggle."

Rep. Chris Smith



Russell Moore, Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission president, speaks Jan. 22 at the March for Life Rally in Washington, D.C. (Photo by Chad Bartlett)

D.C., was shutting down, the march moved forward.

Previously, also on the platform, March for Life Chairman Patrick Kelly welcomed marchers to "... the largest annual civil rights demonstration in the world."

Rep. Chris Smith (R-N.J.) told the crowd, "We are turning the tide! Today, the pro-life movement is stronger than ever and is making serious, significant and sustained progress," Smith said.

"State level gains have been historic," Smith said, adding that 282 pro-life laws have been enacted since 2010. "In the last year alone, nine powerful pro-life

measures have passed the house," he said.

Smith said more than 7 million children have been aborted since 1973, which is estimated to be the killing of a child every two minutes.

"You are the antidote ... to this present darkness, the culture of death," Smith said.

"For the sake of women and children, because we love them both, be further involved, defend life with all the courage, faith, insight, compassion and love that you have to muster," he said. "Don't back down, or give up or ever get discouraged. Ever."

"Someday soon America will protect the weakest and most vulnerable, and into eternity each and every one of you will have played a critical part in this human rights struggle."

Focus on the Family President Jim Daly, coming straight from the inaugural "Evangelicals for Life" conference, sponsored by the ERLC and Focus on the Family, at the nearby Hyatt Regency, Capitol Hill, was quick to acknowledge the large Roman Catholic contingency presence.

Daly said Focus on the Family's "Option Ultrasound," which provides grants for ultrasound machines and sonographer training to life-affirming pregnancy medical clinics in communities with high abortion rates throughout the United States, has saved an estimated 358,000 from abortion.

"Moving forward, we need to look at those who aren't awake yet to the reality of what's being done, with the grace of God, the love of God and the truth of God's Word," he said.

Matt Birk, Baltimore Ravens' center from 2009-2013, was part of the team

that won Super Bowl XLVII. Kelly, March for Life chairman, called Birk a Super Bowl Champ and a pro-life champ. Birk received significant media coverage when he chose not to participate in a White House Super Bowl celebration with President Obama because of the president's support for Planned Parenthood.

Birk told the crowd many asked him why he attends the march. "I'm a football player. I like to keep things real simple," he said with a smile.

He noted, "I've never heard a woman give birth to a baby and say 'I wish I had an abortion.' That's why we march. I've never heard someone say 'I wish I had fewer kids.' That's why we march!"

"... If you've ever seen a baby being born, even though it happens millions of times a day, it's still a miracle, it's pure joy," he said. "If you've ever experienced adoption, which my family and I recently did, it's one of the most beautiful things in the world."

"It's an act of sacrifice by the birth mother to know that she can't give the child what he or she needs and so she does the selfless act of giving the baby up for adoption. That is love. In this world where we have dictators and communism and nuclear weapons and disease, don't we need more miracles? Don't we need more joy? Don't we need more love?" (BP)

Pro-lifers honored before rally

Washington—Russell Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, along with Jim Daly, president of Focus on the Family, presented awards to three pro-life leaders: David Platt, Charmaine Yoest, and Sen. James Lankford (R-Okla.), for their tireless advocacy in support of the dignity of life.

The awards were presented during the first Evangelicals for Life dinner at the Hyatt Regency Washington,

Capitol Hill, Jan. 21. The dinner was a part of the inaugural Evangelicals for Life Conference sponsored by the ERLC and Focus on the Family. In presenting the 2016 Pro-Life Advocacy Award, Jim Daly said, "These are the people getting up every day eating and breathing the pro-life message."

David Platt, president of the International Mission Board, was awarded the Pro-Life Pastoral Leadership Award. Moore called Platt an "obvious" choice, commending Platt for

faithfully preaching on issues regarding human trafficking and human dignity.

Award recipient Charmaine Yoest, president and CEO of Americans United for Life, acknowledged, "This is deeply meaningful for me."

Americans United for Life is believed to be the first national pro-life organization in the nation. Yoest is a former advisor for Mike Huckabee's 2008 presidential campaign and policy analyst at Family Research Council. She has worked with legislators at the state and national levels to pass legislation supporting the respect

of human dignity. She opposed the nomination of Supreme Court Associate Justice Elena Kagan and called for an investigation into alleged discrepancies in Kagan's testimony regarding partial birth abortion.

Sen. James Lankford received the 2016 Pro-Life Public Service Award for his work on the Senate floor to protect human life at all levels, his Christian witness and efforts to enact federal legislation that respects human dignity.

Moore called the recipients "heroes," striving to promote the dignity of all human beings." (BP)

Cause for parental concern: Monthly porn exposure the norm for teens

By David Roach

Nashville—Half of teenagers and nearly three-quarters of young adults come across pornography at least monthly, and both groups on average consider viewing pornographic images less immoral than failing to recycle.

Those are among the findings of a survey of 2,700 Americans released Jan. 19 by Josh McDowell Ministry and the Barna Group. McDowell Ministry and the Internet accountability software provider Covenant Eyes paid approximately a quarter-million dollars to commission the online survey, McDowell told Baptist Press. The study also found porn use is on the rise among young women and that 14 percent of senior pastors surveyed "currently struggle with using porn."

McDowell, a Christian author and speaker, said he is most concerned about the findings related to teens and young adults.

"What this study shows is that little by little, porn is becoming more acceptable, more 'spiritually okay'" among teenagers and adults ages 18-24, McDowell said. With pornography "so accessible now and becoming more accessible, it's going to become more mainstream."

Part of the problem is that children's first exposure to porn is coming earlier than in previous generations, according to the study. Some 27 percent of 25-30-year-olds say they first viewed pornography before puberty. In contrast, only 13 percent of adults from Generation X, the group ahead of them, first viewed porn before puberty.

Exposure to porn apparently increases in the teenage years. Even if they aren't actively seeking pornography,



8 percent of teens responding to the survey say they encounter it daily. An additional 21 percent encounter it weekly, and another 21 percent encounter it at least once a month. Among young adults, 16 percent come across porn daily, an additional 32 percent weekly and another 23 percent monthly.

Intentionally seeking pornography is a daily activity for 8 percent of teens, the study found—the same percentage who say they encounter it daily whether they seek it or not. An additional 18 percent seek porn weekly, and 17 percent more do so monthly. That translates to 43 percent of teens seeking porn at least monthly.

Among adults ages 18-24, 57 percent seek porn at least monthly, the report noted, while forty-five percent of adults ages 25-30 seek porn monthly.

The most common reason people of all age groups said they use porn is "for personal arousal," according to the study. Teens and young adults cite "boredom" and "curiosity" as the next two most popular reasons for porn use.

Though many discussions of pornography focus on men, Barna's research found 56 percent of women

ages 13-24 "actively seek out porn" at least once a month. That compares with 28 percent of women 25 and older.

McDowell said porn use among teen girls and women is increasing "faster than men." Many women use porn in attempt to "save" their marriages, he said, adding teen girls use porn to keep or attract boyfriends.

The survey yielded some positive news about pastors. A full 79 percent of youth pastors and 86 percent of senior pastors said they do not currently struggle with using porn.

Solutions

While there is no "single silver bullet" to reduce porn use, McDowell said, pastors and other Christian leaders must play a major role in addressing the issue. He and Covenant Eyes are hosting a Set Free Global Summit April 4-7 in Greensboro, N.C., to unveil the full results of the study and discuss various facets of pornography use with Christian leaders.

Pastors can help families by teaching about pornography and biblical sexual ethics, McDowell said, and families can help their children by teaching them in age-appropriate ways the biblical model of sexuality by age 6 or 7, just prior to the

average first exposure to pornography.

"Pastors and the church need to help parents create such a loving, intimate, safe home environment that (a) child is totally free and comfortable to ask mommy and daddy anything without shame, without judgment," McDowell said.

He suggested that churches and ministries move away from "one strike and you're out" policies regarding porn use by staff members.

Any ministry leader who is unrepentant about porn use must be fired, McDowell said, but those who admit their sin and covenant to stop completely should be given opportunities to keep their positions and seek help. Policies of immediate termination "drive (porn use) underground," he said.

Jay Dennis, a leader of Southern Baptists' anti-pornography initiative, commended McDowell for "the passion, excellence and experience he brings to addressing culture's number one issue."

Barna's study "gives us valuable insight into the impact of pornography on teenagers and older children," Dennis, co-sponsor of the Join One Million Men campaign, said in written comments. "With more relevant statistical information, we can better communicate the problem. With these statistics, we can qualify what we have suspected: that pornography use is increasing and is becoming normalized. This survey says to every pastor, 'Wake up!'"

To help the 93 percent of pastors whose churches do not have programs to help those struggling with porn use, Dennis said Join One Million Men will soon publish four new resources, including one for teens and another for parents of teens. (BP)

Houston Grand jury indicts Center for Medical Progress activists

By David Roach

Houston—The Houston grand jury charged with investigating Planned Parenthood in conjunction with undercover videos produced by the pro-life Center for Medical Progress has said the abortion provider broke no laws and instead has indicted CMP activists on two felony counts.

In response to the indictments, a spokeswoman for Texas Right to Life told Baptist Press the grand jury process "reeks of something amiss." She said the case illustrates "a pattern" in the Harris County district attorney's office of failing to issue indictments in "abortion-related" cases despite significant evidence that abortionists have committed crimes.

CMP founder David Daleiden and his colleague Sandra Merritt were both indicted on felony charges of tampering with a government record, Harris County district attorney Devon Anderson announced Jan. 25. The New York Times speculated the charges may stem from making and presenting fake identification resembling California driver's licenses in conjunction with the CMP's investigation of Planned Parenthood's Houston affiliate.

If convicted, the journalists each

could face up to 20 years in prison, according to the Houston Chronicle.

Daleiden also was indicted on a misdemeanor charge related to purchasing human organs.

Daleiden told Russell Moore, president of Southern Baptists' Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, CMP's undercover investigation of Planned Parenthood's apparent sale of body parts from aborted babies was not unethical.

Asked by Moore at the Evangelicals For Life conference in Washington whether he was "making morality relative here by using lying and deception," Daleiden responded, "I think that undercover work is fundamentally different from lying because the purpose of undercover work is to serve the truth and to bring the truth to greater clarity and to communicate the truth more strongly."

Daleiden continued, "Certainly in normal everyday life we don't always communicate the truth by a simple one-equals-one mathematical way of speaking. We often use poetry and metaphor and even pretext in order to communicate really important truth in a more clear way. Our Lord did that in the Gospels with the parables; it's often done throughout the Holy Scriptures; and so I see undercover work in that same sort of vein, as a creative way of communicating

and speaking that is in service of the truth."

District attorney Anderson, a Republican, said in announcing the indictments, "As I stated at the outset of this investigation, we must go where the evidence leads us. All the evidence uncovered in the course of this investigation was presented to the grand jury. I respect their decision on this difficult case," the Chronicle reported.

Anderson said the grand jury's investigation, which lasted more than two months, was "lengthy and thorough" and involved her office, the Houston police and the Texas Rangers, the Times reported.

CMP posted a statement on its website in response to the indictments: "The Center for Medical Progress uses the same undercover techniques that investigative journalists have used for decades in exercising our First Amendment rights to freedom of speech and of the press, and follows all applicable laws. We respect the processes of the Harris County District Attorney, and note that buying fetal tissue requires a seller as well. Planned Parenthood still cannot deny the admissions from their leadership about fetal organ sales captured on video for all the world to see."

Melissa Conway of Texas Right to Life



Attorney Terry Yates, left, answers a question as attorney Jared Woodfill listens Jan. 27 in Houston. Both men represent David Daleiden and Sandra Merritt. (AP Photo/David J. Phillip)

told BP, "The hard evidence against Planned Parenthood and contained in the investigative video by CMP is overwhelming and undeniable."

Yet no indictment of Planned Parenthood has been handed down.

"This case reeks of something amiss," Conway said. "...We proudly stand in defense of the efforts of CMP through their investigative reporting and feel that a grave injustice exists as a result of the charges brought against the very people seeking justice on behalf of the true victims in this case—brutally dismembered preborn children." (BP)

The Purpose of Sex

Fewer young people see marriage, procreation as prerequisites for sex

By Jeff Brumley

Church isn't the only institution Millennials are avoiding or abandoning in droves, new research by The Barna Group has found.

The institution of marriage is increasingly shunned by younger Americans who in turn view sexuality as unconnected to matrimony, Barna found in "What Americans Believe About Sex," a survey released Jan. 14.

The research explores generational attitudes about sex and marriage and, its authors concede, leaves families and churches with some pretty tough challenges in addressing cultural trends on sexuality, marriage and faith.

The findings shouldn't surprise anyone familiar with other ongoing trends in American society and religion, most notably the rise of the "nones," said Roxanne Stone, editor-in-chief at Barna. Those are Americans, especially younger generations, who claim no religious affiliation. Stone said they are in general averse to loyalty to any kind of institution, whether it's the church or government.

"We have seen in general younger generations moving away from institutions," Stone said.

And marriage is one of those institutions, she added.

"It's part of a growing sense of individualism and isolation—a sense that you do life on your own," Stone said.

Generational breakdown

The Barna study shows a clear breakdown between generations on attitudes toward sex, marriage and faith.

Older generations—79 percent of Elders and 71 percent of Boomers—say sex is for procreation. The belief that sexuality functions to express intimacy between two people who love each other is held by 68 percent of Elders and 73 percent of Boomers.

"The two younger adult generations are much less likely to embrace these traditional views of sex," the Barna report stated.

The study found that 57 percent of Gen-Xers and 56 percent of Millennials believe sex is for

people who love each other. Some 52 percent of the former and 51 percent of the latter believe sex is for procreation.

Only a third of either generation say sex should bond a man and a woman in marriage.

"Nearly half of younger generations say that sex is to connect with another person in an enjoyable way," Barna said—44 percent for Gen-Xers and 49 percent of Millennials.

However, faith plays a role in these attitudes, according to the study which found that practicing Christians are twice as likely as those of no faith to say sex is meant to unite a man and woman in marriage.

'With no reservations'

But even that is changing, said Joe Beam, a speaker, best-selling author and founder of Marriage Helper, Inc.

Beam told BNG that he routinely comes across Christian adults who share the values expressed in the Barna poll.

Beam said he regularly meets with groups of college-age adults and teaches a course on sexuality at a Christian college. He finds their attitudes about sex revealing.

"They have the idea that sex is a way to get some relief, some sexual fulfillment, and if you like the person you can have some kind of sex with them," he said.

Many define sex only as intercourse, which itself is viewed as a bonding activity, Beam said. As a result, he added, sex is viewed by many young people as a stress-relieving, feel-good activity that is not limited to marriage.

Many students tell him they've had sex already with multiple partners.

"And these are Christians," Beam added.

Those attitudes are not limited to young Christians or young people in general. Beam regularly speaks at churches where such views of sex are prevalent. During a recent visit to a Bible-belt church, Beam said a group of adult women told him it's OK to sleep with a man on the third date.

They told him that, he said, "with no reservations."

Likewise, older adult men expressed their belief that

using pornography, both alone and during sex, is "OK and healthy."

'All mixed together'

No one cultural development can be cited for the current state of sexual attitudes, Beam said.

He agreed with Stone that the rise of the "nones" has an influence.

High divorce rates certainly have an effect on attitudes about sex. But a prevailing opinion that sex should always be exotic also contributes to divorce rates.

"So if I'm not sexually fulfilled with you I will find someone I am fulfilled with," Beam said.

Entertainment also plays a part as television shows, films and music have long depicted sex as legitimate outside of marriage and procreation, according to Beam.

"It's all mixed together," he said about social, religious and media trends that have influenced shifting attitudes about sex.

"It's a big ball of spaghetti and all of these things are affected by the other."

What churches can do

For starters, any helpful teaching on the topic of sex and marriage must be unapologetically Christian without resorting to simply citing chapter and verse, Beam said.

"Think about the relationship involved and teach that sex is best in a committed, permanent relationship," he said, adding younger people should be told that sex is good and that it is best when practiced the way God intended it to be.

Couples should be provided with resources that can help resolve disagreements about sex and can help them overcome periods of sexual inactivity or boredom.

"I teach them about the emotional bonding that takes place" during sex and that it's "not just about pleasure but about a relationship," he said.

"Physically and emotionally it should be pleasant and bonding."

But the education also has to happen with church leadership, Stone said.

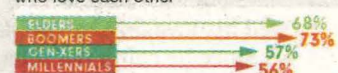
"There needs to be less of an assumption that your congregation is married or moving toward marriage," she said.

Convincing young adults and divorcees to pursue a celibate lifestyle outside of marriage requires theologically grounded reasoning.

"They are not going to settle for an easy answer on why they are supposed to wait for marriage for sex," Stone said. (BNG)

Which of the following phrases summarizes the purpose of sex?
(Respondents could choose more than one option.)

To express intimacy between two people who love each other



To connect with another person in an enjoyable way



To satisfy a biological need, not including reproduction



To unite two adults of any gender in marriage



To reproduce / to have children



To unite a man and woman in marriage



For self-expression and personal fulfillment



Don't know



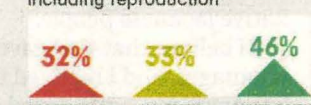
To express intimacy between two people who love each other



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To unite a man and woman in marriage



For self-expression and personal fulfillment



Don't know



Church-state case goes to Supreme Court

By Emily Belz

Asheville, N.C.—A case the Supreme Court has agreed to hear about ground-up tire rubble for a church playground could be one of the more significant religious-exercise cases in a decade. The court will consider when states can provide aid to religious institutions.

Missouri nonprofits can apply to the state for scrap tires to use in playgrounds. Trinity Lutheran Church in Columbia, Mo., which has the Learning Center daycare, applied to receive the tires for its playground. The state ranked the church's application highly, but refused the grant based on a state constitutional provision that forbids state money going to support churches. About 35 states have similar provisions in their state constitutions.

The church challenged the application of the provision in federal court, arguing a church should be eligible for basic state aid. Trinity Lutheran lost at the district court and the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. The Supreme Court, to some surprise, took the case Jan. 22, and will hear arguments in March or April.

The significance of the seemingly pedestrian case lies in a Supreme Court precedent from a 2004 case named *Locke v. Davey*. In that case, the court ruled that Washington state was justified in refusing a scholarship to a student studying theology at a private Christian school.

Essentially, the court ruled a state was justified in refusing to grant scholarships to train clergy. Now the Supreme Court will decide whether *Locke* would apply to other aid.

"The Trinity Lutheran Church case is important because it's going to resolve whether *Locke* should be read narrowly or broadly," said Carl Esbeck, a religious freedom lawyer at the University of Missouri School of Law. He filed an amicus brief on the church's side in the lower court.

"If you care about religious liberty, you want *Locke* to be read narrowly," he said.

The facts in this case are good for the church because it is clear that scrap tire does not somehow promote the Christian gospel. And the church argues the playground is a resource for neighborhood children, not just church members. (BP/WORLD)

For Boyce student autism becomes 'one of God's greatest gifts'

By Robert Chapman

Louisville—Six months after his parents moved from California to Uruguay with the International Mission Board in 1990, Steven Kunkel stopped speaking.

His parents first thought their 1-year-old had culture shock, but they knew something else was wrong when he did not speak for nearly three years.

When Kunkel was 4, his father took him to San Francisco for a formal diagnosis. Doctors said Steven was severely autistic, would never be able to live on his own, learn to speak or make any friends. They recommended that Tim and Iracema Kunkel leave the mission field and put their son in a school for autistic children.

The Kunkels, however, knew God had other plans for their family.

"My parents decided to trust the Lord and take me back to the mission field, knowing that their children belong to God," said Kunkel, now a 26-year-old student at Boyce College, the undergraduate school at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

"They brought me back to Uruguay and the Lord began working in me and I started speaking at the age of 5. I received Christ as Lord and Savior at age 8 by understanding that Jesus came to die for my sins at the cross," Kunkel recounted.

Though doctors had told his parents that Steven would have trouble speaking, he showed a knack for languages. By the age of 15, Kunkel spoke three languages: English, Spanish and Portuguese. At that point, Kunkel sensed a call from the Lord to be a missionary to Japan, which would

wed his love for God and languages.

Since he could not speak Japanese, Kunkel wasn't sure how to answer the call. But God soon provided the opportunity for Steven to learn the language while still living in South America.

"After I got my calling, I realized that there were no Japanese speakers in Uruguay. So we were concerned how God was going to teach me Japanese. But then God opened a path with one of the IMB leaders, and they transferred my family to Paraguay," Kunkel said. "Paraguay had more international people, including Japanese people. We lived in Paraguay for seven years and I learned Japanese by working at a Japanese church with a Japanese pastor."

After working with the Japanese church for seven years, Kunkel answered God's call by moving to Japan when he was 22, where he continued to reach internationals through his gift of languages.

Kunkel spent the majority of his time in Japan working with Jesus the Gospel International, a nondenominational church. It was a mostly Filipino Church and Kunkel served as a translator for them while continuing to evangelize the native Japanese people.

"I believe that God gave me the gift of languages, and I realized that since God has given me a gift I need to use it for His glory," Kunkel said. "I was aware that a lot of people learn languages for money or power, but I am fond of learning languages because I am fond of reaching out to unreached peoples."

Kunkel stayed in Japan for two years before enrolling in Boyce as a global studies major in spring 2015. Kunkel's



Steven Kunkel, once told he'd have difficulty speaking, now speaks multiple languages.

academic success continues to astound his parents.

"When you have a special needs child, you never know exactly what to expect," Tim Kunkel said. "God is working in his life and constantly healing him. Steven manages his own schedule, is on the dean's list and has over a 3.8 GPA. To see him thriving is just amazing and gratifying."

Kunkel currently speaks English, Spanish, Portuguese and Japanese fluently and is learning more than a dozen other languages, including Arabic, Turkish and French. He hopes his proficiency in other languages will better prepare him for future ministry to spread the gospel to as many people as possible.

"Steven is an incredible student," said John Klaassen, program coordinator and associate professor of global studies at Boyce College. "God has gifted him in so many ways, especially in his ability to communicate in other languages. It is a pleasure to watch the Father work in and

through his life as he reaches out across cultures to share the gospel."

After graduating from Boyce, Kunkel hopes to return to Japan but remains open for whatever God has planned for his life. Kunkel said he loved living among the unreached Japanese people, though the pervasive spiritual darkness burdened him.

As Kunkel prepares for missionary service, he hopes to encourage others to trust that God can use them no matter what is standing in the way. Through living with autism, Kunkel has learned to rely completely on God's power so much so he now thanks God for his disability.

"My autism is one of the greatest gifts the Lord has given me. The Lord healed me, but not 100 percent because He wants me to rely on Him," Kunkel said. "If it was not for my autism, I would not be determined to learn languages, meet friends or share the gospel with people, and to encourage others." (BP)

Veto override on PPFA defunding fails in House

By Tom Strode

Washington—The U.S. House of Representatives failed Feb. 2 to override President Obama's veto of a bill that would have largely defunded Planned Parenthood, but pro-life advocates remained hopeful about future success.

The House voted 241-186 for the override, falling 45 votes short of the two-thirds majority required. The failure was not a surprise, considering the margin the proposal originally passed. Supporters of the legislation actually lost ground from the House's original passage vote, which was 240-181.

Only two days after the House vote in early January, the president vetoed the budget-related bill, which would have cut nearly 90 percent of federal money in the next year for the Planned Parenthood Federation of America and its affiliates. The legislation also would have essentially gutted the controversial 2010 health care law opposed by nearly all pro-life organizations.

Obama's veto protected the interests of the country's leading abortion provider, which performs more than

300,000 abortions a year, receives more than \$500 million from the government annually and continues to be plagued by scandal. The latest in a growing list of black eyes for Planned Parenthood's reputation came in last year's revelation through undercover videos that it trades in baby body parts.

Southern Baptist public policy specialist Barrett Duke said the surprise was both chambers "were able to pass this bill in the first place," since the measure "was working against two entrenched, impassioned interests Congress is very divided about—health care and abortion."

"Defunding Planned Parenthood and sending those taxpayer dollars to health providers that do not perform abortions is especially high on our list of things to do," said Duke, vice president for public policy of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

Pro-life leaders expressed their hope the election of a pro-life president this year could result in PPFA's defunding. PPFA and its affiliates received \$553.7 million in government money, according to its latest annual financial report. (BP)

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ERLC addresses religious liberty setbacks

By Tom Strode

Washington—Last year marked a setback for religious liberty in the United States, and 2016 promises more challenges for the cherished freedom, according to the Southern Baptist Convention's public policy entity.

Much of the blow in 2015 to what is often referred to as America's "first freedom" came through advances by same-sex marriage and non-discrimination policies for sexual orientation and gender identity. The struggle between religious liberty and sexual liberty appears destined to continue this year and beyond.

Religious freedom's status as "the next frontier of the culture war" is "nothing less than tragic to our constitutional order," said Andrew Walker, director of policy studies for the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. "Only a few years removed from being a revered topic of consensus, religious liberty is now frequently scare quoted and dismissed by media figures as a 'license to discriminate.'"

As a result, Walker wrote in a Dec. 28 blog post for the ERLC's Canon and Culture channel, 2015 "will long be remembered as a momentous time of change for religious liberty in American history. And unless the course is reversed, religious liberty will continue its descent."

The events of 2015, ERLC President Russell Moore told Baptist Press, offered a reminder of the crucial nature of

religious liberty and the significance of seeking to protect it.

"It is mandatory that conscience freedom be protected from both government overstep and the pressures of cultural conformity," Moore said.

"Christians in particular must model the championing of religious liberty by rejecting the angry pandering of some politicians and advocating on behalf of all," he said. "Only by championing religious liberty for all can evangelicals embody our theology of what it means to be made in the image of God."

Among the challenges to religious liberty in 2016, Walker wrote, will be:

- A Supreme Court decision on the objection by religious, nonprofit organizations to the Obama administration's abortion/contraception mandate;
- The election of a new president, whose judicial appointments will "dictate the future of religious liberty jurisprudence for generations to come;"
- The effort to force Congress to consider "problematic causes" such as the Equality Act, which would establish "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" as protected classes under civil rights law.

The Equality Act, which was introduced in 2015, is "the most sweeping, anti-religious liberty measure" he has

seen proposed by lawmakers, Walker said. "Were this bill ever to pass, it would end public debate and designate the beliefs of any individual with a moral and/or religious objection to the federal statute, regarding an entirely new sexual

ethic, as discriminatory."

While there were some encouraging developments for religious liberty last year, too many were disconcerting, Walker said in his analysis of the top news events regarding religious freedom.

The U.S. Supreme Court's nationwide

legalization of same-sex marriage was "no doubt the biggest religious liberty event of the year," Walker wrote. The high court's majority displayed an "unscrupulous regard for religious liberty," and the minority strongly criticized the majority's treatment of defenders of traditional marriage, he said.

The decision's effect "on culture and religious liberty cannot be overstated," and its "full scope" remains uncertain because the country is still in the "immediate aftermath" of the opinion, Walker wrote.

Other distressing developments regarding religious freedom, Walker wrote, included:

- Increasing charges of discrimination against religious colleges and

universities that receive federal funds while considering applicants' religious values;

- The U.S. Department of Education's threat to pull federal funds from an Illinois school district for refusing to allow a transgender male student to use the girls' locker room;

- Hillary Clinton's "impassioned pro-gay rights speech" to the Human Rights Campaign in which she endorsed the Equality Act and promised she, if elected president, would eliminate funding for agencies that support adoption only by heterosexual households;

- Compromise legislation approved in Utah to protect both gay rights and religious liberty—a measure Moore and Walker concluded "offered too many concessions that disadvantage religious liberty without guaranteeing sufficient protections in return."

Among encouraging developments, Walker wrote, were:

- Unanimous Supreme Court decisions—*Reed v. Town of Gilbert* and *Holt v. Hobbs*—that protected the free speech rights of a church and the religious free exercise of a prisoner, respectively.

- The defeat by Houston voters of an ordinance approved by the City Council that would have expanded non-discrimination protections to encompass sexual orientation and gender identity.

As "the most media-frenzied event," Walker cited the jailing of Kentucky county clerk Kim Davis for refusing to abide by a judge's order to issue a marriage license to a same-sex couple. New Kentucky Gov. Matt Bevin has since issued an executive order in an attempt to achieve a solution. (BP)

Fla. Baptists send additional \$500,000 to SBC

By Barbara Denman

Jacksonville, Fla.—The Florida Baptist Convention sent an additional \$500,000 in Cooperative Program funds to the Southern Baptist Convention Jan. 25.

The funds represented 51 percent of the \$970,924 in budget overages from Florida Baptist churches to the state convention's 2015 budget of \$28.8 million.

"What a tremendous blessing from God for Florida Baptists to express our commitment to the Great Commission in our work together as Southern Baptists through this budget overage," said Tommy Green, the convention's executive director-treasurer.

"This means we will be sharing an additional \$500,000 to the SBC beyond the \$11,808,000 budgeted amount, bringing the total earmarked for the SBC to \$12,308,000," he said.

Frank Page, president of the SBC Executive Committee, voiced gratitude to the Lord "for the faithfulness of His people to support our state convention and SBC ministries through the Cooperative Program."

"I have heard of several other states that have experienced overages in their CP as well," Page said. "As in this case, several have shared this means an even greater percentage for national missions and ministries because of their state's predetermined formulas for distribution."

"These state executives are excited about what God is doing through their churches, and we celebrate with them. Praise the Lord!"

The 2015 giving of Florida Baptist churches through the Cooperative Program is the first time since 2007 when receipts exceeded the prior year, reversing a seven-year trend when CP receipts dropped by 25 percent.

Florida Baptists gave \$29,770,924 through the Cooperative Program in 2015, exceeding the year's \$28.8 million budget by 3.37 percent and surpassing the 2014 giving of \$29,643,195 by approximately \$128,000, or 0.43 percent.

"The generosity of our Florida Baptist churches reflects their deep commitment to reaching the world for Christ," Green said.

The decline over the seven-year period, which originally mirrored the downturn in the economy, was felt throughout the Florida convention, as receipts dropped from an all-time high of \$39.61 million given in 2007 to \$29.64 million in 2014. (BP)

Barbara Denman is director of communications for the Florida Baptist Convention.

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Oneida loses great friend, but his impact will continue

Oneida has so many friends and supporters, far and wide, that it seems an overwhelming task to try to meet them all. One of these many friends I have had the privilege of getting to know was J.V. Case.

This is Oneida



Larry Gritton

In 2005, J.V. established a scholarship endowment fund and continued to make additional contributions to the fund. The J.V. and Josephine Case Scholarship Fund will benefit our young people for many years to come.

After becoming aware of Rev. Case's support of Oneida, I made arrangements to visit him in Bowling Green.

I first met Rev. Case in December 2014. He was up in years, but his mind was sharp, and it was a blessing to hear of his many years in ministry.

After that initial visit, any time I was in the Bowling Green area, I

stopped to see Rev. Case. I always left feeling encouraged and blessed.

I recently received the news that Rev. Case had received his eternal reward and was now in the presence of his Lord. Although saddened, a smile came to my face when I thought of him hearing, "Well done, my good and faithful servant." I rejoice in knowing I will one day see my friend—Oneida's friend—in heaven.

I am continuously amazed and overwhelmed when I consider all of the folks who have helped Oneida help young people for the past 116 years. Some pray for us. Others serve as short-term volunteers. Many commit to full-time service and spend decades here. Some only spend a year or so here. Many bless us financially by giving monthly, annually, or one time. Others ensure we are blessed through legacy giving even after they have gone on to be with the Lord. Others refer kids and families to our

ministry. It takes so many to make Oneida go.

Our co-founder, Rev. H.L. McMurry, once said, "Burns, this school will grow into a great institution, because it is purely the work of God which cannot be overthrown."

A visitor to the Oneida campus later said, "Oneida Institute would never have existed if it had depended on a businessman to build it, for a businessman would have known it could not be done. It took a dreamer and a man of God to make it possible."

I am grateful for James Anderson Burns, our founder, and for J.V. and Josephine Case. I am also grateful for the many friends who have helped us do what we do to reach lost and hurting young people.

Larry Gritton Jr. is president of Oneida Baptist Institute. Website: oneidaschool.org. Phone: (606) 847-4111. Follow OBI on Facebook at www.facebook.com/OBI.KY and Twitter, @Oneida_Baptist and @lgritton.

'Energized churches' goal of 9-stop evangelism road trip

Louisville—An evangelism road trip is looking to fire up Kentucky Baptist churches about meeting new people in their communities and introducing them to Jesus.

"There's no higher priority for a pastor than to lead his church to fulfill the Great Commission," said Chuck McAlister, "and there is no greater purpose for our team than to help churches be the best Great Commission churches they can be."

The McAlister-led Evangelism and Church Planting Team at the Kentucky Baptist Convention will embark on a nine-city jaunt in the coming months called LIFE Tour, breaking down the acronym by equipping churches to Look, Identify, Focus and Engage groups within the their community.

The first stop is First Baptist Church of Mount Vernon on March 10. Other locations include Bowling Green, Clinton, Flemingsburg, Frankfort, Hebron, Lexington, Louisville and Pikeville.

"It is our desire to help pastors build strong, stable, energized churches as they evangelize their communities on four specific pillars," McAlister said.

The pillars are personal evangelism, corporate or community evangelism, church planting and/or multi-site development, and campus engagement. Each evangelism pillar comes with no-assembly-required strategies to help churches maximize their reach. McAlister said a successful tool in personal evangelism is the Tell Your Story website. Since its introduction, tellyourstory.today has spread the gospel across all 50 states, more than 80 countries and has led to 353 salvation decisions.

"For so long, we as Southern Baptists have made evangelism an exercise of the head where we memorize gospel presentations or certain steps," he said. "But when people share the story of their encounter with Jesus Christ, it becomes an exercise of the heart."

In the area of community evangelism, KBC Affinity Evangelism Strategist Andy McDonald designed LIFE Project to identify and engage affinity groups within a church's geographic region.

"People are hungry for authentic relationships," McDonald said. "With LIFE Project, churches can create avenues to build those relationships within the community and, more importantly, point people to a real and authentic relationship with Christ."

Affinities can be built around mutual interest in sports, hobbies, schools or places of work. Other affinity groups can be focused on community needs. Kentucky Baptist churches received LIFE Project resources in the mail following the KBC Annual Meeting last November.

"If you want a great way to get your church focused on others, then engage in planting a church," McAlister said.

The fourth pillar entails mobilizing the next generation of believers. Through a new initiative called Twelve24, churches can impact students' lives with the help of one of nine regional Baptist campus missionaries.

Churches also have the option of partnering with self-funded campus missionary interns. To learn more about attending a LIFE Tour, visit www.kybaptist.org/lifeproject. (KBC)

Alumnus serves on international mission trip

Our students at Clear Creek have many opportunities to participate on mission trips while they are preparing for the calling God has placed on their lives. We want them to have opportunities while they are students in hopes that they will continue to keep missions a priority in their ministry.

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

Alumnus Stephen Thomas now serves in Florida. He shared with me about a recent mission trip he took to another part of the world.

"I had the privilege of serving on a mission team for two weeks where we went to meet with and encourage pastors," Thomas said. "Even though I have traveled for years to other places of the world, God still

humbles me each time I am able to go on a trip like this.

"We met a pastor on this trip who ministers to people who live in caves. The obstacle he faces is that these people don't stay put, but move from place to place so they can graze their cattle. So he has to continuously track their movements and go find them as he tries to share the gospel with them," Thomas said.

"We also met a widow whose husband was a pastor, but has died," he continued. "Following their tradition, his family came and took everything they owned, except for the three children and the clothes on their backs. The widow now struggles to provide for her children, but knows that God is providing for their needs."

"We had the opportunity to preach in some churches," said Thomas. "The

church I preached in was a church plant and does not have a permanent place to meet. The day we were there, the man that owns the building we met in felt led to give the church a piece of his property so they can build a church.

"It was an immediate answer to prayer," he added. "God is good!"

"We also visited a church that was burned down by Muslims in the area, but that has not stopped this church from rebuilding and even bigger. The Christians there stand strong in their faith to Christ, but have a lot of work ahead of them."

"Please remember to pray for these people as God works through these pastors."

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

Gifting real estate

Laurie Valentine, trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, and I had the recent pleasure of visiting with a husband and wife who were seeking guidance on what steps they should take to enable them to gift real

Ky. Baptist Foundation



Richard Carnes

estate property to create an endowment fund which would benefit two Kentucky Baptist causes they faithfully supported.

The wife of this couple attended one of the Foundation's legacy giving seminars a few months ago, and she was inspired to think about the

Christian stewardship of their cash assets and non-cash assets (home equity, life insurance, retirement assets, investments or business interests). During our seminars we share with the participants that the average person's net worth consists of

9 percent in cash and 91 percent in non-cash assets. When hearing this statistic, participants are enlightened that their financial stewardship covers more than just the 9 percent of their cash assets.

As Laurie and I spoke with this couple, we acknowledged that cash is the most common form of charitable gift for most people. However, by giving property, a donor may receive greater tax benefits and conserve cash for other uses. Also, donors may find that they can sometimes make a larger gift at less after-tax cost by giving real estate or other non-cash property.

Most types of marketable real property may be given. Personal residences, farms, vacation homes, undeveloped land and rental property are common sources. And, it is possible to give either all or a portion of the property's value. The property should be readily marketable, especially if

the donor plans to make the gift in the form of a life income arrangement.

Giving real property is handled by deeding the property to a charitable organization such as the Kentucky Baptist Foundation. Our staff, along with a donor's professional advisor can help evaluate the benefits of gifting real estate as well as providing guidance in securing an appraisal and other steps.

Charitable gifts of real estate often involve more tax and legal complexities than other types of donations. Over the years, however, such gifts have provided substantial benefits to both the donors and the charity. To learn more, you may contact the Foundation's trust counsel, Laurie Valentine, or me at our toll-free number below.

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

LifeWay celebrates Thom Rainer's 10th anniversary

By Aaron Earls

In a special chapel service on Feb. 3, LifeWay Christian Resources recognized Thom S. Rainer for 10 years of service as president and CEO.

Rainer was praised for his commitment to Christ and his family, as well as leadership during tumultuous cultural and business changes.

Gary Richardson, LifeWay Board of Trustees chairman, spoke of Rainer as a selfless, transparent and courageous leader. Before presenting Rainer with a gift, he relayed a fellow trustee saying, "LifeWay is impacting and influencing the world as never before for the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

The celebration kicked off with music from Grammy Award-winning artist Mandisa. As a former LifeWay customer service employee, she shared how she "learned the power of the Bible" from her time with the company.

Eric Geiger, vice president of LifeWay's resources division, presented a plaque from the LifeWay Executive Leadership Team thanking Rainer for his "visionary guidance and unwavering leadership." Geiger told him, "In you, I see a man who loves Jesus and leads as someone who has been loved by Him."

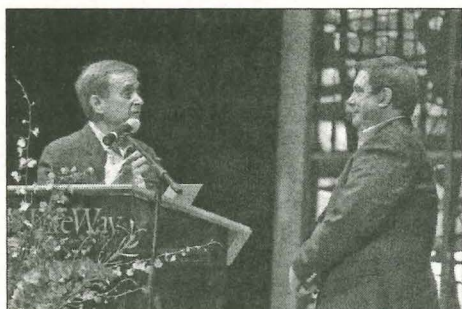
Selma Wilson, vice president of Organizational Development, recalled representing the employees at Rainer's inauguration and expressed gratitude that she could do that again in her current role for his 10-year celebration. "We as an employee team are grateful that, as a leader, you care more about tomorrow than today," she told Rainer.

Wilson also introduced a video created by LifeWay employees that highlighted several expressing their appreciation for Rainer's leadership and mentioning what they feel he has done best as president.

Executive Vice President Brad Waggoner said the one word he would choose to describe Rainer would be "courage." He then described several ways Rainer has displayed courage in his decision to come to LifeWay and his leadership since arriving.

Rainer's wife Nellie Jo, their three sons and daughters-in-law, and nine grandchildren joined Rainer for the celebration. As they did during his inauguration, Rainer's sons, Sam, Art and Jess, spoke of the impact their father made on their lives.

"When I think of my father," Sam said, "I think of Ephesians 6:4. 'Fathers bring up children in the training and instruction of the Lord.' I've had that in my life." Sam noted that his father loves the Lord, his wife, his family and LifeWay. "He loves this place, obviously



Gary Richardson, LifeWay Board of Trustees chairman, led a special service celebrating Thom S. Rainer's 10th anniversary as LifeWay president and CEO. (Photo by Kent Harville)

not because of the building because you're selling it," he joked. "He loves this place because he loves the people here."

Art remembered how their father always told his sons three things: "I love you. I'm proud of you. And I'm glad you are my son." He has carried that tradition on to his own children and wanted to "return the favor" to his parents by telling them those three things.

Jess shared a list of his father's accomplishments in the last 10 years, some serious and some humorous. "Lots of things have changed, but some things didn't," he said. "I know in another 10 years I'll be able to stand here and say the same thing, 'I love you and I'm proud of you.'"

To close the service, Rainer expressed gratitude to his family, LifeWay's leadership team and employees. "This isn't about me. It's about God working through you," Rainer said. "You are making LifeWay what she is today."

Significant advancements during Rainer's LifeWay tenure:

- LifeWay has experienced three consecutive years of growth in ongoing curriculum after nearly 30 years of decline. Helping fuel the growth is The Gospel Project, a group Bible study focused on theology. Initially projected to draw 30,000 users, the curriculum reached 1 million weekly users this past fall.
- Rainer led the strategic sale of LifeWay's campus and secured a new location in downtown Nashville.
- During his time as president, LifeWay has made several key acquisitions including: WORDsearch, Student Life and Berean Christian Stores.
- Rainer has authored more than two dozen books, including his most recent books "I Will: Nine Traits of an Outwardly Focused Christian," "Autopsy of a Deceased Church," and the award-winning and best-selling "I Am a Church Member."
- His website, ThomRainer.com, had more than 7.5 million views last year. In the past 12 months, the "Rainer on Leadership" podcast had 1 million downloads. (BP)

The Cooperative Program

Continued from page 4

While this list is not exhaustive, I trust that it sheds light upon all that Kentucky Baptists are doing to advance the gospel right here in Kentucky through the Cooperative Program. Every Kentucky Baptist Convention staff member belongs to a church that gives through the CP, as does every person who has a leadership role in the work of our denomination, including those who

serve on the KBC Mission Board, convention committees, or as trustees on the boards of KBC agencies and institutions. Those who eat their bread from the CP table and those who choose to lead CP ministries and mission work should lead by example by being part of a local church with a track record of strong CP support.

I believe in the Cooperative Program because of all it accomplishes for Christ's Kingdom. And I'm grateful for every Kentucky Baptist who believes in the Cooperative Program.

Knowing the fullness of His love

By Roger Palmer

Ephesians 3:14-19 reads, "For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God."

When we consider all that God has given us and all that He has called us to do, it really lets us see how important it is for us to pray and to seek deep fellowship with our Lord daily. There's just no way we can do what God desires without the fullness of Him filling us and overflowing in us.

As we pray, we need to remember to pray for all of our brothers and sisters in Christ all over the world. Why? Because all of us have been called to share Him and to live for Him.

To do this, we must be filled daily, hourly, and even minute by minute with His mighty power, which comes through His Holy Spirit within us. Even though God's Holy Spirit lives in us, if we choose to be disobedient we can become powerless and

depend on our own strength.

We have to continually submit to Him and realize we can accomplish nothing without the fullness of His strength, power and, of course, His love. Understanding how high, how deep, how long, and how wide God's love is for us is so important in our daily lives.

Satan and the demons want us to live in guilt and shame. They want us to think we are worthless and can accomplish nothing in this life.

When we understand the fullness of God's love for us and all He gives us, then we see ourselves through His love and we are able to serve Him wholeheartedly. In this life we'll never really fully understand God's love because our limited minds cannot grasp it all.

As we passionately pursue Him and His Word, He continues to reveal more of Himself and His love to us and for us and also how much He loves those who do not know Him yet. We are made complete in Him and it is His fullness in us that makes us complete with His life and His power.

Let's never forget, apart from Him we can do nothing.

Roger Palmer is a ministry consultant for Crossings Ministry.



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February

- 11-18** São Paulo Vision Tour, São Paulo, Brazil
- 12-13** Ky. Baptist Disaster Relief Chaplaincy Training, Porter Memorial Church, Lexington
- 13** Ky. Baptist Disaster Relief Training Phases 1 & 2, Porter Memorial Church, Lexington
- 18** Men's Chorale Concert, Central Church, Paris
- 27** WMU Leadership Network Meeting, Ky. Baptist Building, Louisville
- 27** Operation: Inasmuch Kentucky Training, Crosspointe Church, Owensboro

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

PIKEVILLE—Meta Church will host its first sporting banquet Feb. 26 at 6 p.m. The event will include guest speakers, testimonies and a wild game meal. Please RSVP to (606) 631-1194 or email metachurch@bell-south.net. **Bill Staggs** is pastor.

SHELBYVILLE—Clayville Church will hold a church-wide Valentine's Day Sweetheart Banquet Feb. 14, following the morning worship. The church will furnish the meat; the remaining food will be potluck. **Lee Bolton** is pastor.

Dover Church will hold its Love One Another Valentine Banquet on Feb. 13 at 6 p.m. Make advance reservations at (502) 633-0502. **Ben Early** is pastor.

Highland Church will hold a spaghetti dinner on Feb. 14 at 6 p.m. **Chris Platt** is pastor.

Pigeon Fork Church has called **Vernon Carpenter** as pastor.

Salem Church will hold a Focus on WMU Day on Feb. 14, with a salad lunch at noon. **James Hill** is pastor.

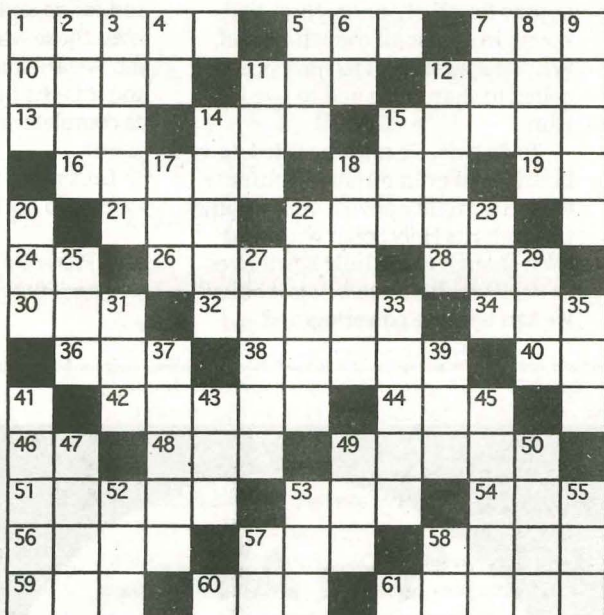
Simpsonville Church will hold Colonial Hall Valentine luncheon on Feb. 13 at noon. **Steve Boyd** is pastor.

Bible Crosswords

By John Thornberg

Across

- 1 "Sacrifice ... of turtle-doves" (Luke 2:24) (2 words)
- 5 Bashful
- 7 "(David) feigned himself" (1 Samuel 21:13)
- 10 "Sword of the Spirit, ... the" of God" (Ephesians 6:17)
- 11 Also known as, abbr.
- 12 Information
- 13 "Ye do _____, not knowing the scriptures" (Matthew 22:29)
- 14 Triple Sugar Iron agar, abbr.
- 15 Male singing voice
- 16 Jewish scriptures
- 18 "Neither shall the cruse of _____ fail" (1 Kings 17:14)
- 19 "Be it unto _____ according to thy word" (Luke 1:38)
- 21 "_____ unto them that call evil good" (Isaiah 5:20)
- 22 "The staff of his _____ was like a weaver's beam" (1 Samuel 17:7)
- 24 "A thousand shall fall _____ thy side" (Psalm 91:7)
- 26 To fill with joy
- 28 "Though he slay me, _____ will I trust in him" (Job 13:15)
- 30 "_____ and feather him!"
- 32 "Sharper than any two-edged _____" (Hebrews 4:12)
- 34 A beaver _____
- 36 "Shut the doors, and _____ them" (Nehemiah 7:3)
- 38 Accomplish
- 40 "_____ weapon that is formed against thee" (Isaiah 54:17)
- 42 Motion picture
- 44 "Cain ... dwelt in the land of _____" (Genesis 4:16)
- 46 "Where two _____ three are gathered" (Matthew 18:20)
- 48 Flying mammal
- 49 Southern Israeli desert
- 51 Regulation decreed by a church council



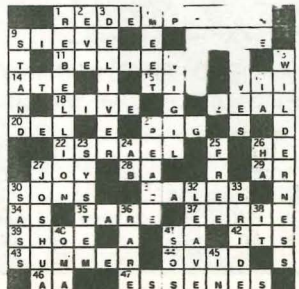
#056

- 53 Animal pelt
- 54 Motorized coach
- 56 "Soul of Jonathan was _____ with ... David" (1 Samuel 18:1)
- 57 "Cast him into the bottomless _____" (Revelation 20:3)
- 58 "(Samson) _____ not that the Lord was departed" (Judges 16:20)
- 59 "The trees of the Lord are full of _____" (Psalm 104:16)
- 60 "Held in with _____ and bridle" (Psalm 32:9)
- 61 Trivial
- 17 "The loving hind and pleasant _____" (Proverbs 5:19)
- 18 Musical drama
- 20 A large tub
- 22 A furnace
- 23 "Though they be _____ like crimson" (Isaiah 1:18)
- 25 Small flap
- 27 "Their laying _____ was known of Saul" (Acts 9:24)
- 29 Light brown
- 31 Isaac's replacement on the altar
- 33 Restaurant
- 35 Unruly throng
- 37 Mechanical monster
- 39 Piece of timber
- 41 "Defence shall be the munitions of _____" (Isaiah 33:16)
- 43 Mover's truck
- 45 Shortfall
- 47 A genus of frogs
- 49 "A tough _____ to crack"
- 50 "Pike's Peak or _____!"
- 52 "_____ in the bud"
- 53 "Men of war _____ for the battle" (1 Chronicles 12:8)
- 55 A pig _____
- 57 3.14, ratio of circle's circumference to its diameter
- 58 "_____ beseech thee" (Psalm 80:14)

Down

- 1 "Stand in _____, and sin not" (Psalm 4:4)
- 2 Nautical left side
- 3 "For the _____, that flieth by day" (Psalm 91:5)
- 4 A part of the psyche
- 5 Schuss
- 6 "He (horse) saith among the trumpets, _____" (Job 39:25)
- 7 "What is _____, that thou art mindful of him?" (Psalm 8:4)
- 8 Elementary particle
- 9 Has courage
- 11 Cinder
- 12 "That he would not _____ to come" (Acts 9:38)
- 14 Chinese ounces
- 15 "_____ them about thy neck" (Proverbs 6:21)

#055



CLASSIFIED ADS

SEEKING: Bi-vocational pastor for small congregation located in DeMossville, Ky. In charge of the welfare and responsible care of the church. Preside at all meetings of the church. Preach at appointed hours of worship on Sunday, lead regular midweek meetings, and administer ordinances as taught in Scriptures. Have general care of the spiritual welfare of the membership of the church. Submit your resumé by mail to DeMossville Baptist Church, P.O. Box 27, DeMossville, KY 41033, or e-mail to dbc@zoomtown.com.

SEEKING: Oakland Baptist Church is prayerfully accepting resumé for lead pastor. Send resumé to Pastor Search Committee, Oakland Baptist Church, P.O. Box 154, Oakland, KY 42159. We will be accepting resumé until Feb. 12, 2016.

SEEKING: Unity Baptist Church in Ashland, Ky., is seeking a full-time minister of music to lead and coordinate an active ministry in a multi-generational church, utilizing a blended style of worship. Average attendance is 250-300. Send resumé to unitymusicsearch@gmail.com. Resumé accepted until Feb. 15.

SEEKING: Munfordville Baptist Church is seeking its next full-time pastor. Criteria include being a Southern Baptist Convention preacher who adheres to the Baptist Faith and Message and will be supportive of the Cooperative Program for missions. Resumé and sermon DVDs should be sent to the attention of Pulpit Committee Chairperson at P.O. Box 445, Munfordville, KY 42765.

SEEKING: Harrodsburg Baptist Church is seeking a full-time student minister with a passion for reaching Jr. and Sr. high youth with the gospel and maturing them in their faith. HBC has an extremely strong youth group, wonderful facilities, large youth budget, and a strong reputation in the community. Applicants may apply by sending resumé to HBC Personnel Committee 312 South Main Street Harrodsburg, Ky. 40330 or email to wayne@harrodsburgbaptist.org. Accepting applications until Feb. 29.

SEEKING: Conservative Southern Baptist Church is seeking a part-time music minister/worship leader. Submit inquiries and/or resumé to: PBCMusicMinister@gmail.com, Music Minister Search Committee, Providence Baptist Church 6265 Georgetown Rd., Frankfort, KY 40601.

SEEKING: Children's minister for Elkton Baptist Church, Elkton, Ky. This is a full-time position, and we are looking for someone who is a team player, energetic, self-motivated, well organized and can relate to children, parents and the rest of the church. A bachelor's degree and experience is a plus. Send or email resumé to: elktonchurch@bellsouth.net or Elkton Baptist Church, P.O. Box 547, Elkton, KY 42220.

SEEKING: Evergreen Baptist Church, 2698 Evergreen Rd., Frankfort, KY 40601, is seeking a part-time children's minister and a part-time youth minister. (502) 223-8364 office@evergreenbaptistchurch.us.

SEEKING: Ferguson Baptist Church is seeking a bi-vocational minister of music to lead blended worship. We are located in Pulaski County and have an average worship attendance of 130. Please send resumé to fbcmusicsearch@twc.com, or to the Minister of Music Search Committee, P.O. Box 247, Ferguson, KY 42533.

SEEKING: First Missionary Baptist Church in Lewisburg, Ohio, is seeking the man that God has called to shepherd our church. Contact Joe Staggs (937) 545-0498, or FMBCsearch@gmail.com

SEEKING: Union Baptist Church, in Northern Kentucky, is looking for a lead pastor with a demonstrated ability to unashamedly preach the Word of God,

challenge His followers, and clearly communicate mission & vision. This person must be a visionary leader who can equip and teach others to serve in the fulfillment of the Great Commission and have a heart for reaching the lost in the dynamic & growing Northern Kentucky community and around the world. We are a mid-size Southern Baptist church with 290-300 weekly attendance. Please submit resumé, audio/video recording to unionbaptistpastorsearch@gmail.com, or Union Baptist Church, P.O. Box 194, Union KY 41091, Attn: Ken Soucy. Deadline for submitting resumé is Feb. 29.

SEEKING: Dyer Hill Missionary Baptist Church, outside Smithland, Ky., is prayerfully seeking a bi-vocational pastor with strong leadership skills to help the church connect with the community and communicate Christ clearly. Services include a blended of both traditional and contemporary worship. Submit resumé to dhbcpastorsearch@gmail.com, or Dyer Hill Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, C/O Kevin Wring 856 Pinckneyville Rd., Salem, KY 42078.

SEEKING: FBC Cold Spring, Ky., is currently hiring a full-time minister of children, youth and their families. This position will oversee the strategic vision for children's and youth ministries (nursery through high school), work with pastor to integrate family-oriented discipleship and parenting initiatives throughout the church, and help to cultivate community development across generational lines. Applicants should send resumé or questions to Robert Miller, Search Team Committee chair at First Baptist Church of Cold Spring, Ky., via email: YouthSearchTeam@fbccs.com by March 1.

FOR SALE: Aurora Baptist Church of Aurora, Ky., is prayerfully seeking a fulltime pastor. Experience is not limited. Education: some college is preferred. Activities (not limited to) preparing sermons, evangelism and personal prayer. Spiritual gifts: leadership, preaching, teaching Bible theology, pastoral care. Important qualities: spirit filled, desire to reach the lost community, able to minister to all ages, able to work with church members. After prayerful attention, submit your resumé and/or sermon tape to mailing address: P.O. Box 22, Hardin, KY 42048.

FOR SALE: Baby-Grand Piano for sale. Our church has a beautiful mahogany brown Yamaha GH1 for sale. It was built in Japan and assembled in Georgia. Has a new humidifier system to help keep tuned. Approximate appraisal of \$10k, asking \$8k. Questions or pics, email www.johnny.baker56@yahoo.com.

FOR RENT: Destin, Fla., beach house. 6 Bed/4 Bath. 1/2 block to beach. Perfect for family vacations. VRBO.com/454133. (502) 727-7426.

AVAILABLE: Pastor with 30+ yrs. experience for interim and/or pulpit supply in Oldham and surrounding counties. (502) 321-1557

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Flint water crisis draws Southern Baptist response

By Tobin Perry

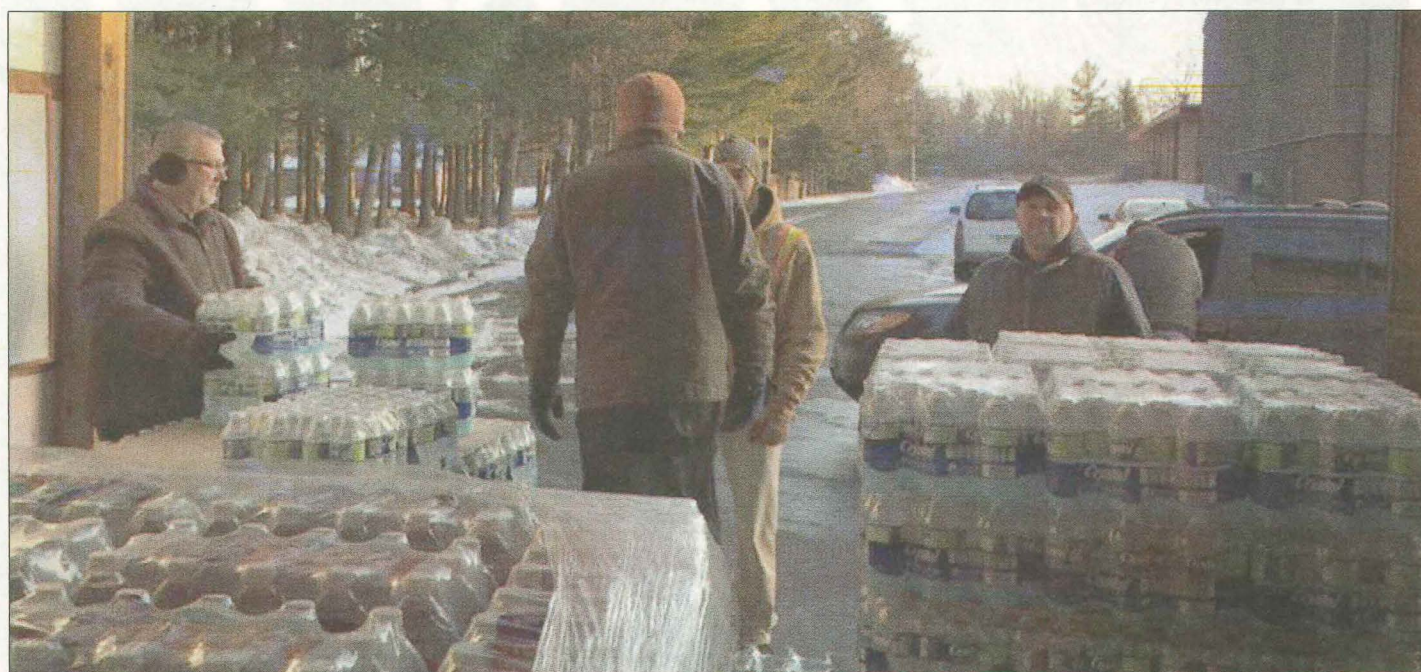
Flint, Mich.—Charnisha Brown could describe in one word her feeling when she first realized that the water coming out of her pipes was contaminated—devastated.

“It was devastating to me because of the kids—especially my kids,” said Brown, a Flint, Mich., resident. “We don’t want the kids going through that. We don’t want anyone going through that. It’s not a good thing that you can’t drink your water.”

So when Southern Baptists provided Brown, a mother of two, with multiple cases of water, she appreciated it, saying it took stress off of her.

Michigan Southern Baptists distributed a truckload of bottled water last week to Flint residents whose contaminated water supply had led to the city being declared a disaster by the state and national governments. The truckload, sent from the North American Mission Board, was the second Southern Baptist Disaster Relief truck full of water sent to the beleaguered city in the past three months.

The water’s contamination had become a problem since the city decided to save money three years ago by switching its water supply from Detroit to a new water authority that would get water from Lake Huron. During the transition time the city received water from the Flint River. The contaminated water had elevated lead exposure, and the dangers from that exposure remain today. According to a recent USA Today article, there is no safe level of lead in



Volunteers from Westside Baptist Church near Flint, Mich., distribute bottled water after the city's contaminated water supply left residents vulnerable to increased exposure to lead. (Photo courtesy Westside Baptist Church)

water. Children, the article says, face the most danger when exposed to lead.

Working out of Westside Baptist Church, just a couple of miles outside of Flint, volunteers have given three to four cases of water to each resident they’ve helped.

According to Westside Baptist’s pastor Ed Emmerling, most Flint residents were only able to get one case of water per day through other sources. Many families needed more water than that because of both drinking and cooking needs.

Emmerling appreciated that his church got a chance to be missionaries

on the ground during the water distribution.

“My church got to see the real tangible value of the Cooperative Program in working with churches all across the country,” Emmerling said of Southern Baptists’ channel for giving to missions and ministry. “My church could never have afforded all of that water. But together churches from all across the country pooled their money. It was an honor for us to hand out. I’m glad our church could see the value of working together. It was a tremendous object lesson.”

Win Williams, the state disaster relief director in Michigan, says efforts like this help show people in Michigan that Southern Baptists care about them. He noted that Michigan Baptists’ disaster relief works through local churches, like Westside Baptist, because they will remain in the community once many disaster relief volunteers leave.

“We want people to remember the local church, not disaster relief, when we leave,” Williams said. “We’re just a tool that God has given the church to show the community that our churches care.” (BP)

‘Risen’ tells crucifixion from soldier’s eyes

By Diana Chandler

Nashville—“Risen,” a new movie distributed by Affirm Films, tells the story of Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection from the perspective of a fictional unbelieving soldier whose investigation of the mystery leads to a personal encounter with Jesus.

Opening in wide release weeks before Easter, the film is promoted as both a picture of faith and a mystery designed to draw believers and non-believers.

Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga., and former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, is among the film’s endorsers, calling the production “a must see for pastors and their congregations.”

“Risen is intriguing in that we all wonder what the response of the religious establishment of Jesus’ day would

have been after His death and resurrection,” Hunt told Baptist Press. “Risen being fiction simply imagines what might have been.”

The lead character Clavius is a fictional Roman military tribune, but the film includes biblical characters including Jesus, the disciples, Mary Magdalene and Pontius Pilate, and strives to achieve historical accuracy, movie promoters said.

“For me, Risen stands out because it’s a quite conservative rendering of the gospel that accepts the extraordinary Word as written,” said lead actor Joseph Fiennes, who won a People’s Choice Award and other accolades for his leading role in 1998’s Academy Award winner “Shakespeare in Love.” “I love that this film embraces the mystery of Christ through an original lens.”

Producer Mickey Liddell and Director

Kevin Reynolds said they worked to remain true enough to Scripture to please the faith community, but dramatic enough to entertain unbelievers.

“We don’t really want to tell anyone what they should believe,” Reynolds said. “People can use this film as a vehicle to examine their own spirituality, or just enjoy the story purely from a cinematic standpoint.”

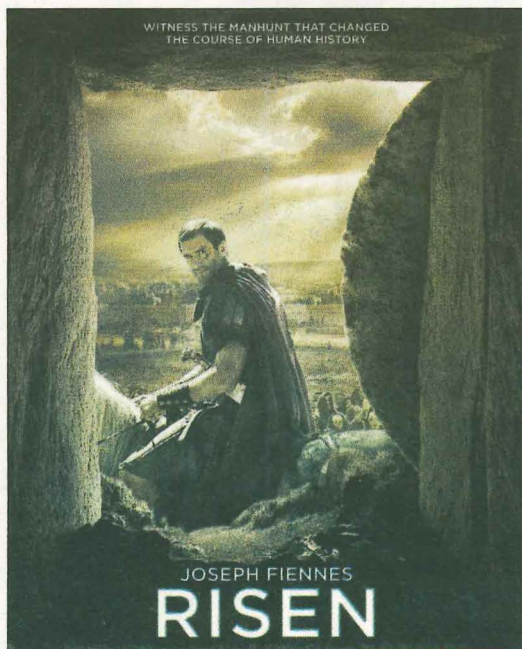
Josh Griffin, high school pastor at Saddleback Church and founder of DownloadYouthMinistry.com, said the film is suitable for teenagers and adults, “and will encourage everyone to look at their own faith and relationship with the risen Christ.”

Ted Baehr, founder and publisher of Movieguide and chairman of the Christian Film & Television Commission, calls Risen “a powerful, poignant, and entertaining movie revealing the impact of the greatest event in history.”

The PG-13 movie opens Feb. 19 in wide release and is accompanied by ministry resources including a church kit with customizable sermon outlines, outreach resources including postcards, door hangers and bulletin inserts, and a novel from Bethany House Publishers.

Affirm Films, a division of Sony Pictures, has distributed top faith-based films including the Kendrick Brothers’ “War Room” and “Courageous.”

More information is available at risen-movie.com. (BP)



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All prices listed are based on the Early Bird Rate. This rate applies to all groups registering AND meeting the \$75 per person deposit deadline on or before February 15, 2016. Please note: lodging and date assignments are based on availability and lodging minimums. You will receive a confirmation email after your registration has been processed.