

WESTERN Recorder

April 5, 2016

Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

Volume 190, Issue 7

Crossings chooses new leader

By Roger Alford

Louisville—A Kentucky Baptist with a broad background in student ministry has been selected to lead Crossings, the youth outreach ministry best known for its popular summer camps at Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek.

Jeffrey Brian Dalrymple succeeds longtime President David Melber, who resigned last year to take a leadership position at the North American Mission Board.

"God is in the business of changing lives," Dalrymple said. "I am excited to see how the Lord will continue to use Crossings in that work, and am looking forward to developing new ministry opportunities in order to serve churches in Kentucky and beyond."

Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Director Paul Chitwood said he is convinced Crossings' board of directors, of which he is a part, made a great decision in choosing Dalrymple.

"He's an obvious fit for this crucial position in what has proven to be one of our most effective outreaches to students," said Chitwood. "He



Jeff Dalrymple, right, and his wife, Kristil, accompany Paul Chitwood on a tour of the Kentucky Baptist Building.

brings a thorough knowledge of organizational leadership to Crossings, having overseen multiple offices encompassing a \$9 million operating budget and having served as board president of Louisville Rescue Mission since 2014. Other Baptist leaders concur.

"I know of few men who would appear so uniquely gifted for such an important role," said Brian Croft, senior pastor at Auburndale Baptist Church, one of several church leaders who recommended Dalrymple for the position.

Dalrymple, a Louisville resident who grew up in California, has worked at Southern Baptist Theological

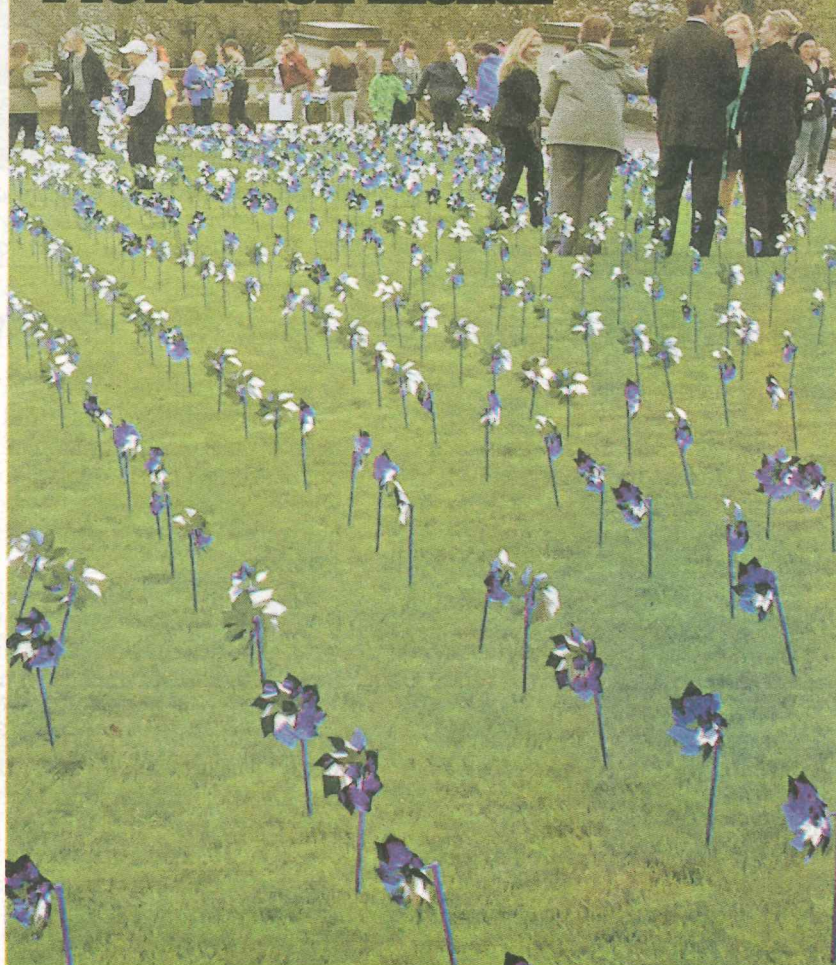
Seminary since 2008. Since 2011, he has been vice president of hospitality services there. In that role, Dalrymple has many duties, including overseeing event planning, dining services, student housing, the health and recreation center and the campus health clinic.

"Jeff has a proven record to take what exists and take it to the next level and beyond," said Croft, who has worked alongside Dalrymple at the Louisville Rescue Mission and at Southern Seminary events.

Dalrymple received his undergraduate degree in

□ See Crossings president...Page 7

Pinwheels mark National Child Abuse Prevention Month



See stories about National Child Abuse Prevention Month on Pages 4, 13.

Bellevue security subdues 'heavily armed' man in Memphis

By David Roach

Memphis—A "heavily armed" man was subdued and arrested at the Memphis-area Bellevue Baptist Church Easter Sunday, the congregation's director of security services told Baptist Press.

Texas-based church security expert Jimmy Meeks told BP the incident serves as an example of "heads-up" response to a potential threat. The man—31-year-old Marcus Donald—who was taken into custody remains under mental evaluation, according to media reports.

Bellevue pastor Steve Gaines said March 28, "Saturday evening more than 75 people gathered to pray over every seat in Bellevue's Worship Center—for hearts to be changed as thousands entered Bellevue's campus on Easter.

"Following that time of prayer in the Worship Center, this group also prayed throughout the church campus for God's



hand of protection to be on each person who visited Bellevue. We believe those fervent prayers were answered in light of the events Sunday morning," said Gaines, who will be nominated for Southern Baptist Convention president in June.

Just before Bellevue's 11 a.m. worship service began March 27 with an estimated 3,500 attendees, greeter Kathy

Jackson noticed a man entering the church with "a pistol sticking out of his pocket," administrative pastor David Coombs told BP. Jackson told a nearby ministerial staff member, who radioed security.

Andy Willis, Bellevue's director of security services and a reserve officer with the Memphis Police Department, approached the man, identified himself

as a police officer and escorted him into a hallway.

"I figured this was a guy with a (concealed) carry permit who just ... didn't know that it was appropriate to hide (the weapon) if he's going to carry it somewhere," Willis said.

Donald appeared calm when Willis took his pistol—a .40-caliber Beretta according to the Memphis Commercial Appeal—and asked him to put the weapon in his car before entering the service. Donald said he had the weapon because "Memphis is dangerous." Donald told Willis he had a permit to carry the pistol and did not have any other weapons. Donald then agreed to let Willis put the gun in a backpack Donald was carrying. When Willis opened the backpack, he discovered an automatic rifle and "lots of ammo."

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ARMORED FOR VICTORY
2016 Senior Living Celebrations
See stories on Pages 8-9

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Bill Wallace, director of missions in the Upper Cumberland Baptist Association in Kentucky, stands in front of Black Mountain Missionary Baptist Church, which an arsonist tried to destroy. Black Mountain Missionary Baptist Church was built in 1937, back in the days when Harlan County's coal mines were bustling. (Photo by Roger Alford)

Arson, coal decline, yet Black Mtn. perseveres

By Roger Alford

Kenvir—Black Mountain Missionary Baptist Church absolutely gleams in the sunshine with a fresh coat of paint on the outer walls and brilliant yellow daffodils blooming on the manicured lawn.

There are no signs of the arson that charred the insides of the historic church, which dates back to the days when this was a working coal camp. The soot and stain and odor of acrid smoke are long gone. So, too, are the water-logged furnishings, ruined in the mad dash by firefighters to extinguish the blaze.

Church members refused to leave Black Mountain in shambles.

"They never missed a worship service because of the fire," said Bill Wallace, director of missions for Kentucky's Upper Cumberland Baptist Association. "They never gave up. That says so much about their determination to serve the Lord and to reach this community with the gospel."

Black Mountain Missionary Baptist Church was built in Kenvir in 1937, back in the days when Harlan County's coal mines were bustling.

Hardy men took turns working shifts in the darkness of underground corridors far beneath the surface of Kentucky's tallest peak. They lived with the constant danger of mine collapses and explosions.

Out of that setting, the church sprang forth, a sentinel to the miners and their families.

Most of those mines have long since played out, triggering an exodus to far-away cities where factories provided the jobs unemployed miners need to support their families.

Black Mountain has persevered through all the ups and downs of the coal industry. That's why Wallace was confident the church would rebound when, on a chilly February day in 2012, an arsonist broke in and set fire in the basement.

By the time firefighters arrived, flames had burned through the basement ceiling and into the sanctuary. When fire trucks returned to the station, church members got their first glimpse

at what remained—a soggy black mess.

Wallace said the sight could have been disheartening for the congregation, but deacon Ed Lyttle stepped forward with encouraging words. "We can bring her back to life," Lyttle told church members.

"And that's just what they did, with God's help," Wallace said. "They went to work. And I really believe it probably looks better today than it did in 1937."

By big-city standards, Black Mountain may not impress. This is no megachurch. It has space to seat only about 100 people. But in this shrinking mining community, that's more than enough.

About 30 people attend worship services at Black Mountain on an average Sunday morning, enough to carry out some noteworthy ministries. They operate an ambitious feeding initiative to provide backpacks filled with canned goods to children in the community who might otherwise go hungry.

They send money to the Southern Baptists' Cooperative Program to fund missionaries who share gospel around the world. They baptized five new converts over the past year, even though they lost their pastor to a sister church in Virginia. And they stay busy doing ministry outreach projects, like one that is modernizing the home of 83-year-old Mildred Asbury.

With a warm smile and glowing white hair, Asbury is thrilled with her new bathroom and the bedroom that's now taking shape. A Christian since her teenage years, Asbury says she's thankful to God and the folks at Black Mountain for the improvements.

"We've got some good people," she said.

As director of missions, Wallace is an unabashed cheerleader for all the Kentucky Baptist churches in Harlan County. He's first to offer thanks for the good work they do amid what are often difficult circumstances. That's why he's especially pleased with Black Mountain.

"Their attitude after the fire was that we're not going to let this beat us," Wallace said. "They said, 'This is God's house, and we're going to put it back in a way that will bring honor to Him.' And that's just what they did." (BP/KBC)



Coy Webb (left), Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief director; Mosa*, a woman in Lesotho and Jeff O'Loughlin, Baptist Global Response disaster relief and community development coordinator, pose while assessing farms.



As staple crops fail in Lesotho, Baptists help feed the hungry

By Lily Jameson*

Lesotho—When Coy Webb first met Mosa*, she was walking. It was a miracle.

While visiting Lesotho, the Kentucky Baptist Convention disaster relief director said, he sat down with the woman by her mud brick hut. Baptist Global Response partner Teresa Flora told him how she met Mosa, an impoverished widow, when she had been too sick to work.

Flora had given her hospice items—simple comforts like socks and drinking straws—and that had been enough to give Mosa hope. She found the energy to walk again. But the woman's difficulties haven't ceased. This summer, she will face a famine.

"It appears that they're going to have massive crop failures all over Lesotho, which will probably result in 1 to 1.5 million having severe hunger issues in the coming months and over the next year until next year's crop," Webb said. "It looks like the corn is going to be a complete failure."

Webb traveled to Lesotho with Jeff O'Loughlin, a BGR disaster relief and community development coordinator, in March before conducting disaster relief training with Baptist leaders in South Africa.

They met Flora and spent two days touring farms in the Thaba Tseka Province. Both he and Flora agreed that the situation looked bleak.

"We were way, way, way behind for our rainfall totals—the worst that it's

been in years," Flora said.

The rain, she said, eventually fell. People had water for their taps again, but the precipitation came too late for the crops. The June harvest would be so meager farmers wouldn't even have the chance to collect enough seeds for the subsequent year's planting.

"There's not going to be anything to harvest," Teresa said. "Some of the crops aren't even fit for animal consumption."

Some nonprofit organizations, she said, planned to conduct needs assessments, but they hadn't started. However, the locals needed food immediately.

The Food and Agriculture Association of the United Nations reported in February that roughly 25 percent of the population was already hungry, and Flora said her husband, Jim, had already made at least one trip to help a family with nothing to eat. This summer, the number of hungry in Lesotho will likely grow.

BGR and the KBC are currently in the planning stages for a food and seed distribution that will cater to underserved people like widows, elderly and orphans—people like Mosa. Webb said the KBC might also send a disaster relief team, as well, to help with distributions. Together, the organizations hope to alleviate some of the hunger needs.

Anyone wishing to join this effort may donate to either the KBC at www.kybaptist.org/dr or to BGR at www.gobgr.org. (BGR)

KENTUCKIANS AT WORK

DR response continues in Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi

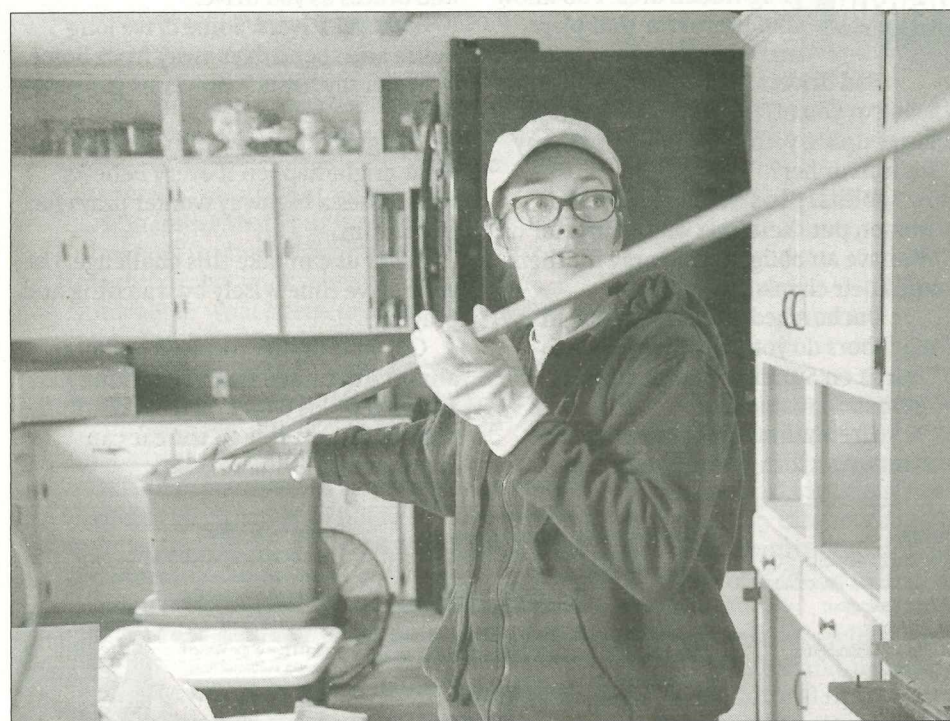
By Jim Burton



Dezzie Jackson, a 45-year resident at her home on Woods Street in Minden, La., asks for prayer with Gevan Spinney, pastor of First Baptist Church Haughton, La., after she received a phone call telling her that her vehicle was a total loss. (NAMB photos by Stewart House)



Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief volunteer Linda Woods of Benton, a member of Hamlet Baptist Church, sprays a flood damaged home with antibacterial spray in Farmerville, La., near Lake D'Arbonne. Disaster Relief volunteers assisted flood survivors in Farmerville.



Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief volunteer Natalie Harding of Paducah, a member of Bellview Baptist Church, works with an SBDR team on a Lake D'Arbonne area home, which was damaged by flood water in Farmerville, La.

Hammond, La.—When flood victim Lynell Davis walked into the Southern Baptist Incident Command Center at Woodlawn Park Baptist Church, long-time Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteer Marlene Thompson could see that he was distraught.

"He looked like he hadn't slept in days," said Thompson of Colyell, La. "He sat down and was shaking, said he hadn't had food."

The volunteers at Woodlawn Park in Hammond, La., provided Davis with food, and then began the process of completing forms for disaster relief team members to clean his flooded home. "He gave me his paperwork and I was able to file his insurance in 15 minutes," Thompson said. "He sat there and wept."

Davis told Thompson that he had cried out for God's help all night.

"He sent me here, and you were able to help me," Davis said. That evening, he would profess faith in Jesus Christ.

With widespread flooding across Louisiana, Texas and Mississippi, Davis represents just one homeowner that SBDR will help. With an estimated 5,000 homes damaged in Louisiana, 1,900 in Mississippi and 2,000 in Texas, Davis' story will likely repeat many more times.

"This is growing by the hour," said David Abernathy, the Louisiana Baptist Convention's Disaster Relief incident commander. "We're finding a lot of damage in rural parishes, which have small communities that are real resourceful, but they can only go so far."

As water recedes in north Louisiana, communities in south Louisiana that weren't even touched a few days ago now have floodwaters. Water is slow to drain, and there is no more flash flooding, Abernathy said.

LBC has organized the response in five regional operations across their 28-flooded parishes. The North American Mission Board is assisting with coordination of the multi-state response in Louisiana.

To date, there are SBDR volunteers serving in the Louisiana response from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.

Disaster Relief teams from the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention and Texas Baptist Men are coordinating efforts in Texas. The Northwest convention's SBDR team is handling additional relief efforts in Washington. Arkansas Baptists are coordinating SBDR ministry in their state. NAMB is sending supplies to aid all of those efforts.

"I've been amazed at the outpouring of support we've gotten because a lot of these states have been through major disasters of their own in the last six months plus," Abernathy said. "Still, they have responded to the call with anything they could send us. It brings back how much we can do when we work together."

In north Monroe, La., Wes Johnson of Chandler, Okla., is leading the SBDR effort there from the campus of North Monroe Baptist Church (NMBC) with teams from Louisiana, Oklahoma and

Alabama. They have requests for the cleanup of 92 homes.

"We have a wonderful college team here from the University of Alabama," Johnson said. "They get to see witnessing to helpless, hurting people. They are learning how to deal with that and how to react in a caring and positive manner."

Johnson said NMBC has been a gracious host to the volunteers.

"They have done great stuff for us, opening their hearts and building," Johnson said.

NMBC Senior Pastor Bill Dye said their church began responding before disaster relief units arrived.

"NMBC responded to the flooding first of all by trying to save houses through sandbagging," Dye said. "We spent most of Wednesday through Friday fighting the flooding with limited success."

"It was truly remarkable though to see young men in their 20s, many with their homes already flooded, staying up all night fighting the rising water with their neighbors."

After the floods, NMBC switched to recovery mode.

"We created a food team to cook meals and deliver them to the workers and dislocated families," Dye said. "Last week, NMBC prepared nearly 10,000 meals and distributed them throughout the community. We have more than 150 volunteers working in food service."

The Mississippi Baptist Mission Board is establishing one of their operation centers in Clarksdale, which is near the Mississippi River in west Mississippi, where most of the original flooding occurred in that state. State Disaster Relief director Don Gann said the water has receded enough that work can begin there this week.

Meanwhile, he plans to establish a second response center in McLain, which is in southeast Mississippi.

Terry Henderson, Texas Baptist Men's Disaster Relief director, estimated that 2,000 homes received flood damage there. Water has just receded from Caddo, and cleanup work has begun there. Other mud-out teams are working on homes from Newton to Orange, he said.

"This week we're getting into communities and assessing all up and down the Sabine River," Henderson said. The Sabine River was a major source of flooding, but receding has happened faster than expected.

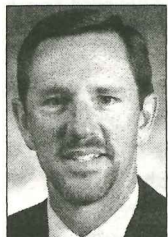
Kirbyville continues to be a major challenge. At least three Baptist churches there have water up to their eaves, he said.

Those wishing to donate to Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDR) can contact the Baptist convention in their state or visit <https://donations.namb.net/dr-donations>. For phone donations, call 1-866-407-NAMB (6262) or mail checks to NAMB, P.O. Box 116543, Atlanta, GA 30368-6543. Designate checks for "Disaster Relief."

NAMB coordinates and manages Southern Baptist responses to major disasters through partnerships with 42 state Baptist conventions, most of which have their own state disaster relief ministries. (BP)

It's a good day!

It's still a good day to be a Kentucky Baptist! We welcomed a new group of ministers to our state this week during our "Welcome to Kentucky!" event at your Baptist Building. As I was giving them updates on all that they were now a part of through the Cooperative Program giving of their church, I realized anew how God is working powerfully in our midst. I know you will be excited to celebrate all that He is doing through His people.

Together
We are the KBC

Paul Chitwood

As you have seen in the Western Recorder, we are celebrating the second straight year of an increase in baptisms. And, for the first time in recent memory, we are halfway through the fiscal year and running AHEAD of the Cooperative Program budget!

As a reminder, any dollars given above the budget will be distributed to KBC and SBC ministries and entities on the same percentage as the budget funds so every penny continues to be used to reach Kentucky and the world for Christ.

Good news continues to come from Crossings Ministries as they just hired a new president, Jeff Dalrymple. They are also on pace for another record-breaking number of students at camp this summer.

Sunrise Children's services, under the leadership of its new president, Dale Suttles, also continues to break records and will soon top the 1,000 mark in the number of kids being ministered to by Kentucky Baptists' orphan care ministry. Many of these kids still have biological parents living but could be called "orphans of the living." Considering the abuse and neglect they have endured at the hands of their parents, being an orphan of the living may be a worse plight than to have parents pass away. Helping them shoulder their pain and providing safe and loving care are a people called Kentucky Baptists.

With an enrollment that has now surpassed 6,000 graduate and undergraduate students, the University of the Cumberlands, under the leadership of its new president, Larry Cockrum, isn't just breaking records, they are destroying records! My son is in his first semester at UC, shooting for the Patriot Archery Team, and loving it. Enrollment is also climbing at Oneida Baptist Institute and Clear Creek Baptist Bible College.

The Kentucky Baptist Foundation, under the leadership of its new president, Richard Carnes, has entered a new phase of partnering with Mission Board staff members to help undergird the financial future of local churches and Baptist work. Thankfully, the Western Recorder and WMU also continue their vital ministry roles in Kentucky.

As I said at the beginning, it's a good day to be a Kentucky Baptist! Thank you for being a part of all God is doing through cooperative ministries and the Cooperative Program of the Kentucky Baptist Convention!

Spinning pinwheels and spurring prevention

What do blue and silver pinwheels and child abuse prevention have to do with one another?

The childhood toy is reminiscent of a day of innocence and frolicking barefoot on a sun-splashed lawn as a cool, gentle breeze caresses our faces. But these spinning, bright blue and silver pinwheels glistening in the sunshine across a Frankfort lawn also are disparate reminders that the sweet innocence of childhood years has been spoiled for some of Kentucky's kids, encroached upon by painful words, bodily injuries, continual suffering, willful neglect, even wrongful death. Sometimes the very hands of those whom they thought loved them most struck in horrifying force, denied essential nourishment, refused critical medical care or lacked understanding compassion.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. In observance, Sunrise Children Services staff joined other Kentucky advocates for children in planting hundreds of pinwheels last week on the Capitol grounds, beckoning state lawmakers and citizens to celebrate the progress being made in strengthening child abuse prevention measures in Kentucky. (See photo on page 1.)

"There is something so poignant and powerful about this event," said Dale Suttles, president of Sunrise Children's Services. "When you realize the pain and suffering each one of those pinwheels represents, it brings into razor-sharp focus just what those children have endured and the consequences they will face for the rest of their lives."

According to a media packet provided by the Prevent Child Abuse—Kentucky organization, abusive head trauma, commonly known as "shaken baby syndrome," continues to be a leading cause of child abuse related deaths. Tragically, at any age, abusive head trauma is most common in babies less than one year old.

One in 10 children will experience sexual abuse prior to their 18th birthday, the state's leading child abuse prevention organization notes. In Kentucky, 1,825 children were reported as victims of sexual abuse last year alone. Horrifyingly, 60 percent of those are abused by someone in their social circle, suggesting that the phrase "stranger danger" is

somewhat misleading.

Kentucky's Cyber Crime Unit seizes more than 272 child pornographic images and videos every day. Just as disturbing should be the 1,264 percent increase in sex crimes committed via the Internet in recent years. And something every parent should take note of is that sources cited by Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky report that one in 25 children, ages 10-17, receives an online sexual solicitation.

While numbers are increasing, so has public awareness

that child abuse may be occurring right in our own communities. We can be part of the solution though, working together to make the homes of all children safe places.

"We know child abuse can be prevented, and we know how to do it; but we cannot do it alone," observes Jill Seyfred of Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky. "Every time you see a blue and silver pinwheel this month, think about a child who will benefit from your awareness of child

abuse and neglect. Take time out. Report. Get involved. It works," she urges others.

Displays, such as the pinwheels on the Capitol lawn, remind us that it is everyone's duty and moral responsibility to protect our children from physical abuse and sexual predators. As Christians, we must make it a priority to protect Kentucky families and commit ourselves and our churches to do everything we can to guard our children from abuse.

Referring to the pinwheel display, Suttles wrote in a recent Facebook post, "It's very moving, especially for those of us who work with abused and neglected children each day, and a reminder of the intrinsic worth of every human being."

"It's why the work we do is so important," Suttles added. And, it's why the support of Kentucky Baptists for the ministry of Sunrise Children's Service through the Cooperative Program is so important in helping provide safe environs, foster care, counseling and adoption services for nearly 1,000 children. You can start by uplifting Sunrise's staff and house parents, Child Abuse Prevention organizations, and the children they serve in prayer this Sunday, and by contacting Suttles to find out how you and your church can become involved in helping hurting children. (WR)

After
Thought

By Todd Deaton

Using drive time for 'drive-by' praying

By Chuck Lawless

Think about how much time you and your family spend in the car. Now think about how you use that time.

Whatever you typically do, I challenge you to use your time to pray as you drive—even to pray aloud as a family as you go.

Think about how many places and people you pass every day for which you might do "drive-by praying":

- **Churches.** How many churches do you drive by daily, but don't think about praying for them?

- **Schools.** It's important that somebody be praying for the teachers, the teens and the children. If you drive by a school, be that intercessor.

- **Centers of other world faiths.** When you see a mosque, a temple or some other religious meeting place, pray that the people who attend there might turn to Christ. You might be the first person

and family ever to pray for them.

- **Hospitals.** Inside those walls are people likely to be dealing with life and death. Who's lifting them to God?

- **"Pockets of sin."** I don't know what that might be in your community. It might be an abortion clinic, an adult entertainment venue, or a gang-ridden area. I do know that prayer for that place matters.

- **Bad drivers.** You know, the person who cut you off in traffic. Rather than curse under your breath, why not pray for him or her?

- **Military bases.** These men and women put their lives on the line for us. We have an obligation to pray for them and their chaplains.

- **Unchurched neighbors.** How many neighbors do you see as you drive to church on Sunday? Interceding for them is a great idea.

- **Fire stations and police departments.** As a former firefighter, I'm

partial to this one. In fact, every siren you hear indicates somebody may be in trouble. Let that familiar wail be a call to prayer for you and your family.

- **Government buildings.** The apostle Paul reminded us to pray for those in authority (1 Timothy 2:1-2). Do that when you see government buildings and offices as you drive.

- **Truck drivers.** Some drive long hours and spend days away from home. Why not say a quick prayer as you pass a semi?

- **Highway crews.** Only God knows what might happen if every believer who passes a highway worker prays for her or him.

All of us can take this challenge. Use your drive time wisely by watching and praying.

Get your family involved and I can almost guarantee that your young kids and grandkids won't miss opportunities to pray. A short ride in the car can change eternity. (BP)

FIRST PERSON

WESTERN Recorder

Shine Like Stars *Philippians 2:15

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Letters to the editor:

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



Time to do a little 'spring cleaning'

It must be spring because all the newspaper and television ads are for cleaning products. With that, I began to think about how that relates to youth ministry. I can usually relate most everything to youth ministry. So, from the home office in Zoneton, Ky., here are the top 10 ways I relate spring cleaning to youth ministry.

1. Clean your office. Now if you know me and have been to my office, you are bursting out laughing. At Edgewood, I cleaned the week before now and anytime I knew my parents were visiting. At the KBC, it was the week before the Mission Board met. And at Crossings, it was in early May before I headed out to camp for the summer. It has to be done, so why not now? Throw away the camp and mission trip brochures, file the papers, dig the candy wrappers out of the love seat in the office, file the paper work, get stuff off the floor, and throw out those empty Ale-8 bottles.

2. Back up computer files. It's gonna crash sometime. Why not go ahead and back up your files now? That way, when it does crash, you won't be out of five years-worth of work.

3. Clean out your car. I know it's your mobile office, but the Diet Mountain Dew bottles rolling under the seats are crying out for help. Get the ski trip and winter retreat stuff out of the trunk. You're going to need room for your softball equipment and golf clubs.

4. Update your contact list. Johnny's parents' email changed nine months ago, and every time you email all the parents, that one bounces back. Every month you put off changing it. Now's the time.

5. Clean the youth space. Last year's camp poster was a great way to promote camp last summer, but it has

served its purpose. Same with last quarter's Sunday School pictures. Keep looking; there are probably old Sunday School quarterlies, handouts from last month's Wednesday night teaching time, as well as signup sheets for events long since passed.

6. Take back borrowed items. The director box you borrowed for the band, the hymnal from the choir room, the hula-hoop from the children's department, the towels from the baptistery, the broom from the custodian's closet, the markers from the preschool department, the chair from the senior ladies class, the wrench from the bus garage—they all need to go back. Their owners miss them.

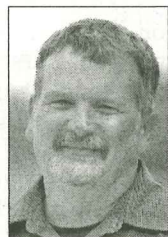
7. Clean out closets. That game with half the pieces missing, the old flashlight batteries you laid down when you put the new ones in, the set from the drama 10 years ago that found its way to the youth storage area, the dried up markers, and the random things left by students at camp and retreats—it can all go.

8. Make a trip to Goodwill. The old now, retreat, camp and youth group t-shirts can all go. So can clothes and sleeping bags that were left on the bus.

9. Wash your coffee cup. I know there is nothing like coffee out of your favorite cup, and most days you rinse out yesterday's coffee with hot water before you put today's coffee in it. It's time. There's a fungus in there that scientists at Harvard can't identify.

10. Renew your spirit. Spring brings a time of refreshing to the world. Take some time to renew your soul. Go on a hike, fly a kite, throw a baseball, play golf, take a nap in a hammock. Do something to renew your soul. Summer's coming; get ready!

Youth Ministry Corner



Joe Ball

Finding 'together time'

Q: Two busy jobs, active teenagers, and responsibilities at our church all make it difficult for my wife and I to get much time together as a couple. Any ideas?

A: Each day you have 86,400 seconds that you must spend by the stroke of midnight. You have exactly the same amount of time as President Obama, your local trash collector, Diane Sawyer, and the children in the local elementary school. You do not have a time problem, but a priority predicament. Which priorities will win out? The Scripture reminds us not to be conformed to this world. One translation of Romans 12:2 puts it this way, "Do not let the world squeeze you into its mold." In "Celebration of Discipline," Richard Foster

wrote, "In contemporary society our Adversary (Satan) majors in three things: noise, hurry and crowds. If he can engage us in 'muchness' and 'manyness,' he will rest satisfied."

Remember that your marriage comes second ... but only to your relationship with Christ. Imagining that your schedule is a garden, think about what needs to be weeded, pruned, rotated and fertilized.

What personal and family activities need to be weeded out or eliminated altogether? Do you really need, for example, to play in that evening basketball league?

Which things need to be pruned or cut back? Perhaps the children do not need to be involved in more than one extracurricular activity per semester.

What activities need to be rotated to another spot on the calendar? Maybe the activity is fine, but the timing is off.

Finally, which marital activities need to be fertilized? A weekly date night, a nightly 15-minute coffee cup conversation on the porch after the family dinner, or a daily walk might be options.



Scott Wigginton

How do you seek God's will?

By Jim Richards

I visited with two young men who were trying to decide on a place of ministry recently. Both were considering opportunities that would change the trajectory of their lives.

I shared with them five principles I use in seeking to know God's will. Whether you are starting in ministry or coming to the end of your ministry, the principles still apply in determining God's will:

1. The foundational principle in finding God's will is the Bible.

Every Bible text has a primary interpretation and a practical application. Some Bible texts have a prophetic revelation.

The following questions are important to ask to find the primary interpretation. Who is speaking? Who is the audience? What is the time frame? What is the occasion for the writing? What is the subject matter?

Answering these questions correctly will give you the understanding of the historical context.

Even the verses intended for ancient Israel or the early church have a practical application for us today. Not every text is to us, but every text is for us. God can speak from His Word directly into your current situation.

The psalmist said, "Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path" (Psalm 119:105).

2. Living inside every believer is the Holy Spirit to guide the child of God in truth (John 16:13).

Some might dismiss the inexplicable voice of the Spirit speaking to our hearts. The Holy Spirit will not reveal any new truth but He will confirm revealed truth. Confirm the Holy Spirit's voice by the written Word of God. Listen to the still, small voice of the Holy Spirit.

3. Seek out godly counsel (Proverbs 11:14).

Let longstanding believers who have lived a consistently faithful life for Jesus speak into your life. Spiritually mature believers will have experienced life's challenges and can help you avoid pitfalls. Two or three people who love Jesus and love you are enough. God uses people to help us know God's will.

Five steps for buying life insurance

When you are young, the main purpose of life insurance is to provide a financial safety net for your family in your most crucial income-earning years. As you get older that need changes, but there are still reasons to have significant life insurance, such as estate planning. For those who are younger, here are a few guidelines for choosing life insurance for the first time.

Step 1: Calculate the need. Online calculators can help. Insurance agents can help. These tools will help you analyze your net worth and potential long-term income and expenses.

Step 2: Max out employer-provided life insurance. You may be eligible upon initial employment for coverage without underwriting. Often you can add more coverage using payroll deductions. Remember that employer-provided coverage is generally term insurance available while you are employed. But those policies often allow you to convert it to an individual policy when you change jobs or retire.

Step 3: Choose a policy type. It's good to have some coverage not tied to your job. You are most often dealing with two choices—term and cash value. Term insurance is for a period of time and is usually cheapest. Cash value has an investment component built in. Seek appropriate counsel on which best fits your needs.

Step 4: Plan for your spouse. Both spouses should have life insurance, especially if they have young children or an elderly relative that may require care.

Step 5: Name your beneficiaries. Most people name their spouse. If you want to name as beneficiary minor children, a trust, or your estate, seek professional guidance. Otherwise you may create unintended tax consequences.

It may also be cost-effective to provide added protection by including accident and disability riders to your life insurance policy. Once your life insurance is in place, be sure to revisit it every few years to make sure it meets your needs. This is critical if there are change in your family or employment status.

(For ministers and church employees, GuideStone offers term life, accident and disability policies designed for those in ministry.)

4. Listen to God's Word being preached or taught by a trusted source.

When a speaker brings out something personal, you can sense God using the words spoken to help you make your decision.

Divine appointments are possible when we have a listening ear. Serendipitous encounters can produce confirmation of God's will.

5. Finally, circumstances play a part in finding God's will.

A person might think that he should be on a semi-faculty, for example, but circumstances might prohibit him from doing so. He does not have a terminal academic degree. He is not credentialed in the proper field of study. There are no teaching positions open. Any one of a hundred different roadblocks could be in the path regardless of how strongly someone feels he should be in the position. Yet God is able to work through circumstances and place you where you need to be.

There is no singular tool to finding God's will when you are making major life decisions. Thankfully, we have several principles that enable us to seek out His perfect plan.

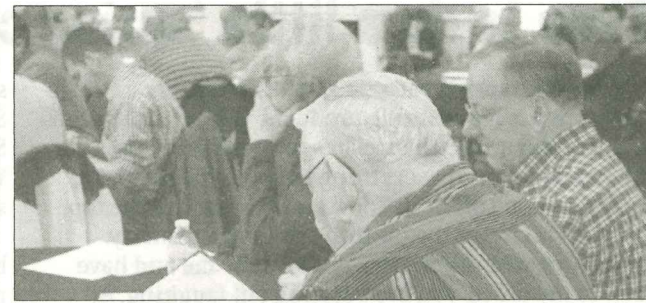
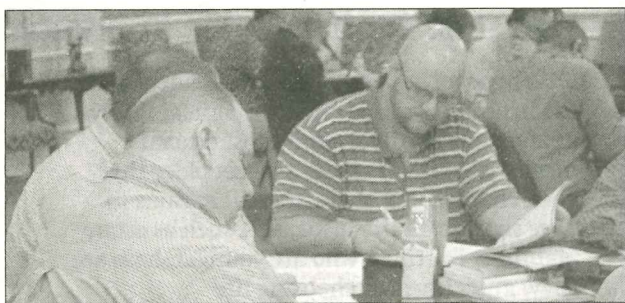
Ultimately, we must be willing to do whatever God tells us.

He wants us to know His will (John 7:17).

We must put our "yes" on the table. When our will is submitted to His will, He will show us the proper path. (BP)



Don Spencer



First Madisonville and Little Bethel churches send pastors to 'boot camp'

Madisonville—First Baptist Church of Madisonville and the churches of the Little Bethel Association entered into a partnership to send the pastors of their association, as well as neighboring churches, to "boot camp."

The association's churches are sponsoring a 12-month training effort, called Revitalization Pastor's Bootcamp,

aimed at equipping and encouraging pastors to lead churches into better days of ministry health and effectiveness.

The monthly training event, based loosely on the book of Nehemiah, addresses 12 topics relevant to church revitalization. Among the topics are discovering current reality, repentance and prayer in the life of the leader, receiving God's vision, and dealing with conflict. Each session offers specific instruction

by providing a speaker and resources related to the issue.

Cost for the 12-month event is being shared by First Baptist Church of Madisonville and the churches of Little Bethel Association. In an interview, Stephen Seaford, transitional interim pastor of Madisonville First, and Bill Egbert, director of missions for Little Bethel, explained why they wanted

to partner together in equipping and encouraging pastors.

Stephen Seaford said that as a transitional interim he wants to see Madisonville take a lead in ministering to churches and pastors in the area. He recognizes that the church has a great facility and resources that could be a blessing to the larger church community. He also wants to strengthen the partnership between the church, the state conven-

tion and the association.

DOM Bill Egbert agreed that First Baptist is a great host church and that an effort for equipping church leaders is needed. Egbert reflected that half of the churches represented in the first training event were from the Little Bethel association.

What do they hoped to see happen as a result of the training effort?

Egbert would like for churches and pastors to recognize the need for revitalization and put an action plan in place to address the issues. The first step toward revitalization entails understanding current reality. After discovering how things are in one's place of ministry, then steps can be taken to address issues that have emerged.

Seaford would like for participants to become aware of the need for revitalization, but also to be inspired by the realization that revitalization is possible. Seaford hopes to see relationships strengthened between pastors and the Kentucky Baptist Convention, and for pastors to realize that they are not alone.

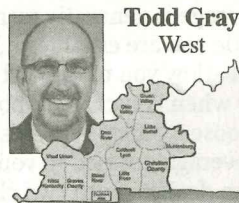
Ministry can be a lonely occupation,

Seaford said, and he hopes participants will recognize that they are not in competition but in cooperation with each other and will encourage each other. Seaford has sought to help FBC realize that "our mission is bigger than us and that we can reach beyond our local church and minister to pastors and churches."

Egbert said the leaders involved thus far "have loved it." He has observed a desire to serve Jesus and see their churches revitalized. Church leaders have attended the training sessions with the right attitude looking for ways to better serve their congregations, Egbert noted. And, he feels the meetings have strengthened his relationship with pastors.

For Seaford, there has been a sense of satisfaction with First Baptist serving other churches. The congregation feels good about offering their facility, staff and resources to assist other area ministers. Seaford feels that the experience has been good for the staff, who are enjoying putting meals together and serving the pastors who gather for training. (WR)

Regional SPOTLIGHT



Todd Gray
West

Former SBC president Luter nominates Crosby for position

By David Roach

St. Louis—Louisiana pastor David Crosby will be nominated for president of the Southern Baptist Convention, former SBC President Fred Luter announced March 24.

"I have watched David the last 10 years here in New Orleans as he has taken the leadership of all the churches and pastors of our city in helping to rebuild New Orleans, which everybody knows was totally destroyed (in 2005) in Hurricane Katrina," Luter, pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans, said in an interview, telling Baptist Press of his intention to nominate Crosby during the SBC annual meeting June 14-15 in St. Louis.

"I saw how he was able to get a lot of things done to get the city back up and running," Luter said, noting Crosby's "passion for the Body of Christ" and for the convention. "I can see that same passion he had for our city leading the Southern Baptist Convention."

During the 20 years Crosby has been pastor of First Baptist Church in New Orleans, the congregation has given between 7 and 15 percent of its undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program, Luter said. That level of CP giving persisted despite a major relocation effort and \$3.5 million of damages sustained from Katrina, Crosby said.

During the fiscal year that began a month following Katrina, First Baptist gave 10.4 percent through CP, according to the SBC's Annual Church Profile. Over the past five years, the congregation has averaged 9.5 percent giving through CP, Southern Baptists' unified program of supporting North American and global missions and ministries.

Total missions giving for the congregation has been at least 22 percent of its undesignated receipts each of the past five years, according to ACP.

Currently, First Baptist forwards 7 percent of undesignated receipts through CP; 1 percent to New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary; 1 percent to the New Orleans Baptist Association; .5 percent to Baptist Friendship

House in New Orleans (a joint ministry of the North American Mission Board and the New Orleans Baptist Association); and approximately .5 percent to a ministry to seafarers at the Port of New Orleans, Crosby said.

A designated gift held in trust also generates funds given through CP each year, Crosby said.

The church has averaged 658 in worship and 24 baptisms annually over the past five years, according to ACP. Previously, Crosby pastored churches in Texas and Mississippi.

Luter said Crosby has demonstrated "a heart for missions and a heart for people regardless of their skin color or what side

of the tracks they were born on."

Some 20-25 percent of worship attendees at First Baptist come from non-Anglo ethnic groups, Crosby said. Following Katrina, Franklin Avenue, which is predominantly African American, met at First Baptist's facilities for two and a half years, and the two churches continue to engage in joint ministry and fellowship activities.

Total missions participation at First Baptist "may rival" worship attendance, Crosby said, with 4,235 instances of individuals participating in missions projects reported on the 2014 ACP, the most recent year for which data is available. That statistic includes some individuals being counted multiple times because they participated in multiple missions projects, Crosby explained.

Each week, First Baptist sends 80-100 adults into New Orleans to perform a variety of ministries, including feeding the homeless, providing weekend food for needy public school students, conducting prison ministry and nursing home ministry, teaching English as a second language and ministering to people in the sex industry.

The church has taken 14 trips to Ghana over the past six years in conjunction with its adoption of an unreached people group "through the guidance and encouragement of the International Mission Board," Crosby said.

First Baptist sponsors NOLA Baptist Church, a NAMB church plant, and Crosby is a founding board member of

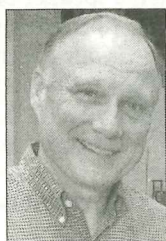
New Orleans Baptist Ministries, the umbrella organization which operates Baptist Friendship House on behalf of NAMB and the local association.

Crosby has served a variety of leadership roles at the association, state convention and SBC levels, including moderator of the New Orleans Baptist Association, Executive Board member of the Louisiana Baptist Convention and member of the SBC Committees on Committees and Resolutions. He is a trustee at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary.

Crosby told BP, "I really believe in cooperation, and I believe the Southern Baptist Convention exists primarily to facilitate cooperation among our churches for the world mission of the gospel. Cooperation, to me, has a financial component, and my churches have always been deeply invested in the Cooperative Program and the special missions offerings. Cooperation also has a personal component."

He continued, "I also feel strongly about the gospel being both proclaimed and enfolded. The gospel needs proclamation and incarnation. So I'm convicted that our behavior, both individually and collectively, should reflect the Savior and please Him, and that our words are not enough. ... I try to keep both the Great Commandment and the Great Commission on my heart."

Crosby's nomination is the third candidate to be announced for the SBC annual meeting. (BP)



David Crosby

Judas documentary critiqued as heresy, revisionism

By David Roach

Nashville—A BBC documentary suggesting Judas Iscariot wasn't purely a traitor has drawn criticism from evangelicals as, among other things, "an attempt to undermine the Christian gospel."

"This is nothing new," said Jerry Vines, a former Southern Baptist Convention president. He noted attempts since the second century to portray Judas more favorably than he is presented in Scripture—as a traitor who delivered Jesus to the authorities for 30 pieces of silver.

Revising Judas

The BBC documentary, Vines told Baptist Press, appears to be "an attempt to undermine the Christian gospel, actually. This idea that you're a sinner is not real popular with culture. So if you can turn the so-called notable sinners in the Bible into just misunderstood men and scapegoats, it kind of minimizes the fact that men are sinners and need a Savior."

"In the Footsteps of Judas" aired March 25 on BBC One and features Church of England vicar Kate Bottley. She argues Judas should not be defined by his most notorious act and, according to The Telegraph, suggests "Judas was a dedicated revolutionary who saw Jesus as a reluctant political messiah and hoped that by handing Him over for arrest he could trigger an uprising against Roman rule in Judea."

Bottley says in the film's closing scene Judas was "a real man with shortcomings and failings not that different from my own." She continues, "If only Judas could have heard those words that Jesus said from the cross, 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.' There's no reason to think that those words don't extend to Judas too."

In conjunction with the documentary, other British clergy and theologians have expressed their support for a revised portrait of Judas. Bishop of Leeds Nick Baines wrote in the magazine Radio Times, "Judas had invested himself in the revolutionary leadership of Jesus of Nazareth ... only to find himself let down. Trying to force the hand of the messiah didn't work, and, instead of provoking the ultimate uprising against Roman rule, the glorious leader simply let Himself get nailed without resistance. No wonder Judas got upset."

Similarly, Katie Edwards of the University of Sheffield wrote in the Daily Mail, "Despite centuries of (Judas) denunciation, the biblical text itself is more ambiguous than we might expect."

Vines disagrees. "You go by what Scripture says, not by these outside, extraneous views," said Vines, retired pastor of First Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Fla. "Jesus called Judas the 'son of perdition' in John 17, and then

almost uniformly he's referred to as 'the traitor.'

"When I preached on Judas, which I did many times through the years, I certainly felt sorry for him," Vines continued. "You're sorry he became such a tragedy, but he made his own decisions and according to Acts, he went 'to his own place,'" a reference to hell.

Vines added Judas demonstrates the balance in Scripture "between divine sovereignty and human responsibility" because he "made his own choices" while also playing a role in God's sovereign plan. "When you over-emphasize one (of these realities) to the exclusion of the other, that's when you get out of balance."

Judas in Scripture

David Allen, dean of the School of Theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, told BP, "From a biblical perspective ... there's no question, number one, about (Judas') character and, number two, about his eternal destiny. The Scripture is actually quite clear on both counts."

Judas was not "an unwitting player" in a political or cosmic drama, Allen said. "It's very clear that Judas made a personal choice to betray Jesus," he added. "It's very clear that Satan exploited that choice. And it's very clear that Judas realized what he had done ... realized the gravity of it. It's also clear that when he died, he went to hell."

Allen cited Matthew 26:24 and Acts 1:25 as evidence Judas died without repenting of his sin and trusting Christ for salvation. He noted the Greek word used to describe Peter's repentance from denying Jesus (*metanoeo*) is different from the Greek word used to describe Judas' regret in Matthew 27:3 (*metamelomai*).

Nineteenth-century New Testament scholar Richard Trench argued that while "no rigid line of discrimination can be drawn" between the two Greek words, "a predominant use" of *metanoeo* is to indicate true repentance while *metamelomai* tends to indicate "a disliking of the thing with its consequents and effects."

Allen said attempts to "sanitize Judas" seem to occur "within the purview of liberal theology, where we don't want to say that anyone is damned."

Rick Durst, professor of historical theology at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, echoed Vines' assessment that attempts to portray Judas in a favorable light stretch back two millennia. In the second-fourth centuries, Durst said, a heretical Gnostic sect known as the Cainites "venerated Judas" and taught he "was the enlightened disciple who acted for the redemption of humanity through the death of Christ." Apologists Irenaeus, Tertullian and Epiphanius condemned Cainites.

The third-century theologian Origen, described by Durst as "ever creatively odd," wrongly argued "Judas committed suicide by hanging to seek Christ in the



Judas Iscariot, depicted here leaving the Last Supper to betray Jesus, is the subject of a BBC documentary. (Image from Wikimedia Commons)

nether world and beg His pardon." On a more orthodox note, John Chrysostom, Ambrose of Milan and Augustine all spoke of Judas as evil and condemned during the fourth and fifth centuries.

In the 20th century, Nikos Kazantzakis' novel "The Last Temptation of Christ" attempted to portray Judas as Jesus' friend and was made into a movie.

Preaching Judas

For preachers, the biblical story of Judas is more powerful than a manufactured narrative, Allen and Vines said. Allen added "from an application standpoint, preachers can point out that if Judas could sin against Jesus in His very presence, then how much more are we prone to deny the Lord like Peter did or to even betray Him into the hands of false doctrine or false teachers if we're not careful."

Judas demonstrates supposed followers of Jesus can "have an outward profession but not have an inward possession of genuine salvation," Allen said.

Vines' book "Interviews with Jesus" drew on Judas to extend an evangelistic invitation. Had Judas truly repented of his sin, Vines wrote, "I fully believe that the Lord Jesus Christ would have reached out His arms of mercy, forgiveness and love, and brought Judas into the very family of God. But Judas didn't do it, and it is too late for Judas today. Judas sits upon a throne of fire in hell today, and the epitaph over his throne in hell reads, 'Judas Iscariot, the traitor.'"

"Too late, but it is not too late for you," Vines wrote. "... There is time for you. You can repent. ... You can quit hiding behind your religiosity and your church membership. You can come to Jesus Christ and let Him save you." (BP)

Bellevue gunman

Continued from page 1

"I, of course, quickly changed mode," Willis said. "I dropped (the backpack). I put my hand on my pistol—I didn't draw it. And I yelled at him, 'Get down on your knees,' which he did."

After another security team member arrived to assist, Donald rolled off his knees and ran toward the auditorium. Willis said he tackled Donald, and security team members handcuffed him and escorted him to an exit to wait for police.

Donald was arrested for "emergency commitment" and underwent psychiatric evaluation, according to the Commercial Appeal.

"When I saw the rifle, I thought, 'This guy's coming to do terrible stuff. I'm going to do what I'm supposed to do. I'm stopping him,'" Willis said. When Donald ran, he "was not trying to get away. He was moving as if he was headed to complete his mission."

Willis added he doesn't know whether Donald intended to do harm. Coombs said Donald's mother, who is a Bellevue member, reported he was "hyper-afraid of being attacked."

The Memphis police and the FBI are investigating the incident, Willis said.

Under Tennessee state law, guns are banned on church property only if the property is being used for a school event or if the church posts signs at entryways stating weapons are banned, the Commercial Appeal reported, noting a church spokesman was unaware of any such policy at Bellevue.

Meeks, a retired Hurst, Texas, police officer who trains churches across the U.S. in proper security procedures, credited Jackson, the greeter who initially reported Donald.

"What a heads-up call," Meeks said. "What a Joan of Arc, as we would call her at the seminar. My hat's off to her because we've told people over and over: It's not just a case of 'Do you have armed security?' She probably wasn't armed. But she saw something. ... You've got to pay attention."

Since 1999, there have been 625 violent deaths at American houses of worship, Meeks said. To avoid additions to that statistic, churches should form security teams trained to watch for suspicious behavior like individuals carrying backpacks or wearing jackets in hot weather.

Depending on state laws and other factors, church security teams may or may not choose to be armed, Meeks said.

He urged all security teams to train regularly, "just like the praise and worship team or choir does." (BP)

Crossings president

Continued from page 1

organizational management from The Master's College in Santa Clarita, Calif., and his graduate degree in international relations and conflict management from American Military University in Charles Town, W.Va.

In his new position, Dalrymple will lead one of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's most successful institutions. Crossings camps draw thousands each summer. The total topped 13,000 students last summer, and is expected to exceed 14,000 this summer.

More than 800 of the students who attended Crossings camps last year made professions of faith.

Dan Dumas, senior vice president of institutional administration at Southern, said Dalrymple has a passion for excellence.

"I consider him a dear friend, trusted ally and world-class leader," Dumas said. "I am sad to lose him, but want God's will for his life more than my own."

Eric Bancroft, senior pastor of Castleview Baptist Church in Indianapolis who knew Dalrymple in Los Angeles, said he is a man of great character and leadership capacity.

"Jeff's work ethic, reputation for humility, and tremendous capacity has been shown over and over again," Bancroft said. (KBC)

Voice of the Martyrs shares plight at Shelbyville Church

Shelbyville—First Baptist Church of Shelbyville is hosting a Voice of the Martyrs Advance Conference, a regional conference to raise awareness of the persecution being endured by Christians from around the world, on April 16.

The conference, which will be held 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., features speakers from India, China, Iran and another sensitive location who will go beyond the headlines appearing in the news to share real life accounts of those who have endured persecution. They tell their journey with American Christians from whom they seek prayer.

"When persecution has a face, it changes how we see the world and how we pray, said Shelbyville pastor Maurice Hollingsworth. "That is the purpose of this event. The Voice of the Martyrs Organization solicits prayer support for those who suffer."

The Voice of the Martyrs, a non-profit, interdenominational Christian organization, was founded in 1967 by Pastor Richard Wurmbrand, who was imprisoned 14 years in Communist Romania for his faith. The conference is free, but advance registration is requested by visiting www.vomevents.com or calling (800) 747-0085. (WR)

Pakistani Easter bombing death toll passes 75

By Diana Chandler

Lahore, Pakistan—The death toll is rising from a suicide bombing targeting Christians in a crowded park on Easter Sunday in Lahore, Pakistan, with at least 75 dead and more than 368 wounded, 138 of them critically, based on reports from Morning Star News and CNN.

Already claiming responsibility for the evening attack and professing to have targeted Christians is the Jamaat-ul-Ahrar terrorist group, a splinter faction of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) that has professed allegiance to ISIS.

"We claim responsibility for the attack on Christians as they were celebrating Easter," Jamaat-ul-Ahrar spokesman Ehsanullah Ehsan said in a statement the group released shortly after the bombing.

"It was part of our annual martyrdom attacks we have started this year," he said, threatening that the attacks "will continue throughout this year."

Killed were at least 45 Christians and 25 Muslims, Morning Star News said, based on unofficial reports in the country where Christians comprise only 2 percent of an estimated 192.8 million people.

Many of the victims were women and children, as the suicide bomber detonated at least eight kilograms of explosives near the children's swings in Gulshan-e-Iqbal Park, Morning Star News said.

Saeed Elahi, chairman of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (Red Cross), told CNN in a live news report March 28 that the death toll had surpassed 75.

"The Red Crescent responded within five minutes, and the first ambulance reached there within four minutes," he said, "but because the casualty was very high, we had to respond with doctors, paramedics and a large number of volunteers. So they provided them first aid and shifted them to the different hospitals."

Businesses, schools and public parks closed in Pakistan and citizens are

urged to donate blood for the injured. Dozens of women and children covered in blood were wheeled into hospitals, Morning Star News reported.

A family in the Christian neighborhood of Bihar Colony lost four family members in the explosion, a witness told Morning Star.

"What a brutal end to Easter celebrations," Morning Star quoted Esther Murad. "Words cannot do justice to their pain."

A doctor at the Government Jinnah Hospital told Morning Star he feared the death toll would continue to rise,

based on the number of critical injuries.

The attack was the deadliest in Pakistan since the December 2014 massacre of 134 school children at a military-run academy in Peshawar.

Pakistan is ranked as fourth on the 2015 Global

Terrorism Index. Pakistani Christians and other religious minorities have faced attacks from Islamist militants for more than a decade. Blasphemy there is punishable by death, and some Christians are imprisoned for their faith.

"The situation for Christians in Pakistan is getting increasingly dangerous," a Christian rights activist who requested anonymity told Morning Star. "On one hand, the Taliban are saying that they will launch more attacks on Christians, while on the other hand the government is being pressured by Islamists who want to keep non-Muslim citizens of Pakistan subjugated through the blasphemy laws."

Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif condemned the bombing and assured justice to families of victims, but the activist who spoke to Morning Star accused the government of lacking commitment to fighting terrorism and religious extremism.

"This is a war between two mindsets, and it is now up to the state to decide how many more innocent lives will be lost to religious extremism, which is eating up Pakistani society like cancer," the activist told Morning Star. (BP)



Don Neal: His 'never met a stranger' demeanor opening doors

By Myriah Snyder

Richmond—Don Neal has a "never met a stranger" personality that is ideal for serving in the greeter's ministry at First Baptist Church of Richmond.

"His favorite thing to do is to be a greeter at the door of the church," Floyd Price, director of senior adults at First Baptist, said. "He is very involved. He thinks if you're going to be a part of a church, you'd better participate, so he participates in almost everything we do."

Neal and his wife, Donna, joined the church after moving to Richmond in 2007 to be near their son, Lance, and two grandchildren. Neal and his wife have two children, their son and a daughter, Sonja, who lives in St. Louis.

"My wife and I have been married for 51 years. First thing we ever did when we got to town was look in the yellow pages and try to find a Southern Baptist church," Neal, who grew up in a faithful Baptist home and has been a deacon in various churches for 68 years, said.

"We had visited the church numerous times throughout the years, so whenever we moved down here it was pretty much a no-brainer to join First Baptist," he continued. "We really found a home there."

Immediately after joining, Neal found the greeter ministry. He was the chairman of the ministry for about eight years, until he gave up the responsibility this past January. He still uses his time to be a greeter each Sunday.

"My personality is that I have never met a stranger. I just walk up to someone and say, 'Hi I'm Don Neal. How are you?' and strike up a conversation. I guess some other people saw that right away and put me in charge of the greeter ministry," he said.

He added, infusing his humility, "Maybe they didn't have anybody any better. I wasn't much, but I was all they had or something like that."



Don and Donna Neal have been members of First Baptist Church of Richmond, Kentucky for the last 9 years. Don loves serving in the greeter's ministry.

Neal retired from the Navy in 1993 after 20 years. He officially retired from the workforce in 2007. He now uses his time to not only serve in the greeter's ministry, but also to help with the senior adult ministry.

"Don is such a committed Christian, and his commitment is with senior adults at this point in time," Price commented.

"It's meeting and encouraging and supporting people and doing what you can to make their life a little bit easier, a little bit better," Neal said.

He praised the director of senior adults for the things that he has done to help the ministry grow, including weekly luncheons and regular day trips.

"Basically, since he's been here in the last seven years, our senior adult ministry grew from having 35 at a luncheon to where now we're having 85-125. Things have really taken off under the leadership of Floyd Price," he said.

When Price retires in six months, Neal hopes to see the group continue to grow. He said that will be part of his job as chairman of the senior adult council.

"It's hard to explain. I guess you find something that you're good at or something that you like and no one can make you want to do it. You have to want to do it," Neal said.

"Like with the greeter ministry, I don't do it because I have to. I do it because I want to and I enjoy it," he explained. "With senior adults, it's pretty much the same way." (WR)



Attendance at the senior adult luncheons has grown from 35 to around 100 in the last seven years. Don Neal, chairman of senior adult council, is committed to helping the ministry continue to grow. (Photo courtesy of church's Facebook page)

Johnsons: a couple whose church deems 'clone-worthy'

"We just get more involved as the years go on."

By Myriah Snyder

Elizabethtown—They've been members of Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown since 1972; they've seen all four of their children baptized and married in the church; they've sat under four pastors; they're involved in mission trips; and they teach a senior adult Sunday School class together—among other ministries.

"When I see people like them, I always say I wish we could clone people. They are amazing," Ray Hicks, associate pastor of member care at Severns Valley, said of Marshall and Jerry Sue Johnson.

"They model a testimony for Christ. They have a strong witness for Christ in the community and the church and they are active servants of the Lord," Hicks added.

"When we came here, we had four little kids," Jerry Sue recalled. "We looked for a place that had a good children's program, and we were very pleased all through the years our kids were growing up.

"We have just been blessed to have a family grow up in the church. We were just so involved by the time our family left that we stayed interested," she continued. "I know some folks kind of drop out when their kids leave, but we were so involved at that point that we never ceased.

"We just get more involved as the

years go on," she added. "I think that's what keeps you in a church is being involved and being a part, feeling a part, of what is going on. We always felt a part of what is going on."

Marshall, a general surgeon and Vietnam veteran, and Jerry Sue, an English teacher, spend much time and energy involved in the ministries of their church.

Jerry Sue was a part of the Women's Missionary Union, has taught Sunday School for various age groups, is involved in missions, and has been a foundational part of the "International Fellowship," a ministry to international ladies in the area, for 30 years.

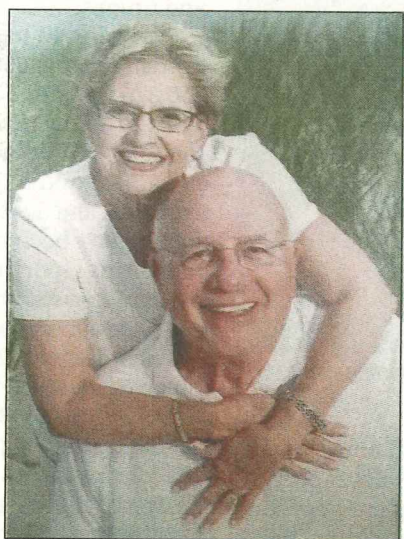
Currently, International Fellowship ministers to mostly Japanese ladies whose husbands are connected to the factories in the Elizabethtown

area. In addition to godly fellowship, they do Bible study with the ladies and teach English as a second language.

Marshall is moderator at Severns Valley, has been on several councils and uses his skills as a general surgeon on many mission trips. These trips include Russia, Brazil and, most recently, Nicaragua in October 2015.

Additionally, the couple pours their hearts into Marshall's duties as a deacon, and they can often be found visiting in homes of members, Hicks said.

Marshall speaks highly of the leadership of the pastors for which he has had



Marshall and Jerry Sue Johnson have been members of Severns Valley Baptist Church since 1972.



Marshall Johnson, a general surgeon who often takes mission trips and utilizes his surgical skills, consulting with patients at the church clinic.

Jerry Sue Johnson has been working with Severns Valley's ladies' "International Fellowship" for 30 years.

the honor of being on the search committee. "I think that we've been tremendously blessed by being under the leadership of those four men," he said.

"Our preachers have all been like that (community focused). Our church has tried to reach out to the community, and continues to do that and be a very progressive church," he continued.

Noting that Severns Valley is more than 200 years old, Marshall observed, "It's not just living on its past. It's always

looking to the future. I love that kind of attitude.

"It's just an outstanding church where—as our principle saying states—we try to 'love people, love God, and disciple people,'" he said. "We've just been blessed to be a part of this congregation, and hopefully we will be able to serve until the Lord calls us home. (WR)



Faye Florida: tiny, little servant with a lively spirit

By Myriah Snyder

Madisonville—During the 52 years she has been a member of First Baptist, Madisonville, Faye Florida has served her church in numerous capacities.

"She's amazing. She's a tiny, little woman that could work circles around most everybody," Ann Oldham, ministry assistant and longtime friend of Florida's, said of the 78-year-old church member.

"She's probably held every volunteer position this church has to offer," Oldham continued.

She pointed out that Florida serves on the property committee, with staff development, will be involved in the upcoming Women's Missionary Union

annual meeting at Severns Valley Baptist Church, as well as serves in children's ministry, music and the choir.

Additionally, she is a costume designer for the church's "Journey to Bethlehem," which draws well over 6,000 visitors each December.

What originally drew Florida and her husband, Bob, to First Baptist was the children's ministries.

"We have one son. We united with First Baptist when he was 6. We were looking for a church that would offer opportunities for him. We were looking around, and we felt that First Baptist had

a lot to offer," Florida said.

Since then, she has spent much of her time investing in the ministries that

drew her family to the church.

"She has a deep compassion for children and involving children in music," Oldham explained. "She and other volunteers have held a very large children's music ministry. Our church buses would pick kids up on certain days of the week from the schools in the area and bring them here for music and to learn about God."

Florida calls the family's decision to join First Baptist over five decades ago "a God thing." "It had been about four months since we moved here, and we just couldn't come to terms with where God wanted us, so we prayed for a sign for that to happen," she said.

Florida continued, "On a Thursday morning I was gone, and when I got back I had a note on the door. A girl had visited me from the Sunday School class. We joined the church the next Sunday."

"I am a firm believer that God gives everybody a gift. It's up to us to use it. Sometimes they are taken away

if we don't use them," Florida said.

Her ministries within the church have given her many opportunities to exercise her gift of hospitality. She is currently excited about being part of the greeting team for the upcoming WMU annual meeting.

"We are just so blessed. Bob and I have always put God first. Our son does the same. I think we have been good examples for him as well as other people, and now we have seen the fruits of our labor with other people being involved in the

ministry that we worked in," Florida said.

Although she and her husband retired their hobby of riding motorcycles in 2009, Florida stays continually busy in ministry.

"They wear me out," she said jokingly.

Oldham continued, "She's always here, and she's always willing to help. Very energetic.

She is just willing to do anything, very caring and giving." (WR)



Bob and Faye Florida have been members of First Baptist Church of Madisonville for 52 years.

"She's always willing to help. She's amazing. She's a tiny little woman that could work circles around most everybody."

Ann Oldham, First Baptist ministry assistant

IMB responds to concern over large decline in baptisms

By David Roach

Nashville—Decreases in the number of baptisms and new churches reported by International Mission Board missionaries during the past decade reflect changes in data-reporting methods and missions strategy, not a lack of evangelistic ministry.

That's the conclusion of a March 21 IMB news release issued in response to observations that overseas baptisms for 2015 are at their lowest level since 1969—54,762, according to the IMB's 2016 Ministry Report to the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee, down from a high of 609,968 reported for 2007.

IMB President David Platt said questions about the entity's 2016 report "are good and valid." He stressed the SBC's international missions entity is "absolutely committed to practically accurate, biblically faithful reporting to the SBC."

Among the factors IMB leaders cited to account for the decreases:

- A halt to the practice of reporting baptisms performed by partner conventions and other ministries "in which IMB personnel were less directly involved."
- A shift toward work among unreached people groups, which yields fewer visible results initially.
- An inability to report some 2015 statistics because "visa denials and family circumstances" prohibited IMB missionaries from collecting on-the-ground data related to several "large movements of national believers."

Executive Committee President Frank Page told Baptist Press, "We rejoice at all evangelistic efforts everywhere. At the same time, this office has been encouraging the IMB to evaluate its reporting system to bring greater focus to the work directly empowered through our Cooperative Program gifts."

"We are grateful to Dr. Platt and his staff for moving in this direction. While the numbers may initially look negative and some may focus on the apparent



A decrease in international baptisms reported is due largely to changes in data-reporting methods, the International Mission Board said. (BP photo)

decline, the reality is we are seeing a clearer picture of the impact our missionaries are making and I am deeply grateful for that."

Among those to note the decreases was Will Hall, editor of Louisiana's Baptist Message newsjournal. In a news story, Hall said the 2016 "baptism figure represents the lowest level reported in 46 years." Hall also noted a decrease in "new churches" reported by the IMB from 13,824 in 2014 to 3,842 in 2015, according to the Ministry Report.

Some explanation of the decrease was included in the Ministry Report, which was posted online in February at www.sbc.net/cp/ministryreports/ and emailed to EC members, Baptist state convention executive directors, Baptist state paper editors and SBC entity leaders. Decreases in new churches between 2012 and 2013 and again between 2014 and 2015 each was "due to one large CPM (church planting movement) no longer reported," according to question 22 of 25 in the

report—an observation Hall noted.

Not commented on in Hall's report was a response to a subsequent question in the Ministry Report that states, "IMB is committed to seeing indigenous movements within every people group and urban center engaged with church planting teams. As teams reach the point where a movement is occurring, they hand off their work to capable indigenous leaders and move on to an unreached people group that needs a team to begin work."

"When teams move on, IMB no longer counts statistics from their former work, and these are no longer reported in the annual statistical report," the IMB stated.

"The years of 2012 and 2015 were characterized by such transitions as IMB missionaries responded to the needs of unreached people groups in hard places. With this said, IMB missionaries planted 3,842 churches last year, and the number of Baptist churches in people groups and urban segments grew to 41,172," the

report stated.

In addition, annotations in SBC Annals appear to reflect two separate changes in data reporting methods since 2009, a fact to which Hall alluded. In 2011, the IMB stated, "Beginning with this report (on 2010 statistics), figures reported are for work related to IMB personnel only, and no longer include reports related to partner conventions and unions."

Accordingly, reported baptisms decreased from 506,019 for 2009 to 360,876 for 2010.

In 2014, the IMB noted on its report for 2013, "Major movements that are self-sustaining and require only occasional guidance and assistance from IMB personnel have been removed from the statistics this reporting year, which results in some statistics being somewhat different from earlier reporting periods."

Accordingly, the number of baptisms reported declined from 266,451 for 2012 to 114,571 for 2013.

Platt said "complications" and apparent "discrepancies" in IMB statistics demonstrate "that we need to reevaluate our current methods for collecting data from the field."

"This is one of many reasons why months ago we began a process of reevaluating the quantitative and qualitative measures of our work around the world," Platt said. "This process of reevaluating is focused on defining terms, minimizing inconsistencies, increasing accountability and ensuring accuracy in our reporting. We look forward to completion of this process with a view toward consistent implementation of it in the future."

One reality unquestionably reflected in IMB statistical reports, Platt said, is that "every single day God is using Southern Baptist church members who have been sent to the nations to lead people to Christ, to make disciples, to plant churches, to train pastors and to train missionaries." (BP)

Is religious liberty on the decline in America?

By Bob Smietana

Nashville—A growing number of Americans believe religious liberty is on the decline and that the nation's Christians face growing intolerance, according to a survey by LifeWay Research. Those surveyed also noted American Christians complain too much.

Those are among the findings of a new study of views about religious liberty. Researchers surveyed 1,000 Americans in September 2013 and September 2015 and then compared the results.

Two-thirds (63 percent) say Christians face increasing intolerance, up from half in 2013. A similar number (60 percent) say religious liberty is on the decline, up from just over half (54 percent) in 2013.

Forty-three percent say American Christians complain too much about how they are treated, up from 34 percent in 2013.

"More Americans worry the U.S. has a hostile environment for religious liberty," said Ed Stetzer, executive director of LifeWay Research. "As this perception grows, some approve of it while others speak up against it."

Religious liberty has become an increasingly contentious issue in American culture—with disputes over birth control, same-sex wedding cakes, headscarves at work, and prisoners' beards.

The more recent LifeWay Research survey found faith plays a key role in how Americans view the state of religious liberty.

Two-thirds of Christians (64 percent) and those of other faiths (65 percent) say religious liberty is on the decline. Self-identified evangelicals (71 percent) and those who attend worship at least once a week (70 percent) are most likely to agree.

Catholics (56 percent) and non-evangelicals (55 percent) are more skeptical. So are Nones (46 percent).

"Christians are particularly sensitive to what they see as intolerance towards their faith," Stetzer said. "But they share a common concern with people of other faiths—that religious liberty in general is declining. And this perception is growing rapidly."

Age also played a role in how Americans view the state of religious liberty.

Less than half (42 percent) of those 18 to 24 say religious liberty is on the decline. By contrast, 6 in 10 (62 percent) of those over 25 see a decline.

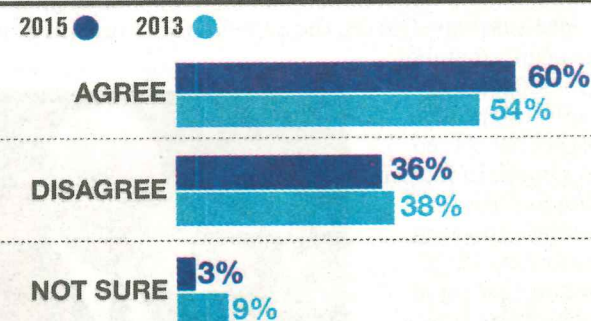
LifeWay Research also found non-Christians are less convinced that Christians face intolerance. Less than half of those from other faiths (43 percent) and Nones (48 percent) agree when asked if intolerance toward Christians has increased.

By contrast, most Christians (70 percent), self-identified evangelicals (82 percent) and Protestants (74 percent) see more intolerance. So do three-fourths (76 percent) of those who attend services once a week or more.

Researchers found some signs that Americans are tired of arguments over religious liberty. A sizable number of Americans believe Christians' complaints about

Among Americans:

Religious liberty is on the decline in America.



how they are treated are excessive.

Among them:

- 38 percent of Christians
- 39 percent of Americans of other faiths
- 59 percent of Nones
- 53 percent of those who rarely or never attend worship

American Christians face a challenge, as the nation becomes more secular, Stetzer said. Calls for religious liberty may fall on increasingly deaf ears in the future.

"Most people now believe Christians are facing intolerance, however, a surprisingly large minority perceives Christians to be complainers," Stetzer said. "Both of those facts will matter as Christians profess and contend for their beliefs without sounding false alarms around faux controversies. It won't be easy to strike that balance." (BP)

Food pantry keeps going as state's coal industry struggles

By Kristen Lowry

Whitesburg—A middle-aged woman rushes through the door of the Letcher County Food Pantry just before closing time.

"I thought I was too late," she says, with obvious relief. "I really need my box this month."

She's not the only one.

"We have a lot of people who will tell us, 'There's no food in my pantry; I have nothing to eat,'" said Vicki Holbrook, co-director of the Letcher County Food Pantry in Whitesburg. "If not for what we do here, we'd have a lot more people going hungry in Letcher County."

The food pantry helps more than 500 families in a six-mile radius each month. It is operated out of a small white house on the corner of the grounds of First Baptist Church of Whitesburg. The building is provided by the church, which also pays the water and electric bills each month.

Inside the house, volunteers make their way through a maze of boxes of cereal and canned pork and beans in order to fill a box of food for each family.

Holbrook has been volunteering with the food pantry for three years, and served as co-director for two.

The food pantry, serves an average of more than 1,000 people a month and was established with money from a legal settlement after the Scotia mine disaster of 1976, one of the worst in Kentucky history. Holbrook said most of the people who use the food bank typically are the

unemployed or the working poor trying to make ends meet in minimum-wage jobs.

And their ranks keep growing throughout central Appalachia where the coal industry is going through a bust cycle. Employment in the coal industry has declined from more than 13,000 five years ago to under 6,000 today.

That's the fewest number of miners working in the state's mountain region in more than a century.

Holbrook said the Letcher County Food Pantry was serving an average of 350 families before the coal industry bottomed out. God's Pantry Food Bank, based in Lexington, supplies much of the food distributed by the Whitesburg initiative.

God's Pantry has seen a steady increase in the amount of food distributed in the 50 counties it serves.

"We hear stories almost monthly of mining operations shutting down that result in staggering job losses, and there are not enough new jobs entering the area to keep pace with those that are lost," said Marian Guinn, CEO of God's Pantry Food Bank.

"We find our partner agencies are feeding more and more people who never thought they would need assistance," Guinn noted, "and don't know how long it will be until they can once again support their families as they have in the past."

The decline of the coal industry has been devastating for the region. The once-thriving downtown business



Vicki Holbrook, co-director of the Letcher County Food Pantry, helps prepare food boxes for the hundreds of families served by the ministry. (Photo by Kristen Lowry)

districts in many Appalachian towns now sport mostly empty storefronts.

In 1988, Letcher County had nearly 1,700 residents working in coal-related jobs. By the end of 2015, that number had fallen to about 100.

"There's depression in a lot of people here," said Tony Brown, pastor of Whitesburg First Baptist. "There's a heaviness. A lot of people just don't see any hope for the future."

Brown, who serves on the local food pantry's board of directors, said the pervasive unemployment is tough on

churches, which regularly receive more requests than they can fulfill for help with utilities, lodging for the homeless, even gasoline for people's cars.

The hard reality is that churches have had to put restrictions on the help they give.

"There's simply not enough money," he said.

He sympathizes with the young families that are hanging on, still looking for work in the region.

"This is where they grew up," Brown said. "They want to live here." (BP)

State laws aim at helping pastors decline performing gay weddings

By David Roach

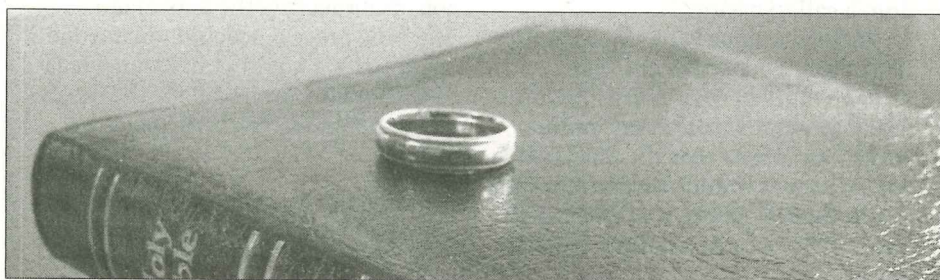
Nashville—Pastor Protection Acts adopted in multiple states and under consideration in others seek to protect the right of ministers not to perform same-sex weddings. But the bills have drawn mixed reviews from religious liberty proponents.

Three state legislators who have served as Southern Baptist ministers told Baptist Press that Pastor Protection Acts are helpful even though they should be supplemented by broader guarantees of religious liberty in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's legalization of same-sex marriage.

Roger Severino of The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank, told BP that Pastor Protection Acts "make doubly clear" that First Amendment guarantees of free speech and freedom of religion apply to clergy, yet the bills are "of limited value" because they tend to stop short of addressing "the real threat"—discrimination against believers who stand for traditional marriage in government roles and private business dealings.

According to news reports, at least three states—Texas, Oklahoma and Florida—have adopted Pastor Protection Acts, with others considering similar legislation, including Tennessee, Georgia and Ohio. BP contacted four national organizations that support pro-family legislation, but none had information about the total number of states with Pastor Protection Acts.

Texas state Rep. Scott Sanford, an



executive pastor at Cottonwood Creek Church in Allen, Texas, was the original author and House sponsor of the Lone Star State's Pastor Protection Act, which became law last year. He told BP he "would have liked to have gone broader" with additional religious liberty protections, "but it was a matter of ... what the House leadership would allow on the floor."

Still, Sanford said the bill has value and is "broader than the title suggests."

The bill "protects those services connected with a church or a ministry," Sanford said. "So, for instance, if a church had a wedding chapel service or a bakery service, it would be protected—or a floral service or a photography service. But if they're stand-alone businesses, this bill does not address that."

Oklahoma state Sen. Dan Newberry, who has served on staff at multiple Southern Baptist churches, said his state's Ministers' Bill of Rights clarifies the application of the First Amendment to clergy. Gov. Mary Fallin signed the bill into law last spring. It states, "No regularly licensed, ordained or authorized official of any religious organization shall be required to solemnize or

recognize any marriage that violates the official's conscience or religious beliefs."

Newberry said some interpret the First Amendment as referencing only "the right to pray and worship how you see fit" and not the right of "ministers to say no" to weddings.

"So in our bill in the state of Oklahoma, the Ministers' Bill of Rights, we attach your right to say no to the First Amendment," Newberry said.

In Tennessee, a bill is under consideration by legislators stating no minister or religious organization "shall be required to solemnize any marriage ... if the action would cause the individual or organization to violate a sincerely held religious belief." The office of the bill's House sponsor, Andy Holt, told BP the staff of Republican Gov. Bill Haslam has requested a meeting and "expressed concern" over the bill.

Tennessee Rep. Jerry Sexton, who served as a Southern Baptist bivocational pastor for 25 years, told BP Pastor Protection Acts may be necessary in the wake of the Supreme Court's same-sex marriage decision.

"As a minister," Sexton said, "you can refuse to marry people of the opposite

sex. Some ministers wouldn't marry you if you've been married before. So there's never been in the past any reprisal for refusing to do a marriage. But we're just in a new territory, uncharted waters. So we really don't know what to expect."

Ministers, Sexton said, "ought to be protected."

Severino, director of The Heritage Foundation's DeVos Center for Religion and Civil Society, applauded the efforts of states that have adopted Pastor Protection Acts, but he expressed concern the bills may serve as "a distraction from the more pressing fight."

"Pastor Protection Acts are motivated in reaction to an extreme decision" by the Supreme Court, Severino said. "But it is not enough to simply say religious freedom is protected so long as it's protected in the four walls of a church."

Same-sex marriage proponents "will often say, 'Well of course no one should force a pastor to perform a religious wedding against their religious beliefs,'" Severino said. That's why he urged legislatures to go beyond Pastor Protection Acts and protect the religious freedom of adoption agencies, schools and private business owners whose opposition to same-sex marriage could provoke discrimination.

"It would be best if legislatures passed Pastor Protection Acts, Religious Freedom Restoration Acts and First Amendment Defense Acts in combined religious freedom bills," Severino said. "... That approach would get the best of all sides so that no freedom is left behind." (BP)

Spring has sprung

As our spring break approaches each year, Angie often tells me she wants to "go someplace warm." One thing I missed while living in Florida was the different seasons.

This is Oneida



Larry Gritton

Florida seems to have two seasons—warm and hot, but Kentucky (God's country) has such a variety.

Spring seems to bring new life to the Oneida campus. As the weather turns from cold and sometimes dreary to warmer, our campus life seems to awaken. The fourth quarter of our school year involves much activity. As the weather warms up, our campus comes alive with young people all over our small campus. It is always refreshing to see and hear the life and laughter our kids bring as they are active outdoors.

The school year will come to a crescendo with our annual baccalaureate and graduation services May 14,

but between now and then there will be much activity and many events.

There will be a "Spring Fling," which is an event involving food, fun and games for the entire school. We will have many awards ceremonies in our daily chapel services. We believe very strongly in recognizing the accomplishments of our young people. There will be academic awards, dorm awards, work program awards, staff service awards, vocational awards and much more.

Our drama team will put on a spring play. Our seniors will take their annual senior trip to Gatlinburg. There will be a National Honor Society induction ceremony. There will be an athletic banquet, our annual FFA banquet, and our Junior/Senior Banquet. This Junior/Senior Banquet is typically one of our best meals of the year, and much of our staff joins our upperclassmen for steak and shrimp and good fun. Our chaplain of many years once told me the trials and challenges we face each

year are made better by this one meal.

We will do our best to live and serve each day in accordance with the Lord's will, and will also attempt to live each day as if it is our last opportunity to touch young lives. Human nature is to fast-forward our lives to the good parts, and as I look ahead at our spring calendar, I am excited by what lies ahead. I also become a bit weary just thinking of all we will do as we close out yet another wonderful school year.

Through our excitement and weariness, we will do our best to educate and serve the entire young person whom God has sent our way. Stop by our campus any time, or if there is a particular event I have mentioned that you would like to be a part of, just give me a call. May God bless each of you for your faithful support and partnership.

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.

Student thankful for opportunity to learn

Student Terry Jackson and his wife, Karen, are enjoying this time of their lives as grandparents. Their daughters are serving in a church where he served as pastor in Georgia. The distance away from their children and grandchildren is hard, but they know this is where God wants them to be right now.

"I attended church some with my grandparents as a child," said Jackson. "It was not until the age of 19 that I came to know Jesus as my savior on an Easter morning in that same Baptist church

that I had attended with my grandparents.

"It has been a growth and refining process up to this day. God is still

working on me even at 46 years old.

"I surrendered to the call to preach in February 2002," said Jackson. "I spent two years doing pulpit supply wherever I could. This helped me initially to get some good experience as I was starting out. I took my first pastorate in August 2004. The first church I served was not the only church I would serve in, but it was where I can remember that my call began to shift from a call to preach into a call to pastor.

"After I accepted the call to pastor this church, I discovered Clear Creek's online program in 2004. I initially attempted to do some online work, but I knew that the on-campus environment would work best for me. So, in the fall semester of 2015, at 45 years old, I became a college student

living on campus. Wow! God is good!

"I love the classes that I have been blessed to take so far," said Jackson. "I look at what an opportunity I have to learn now, and wish that I had learned these things earlier on in the ministry. Classes at Clear Creek are not easy; then again, nothing worth having is. I don't really have a favorite class because they all are great and they all build on each other.

"Clear Creek has done an excellent job of connecting the dots in our learning process. I would tell anyone looking for a quality Christian education that will equip you for the ministry that Clear Creek is the place to be!"

Donnie Fox is president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, 300 Clear Creek Road, Pineville, KY 40377; toll-free: (866) 340-3196; ccbbc.edu; email: dfox@ccbbc.edu.

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

Senior celebrations

Annually the Kentucky Baptist Convention conducts a wonderful multi-site event entitled Senior Living Celebrations for Kentucky Baptist senior adults. This year's theme is

"Armored for Victory," based on the scripture passage of Ephesians 6:13-18.

Attendees will have the opportunity to participate at either First Baptist Church of Madisonville on April 18, Severns Valley Baptist Church on April 19, or First Baptist Church of Richmond on April 21.

The Kentucky Baptist Foundation is honored to again sponsor the breakfast at each celebration

and provide leadership for one of the workshops that will be offered during this event.

This popular Kentucky Baptist Convention event is always well attended by enthusiastic senior adults

who come to worship, learn and celebrate life together. This year, there will be over a dozen workshops at each location, covering topics such as tips on physical well-being, growth in prayer, navigating Medicare, missions and ministry opportunities for seniors, travel tips for your next senior adult trip, and more.

The Kentucky Baptist Foundation's trust counsel, Laurie Valentine, will lead an excellent workshop session titled "Who will be in charge if," which explores what happens without planning for possible future incapacity. The session will detail the essential aspects of key incapacity planning tools including Powers of Attorney, Healthcare Advance Directives and Living Trusts.

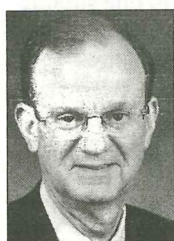
Why is this topic so important? We should anticipate and plan for the possible event of an accident or an illness that leaves us incapable of making decisions for ourselves and incapable of managing our finances.

Laurie's seminar on this topic will equip you with the understanding of key documents you can put in place to ensure that should an incapacity occur, you and your loved ones will be properly cared for and the individuals you've selected to act on your behalf have the necessary authorization.

Laurie and I hope to see you at one of the upcoming Senior Living Celebration events so you too can be armored for victory. Come join us for breakfast and be sure to attend one of Laurie's workshop sessions during the day. If you are not able to attend, you may always contact us directly to discuss how best to organize your estate planning goals to achieve your personal and charitable objectives to support your church and other Baptist causes. To learn more, you may contact Laurie Valentine, or me at our toll-free number (866) 489-3533.

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

Ky. Baptist Foundation



Richard Carnes

Two with Kentucky ties to serve on SBC committee

St. Louis—Southern Baptist Convention President Ronnie Floyd has named Committee on Resolutions members for the June 14-15 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in St. Louis.

Floyd, senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, appointed the 10-member committee, which includes two with ties to Kentucky—Linda Cooper, of Bowling Green, and Jim Smith, of Louisville.

Cooper is the national president of Woman's Missionary Union and recently had the task of naming the search committee who will identify the next executive director of the missions organization. She also serves on the SBC Executive Committee. A former state WMU president, she is a member of Forest Park Baptist Church in Bowling Green.

Smith was recently named vice president of communications for the National Religious Broadcasters in Washington, D.C. Previously, he was executive editor and chief spokesman of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. From 1989-1995, Smith was director of government relations for the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Committee, and from 2001-2013, he was executive editor of Florida Baptist Witness. He is a member of Ninth & O Baptist Church in Louisville.

Floyd named Stephen Rummage of Florida as committee chairman and Jason Duesing of Missouri as vice chairman. Rummage is senior pastor of Bell Shoals Baptist Church in Brandon; Duesing is provost and associate professor of historical theology at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City.

Proposed resolutions may be submitted as early as April 15, but no later than 15 days prior to the SBC annual meeting, giving the Committee on Resolutions a two-week period in which to consider submissions. This year's cut-off date is May 30. Resolutions may not be submitted during the annual meeting.

Resolutions should preferably be submitted by e-mail through the resolutions submission page at sbc.net/resolutions/ submit or mailed to the Committee on Resolutions in care of the SBC Executive Committee, 901 Commerce St., Nashville, TN 37203. Proposed resolutions must be typewritten, titled, dated and include complete contact information for the person and his or her church.

Resolutions must be accompanied by a Credentials for Resolutions Submittal form (downloadable from the resolutions submission webpage) or by a letter on church letterhead, either of which must be signed by the pastor or other church officer, certifying that the individual submitting the resolution is a member in good standing. (BP)

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State leaders explore church revitalization

By Keith Collier

Charleston, S.C.—Church growth is a “supernatural event, and therefore church revitalization is more of a spiritual issue than a mechanical one,” said Ken Hemphill, director for North Greenville University’s Center for Church Planting and Revitalization, during a meeting of leaders from 14 Baptist state conventions, including Kentucky.

Hemphill was a guest speaker at the March 21-22 meeting in Charleston, S.C., where the network of leaders focused on sharing best practices related to work in church revitalization. Also present were representatives from LifeWay Christian Resources and the North American Mission Board as well as several leaders of associations in South Carolina.

“Our core conviction is (that) nothing changes the heart and mind but the Word of God applied by the Spirit of God,” Hemphill said. “Church revitalization must be undergirded by prayer and based on the effective and accurate teaching of God’s Word.”

The leadership network was initiated by Kenneth Priest, director of convention strategies for the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, and Steve Rice, church consulting and revitalization team leader for

the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

“The Southern Baptists of Texas Convention believes church revitalization is brought about by the people of God returning to the Word of God,” Priest noted.

“This means that the strongest model for bringing about the needed change in a church is done from the pulpit by the pastor,” he said. “Therefore, we use a process that is focused on preaching for revitalization and reinforce this with small group study based off the sermon.”

Darwin Meighan, director of church revitalization/evangelism for the Nevada Baptist Convention, shared ways his convention partners with pastors and churches, including providing resources that give “transferable scriptural principles along with key components essential to the spiritual process of revitalizing every church regardless of its size, condition or context.”

“Our desire is to come alongside pastors and churches to join them in the journey of restoring spiritual health, hope and renewal in each church’s unique ministry setting, with the goal of helping them more effectively accomplish the Great Commission,” Meighan said.

Each year, a different state convention hosts the



Ken Hemphill, director for North Greenville University’s Center for Church Planting and Revitalization, speaks to Baptist state convention leaders about church revitalization in Charleston, S.C. (Photo by Kenneth Priest)

meeting of state convention leaders so they can discuss what is happening in their respective states, new practices and tools developed in the past year, what is working and what is not working in church revitalization.

“Even though each of us has a different model, none of them are bad or wrong; they are simply different,” Rice said. “Each of us has to approach revitalization within the model and the context of the model within our respective state convention.” (BP)

Annual audit of KBC entities report

By Stephen Bruce

The audit work group of the Kentucky Baptist Convention mission board’s business and finance committee met Dec. 15, 2015, to perform its annual review and evaluation of the financial condition and practices of the Kentucky Baptist Convention’s affiliated entities and its mission board as reflected in their 2015 audited financial statements.

Kentucky Baptists can be pleased that this procedure exists whereby the convention and its institutions and agencies can give an accounting of the stewardship of the resources entrusted to them.

These entities include University of the Cumberlands, Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Oneida Baptist Institute, Kentucky Baptist Assemblies, Sunrise Children’s Services, Baptist Healthcare System, Woman’s Missionary Union, Western Recorder, Kentucky Baptist Foundation and the Kentucky Baptist Mission Programs and Subsidy.

Kentucky Baptists also can be pleased and encouraged with the sound financial

condition and stability of the institutions and agencies and the level of cooperation demonstrated by them. The work group complimented the board and administrative leadership of the convention and each of its affiliated entities. Kentucky Baptists are encouraged to increase their support of these institutions and agencies prayerfully and financially.

Members of the audit work group were: Chairperson Stephen Bruce (Versailles), Charles Steger (Walton), Andy Gowins (Hartford), Mike Hamrick (Lawrenceburg), Dennis Jackson (Berry), Bobby Sellers (Dawson Springs), Richard Carwile (Bloomfield), Barry Yates (Morganfield), Stan Milby (Russell Springs), Maurice Hollingsworth (Shelbyville), John Gifford (Bowling Green), Executive Director-Treasurer Paul Chitwood, Business Manager Lowell Ashby, Accounting Services Director/Controller Cathi Roy-Sanders. In addition, Rebecca Phillips, CPA auditor from Mountjoy Chilton Medley met with the group.

The work group’s report was made to the full Business and Finance Committee on April 1 and was approved.

Pinwheel planting at the Capitol

By Christi Moffitt

Sunrise Children’s Services, Kentucky’s oldest provider of support services for abused and neglected children, joined other children’s support agencies from across the state at this year’s “Pinwheel Planting,” held March 31 in Frankfort.

What began as a rainy, brooding day was quickly transformed by bright signs of hope for one of Kentucky’s most vulnerable populations. Thousands of silver and blue pinwheels were placed on the front lawn and around the Capitol building, commemorating the work of Kentucky’s child advocacy organizations.

The Pinwheel Planting, which kicked off National Child Abuse Prevention Month, was a celebration of progress in strengthening child abuse prevention measures in Kentucky, and an opportunity to focus on an epidemic that impacts tens of thousands of children statewide, according to the Kentucky Department of Community Based Services (2015 statistics). Most importantly, the pinwheels symbolize hope and healing.

“There is something so poignant and powerful about this event,” said Dale Suttles, president of Sunrise Children’s Services. “It’s very moving, especially for those of us who work with abused and neglected children each day, and a reminder of the intrinsic worth of every human being. It’s why the work we do is so important.”

The Pinwheel Planting and National Child Abuse Prevention Month serve as reminders that recognition and understanding are essential to helping prevent child abuse and neglect ... and to reducing the number of pinwheels that appear on the statehouse lawn each year. Kentucky Attorney General Andy Beshear, who joined First Lady Glenna Bevin at the rally, reported

that his office expects to prosecute significantly more child abuse cases this year than last, and noted that it’s everyone’s responsibility to report suspected child abuse.

Consequently, it is important to recognize the signs of abuse, which may be indicated if a child:

- Exhibits a sudden shift in behavior or starts doing poorly in school
- Experiences difficulty learning or concentrating which cannot be traced to physical or psychological reasons

- Appears to be excessively passive or withdrawn

- Does not want to go home after school or other activities

An abusive situation may also be present if a parent:

- Does not appear to be concerned about their child
- Treats the child as an unwanted burden or a “problem”
- Ignores problems the child may be having at school or home
- Issues demands the child cannot meet*

Sunrise Children’s Services offers Kentucky’s hurting children and families a continuum of Christ-centered care, including therapeutic, residential and foster care programs for abused, abandoned and victimized children throughout the state. Sunrise’s nonprofit ministry began in 1869 — today, it is a fully licensed behavioral health service organization helping change the lives of children in crisis throughout the commonwealth. For more information or to learn how you can help, call 1.800.456.1386 or visit www.sunrise.org.

Contact Sunrise Children’s Services, P.O. Box 1429, Mount Washington, KY 40047-1429; (502) 538-1000; www.sunrise.org.



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Long-time Okolona pastor Carter dies

Louisville—John E. Carter, 97, Okolona Baptist Church pastor for nearly 65 years, died Feb. 3, preaching to the very end.

Born October 23, 1918, Carter was pastor at Okolona from 1951 until his death, having served Rockbridge Baptist Church in Washington County in seminary. He is a graduate of Wake Forest University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Choosing not to take a ministerial exemption, Carter served as a Sergeant-Major of the Army Air Corps bombardier school in Albuquerque, N.M., throughout World War II.

He is survived by his wife of 73 years, Rebecca Lila Carter (McAlister), three children, John K. Carter, Paul W. Carter, and Brenda R. Carter-Rupe; four grandchildren; and seven great grandchildren.

A funeral service was conducted Feb. 7 at Okolona Baptist Church, with burial at Hebron Cemetery in Shepherdsville. (BP)

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

BARBOURVILLE—James McDonald has been called as pastor of Callihan Church in Knox Association.

BEREA—Conway Church will hold revival April 10-13 at 6 p.m. on Sunday and 7 p.m. on Monday-Wednesday. **Randy McPherson** will be evangelist, with "Family Day" and a fellowship meal April 10. **Bobby Turner** is pastor.

CLINTON—Springhill Church has called **David Crowder** as pastor.

FARMINGTON—Farmington Church will hold revival April 17-20. Sunday, 11 a.m.: **Ron Noffsinger**; Sunday, 6 p.m.: **Donnie Blick**; Monday, 7 p.m.: **Moses Radford**; Tuesday, 7 p.m.: **Jimmy Fuller**; Wednesday, 7 p.m.: **Chris Skipworth**. **Ben Stratton** is pastor.

FULTON—Riceville Church will hold revival April 20-24. **Max Cooper** will bring the message. **Richard Hart** is pastor.

LEXINGTON—Boones Creek Church will hold spring revival April 24 at 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., and April 25-27 at 6:30

p.m. nightly. **Todd Rader**, pastor of Ephesus Church, will bring the messages. **Charles Dixon** is pastor.

LOUISVILLE—Women of Walnut Street Church present "An Evening With Liz Curtis Higgs" April 21 at 6 p.m. Program begins at 7 p.m. **Mark Williams** is pastor.

Long Run Association is seeking a successor to its director of missions, **Wesley Pitts**, who has announced retirement, effective Oct. 31.

PRESTONSBURG—Enterprise Association will present a "Being the Church" training conference April 15-16. Times for the conference are Friday, 6-8 p.m., and Saturday, 8:30 a.m.-Noon, followed with a lunch roundtable. The conference is free, but registration is requested. Register by calling (606) 886-3335 or emailing enterpriseassoc@bellsouth.net.

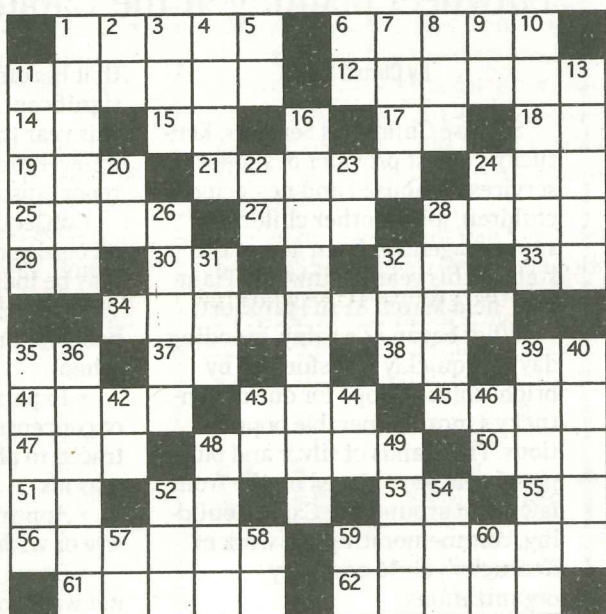
SHELBYVILLE—First Church will host The Voice of the Martyrs Advance Conference April 16. Register for free at www.vomevents.com or call (800) 747-0085.

Maurice Hollingsworth is pastor.

Bible Crosswords

Across

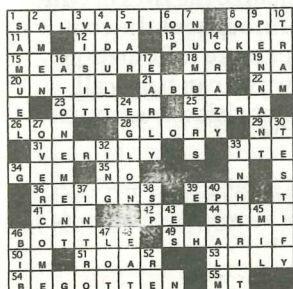
- 1 God sent this man a dream of a ladder with angels ascending it (Genesis 28:12-16)
- 6 God called this man from a burning bush (Exodus 3:1-12)
- 11 Full of cheerful good humor
- 12 Jesus called this man to follow Him (John 1:43)
- 14 Osmium, chem. symbol
- 15 Delirium tremens, abbr.
- 17 Manganese, chem. symbol
- 18 Maine, abbr.
- 19 Not existing before, recently made or invented
- 21 Belonging to the church's first missionary (Acts 9:15-16; 13:1-2)
- 24 Suitable or quick at learning
- 25 Tailless monkeys, or large uncouth men
- 27 Unwell
- 28 Without payment, costing nothing
- 29 His Highness, abbr.
- 30 Lanthanum, chem. symbol
- 32 Milliliter, abbr.
- 33 Rural route, abbr.
- 34 Jesus called this man to follow Him (John 1:44-51)
- 35 Society of Jesus, abbr.
- 37 Physical Education, abbr.
- 38 In the matter of, about, concerning, abbr.
- 39 Printer's unit of measure
- 41 Electrically charged particles
- 43 Fodder
- 45 A narrative or story
- 47 Life-support system, abbr.
- 48 Carried
- 50 Central Intelligence Agency, abbr.
- 51 Exclamation of satisfaction
- 52 Laughter sound



#60

- 53 Eastern Time, abbr.
- 55 Rue, Amer. abbr.
- 56 Excellent, most impressive or splendid
- 59 Person who worked iron
- 61 God called this man to become Israel's first High Priest (Leviticus 8:2)
- 62 God called this man to marry a harlot (Hosea 1:1-4)
- Down
- 1 Sold into slavery by his brothers (Genesis 37:27-28)
- 2 Authorized Version of the Bible, abbr.
- 3 Criminal Investigation Department of Scotland Yard, abbr.
- 4 Hardy cereal plants grown in cool climates
- 5 Barrel, abbr.
- 6 Military Policeman, abbr.
- 7 Units of electrical resistance
- 8 Breaking of religious or moral law
- 9 Elevated railway
- 10 An affected smile
- 11 God called this man to warn Nineveh about coming judgment (Jonah 1:1-2)
- 13 Jesus called this fisherman to follow Him (Matthew 4:18-20)
- 16 The territory of a sultan
- 20 Us
- 22 Artificial Intelligence, abbr.
- 23 Lines, abbr.
- 24 Argon, chem. symbol
- 26 Strikes with open hand
- 28 Moving swiftly, nimble
- 31 Consumed
- 32 To damage, to spoil
- 35 This man was called to help Paul (Acts 15:40)
- 36 God called this man to lead Israel into Canaan (Joshua 1:1-9)
- 39 God called this man to be the successor to Elijah (1 Kings 19:16-17)
- 40 Fleshy or full of subject matter
- 42 Not specified, abbr.
- 43 "____, every one that thirsteth" (Isaiah 55:1)
- 44 KJV you
- 46 Actinium, chem. symbol
- 48 Tropical plant with a tuberous root used for food
- 49 Item used for demonstration
- 52 Opposite of him
- 54 It is, poetic contraction
- 57 Ma's mate
- 58 Battalion, abbr.
- 59 Hush!
- 60 Tellurium, chem. symbol

#59



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April

8-9 Basic Training Journey - Spanish, Westport Road Church, Louisville

8-9 Disaster Relief Chaplaincy Training, Calvary Church, London

8-9 Ky. WMU Annual Meeting & Missions Celebration, First Church, Madisonville

9 Disaster Relief Training Phases 1 & 2, Calvary Church, London

10 Ky. Baptist Women's Chorale Performance, Edmonton Church, Edmonton

14 LIFE Tour, Buck Run Church, Frankfort

14-16 Ministers in Transition, Louisville

16 Operation Inasmuch Training Northern Ky. Association, Erlanger

18 Senior Living Celebration, First Church, Madisonville

19 Senior Living Celebration, Severns Valley Church, Elizabethtown

21 Senior Living Celebration, First Church, Richmond

22-23 Women's Regional Retreat, Laurel Lake Camp, Corbin

CLASSIFIED ADS

SEEKING: New Bethel Baptist Church, a growing, mid-sized church in Northern Kentucky, is seeking a full-time pastor to provide spiritual instruction and leadership to its members and to the Verona, Ky., community. The church averages 160+ in Sunday morning worship, has many active ministries, and is seeking to expand. A complete job description, and community and church profile is at www.nbbck.com/. A resumé, cover letter and three references should be submitted no later than April 15 in electronic format (preferred) to newbethelbaptistverona@gmail.com, or via mail at Attn.: Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 50, Verona, KY 41092.

SEEKING: Friendship Baptist Church is seeking a bi-vocational minister of music to lead a blended worship of a multi-generational church. Candidates must be experienced in worship leadership, evidence a kingdom focus and be a team player. We are located in Campbellsville, Ky. Send resumé to friendshipcampbellsville.com, 5411 Bengal Rd., Campbellsville, KY 42718, or to finance@friendshipcampbellsville.com. Resumes accepted until April 15.

SEEKING: Rosebower Baptist Church is seeking a part-time music minister. Please mail resumé to 1120 Tyree Rd., Paducah, KY 42003.

SEEKING: Oldham-Trimble Association is taking resumé for the director of missions position. Resumes should be mailed to DOM Search Team, c/o Sandra Perry, 673 Brownsboro Rd., Pendleton, KY 40055. You can also call Mark Roberts at (502) 494-2946. Deadline is April 30.

SEEKING: Cornerstone Baptist Church is seeking a senior pastor. A young church between Lexington, Ky., and Winchester, Ky. Send resumé to 4451 Winchester Rd., Lexington, KY 40509.

SEEKING: Stithton Baptist Church is a culturally, ethnically and economically diverse body of believers located in Radcliff, Ky., adjacent to the Fort Knox Army community. We are prayerfully searching for a pastor that meets the qualifications as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 1 Peter 5:1-4. Resumes and inquiries can be sent to StithtonPastorSearch@gmail.com.

SEEKING: New Bethel Baptist Church, 504 Highway 2779, Hardinsburg, KY, 40143, is seeking a part-time youth/children's minister. Please contact Bro. Jeremy at (270) 925-5875 or HardinsburgNewBethel-Baptist@gmail.com.

SEEKING: Immediate opening (Bullitt County) qualified lawn applicator certified with Department of Agriculture, valid driver's license/cell phone. Leave message (502) 955-5494 or mail resumé to jcross4081@yahoo.com.

SEEKING: An interim pastor and/or a pastor who can fill the bivocational position for Locust Grove Baptist Church in Hardin County. Our congregation is praying for a person who will lead in the Baptist Faith and Message, preach and work to reach the lost in our rapidly growing community. Please submit a resumé to Ellen Douglas, P.O. Box 429, Elizabethtown, KY 42702 or send by e-mail to: ellen_m_douglas@yahoo.com.

SEEKING: Full-time youth minister who feels called to shepherd the teens of First Baptist Church of Lawrenceburg, Ky. Email resumé & references to fbcyouthsearch16@gmail.com by May 16.

SEEKING: Southside Baptist Church, Princeton, Ky., is now accepting resumé for a full-time youth and children's minister. Bachelor's degree, seminary training and experience is preferred, but not required. Please email resumé to: youthsearchteam@southsidebaptist.com or mail to: Southside Baptist Church, Attention: Youth Search Team, P.O. Box 684, Princeton, KY 42445.

SEEKING: Olivet Baptist Church is a community oriented church located in Paducah, Ky., with Southern Baptist affiliation. We are seeking an associate pastor of family ministries to join our team. This is a full-time position ministering to the families of youth and children. The qualifications include: Seminary degree and/or theological education. Ministry experience preferred. Demonstrated leadership and organizational skills. A desire to be a team player. The primary responsibilities are, but not limited to: oversee the discipleship of our families, lead and oversee the spiritual training of our children and students from birth through college. The primary emphasis will be 7th-12th grade. Plan and coordinate a comprehensive student ministry. Please send a resumé and photo via mail or email to: Olivet Baptist Church Personnel, Associate Pastor, 5186 Hinkleville Rd., Paducah, KY 42001. Email: office@obc-paducah.org.

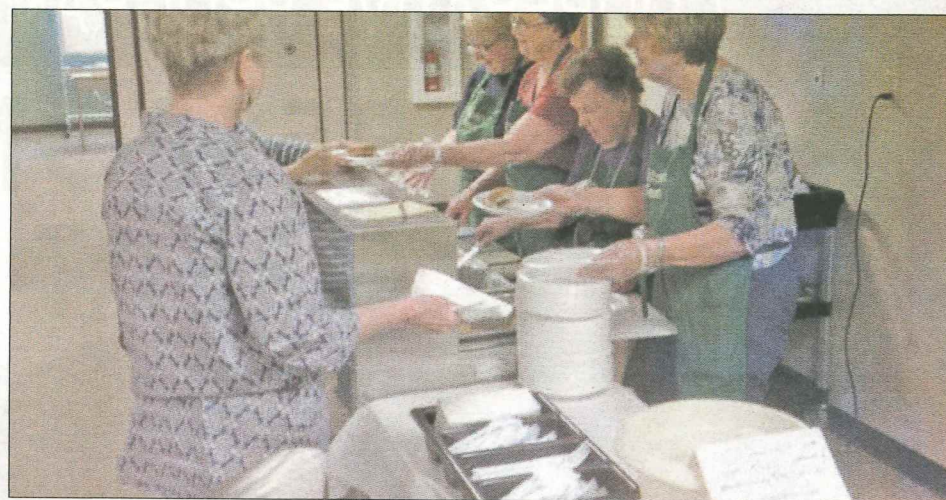
SEEKING: Union Baptist Church in Northern Ky., is seeking a part-time director of children's ministry. Please submit resumé with references to ubcchildrensearch@gmail.com or Union Baptist Church, P.O. Box 194, Union, KY 41091. Deadline for resumé submittal is April 30.

SEEKING: Bagdad Baptist Church is seeking a person to fill the position of minister of discipleship and family. This person would be helping new believers and long-time church members grow in their walk with Christ. If interested in applying please send your resumé to kwiley83@att.net.

FOR SALE: 2000 Ford E-450 26-passenger church bus. 55,673 miles. Diesel V-8. 1 owner. Excellent condition. 16k. First Baptist Church, Whiteville, Tenn. Contact fbwhiteville@gmail.com.

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SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Franklin, Ky., is in search of a full-time minister of youth and children in order to disciple our young people and to win the youth of Franklin to faith in Jesus Christ. Minister must live in or be willing to relocate to Franklin. Resumes can be submitted to fbcyouth2016@gmail.com and will be accepted through April 13.



Church leverages Boomers for kingdom impact

By Stephanie Heading

Vidor, Texas—America's Baby Boomers are aging. In 2014, the last of the Boomers—those born between 1946 and 1964—crossed the threshold into their 50s; and whether they liked it or not, they received their first invitation to join AARP and entered the ranks of “senior adults.”

Aging Boomers present new challenges for churches, who now must balance ministering to younger Boomers, who often do not consider themselves seniors, and their Builder Generation parents, many of whom are still active and involved in the same churches and ministries as their own children.

In his 21 years of ministry to seniors at First Baptist Church of Vidor, Phil Burnaman has seen huge changes in senior adult ministry. For years, senior adult ministry was a “silo” ministry, according to Burnaman. “All our ministries—preschool, children, youth, adults and senior adults—were separate and competed for people, time and budget.

Our senior adult ministry was activity- and fellowship-centered. It was set up like a youth ministry for 60-70-year-olds.”

However, about 10 years ago, FBC Vidor rewrote its mission statement and shifted how it does ministry in all areas, including senior adult ministry.

“Here, we eliminated ‘silo’ ministries,” Burnaman said, adding, “All our ministries (now) work together as a team.” Part of the shift included changing the name of senior adult ministry to “Encore Adults”—saving the best for last.

That reorganization, in addition to the dynamic of having both Boomers and Builders involved in senior adult ministry, fueled a significant change in how FBC Vidor views ministry to and by older members.

“Our senior adult ministries don’t focus on activities but on how Boomers and Builders can be effective in serving and in growing in our walk,” Burnaman said.

Burnaman also noted that everything in the Encore Adult ministry has been brought into alignment with the church’s ministry statement: “First Baptist Church of Vidor exists to make disciples who worship God, grow in Christ, serve others, and impact the world.” Every activity of Encore Adults must fall under one of the four tenets of this church mission statement.

For example, The Glory Singers, a choir of Builders and Boomers, minister inside the church and fall under the

worship component of the mission statement, while The Glory Band, comprised of younger Builders and Boomers, goes into the community to minister, so it is part of the church’s impact strategy.

Even as Encore Adult activities support the mission statement, they are also grounded in the church’s small group program. Currently, 145 Baby Boomers are enrolled in Life Groups, which are divided by age and stage of life.

With the structure firmly in place, Burnaman is then free to minister to both Baby Boomers and the Builder Generation, striving to meet each group’s unique needs. “If you want to be effective, you have to be creative and strategic to provide ministry opportunities for two different generations,” he said.

“Baby Boomers do not want to be called ‘seniors.’ Baby Boomers are not interested in doing the same things as their parents. The main thing with Boomers is how they serve, impact society and socialize.”

The Builder Generation is more interested in clubs, game nights, day trips and luncheons, but these activities are not priorities for Baby Boomers.

“Boomers couldn’t care less to get together for a program,” Burnaman said. “They like large group meetings for a

cause. They also like conferences or forums with things to help them enjoy life better, such as ‘how to be a better caregiver.’”

Boomers are also facing additional challenges that don’t plague Builders. Boomers are “the sandwich generation”—caring for their elderly parents while many continue to raise their own children.

Due to the number of single parents raising children alone, Boomers are also being called on to help raise the next generation. “Many are focusing on taking care of their grandchildren,” Burnaman said.

While Builders and Boomers are both considered “seniors,” Burnaman has also noticed Boomers themselves can be divided into two groups—those who grew up in the church and those who did not.

“Boomers who grew up in the church have been mentored and see the importance of long-term projects and are willing to mentor long-term,” he said. Therefore, Encore Adults is currently involved in a spring mentoring program for students in grades 1-12, teaching them how to become godly young people.

On the other hand, Boomers who grew up outside the church see everything from the point of view of the “Me

Generation,” according to Burnaman.

“They are willing to do short-term projects but want freedom to fulfill their social needs,” he said. “They will participate in projects, such as mentoring young people, if it’s worth their time and is self-satisfying, making them feel good.”

Over time, Burnaman noted, these Boomers can move away from their “Me Generation” upbringing and learn to worship, grow, serve and impact their communities.

“We have to be patient with Baby Boomers who did not grow up in church,” he said. “They are at a stage of life where they are thinking about spiritual things. However, they see things through their anti-establishment filter. You must earn their trust, and once they accept Christ as their Savior, they put everything into it. They are a valuable asset.”

As Boomers age and people in general live longer, their impact on the church will continue to be felt for some time.

“Baby Boomers have had an impact on the world,” Burnaman said. “They bring that experience to the local church. Boomers have vast experiences that will help the younger generation, if they will listen.” (BP)

A servant until the end



Disaster Relief volunteers Bob Fulkerson and his wife Margie (left) and Butch and Debbie Porter (right) rest for a moment a few years ago in New York. Fulkerson passed away March 29 while serving in Leesville, La. Both couples are members of First Baptist Church of Galatia, Ill.

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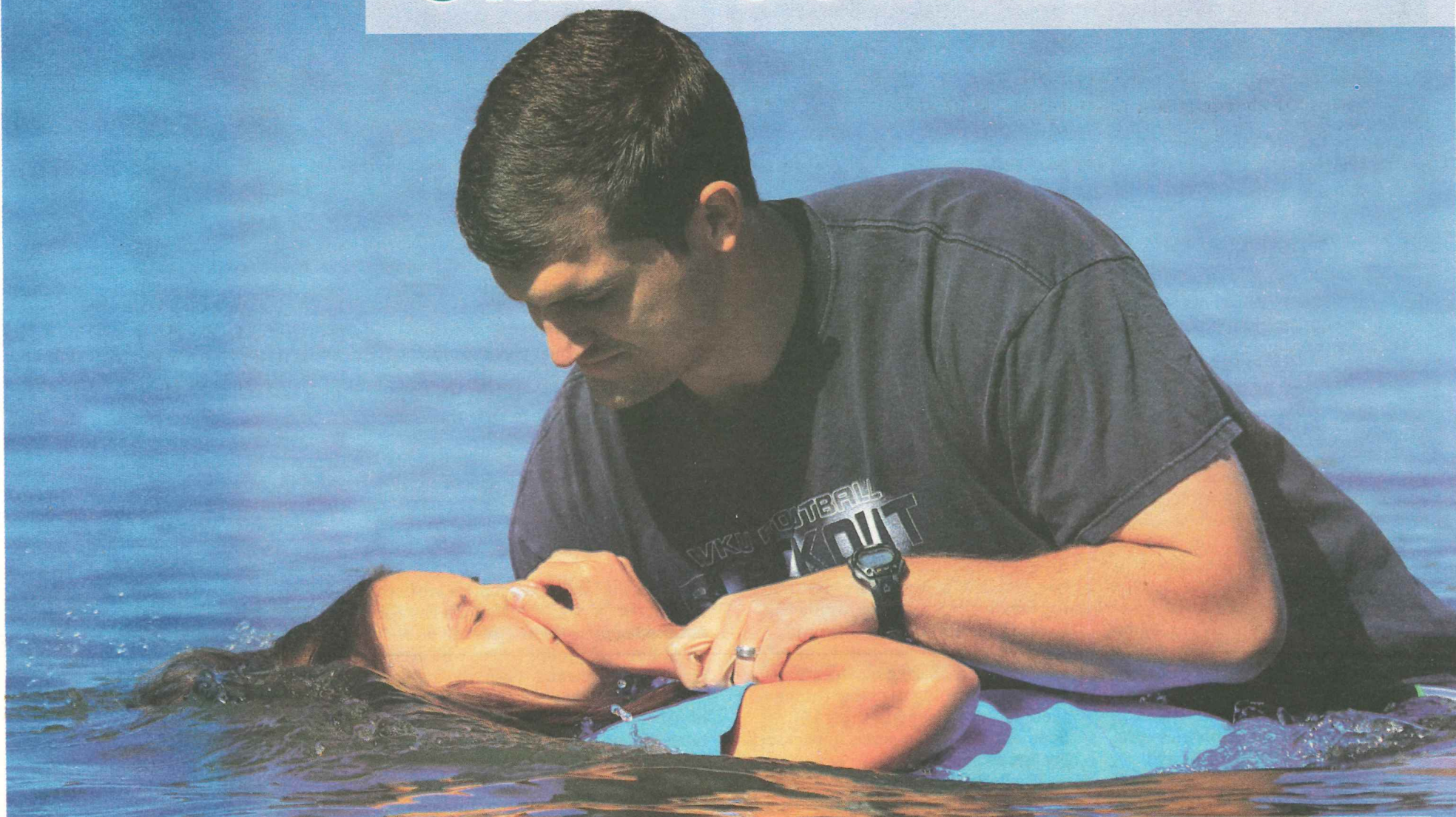
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Cooperative Program Sunday
April 10, 2016