

MARCH 2016, VOL. 153, ISSUE 3

WORD & WAY

SERVING BAPTISTS FOR OVER A CENTURY



Proclaiming **FREEDOM** for the prisoners

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PRISONERS
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**PURSUING
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Elizabeth MacLeod Walls named Jewell president

LIBERTY, Mo. — The William Jewell College Board of Trustees has named Elizabeth MacLeod Walls as the 15th president of the college. She will succeed David Sallee, who will retire July 31 after serving as president since 2000. Her appointment is effective July 1.

MacLeod Walls is in her fourth year as dean of University College at Nebraska Wesleyan University, where she oversees graduate and adult education at four campuses. She previously served in administration at Bryan College of Health Sciences in Lincoln, Neb., as director of institutional effectiveness, dean, interim president and president.

She also has taught college literature courses, written numerous refereed articles, co-edited several books and consulted on accreditation, healthcare reform and continued education.

She graduated Phi Beta Kappa from



MacLeod Walls



Sallee

Hiram (Ohio) College with a B.A. in English and history. She completed a Ph.D. in literature and rhetoric, with Highest Distinction, from Texas Christian University and the Management and Leadership in Education Program at Harvard University.

“After conducting a national search, the board is confident Dr. MacLeod Walls can continue the great work of President Sallee and ensure Jewell’s strength for the future,” said Trustee Chair John Gill.

“She values the traditions and academic rigor of a national liberal arts college, and she has proven success in many facets of higher education administration, including curriculum development, enrollment management, fund development, strategic planning and student services.”

A native of Lincoln, MacLeod Walls will move to Liberty this summer with her husband, Rev. Dr. Craig MacLeod Walls, and their two sons.

“It is my honor to be called to serve as the 15th president of William Jewell College,” she said.

“I look forward to building upon the superb legacy of Dr. David Sallee and his team, and to work with the students, board, faculty, staff, alumni and the larger Jewell community to fulfill the founders’ vision of transforming those who will transform the world.”

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WORD & WAY
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Focus on Christ all season this Easter

Growing up, Easter was basically a single-day observance in my hometown Baptist church.

We acknowledged Good Friday and what happened to Christ on that day, but for most of us this was a signal that

it was almost Easter Sunday. The only other pre-Easter event that had become a staple in our congregation was the Easter cantata presented by the choir on the Sunday before.

The annual cantata was always moving, and it provided a

great opportunity for members to bring their friends to church. Easter Sunday was always a highlight of the worship year as we reflected on Christ's sacrifice for each of us and observed the Lord's Supper.

Practicing Lent was not really on the radar for us. Lent was something a few other churches of different denominations practiced. We couldn't find the word "Lent" in the Bible, so we were not sure what it meant to those who practiced it.

I'm glad that Lent is a part of the Easter season experience at the Baptist church where I have been a member the last several years and many others, in part because it helps us see Easter as more than just a single-day commem-

oration. Because of what Christ's death and resurrection mean to me, it makes sense to spend more time on the subject and more time with Christ.

During that six weeks or so between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday on the Christian calendar, Lent affords those who practice it an opportunity to commemorate not only what Jesus did but to reflect on his life teachings and example.

For many people today, Lent is an opportunity to simplify overcomplicated and overcrowded lives. One thing I remember growing up was our simple understanding that Lent was a time some people of faith gave up something, whether it be an activity, a bad habit or whatever. I remember overhearing the question, "What are you giving up for Lent?"

But the fact is that following Christ faithfully means a lot more than that. Some who have given up bad habits during this spiritual season have made the self-improvement permanent; others "backslide" into their old ways and resume the practice of bad habits.

Without question, for any believer to address sin in his (or her) life is not only admirable but important. Jesus himself told us so.

But the Lenten season gives us a perfect opportunity to do what we should be doing every day, not just in late winter and early spring. Our focus on Jesus confronts us with seeking his will for our lives and virtually every aspect of our being.

I *wish* I were more like Jesus in how I thought, spoke and acted, but wishing

usually won't make it so. Most of us are fickle and impatient wishers anyway. We quickly move onto the next wish, and it may have little to do with Christ's desires and much to do with our own "wants."

This season is one in which we join others in holy pursuit of the one after whom Christians — translated sometimes as "little Christs" — are named.

This spiritual focus enables us to do just that — focus. This attention, accompanied by desire, dedication and ongoing commitment, help us to not simply imitate the talk or active responses of Jesus, but rise to the next level, which is to increasingly *be* more like him.

That desire — interestingly — tends to grow as we find ourselves responsible for raising children and influencing grandchildren. It also finds fertile soil as we engage in various ministry activities.

Perhaps based on some of our own mission experiences, we adults sometime make light of the enthusiasm that grips Christian young people when they engage in specific missions and ministry. We don't say it aloud much anymore, but we sometimes nod our heads and mumble to ourselves, "Well, that won't last long."

I pray that whatever draws any of us closer to Christ and his purposes this time of year will not only stick with us but also grow and mature.

Life with all its busy-ness and allure has a way of pulling us back from the most important things. Use this time of gratitude to Christ to persistently cling to him. God bless you.

Bill Webb is editor of Word & Way.



BILL WEBB

MBU violence awareness emphasis is commendable

As I write, Missouri Baptist University in St. Louis, Mo., is winding up its second annual Interpersonal Violence Awareness Week.

I am reading a news release and getting an overview of various events addressing serious topics that MBU is helping students and others address.

The university and its students

deserve commendation for engaging in dialog about interpersonal violence, learning to identify signs of abuse and helping male students to become "men of integrity" in treating women as God intended.

The week included engagement with community programs, including Thrive (to provide resources for women) and

ALIVE (Alternatives to Living in Violent Environments).

Throughout February, MBU Campus Safety held Rape Aggression Defense classes led by certified instructors.

Unfortunately, the issues are real and pervasive in communities today. That's why this effort by the university community is praiseworthy.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Help Syrian refugees, but be concerned about terrorists

FROM DON POLACEK

Farmington, MO

I'm in complete agreement with the clergy and everyone else who is trying to help the Syrian refugees, but....

No one seems to be concerned about the possibility of terrorists coming into our country along with these refugees.

After 2001, it seems to me that is a very real possibility, and I really don't think

Barack Obama or the other politicians in Washington care! I think someone should be concerned about this!

Carl Hunker a Baptist saint

FROM JERRY CAIN

Kearney, MO

I learned with sadness in the last edition of Word & Way that Carl Hunker had died. He was truly a Baptist saint if Baptists were to bless sainthood.

I met Carl back in the 1980s when Missouri Baptists worked together on Bold Mission Taiwan. Our first contact was in Dr. Hunker's

home at the seminary in Taipei just a few weeks before his wife Jeanette died.

I did not have time to get to know her but others would testify that she should be sainted also.

Upon Dr. Hunker's retirement from international missions, he moved to Liberty and lived in College Place West adjacent to the William Jewell College campus. He regularly attended Thursday morning chapel and made use of campus resources to feed his always inquiring mind.

He was gentle and kind and patient and always brought a sense of tranquility to any gathering. We need him now.

Back in those days at Jewell I had a spiritual advisor each year, and three times over several years I asked Dr. Hunker to meet with me monthly for a year.

He insisted we meet in his home, where he would prepare Chinese *jiaozi* (pot-stickers) and we would talk and read and pray together.

When he prayed, we had to kneel on the floor and rest our elbows on the couch. I had never used that prayer posture before but have subsequently used it many times due to the influence of Dr. Hunker.

My soul rejoices at his eternal victory but aches at the loss of this spiritual giant.

“SBU professors have high expectations, but they help you meet those expectations. They see potential in every student. They really care about you personally and academically.”

MATTHEW RANDOLPH
Accounting major from Lebanon, Mo.

Matthew is a member of the Accounting Club, the student chapter of Institute of Management Accountants, and Enactus.



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Minister ‘fought herself’ over maternity leave

BY JEFF BRUMLEY

Baptist News Global

Many women clergy serve at churches where there are zero or inadequate maternity leave policies.

“The greater percentage of Baptist churches don’t give parental leave policy much thought until a woman staff member either brings the subject up or is pregnant,” said Pam Durso, executive director of Baptist Women in Ministry. “Then the conversation can move from being a healthy policy discussion to feeling very personal and reactionary for that minister.”

But that wasn’t the case for Carol McEntyre, pastor at First Baptist Church in Columbia, Mo., who is taking 12 weeks of maternity leave to adopt an infant girl from China.

McEntyre describes her church’s leave policy as parental, not just maternal, enabling her husband and associate pastor for youth, Michael McEntyre, also to take off a chunk of time once they left for China in February.

Both, she said, could have taken even more time and were encouraged by personnel committee and other church members to take what they needed.

Even so, McEntyre faced daunting challenges in actually going through with the process. And those challenges came not from lay people or other clergy on staff — but from herself.

There were two main obstacles: guilt and her go-get-’em work ethic, McEntyre said.

“I am a Type A person,” she wrote in a recent article for the Baptist Women in Ministry website. “I am competitive, and I am an achiever. I like to work, and I love being a pastor. It is hard for me to let go.”

Her article, “Fighting Myself for Maternity Leave” (tinyurl.com/McEntyre), explained that she and her husband were

set to add the adopted infant to their family, which includes a son who is 6.

But her gung-ho work attitude was getting in the way, she said.

“Even at my previous church, the staff always made fun of me for my to-do lists. I always have it with me, I’m always



Carol McEntyre with her son Nate.



Michael and Carol McEntyre clown with their son Nate in 2013.

checking things off.”

She’s also known for her diligence.

“If I expect things to get done and I expect it to get done well, I am probably going to come back and check with you.”

The idea of taking enough time off to help her, her husband, son and the baby adjust to each other, she explained, challenged those feelings of control at work and resulted in a good amount of guilt.

“I spoke with a spiritual director about all of this, about the guilt that I felt, and the spiritual director said, ‘You need to

trade that guilt in and see what God may give you in place of that.’”

HEALTHY CONVERSATIONS NEEDED

McEntyre’s self-imposed barriers to maternity leave place her right in the middle of the pack among those whose churches have adequate policies, Durso said in an email.

“Carol’s response, I think, is pretty universal. Women ministers often feel conflicted about how to best care for their families while still fulfilling church obligations and meeting the expectations of members.”

And the truth is, it’s not a problem faced by women alone.

“Male ministers struggle with those feelings as well,” Durso said.

The difficulty, whatever the gender, boils down to boundary-setting, which Durso said can be tough for ministers — especially younger ones.

But congregations can do a lot to help, she added.

“Churches who want to have healthy ministers need to have conversations about boundaries and self-care, respect for family time and days off, and, of course, parental leave provision for new parents. In the end, the healthiest congregations are those that intentionally learn about ministerial wellbeing and then initiate steps to provide for their ministers.”

Durso has discovered from conversations with women ministers that a small percentage of Baptist churches have given careful thought and done strategic planning on parental leave. Those that do have plans “vary greatly from generous to following the ‘letter of the law’” as spelled out in the Family Medical Leave Act.

‘I HAD NO IDEA’

McEntyre said First Baptist’s parental leave policy definitely falls into the generous category. It offers 60 days of paid leave for the adoption or birth of a child, with an additional 60 days off with con-

gregational approval. On top of that, a minister may tack on all their sick leave.

What McEntyre decided to do is take a total of 12 weeks broken into shorter periods. So after an initial period when both she and Michael are on leave, they will take turns working and being off so that the church isn't without two ministers the entire time.

But it took some creative thinking — initiated by others — to arrive at that plan, she said.

It started when she went to meet with the head of the personnel committee. Her plan was to pitch missing only seven Sundays.

“But the personnel chair said, ‘Let’s not talk about the policy, let’s talk about what you want,’” McEntyre recalled.

She was stumped. “I had no idea what I wanted to do.”

She stumbled through the meeting before asking to reconvene later.

“I said ‘I have to get back to you.’ I was completely thrown off by his encouragement to take the leave.”

PRAY TO KNOW WHAT GOD WANTS

Two ongoing spiritual practices helped her open her mind to the possibilities. One was a years-long Sabbath practice in which she fasted from any ministry-related activities, including emails. Instead she focused on family and rest.

“The rhythm of that practice has helped me think about taking [more] leave.”

Another stemmed from her spiritual director’s advice to pray for what God would want for McEntyre instead of guilt.

“One of my prayers the last few weeks was ‘God, I want to trade in the guilt and what would you give me in its place?’”

The answer has been joy and the opportunity to bond with a newly adopted daughter with her husband and son gathered around, she said.



Pastor Carol McEntyre preaches during a worship service.

“And I got this sense the church is going to be fine” while she is away. “It has survived 190 years without me.”

One reason McEntyre said she wrote the article is to encourage churches to look beyond leave policies just for women ministers.

“I think this issue needs to really be seen as a family issue and not just a women’s issue. Men and women need to be able to take paid time off to care for their children without feeling guilty about it.”

If churches do that, they’ll be setting the example not only for other congregations, but for Americans in general.

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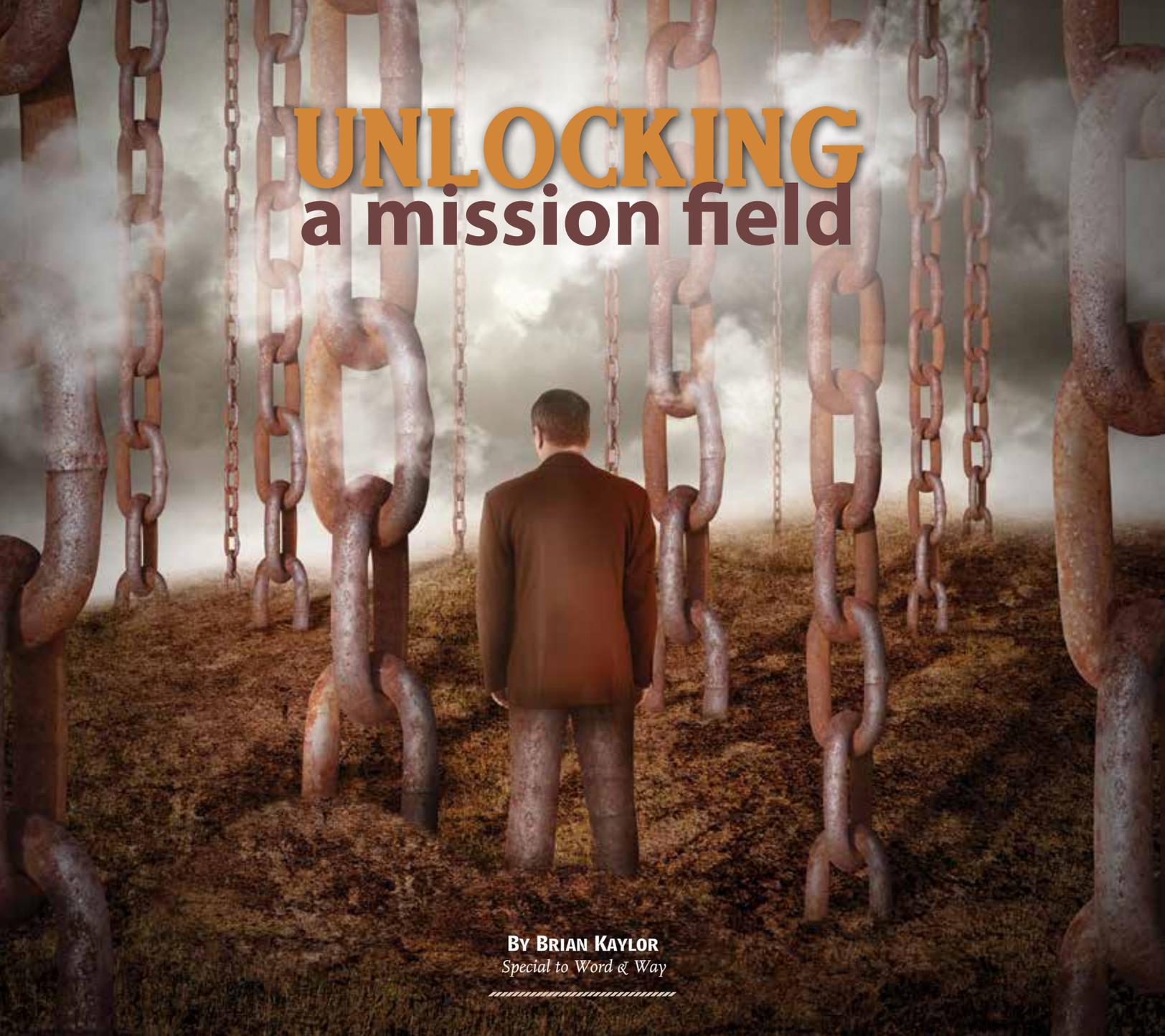
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UNLOCKING a mission field

BY BRIAN KAYLOR
Special to Word & Way

The United States locks up more people in prison — in raw numbers and in percentage of the population — than any other nation in the world. More than 2 million people are incarcerated in federal, state and county jails, with more than twice that number on probation or parole.

Prison numbers appear even more dramatically out-of-balance when looking at incarceration rates for African-American males and other minorities. With so many people

in prison — or formerly in prison, Burton Barr believes “prison is a mission field.”

“It’s a very needed ministry,” he said. “That’s a way to reach people.”

As an associate minister at West Side Missionary Baptist Church in St. Louis, Barr leads the church’s prison ministries. He has also served in prison ministry leadership roles for the Missionary Baptist State Convention of Missouri and the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc.

“Prison ministry has a direct

mandate throughout the Bible,” Barr said, adding that prisoners and related topics are mentioned in the Bible over 130 times.

Involved in prison ministry for two decades, Barr visits several prisons on a regular basis. He also works with aftercare outreach to people recently released from prison. He called aftercare “one of the most important parts of prison ministry.”

“We can go in and preach and sing, but then when they get out if they don’t have the resources, a lot of them might resort back to the same

old ways,” he explained.

Barr noted he experienced this problem personally. Although he grew up in the church and felt a call to ministry as a teenager, he “backslid” and ended up in prison. While incarcerated, a prison minister helped him return to God. Yet, after being released from prison, Barr found himself unwelcome at a church because he was an ex-convict. Eventually, he changed his path and now works at a church and ministers to prisoners just as a pastor once ministered to him.

Because of his own experiences, he hopes churches will recognize they “have to make sure people feel welcome and have resources for them and help them with whatever they need.” He said that while missions is often thought about as something done in Africa or Russia or somewhere else far away, Christians “can do ministry right here at home by ministering to people who are locked up.”

Barr urged people interested in engaging in prison ministry to get training and connect with others already involved. He emphasized one did not have to go into a prison to minister to inmates but could help with aftercare ministries or work with families of inmates.

He also encourages Christians to write letters to inmates since there are tens of thousands of inmates in Missouri alone who never receive a phone call or letter during their incarceration. Throughout it all, he hopes Christians will join him in proclaiming, “God still loves you” to those who “lost their way.”

WORSHIPPING BEHIND BARS

David Tolliver, a long-time Missouri Baptist pastor, serves as institutional chaplain at the Jefferson City Correctional Center. He facilitates the religious meetings and service of various faiths. He said he spends much of his time in administrative tasks but particularly enjoys the opportunities to preach.

Several times a week he also breaks the news to an inmate that a loved one has died.

“Probably the time I do the most ministry is when I’m talking with a person about a death in the family,” he said. “It’s a unique relationship that I have.”

Tolliver acknowledged that for many people, prison ministry can seem “unsettling or scary” but he quickly added, “It’s a rewarding ministry.” He said people who volunteer often say they got more out of it than the inmates, but the inmates disagree.

“It’s rewarding on all sides,” he said.



Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison. That’s what Jesus did.

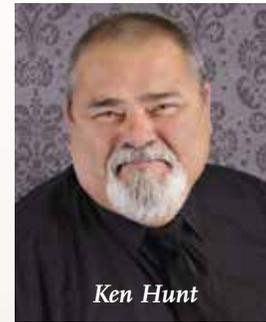
— David Tolliver

He specifically pointed to the worship services as a blessing. The services are often animated as the inmates who attend the services come “because they want to be here.” When he preaches there, he finds it takes twice as long to get through his sermon because the congregation joins in.

Tolliver encouraged Baptists interested in volunteering to call a nearby prison and ask to talk to the chaplain. Quoting Hebrews 13:3, he noted the biblical call to minister to those in prison.

“Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with

them in prison,” Tolliver said. “That is what Jesus did. He found the down-and-out, those in the greatest need and he ministered to them.”



Ken Hunt

Another Baptist pastor spending much of his time behind bars is Ken Hunt. He serves as pastor of Church of Hope, a congregation

inside the South Dakota Women’s Prison in Pierre, S.D. As the pastor to this unique American Baptist congregation, Hunt leads multiple worship services and Bible studies. He spends most of his time at the prison counseling inmates.

Hunt noted that “about 70 percent of our congregation is new every six months to a year.” Yet, even in that short time, he finds many ways “to show the face of Jesus Christ and introduce people to the gospel.” Last year, he baptized about 50 women in the church. He baptized another 10 in February.

“It is an open ministry field where people for the first time are exposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ and there’s great fruit to be borne from that,” he said. “What better thing can we do as Baptists than baptize new believers? There’s nothing cooler than realizing that the kingdom of God has increased and lives have changed. That’s what the heart of ministry is all about.”

Like Tolliver, Hunt noted worship in prison often includes more excitement and energy. Hunt encourages Baptist to visit a service and “to volunteer inside the prison in some way,” where “you will make a difference for life.”

“If you want to change a heart, volunteer for prison ministry,” he added. “Bring hope where there was no hope just by being willing to sacrifice a little bit of time.”

Proclaiming FREEDOM FOR PRISONERS

BY BRIAN KAYLOR
Special to Word & Way



For the past 15 years, Alan Bean has found himself involved in some of the biggest criminal justice controversies in Texas and Louisiana.

In 1999, the mild-mannered Baptist minister founded Friends of Justice and assumed the role of prophet and advocate for criminal justice reform. After successfully working to overturn “what we considered to be a grave injustice” in Tulia, Texas, Bean and his organization received requests to help in other cases, including the “Jena Six” case in Jena, La., in 2007.

He told the story of the first case in his book *Taking Out the Trash* in Tulia, Texas, and both cases found him talking with national media on issues of justice and race.

Today Bean spends much of his time writing and speaking in churches to help Christians understand biblical teachings on issues of criminal justice and prison reform.

“Throughout the teachings of Jesus this is something he was very concerned about,” Bean explained. “Throughout the teachings of Jesus there is this strong sense of compassion for the least, the last and the lost.”

Bean noted Jesus started and ended this ministry by including prisoners in lists of those his followers should particularly care for.

In Luke 4, Jesus recited a passage from Isaiah to say he had come “to proclaim good news to the poor” and “proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” In Matthew 25, Jesus told a parable of sheep and goats being separated in part based on if they cared for “the least of these” like

prisoners.

For Bean, this means Christians need to recapture the teachings of Jesus on caring for prisoners and others often cast out, like widows, orphans, immigrants and refugees.

“Our Christian faith compels us to become prophets, to become advocates,” he explained, “on any issue that affects the poor and the disadvantaged.”

“We’ve lost that but I think we’re getting it back,” he added. “There has been a shift in prison ministry from going into prisons and merely trying to save souls to combining that evangelistic mission with what is redemptive for these people.”

For Christians who have not engaged in prison reform advocacy, Bean said “the best place to start is with Bible study and looking at the scriptures.” He added that “the love of God compels” us to then act.

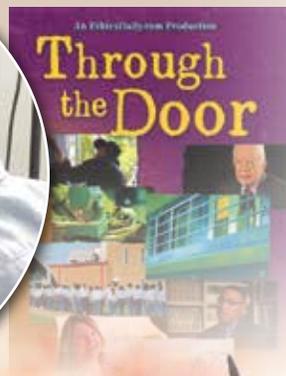
THROUGH THE DOOR

From *The Shawshank Redemption* to *Orange Is the New Black*, prisons often provide the context for movies and TV shows. However, some see film as a medium not merely for entertainment but also for information and advocacy on prison reform.



I’m not saying people don’t make bad choices, but if that’s all we see, I think we’ve got bad vision.”

– Cliff Vaughn



Through the Door, the most recent documentary created by EthicsDaily.com, takes viewers inside prisons to explore how faith communities are ministering to inmate and officers. Shot in Nashville, Tenn., Richmond, Va., Huntsville, Texas, Carlisle, Ind., and Atlanta, Ga., the film explores several aspects of prison life and ministry.

The film has aired on multiple TV broadcast stations and screened at churches across the country. Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, a Baptist Sunday School teacher, is among those interviewed in the film.

Cliff Vaughn, media producer for EthicsDaily.com, served as a producer and director for the film. He noted he had previously visited a prison for some “background research” on an earlier documentary, but he went inside several to film *Through the Door*.

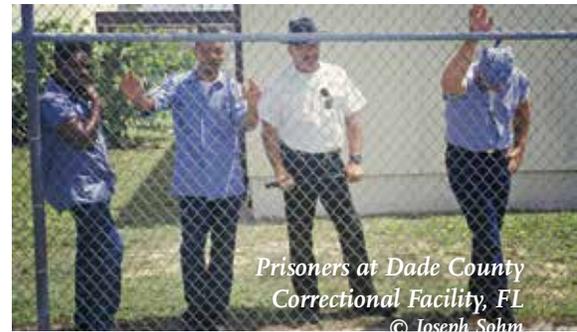
“One of my dominant impressions was respect for the people who work there,” Vaughn explained. “I knew I wasn’t in Kansas anymore, so to speak. My naïveté about some things was punctured.”

“I had never really thought much — prior to this project — about those who work in corrections,” he added. “This project put me in touch with wardens, officers, chaplains, guards, on and on. Their task is tough, to say the least, on so many levels. As we work for a better criminal justice system, we must pay attention to these citizens as well — their safety, wages, support.”

Another area Vaughn particularly saw important was education, not just behind bars but earlier in individuals’ lives.

“I observed what tough work it is to equip folks behind bars — equip them with necessary training, counseling, education and so forth,” he said. “God knows it must continue because so many





people behind bars need this help. But it's easy, for me anyway, to draw a line from this necessity behind bars to our dropping the ball earlier in terms of that which is necessary: education, living wages, building up families and communities. I'm not saying people don't make bad choices, but if that's all we see, I think we've got bad vision."

"Frankly, we've made a lot of documentaries on various topics: immigration, racism, taxes, prisons, to name some," he added. "When we talk to experts in various fields, they

almost always wind up talking about one thing: education. That's just an observation I've made listening to experts talk for the last decade."

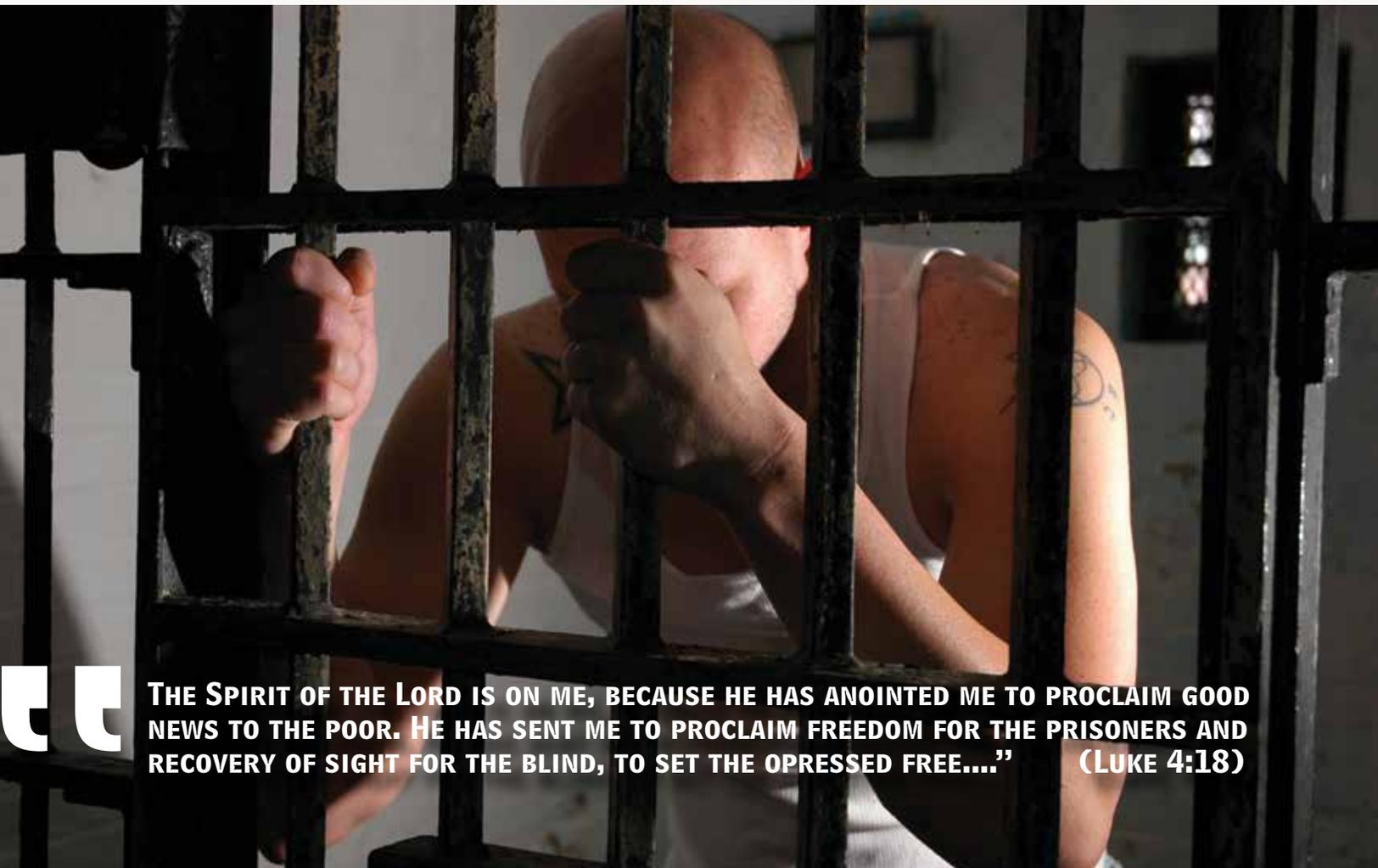
The film is designed for use in churches, either as a full movie screening or shorter segments for Sunday School or small group use. As Vaughn reflected on visiting prisons for the film, he connected issues of prison reform to his faith.

"I was also saddened to see the loss of liberty, the missed opportunities for individuals and for society in the aggregate," he said. "It

made me grateful for the context of blessing and advantage into which I was born, but surely my gratitude isn't enough. My faith mandates working for justice — and I think somewhere in there that means giving others the opportunities I had.

"And that's what I walked out wishing: that my individual blessings could be systemic blessings," he added.

"I guess that's the kingdom of heaven. If I don't act on my wish, then maybe my faith is dead and the kingdom doesn't break in."



THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS ON ME, BECAUSE HE HAS ANOINTED ME TO PROCLAIM GOOD NEWS TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM FREEDOM FOR THE PRISONERS AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT FOR THE BLIND, TO SET THE OPRESSED FREE...." (LUKE 4:18)



Churchnet Annual Gathering

April 15-16
First Baptist Church
Lee's Summit, Mo.

The Churchnet Annual Gathering will be held next month in the Kansas City area. First Baptist Church of Lee's Summit will host us April 15-16 for a special time of worship, preaching, missions, workshops, fellowship and, of course, food.

The Annual Gathering will start with our annual missions banquet on Friday evening. **Carol Bercian**, founder of Tabitha Ministry in Guatemala City, will speak at the banquet. One of the two other main speakers will also be joining us from Guatemala: **Otto Echeverria**, president of the Convention of Baptist Churches in Guatemala.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of Churchnet's partnership with Guatemalan Baptists. We are excited to welcome these Guatemalan partners to celebrate with us and share about their important ministries.

Our other plenary speaker will be **Samuel Tolbert**, president of the National Baptist Convention of America, Inc., International. We are thrilled that all three of these Baptist leaders will share with us during the Annual Gathering.

In addition to the inspiring speakers, the Annual Gathering will feature several workshops led by Baptist

leaders from across the state and beyond. More information about the workshop topics and facilitators will be available soon.

We hope you will make plans now to join us for the Annual Gathering. Please visit our website (www.Churchnet.org) for more information, including details about speakers, workshops, lodging and more.

We look forward to seeing you in Lee's Summit as together we engage the future with hope and share the love of Jesus throughout Missouri, the United States, and the world.

Our mission is to serve churches by fostering collaboration and hope for engaging new generations and cultures.



*Above: Carol Bercian
Below: Samuel Tolbert*



Left: Otto Echeverria



Free Webinars Coming Soon!

Churchnet is offering new, free webinars on important ministry topics.

March webinars:

- "Leading Effectively From Your Natural Leadership Style," **Mark Tidsworth**, March 17 at 10-11:30 a.m.
- "Identifying Your Leadership Growth Plan," **Mark Tidsworth**, March 31 at 10-11 a.m.

April webinar:

- "The Church As a Healing Presence Between Citizens and Law Enforcement," **Terrell Carter**, April 7 at 10-11 a.m.

Learn more and register for them in the "Events" section of our website (www.Churchnet.org). We hope you will join us for these enlightening sessions.

The Shepherd Calls

A conscience for automobiles?

In Mississippi, where I spent my teenage years, one can acquire a driver's license at the age of 15. Despite its legality, my father thought I should not get a license until I was 16. It was a long year.

Decades later, it became my joyous privilege to teach my four children to drive and help them get a driver's license.

Once or twice while I was serving as pastor, I was offered the opportunity to teach a parishioner how to drive. It made me feel a little guilty, but I always managed to avoid that privilege. Like most adults these days, I have spent thousands of miles and hours behind the steering wheel of a car.

Given my driving experience, I read with great interest the projections regarding driverless automobiles.

A recent article in the Kansas City Star Business Section reported on a driverless Google car. There is a legal battle going on about it. (We Americans take everything to court.)

Can a computer be an automobile driver? If so, can a patrolman stop it and give it a ticket? Must a computer-driven car have an accelerator and a brake?

I am wondering if traffic signals like speed limits and approaching road conditions will be automatically beamed to the computer/driver. If so, will the computer in the auto be required to obey those signals? If the answer to those questions is yes, then for all practical purposes this computer driven auto of the future will have a conscience.

On the one hand, these future cars would seem to be an improvement. Many accidents come through driver error. On the other hand, having a conscience has not been extraordinarily successful for humankind as a whole.

Somewhat we find ways of circumventing our consciences. For example, Jesus instructed us to feed the hungry. Our conscience tells us we should do so, but many refuse saying that it perpetuates sloth. "If you're hungry, get a job." But little children are not allowed to work. Per Jesus' instructions, our consciences tell us to love our neighbor. "But wait," you say, "my neighbor isn't very lovable."

It would be easy to adjust an automobile computer conscience — just add an app. Maybe that's what we humans have been doing — changing the apps in our conscience. Obviously, this is all tongue-in-cheek, but think about it. It's intriguing.

Wade Paris writes a weekly syndicated column, "The Shepherd Calls."



WADE PARIS

\$1 million Lilly grant to CBF to benefit pastors

The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship has received a \$1 million grant as part of Lilly Endowment Inc.'s National Initiative to Address Economic Challenges Facing Pastoral Leaders, according to a CBF news release.

The initiative supports a variety of religious organizations across the nation as they address the financial and economic struggles that can impair the ability of pastors to lead congregations effectively. Lilly is giving \$28 million in initiative grants.

CBF conducted a survey of more than 600 pastoral lead-

ers in 2015. The survey found that financial literacy in the areas of budgeting, benefits and retirement, as well as debt management, are barriers that impede the progress and efficiency of pastors.

CBF will also establish the Ministerial Excellence Fund in partnership with the CBF Foundation and will provide matching funds of \$500,000 for long-term sustainability. The fund will provide grant awards for immediate debt relief of pastoral leaders, financial consultation, coaching and other educational programs for recipients.

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WORD&WAY

Media & the Internet

March is a month to share

People by nature have wanted to name things since the Garden of Eden. If it isn't finding shapes in the cloud or identifying a taste, it's giving significance to days, weeks and months. You can find these compiled in the annual Chase's Calendar of Events or online at Brownielocks.com.

Several month-long observances in March relate to sharing — some more commercially than others. Even if you don't spend much time online, you can make the most of the rest of this (or any) month.

Optimism Month: Looking on the bright side of life has been associated with better health, longer lives and more job satisfaction. Plus, you are just more fun to be around, because optimism is contagious! Share a positive word with others (happify.com/hd/10-reasons-to-think-like-an-optimist).

National Mirth Month: Sharon is a fun friend to have because we trigger each other's funny bones. Do you know a person like that? The Corrections Corporation of America, of all places, reminds us that sharing joy and excitement leads to better physical, mental and social health (cca.com/insidecca/put-some-mirth-into-your-life). It can start with a smile (or in Sharon's case, a snicker).

National March Into Literacy Month: Two-thirds of children who can't read proficiently by the end of 4th grade end up in prison or on welfare. Sharing stories, reading aloud, writing notes and utilizing the library can all help (getreadytoread.org).

The approximately 93 million adults in the U.S. who have basic and below-basic literacy skills are likely to be on welfare, unemployed, having out-of-wedlock births and lower recidivism after prison. Addressing literacy needs can lead to better language skills, jobs and community health (ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/implement/improving-services).

Sing with Your Child Month: A 2009 study found that babies are able to discriminate rhythmic patterns after a single day. Sharing live music with infants and children results in better vocabulary, tighter bonds and increased spatial reasoning (brighthorizons.com/family-resources/e-family-news/2010-music-and-children-rhythm-meets-child-development).

Life is not all fun and games. Much of our world faces heartbreak and hopelessness. Choosing to share words, music, a smile or a positive outlook will be a blessing to others, as well as yourself.

A former media specialist, Ken Satterfield is marketing coordinator for Word & Way. Find additional links online.



KEN SATTERFIELD



Nearly 700 Southwest Missouri teens and adults participating in "Hope for the Hungry" — sponsored by YouthQuake 417 — packed 53,352 meals to send to the needy in Haiti on Jan. 30 at Ridgcrest Baptist Church in Springfield, Mo. Above are (from left) Steven Howard, Food Aid Ministry associate; Doug Watson, YouthQuake 417 coordinator; and Chris Leader, Director of Food Aid International. The event featured a spiritual challenge and Christian musicians Finding Favour, Hollyn and Young Noah. Twelve students accepted Christ. (YouthQuake 417)

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The aging of grief

Late January marked the 46th anniversary of the death of my 16-year-old brother, Dennis, in a car accident. Forty-six years. If you think all of the grief is gone and my heart has completely healed, think again.

Obviously, the pain is not as intense. Someone once said that losing a loved one is like losing an arm or leg: you

survive it, learn to adapt without it, but the loss is always with you. Most of the grief counseling we receive via websites, books, Hallmark cards and well-meaning advice relates to the immediate loss. More needs to be said about the aging of grief as the years and

decades roll on.

Up until this year, I sent flowers to my parents each Jan. 30, the anniversary of Dennis' death. But my father died last May, and since Mom had passed away several years ago, a new wave of grief hit me last week: I don't have anyone to send flowers to.

I still have not brought myself to delete the recurring calendar reminder each Jan. 28: "Send flowers to Mom and Dad." Right now, it feels as if removing that calendar notice would be just one more loss, one more step away from what was. One more "no more."

This strikes at the heart of grief. Death doesn't just rob us of a sibling, spouse or child right now; the loss is permanent. As grief ages, other life events move us farther and farther away from that absent loved one.

One day after Dennis' funeral, my dad and I were outside taking care of the livestock. Suddenly, my heart came into my throat as I noticed that Dennis had signed his name in the grain dust of one of our large farm machines. And

so, I began a new round of anticipatory grief. Someday soon, weather, wind and time would remove my little brother's signature. One more loss.

All of this set me to thinking. I pastor people who've outlived spouse, child or sibling — some by 40, 50 or 60 years. What pain are they silently bearing, as birthdays, anniversaries and special occasions trigger new-old grief? And what could we, the Church, do better in helping these suffering souls mark the anniversaries and tell the stories that need to be shared?

In my sorrow, I need someone to know that Dennis was so mechanically inclined that at the age of 9 he designed a miniature automatic transmission out of an Erector Set. I need someone to know that Dad loved history and despised pretension, and that Mom was a published poet. As the relentless calendar keeps moving us farther from these loved ones' birth and death dates, I have this urgent need to keep the embers of these stories glowing.

The aging of grief also started me thinking about God's grief. Since God's love is even more fierce than that of a mother's (Isaiah 49:1, 15-16), how could we begin to measure the pain in God's heart for all the accumulated losses of the universe? How God must weep.

I am also taking a fresh look at the incarnation. What does it mean that our God took on flesh and entered into this world crammed full of losses and painful goodbyes?

With hope, I read about my loving Savior bearing our grief and sorrows (Isaiah 53:3-5). He becomes our Priest, carrying within himself all of our heartache (Hebrews 4:15-16; 7:24-25).

As the years roll on, grief matures and ages. When certain events or memories trigger such grief, don't ignore it. Sit with it. Feel it. Mourning doesn't mean your faith is weak. It means you're human. It means you have loved.

Thank God, it means you're alive.

Doyle Sager is senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Jefferson City, Mo.

Retired pastor Dwight Clifford Clark dies at 84

Dwight Clifford Clark, 84, died Jan. 31 at his home in Independence, Mo., with his wife by his side.

Funeral services were held Feb. 6 at Calvary Baptist Church in Independence, Mo. Committal services were at Hopewell Cemetery, north of Weatherby, Mo.

He was born Oct. 30, 1931, at his uncle's farm west of Pattonsburg, Mo., the son of Clifford N. Clark and Ruby (Vanover) Clark.

Rev. Clark first attended church at Hopewell Baptist near Maysville, Mo., and accepted Christ and was baptized there. He was ordained to the ministry in 1960 at Gentry (Mo.) Baptist Church.

He served in the U.S. Army as a personnel management specialist at Camp Chaffee, Ark., from 1952-54. He received bachelor's degrees in vocal music and religion from Ouachita Baptist College (University) in Arkadelphia, Ark.

He earned his M.Div. degree from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo..

Rev. Clark and his wife, Ann, met in college and graduated together in 1958. They recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary.

The couple ministered in several churches in Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas and Michigan. They also served as missionaries in the Bahamas. He was pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Independence from 1978-88.

He retired in 1997 from Warren Woods Baptist Church in Warren, Mich., and retired again in 2009 from Besonia Baptist Church in Kansas City.

Survivors include his wife, Ann; step-brother Arthur Lee Trussell and wife Joy, Powersite, Mo.; cousins Ray Forbes and wife Thelma, Cody, Wyo., and Etavon Ochs, Ft. Morgan, Colo.; brother-in-law Don Salter and wife Rose, Paris, Ill.; sisters-law Carol Stuart and husband Buster, and Nancy Matlock and husband Stueart, all of Little Rock, Ark., and nieces and nephews.



DOYLE SAGER

Oklahoma court upholds school vouchers

The Oklahoma Supreme Court ruled Feb. 16 that a school voucher program for students with disabilities is constitutional, over objections that it amounts to indirect taxpayer funding of parochial schools.

The state high court said the program does not violate a ban in the state constitution on use of public funds for religious organizations because parents, not the government, determine where to send their children to school.

The court rejected arguments that because the vast majority of schools qualified to accept the scholarships are religious, the program is tantamount to state support and control of religion, thereby violating an article in the Oklahoma constitution.

A friend-of-the-court brief by the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, among others, argued unsuccessfully that the intent of Oklahoma's "no-aid" clause was historical attempts to use federal

money to pressure Native Americans to enroll their children in Christian schools. That effort was an attempt to assimilate by converting to Christianity a population relocated during the Trail of Tears death march in the early 1800s.

It is the parent "who...directs payment by endorsement to the independently chosen private school," the court said, without any control or direction of the state, breaking "the circuit between government and religion." (BNG)

BIBLE CROSSWORD

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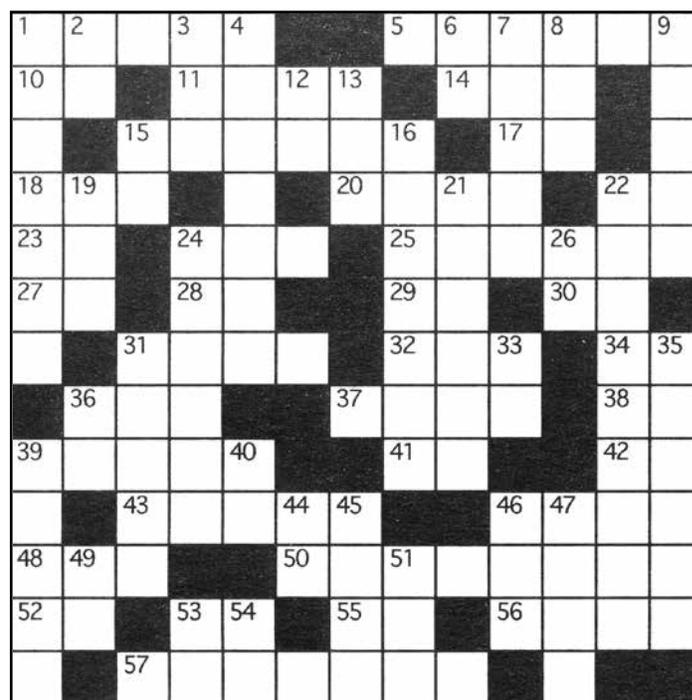
Across

- "We should be made ____" (Titus 3:7)
- "Now I have prepared...for the house of my God...all manner of precious stones, and ____ stones in abundance" (1 Chronicles 29:2)
- Each (abbr.)
- "I entreat thee also, true ____ fellow, help those women" (Philippians 4:3)
- Federal Aviation Agency (abbr.)
- "This ____ said, I am able" (Matthew 26:61)
- Laughter sound
- "A meat offering baken in a ____" (Leviticus 2:5)
- Unit of verse measurement
- District of Columbia (abbr.)
- Letter after em
- Timothy (for short)
- Hare
- Railway (abbr.)
- Do, ____, mi
- Kilogram (abbr.)
- "This ____ the day which the Lord hath made" (Psalm 118:24)
- "All things ____ together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28)
- The self, according to Freud
- Common Era (abbr.)
- Louise (for short)
- Matured
- Springfield's state (abbr.)
- "A time to weep, and a time to ____" (Ecclesiastes 3:4)
- Pierre's state
- Paid (abbr.)

- Capital of Tibet
- "I, John...was in the ____ that is called Patmos" (Revelation 1:9)
- "As many as they found, both ____ and good" (Matthew 22:10)
- "My fellow ____ in Christ Jesus" (Philemon 23)
- "Thou shalt not muzzle the ____ when he treadeth out the corn" (Deuteronomy 25:4)
- Gym class (abbr.)
- Iridium (chemical symbol)
- To-do
- "Joined himself to a ____ of that country" (Luke 15:15)

Down

- "But are ____ of your joy" (2 Corinthians 1:24)
- 10 across
- A type of grain
- "Send to you Epaphroditus, my brother...and fellow ____" (Philippians 2:25)
- Air Force (abbr.)
- "Joshua saved ____ the harlot alive" (Joshua 6:25)
- Sheep's sound
- Command
- Kiloliter (abbr.)
- End of month (abbr.)
- Footnote (abbr.)
- "These only are my fellow ____ unto the kingdom of God" (Colossians 4:11)
- "Lest at ____ time thou dash thy foot against a stone" (Matthew 4:6)
- Tattered
- "And the ____ were called Christians first in Antioch"



See answers on page 18

- | | |
|--|---|
| (Acts 11:26) | (abbr.) |
| 24. "Emptied her pitcher into the ____" (Genesis 24:20) | 45. Western state (abbr.) |
| 26. Two (prefix) | 46. Independent Order of Foresters (abbr.) |
| 31. "They ____ have repented long ago" (Matthew 11:21) | 47. A blunt nose |
| 33. Exclamation of pain | 49. "Now also the ____ is laid unto the root of the trees" (Matthew 3:10) |
| 35. "The four and twenty ____ ...fell down and worshipped God" (Revelation 19:4) | 51. Anger |
| 36. California city (abbr.) | 53. Greek letter used for the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter |
| 39. Work | 54. And (Latin) |
| 40. Sound of laughter | |
| 44. South America's language | |

College, seminary to bridge L'ville racial opportunity gap

A historically black college and a Cooperative Baptist Fellowship-aligned seminary have announced a collaboration to boost higher education opportunities for African Americans in Louisville, Ky.

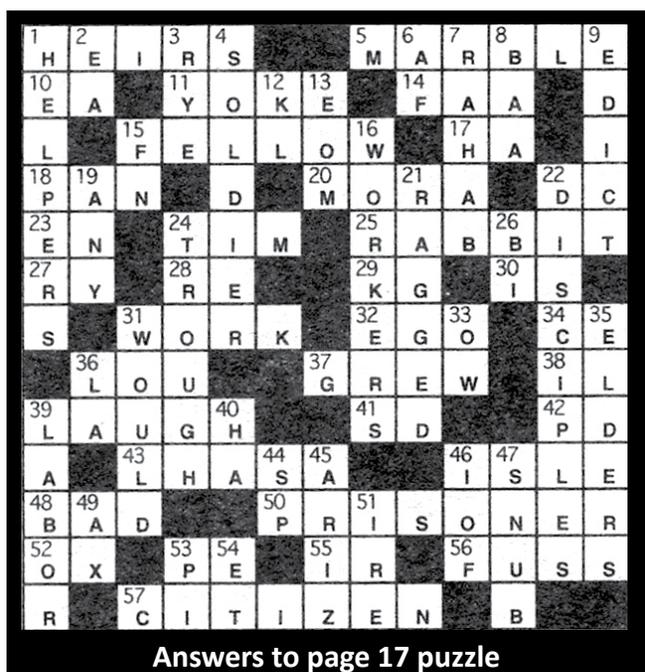
Simmons College of Kentucky and the Baptist Seminary of Kentucky will move together toward offering graduate Baptist theological education in the economically disadvantaged west end of Louisville, leaders of the two institutions announced in a press conference Feb. 16.

Simmons President Kevin Cosby said that prior to the school's accreditation in 2014, students in west Louisville had to leave their community in order to attend college. Cosby, who also is pastor of St. Stephen Baptist Church in west Louisville, said that is still the case for students who want a graduate degree.

"That's not good for west Louisville," said Cosby, a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Cosby is credited with rescuing the liberal arts college established in 1879 from bankruptcy and making it the centerpiece of a plan for neighborhood renewal.

Greg Earwood, president of the predominantly white Baptist Seminary of Kentucky, said the two groups will engage in dialogue on racial issues and in the process shape graduate-level theological education opportunities in the west end of Louisville.

The talks will explore how the seminary — located 70 miles away on the campus of Georgetown College — can best offer graduate theological education in Louisville's west end.



Answers to page 17 puzzle

CLASSIFIED ADS

PASTOR

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH, Kansas City, Mo., is prayerfully seeking a bivocational pastor. We are a multicultural American Baptist congregation. Please email resumes to sandi.mckee@grace4u.net or send to Pastoral Search Committee, Grace Baptist Church, 3101 NE Vivion Rd., Kansas City, MO 64119.

SMALL, LOVING, MISSION-MINDED rural church seeking bivocational pastor. Send resumes to: Foley Baptist Church, Attn: Search Committee, PO Box 97, Foley, MO 63347.

WORSHIP

PART-TIME WORSHIP LEADER: Second Baptist Church, Granite City, Ill., is seeking a part-time worship leader. \$20 per hour for a schedule of 15 hours per week (includes planning time, rehearsals and weekly services). For more information on the church and position, go to www.sbcgranite.org. Email resumes to pastorbrian@sbcgranite.org or fax to (618) 877-4395 to the attention of Pastor Brian Smith.

PARKADE BAPTIST CHURCH of Columbia, Mo., is seeking a full-time music worship leader to lead worship and music ministries. Applicant must be proficient in planning, leading and resourcing worship teams in multiple venues and styles. Choral and instrumental conducting experience is necessary. Bachelor's degree in music and experience required. Seminary training preferred. Job description and application process found at ParkadeBaptistChurch.org.

DISCIPLESHIP & ADMINISTRATION

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF FARMINGTON, Mo., is seeking a full-time associate pastor for discipleship and administration. Resumes or inquires may be sent via email to: Attn: Personnel Committee, fbcfarm@sbcglobal.net or via USPS to 210 North A Street, Farmington, MO 63640.

YOUTH & EDUCATION

WYATT PARK BAPTIST CHURCH in Saint Joseph, Mo., is seeking a minister of youth and education. The minister will plan and implement an effective ministry of discipleship and evangelism to children, youth and families. Resumes will be received until the position is filled to: Wyatt Park Baptist Church, Attn: Search Team, 2902 N. Leonard Rd., Saint Joseph, MO 64506, or to dr mike@wyattpark.net. For more information and a detailed job description, visit www.wyattpark.net.

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Faith forged in crisis aids hospital chaplain

Author Stacy Sergent said her chaplaincy calling helps form her faith, spirituality

BY JEFF BRUMLEY

Baptist News Global

You might think chaplains — those ministers called to be the calming presence of God wherever they are — are 100 percent certain in their faith with spiritual feet planted firmly on firm ground.

Think again.

“We all have doubts,” said Gerald Hutchinson, a former military chaplain who now endorses and oversees chaplains and pastoral counselors for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

That was a lesson Stacy Sergent had to learn from experience on the job as a clinical staff chaplain at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston.

“I came out of seminary a little wishy-washy on my faith and that first year really forced me to figure it out,” said Sergent, who is endorsed by CBF.

‘YOU CAN’T FULLY PREPARE YOURSELF’

She shares that spiritual and pastoral learning curve in her 2015 book *Being Called Chaplain: How I lost my name and (eventually) found my faith*.

Sergent again has taken to writing about her chaplaincy experiences. She recently published “A Day in the Life of a Chaplain” on the Baptist Women in Ministry website (tinyurl.com/BWIM-sergeant).

The short article gives an hour-by-hour account of the sometimes mundane and sometimes gripping experiences these ministers have during a 12-hour shift.

That particular day ranged from grabbing a sandwich, notarizing some documents and speaking with a potential kidney donor to calming down a distraught relative to helping a family through a decision to remove a loved one from life support.

“The best and worst thing is you never know what any day is going to be like, so

you can’t fully prepare yourself or know how you’re going to react when the pager goes off,” she said in a subsequent interview with Baptist News Global.

So she gets centered by practicing yoga and listening to a podcast of music, prayer and scripture.

Hutchinson said it’s crucial that chaplains go above and beyond to ensure their own mental, spiritual and physical health.

“Practicing self-care makes it easier to not become complacent to suffering and pain,” he said.

‘YOU JUST HAVE TO GET TO IT’

Sergent said she has been there.

“If I am complacent, it’s a warning sign that I am close to burnout or tired — or that, spiritually, there is something off,” she said.

Her BWIM article takes its readers from task to task, many of which would be shocking for non-medical personnel to witness.

Part of her job is to interview any patient who expresses interest in advance directives, which spell out patients’ wishes in the event that the worst happens. Occasionally those patients and their families turn combative during these discussions. More often they are tearful encounters as patients and loved ones face mortality and other difficult realities. Others say no and ask her to leave.

And there are situations that are more difficult still.

“A family in ICU has to make the decision whether or not to withdraw their loved one from life support,” Sergent writes in her BWIM article. “They feel it’s time to do so, based on doctors’ reports, but ask, ‘Will God forgive us? Are we giving up on her?’ We talk through the ethical and theological issues, then pray together.”

Sometimes there can be several of those situations in a single shift, she told BNG.

Emotionally and spiritually it can be draining. “You just have to get to it,” she said. “You can’t let this big, life-changing event get to you because you have to do it over and over.”

But they also require her full attention and presence — regardless of how many happen in a single day.

“I still put myself in those families’ shoes to know that this is life-changing for them, to be compassionate even if I have done it two times that day.”

‘HOW DO I DO THIS?’

Another responsibility is ministering to the hospital staff. That can range from nurturing relationships to helping medical professionals process their experiences.

It can also include helping doctors with death notifications, Sergent said. And that often means being there for the physician as well as for the deceased’s family.

“A lot of doctors are not great with that part of it,” she said.

Some will depart immediately after delivering the news, leaving Sergent with the aftermath.

“Sometimes a doctor will say (to her): ‘I have never done this before. What do I say? How do I do this?’”

Occasionally the encounters are merely awkward. Now and then, Sergent said, someone will ask for a Baptist chaplain to visit their room and be shocked when a woman arrives.

Others simply need a soothing presence during a crisis.

“I model calm for them.”

Sergent said she couldn’t do what she does today if she were running on the undefined Christian faith that defined her life before seminary and her first year at the hospital, which was in 2008.

“It was a generic sort of faith,” she said. “If you asked me too many questions all I could say was ‘Bible and Jesus,’ but it was never tested.”

That faith became defined as those pastoral challenges came. “That first year forced me to figure it out because I ran into so many crises,” Sergent said.

Her chaplaincy ministry taught her other lessons, too, including getting used to being called “chaplain” 12 hours a day.

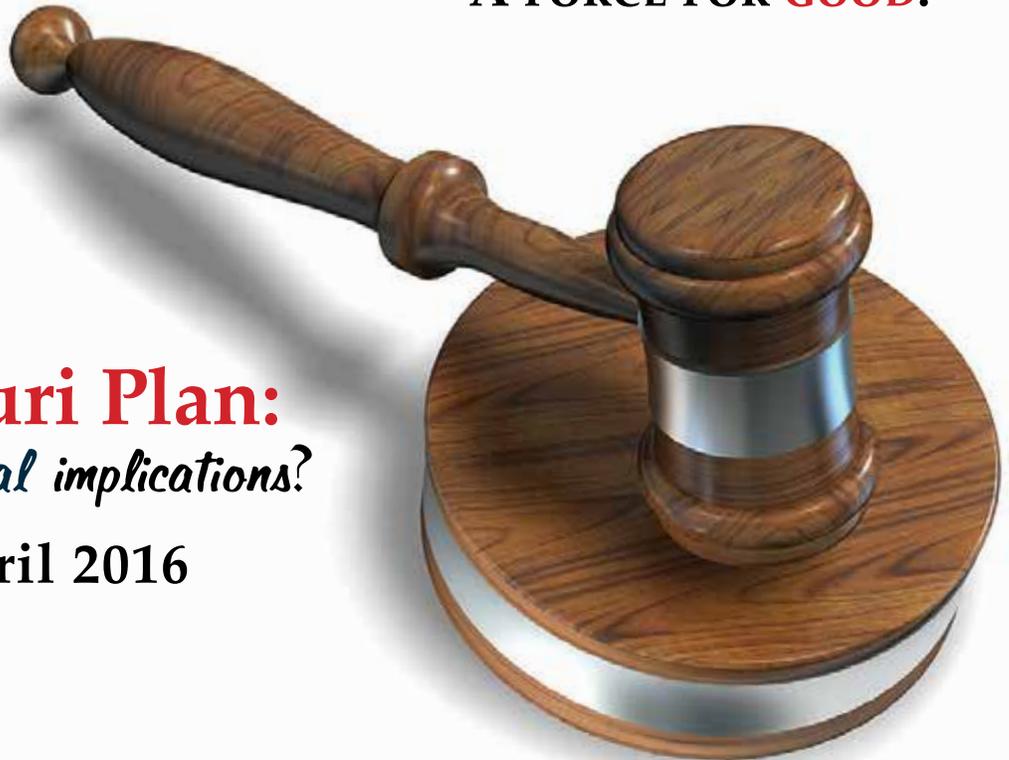
“That’s all people call me at the hospital,” Sergent said. “Some people don’t even know I am Stacy.”

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