

MINISTRY, EVENTS OFFERED

Check out the ministry opportunities and fun events available the rest of the year listed in the Mid-Year Planning and Event Calendar.

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TBH PLANS NEW CAMPUS

The Baptist Home continues to work on plans that will bring a campus to mid-Missouri, near Ashland on Highway 63.

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EDITORIAL

Church members should walk in the shoes of those who face mental health issues so that believers can more fully understand and help.

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Word & Way

SERVING BAPTISTS FOR OVER A CENTURY



PRAY FOR MISSIONS

Students pray for summer missionaries and leaders during a commissioning service at Southwest Baptist University.

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Mental illness and the church

What can churches do to reach out to members and others who suffer from mental disorders?



ALSO IN THE NEWS

MBF BOARD AWARDS TWO MISSION GRANTS

Missouri Baptist Foundation trustees approve \$6,000 in grants for mission work in Ukraine and for senior adult education.

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SPRINGFIELD CHURCH LETS CHIN GROUP USE CHAPEL

University Heights Baptist Church in Springfield, Mo., is opening its chapel to Chin Community Church, a group of believers from Myanmar.

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HLGU CONFERS NEARLY 300 DIPLOMAS MAY 3

Nearly 300 graduates receive diplomas from Hannibal-LaGrange University during commencement exercises on campus May 3.

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PAGES 6-8: Churches can minister to those with mental illness

Experience on Broadway enriches Baptist couple's calling to special needs advocacy

BY JEFF BRUMLEY

ABPnews/Herald

For most performers, making it to Broadway would be considered the apex of a career, the end-all, be-all of performing on stage.

But for Amy and Ben Wright, who are deacons at First Baptist Church in Wilmington, N.C., it was just a rehearsal for the truly important and challenging parts God had written for them.

And it's been in those relatively recent, and often difficult, roles — namely as parents of two children with Down Syndrome — that the couple say they've seen God so clearly directing their lives.

Today, their songwriting, acting and singing abilities are used to push for changes in the way the world sees and hears people with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

That role wasn't so clear when their third child (and first boy), Beau, was born with Down Syndrome in 2004.

"There was just an enormous amount of grief — it was like I was grieving the son I thought I was going to have," Amy Wright said.

'NO BURNING DESIRE'

The transformation in attitude she and her husband would eventually experience after Beau's birth began much earlier in their lives.

For Amy, growing up in Pennsylvania, and then North Carolina, included the typical childhood dance and singing lessons while being raised in a Methodist church. She went on to study at the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music, where she met Ben.

His journey to stardom began early as his theater-loving mom dragged him to her own community theater auditions. He was told to audition for parts, too, and his talent quickly became apparent to others.

"I just sort of went along with it," he said, adding that his heart was never in it.

"That was part of the problem — I never had a burning desire," he said. "It was just something I grew up doing."

But he did it well enough to land lucrative roles by the time he was a teenager, and by the time he was 30 he had returned to and left the business three times.

After they married in 1993, Ben and Amy moved to New York so she could pursue her dream of performing on Broadway.

Ben landed the role of Jack in "Into the Woods" by Stephen Sondheim and as Wayne Frake in 1996 in Rodgers and Hammerstein's "State Fair." Amy performed as a member of the production's ensemble.

Eventually, Amy said she felt she had accomplished her goal. They moved to North Carolina to be near her relatives.

"I said, 'OK, it's time to start a family.'"

'HE FELT EMPTY'

The couple, however, kept working. Ben's acting credits include films like "Born on the Fourth of July" and "Renaissance Man." He starred opposite Judd Nelson in



Ben and Amy Wright with their children.

NBC's "Hiroshima: Out of the Ashes."

Amy appeared in television ads for cars, restaurants and hair-care products. She also ran a performing arts studio for children.

All that time, Amy said, they sensed there had to be more.

"Ben will say that on stage, he felt empty...and that to take the applause didn't feel quite right."

What did begin to feel right was the birth of their first daughters, Lillie and Emma Grace, now 15 and 13, respectively.

Their births took Amy's faith to a new level and inspired her to write an album of spiritual music for children.

"I had a very deep faith as a

child and a teen and that developed more in adulthood with each child I had," she said.

But if that was the case with Lillie and Emma Grace, it was even more the case with Beau.

"When we learned about Beau's diagnosis I felt so sad and overwhelmed," Amy said. "But I

feel that was the moment I was drawn closer to God."

Within a short time the couple realized what a blessing a Down Syndrome child is, and they began — just barely — to glimpse the positive impact Beau would have on their family.

"In an instant we had a new perspective."

Five years later Jane Adeline, or "Bitty," was born with Down Syndrome. Doctors had given her only a 25 percent chance to be born alive.

'TWO STEPS INTO THE JOURNEY'

That new perspective has inspired the Wrights — including their children — to become advocates for people with devel-

opmental and intellectual disabilities.

In 2012, Amy penned a song titled "It Starts with a Voice" which led to a local benefit concert that included performances by their two oldest daughters. It also inspired a music video and further performances at the National Down Syndrome Congress and Best Buddies International.

The song also is being used in a Special Olympics school enrichment program and it serves as the title for a blog Amy writes to advocate for those with disabilities.

The two older daughters are promoting education and outreach efforts around special needs, and Beau starred in the film "Little Accidents," which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival.

Ben opened an investment firm and hired nine employees with developmental and intellectual disabilities as hospitality associates to greet clients. He also continues his singing — but mainly to promote the same cause.

"When I sang on Broadway, it felt empty," Ben said. "This feels like the proper use of the gifts I have been given."



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Baptist Home plans mid-Missouri campus

BY VICKI BROWN

Word&Way Associate Editor

Some people have already sent their contact information to The Baptist Home corporate office in hopes of being among the first to move into an adult community in mid-Missouri.

While plans for the newest TBH campus are moving forward, the first residents still will have to wait from three to five years before moving in.

Baptist Home trustees and leaders first considered adding a mid-Missouri site under Reuben L. South's tenure as Missouri Baptist Convention executive director from 1975-1986, but did not move forward with the idea.

Webster and Elizabeth Brown also were instrumental in advocating for the project. A TBH trustee in the 1990s, Brown dreamed of a mid-Missouri campus and kept the idea before the board.

But not until two years ago did trustees get serious about it and formed a committee to examine the possibility, TBH President Steve Jones explained. That committee determined the project feasible.

Through a market study, the committee found a desire and a need particularly for independent living accommodations for mature adults.

Property for the newest venture has been purchased two miles north of Ashland, Mo., on the west side of Highway 63.

Steve Long has been named founding administrator and will move into a home on the property this fall to oversee the development.

The site includes 73 acres, which will lend a pastoral set-

Currently, Allstate Consultants, a Columbia, Mo.,-based civil engineering firm, is assisting with the site plan, including zoning and other infrastructure issues.

Once zoning and other

kitchen and dining room and areas for socialization and fellowship — also will be available. The congregate living option will target the independent 70+-year-old single adult, widow or widower.

intermediate care clients into institutional buildings, the Home will concentrate on continuing care through assisted living. The continuum of care philosophy allows people to age in place, which could be done through home health services and hospice, as may be required.

Although The Baptist Home remains under a legal cloud, Jones said the continuing lawsuit has not hindered the mid-Missouri plan so far. The Home was the first of five agencies formerly affiliated with the Missouri Baptist Convention to change its governing documents to allow it to elect its own trustees.

The MBC filed a lawsuit against the Home, Word&Way, Windermere Baptist Conference Center, Missouri Baptist University and the Missouri Baptist Foundation on Aug. 13, 2002, to try to force the

five to rescind those changes and return control to the convention. The courts have sided with Windermere, and the MBC dropped legal action against Word&Way. Legal action is still pending against the remaining three entities.

Though the Home has not developed a waiting list for the mid-Missouri campus, individuals hoping for a spot may send their contact information to Long by email at slong@thebaptisthome.org. Churches, other groups and people interested in a presentation or more information about the newest campus also may email or call him at 573-823-1261.



This home sits on 73 acres of land near Ashland, Mo., that will be the site of a mid-Missouri campus to be completed in the next few years, according to Baptist Home leaders. Steve Long, who has been named the founding administrator, will move into the farmhouse with his wife, Joyce, this fall and will oversee development of the campus, which will begin with construction of independent living units.

ting for residents. The large farmhouse that will serve as Long's temporary home will be converted into offices and conference rooms.

Before starting construction, TBH administrators are working on zoning. They hope to get the property incorporated into Ashland's city limits. The property needs some road improvement to avoid entering and exiting the property directly from Highway 63, and sewer access.

requirements are met, the Home would be ready to start construction of its independent living units. Administrators and trustees currently are considering design builders and architects to choose one to develop building plans.

The TBH plan calls for stand-alone, two-plex and four-plex homes for adults who want to retain their independence. A "congregate living" option — apartments for independent living that include a common

A community center and indoor/outdoor recreational facilities also are planned.

The elder care industry is changing rapidly to reflect the lifestyle mature adults want, Jones said. But The Baptist Home remains committed to its continuum of care philosophy — to provide tools for as high a level of quality of life as possible for as long as possible. The TBH plan calls for assisted living options, as well.

Rather than separating

Foundation trustees announce grants, okay awards to stewards

BY VICKI BROWN

Word&Way Associate Editor

Missouri Baptist Foundation trustees approved grants for overseas missions and heard reports on various items to be considered in August, during their session on May 9.

Meeting at Windermere Baptist Conference Center in Roach, Mo., trustees awarded \$6,000 to mission work in Ukraine and to senior adult education.

Board members revised the Foundation's process for awarding grants. The MBF now will distribute funds at the end of each fiscal year. In the

past, awards had been made before funds were available.

Trustees selected winners of this year's Fellowship of Christian Stewards awards. The list will be released as soon as all awardees are notified.

The strategic planning advisory team updated trustees on two goals for improvements in operations and communications. Those will be presented for action at the MBF's August board meeting.

Also in August, board members will consider new trustees and advisors. The nominating committee noted its progress

at the May meeting.

Trustees split an undesignated estate gift for the Foundation's operations, with half to future space needs and half to an endowment for ongoing operational needs.

An investment performance report showed the balanced fund at 11.65 percent, diversified fund at 12.01 percent and the stock fund at 17.49 percent for the previous 12 months.

During an executive session, trustees reviewed President Chris Calmer's performance and adopted a payroll budget for fiscal 2015.

Word&Way trustees hear various reports

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — Word&Way trustees considered several reports May 13 in Jefferson City.

They learned the entity had held expenses about \$17,500 under budget since Jan. 1. Although revenue also is under budget projections, trustees were reminded that an awarded Baugh Foundation grant has not yet been received.

Dale Siebeneck of Evers & Co. presented a clean audit. Total liabilities and net assets were listed at \$268,827.01 for fiscal 2013.

Trustees discussed possible new board members, and noted that strategic planning would resume.

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Sensitivity to mental illness

One of the goals for this week's cover package, "Mental illness and the church," was to discover what specific congregations might be doing to minister to members and others in the community suffering from one of the many forms of mental illness.

Responses to a few queries suggest that there are probably few, if any, Sunday morning Bible study classes for sufferers of mental disorders. Nor is the landscape awash with materials for supportive small groups of young people or adults trying to cope.

The absence of such "ministries" hardly means that congregations do not care about people's hurts and needs. Mental illness at multiple levels is a reality for one or more individuals in more and more families — and in more and more congregations. Mental disorders are pervasive. The Gospels suggest they were not unheard of in Jesus' day.

Traditionally, the church has not acknowledged mental illness as an overtly intentional concern for multiple reasons. For sufferers, the condition is not one to bandy about. It is intensely personal, usually controlled by various degrees with medication and/or therapy, depending upon the specific disorder.

Sufferers are acutely aware that the reaction to awareness of their conditions may be unpleasant. True, some of those reactions might be empathetic, even compassionate. But others are likely to be insensitive or even hurtful. No one in this position wants to be identified stereotypically. Some of the stereotypes are outrageously unfair, even bizarre.

The result of disclosure may well be that a sufferer learns who really cares about him or her, and who doesn't — who is truly a friend, and who isn't.

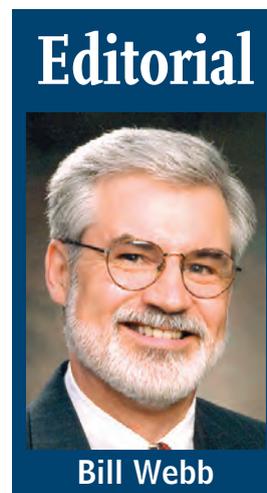
If announcing a Bible study class for people with diagnosed mental disorders or some other ministry isn't the answer, what can congregations do to accept those

with such disorders?

Sensitize members

Sensitize them not only to the reality of mental illness but what the disorder means to those who experience it day in and day out.

Biblically, Jesus is one of the few examples of consistency in acceptance of others, even those whose condition meant that they were placed in isolation by society and by their own families because they were different in various ways.



Editorial

Bill Webb

The Christ-way is to acknowledge every person as a creation of God and afford that person the respect due them as a creation.

The isolated "odd" people of Jesus' day were in places most people didn't have to pass by, even if they had wanted to. Christ-followers today can do the same thing in the same room — the same sanctuary — by avoiding eye contact, or greeting and acknowledging another person. It happens all the time.

Sensitivity training in a congregation begins with the words "mental illness" not being taboo but even used from the pulpit. Churches would do well to offer resources such as training to help people understand more about mental illness, the struggle of people with disorders and effective treatment.

Like just about anything about which people lack awareness and understanding, a myriad of myths abound about mental illness and those suffering from it. A professional could lead an informative ses-

sion as a mental health myth-buster.

Walk in another's shoes

Church members often joke about the healthy at the expense of the mentally ill. "It looks like Sally forgot to take her meds this morning," people may quip. The insensitive line often draws a chuckle and is usually not intended to be hurtful. To someone who overhears it, the line may hurt. Imagine you are the person who depends upon psychotherapeutic medications when you next hear that line.

It is not a matter of being politically correct but of being sensitive as a child of God to God's other children. By comparison, people who are sensitive would not make jokes about a friend's chemotherapy and its side effects or about heart surgery, also common health issues.

Choose not to walk away

Baptist congregations and others often conclude that people with particular problems or issues are too high maintenance. They effectively ignore such people, not unlike the priest and the Levite in the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Many people with mental illnesses don't exactly know how to relate to others or whom to trust, but everyone needs friends and people who care for them. Such a friendship can be like any other and includes sharing of personal information by both parties and, as the friendship develops, a sharing of feeling, hurts and whatever. A mental health condition need not be the focal point of the relationship. After all, none of us is perfect. We all have our "disorders."

When Jesus reached out to befriend people with mental disorder-like symptoms and actions, his disciples and others were shocked by his Christ-like actions.

Have you done anything to prompt such a reaction from anyone this week?

Bill Webb is editor of Word&Way.

And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

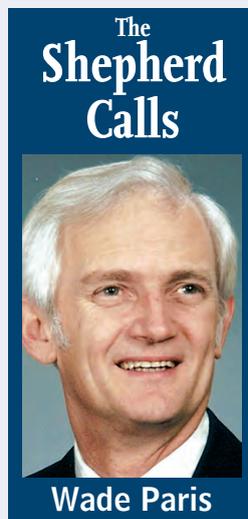
Mark 10:16
NIV

Good courage

Some people I love are hurting. My heart is heavy. I want to help them, but there is so little I can do. I am seriously praying for them. My pain is great, and theirs must be many times worse.

Pain in one's body is unpleasant; but heart pain — emotional pain — is much worse. I try to keep busy to keep my mind occupied, but even then, the pain slips in. I try to sleep and make it all go away, but I awaken to find my mind has been dwelling on it even in my sleep.

I genuinely believe God will hear my prayers and bring good to all of us again, but until he does, life is heavy. I try to rush God, but his timetable and mine are seldom the same. My wife and I went to dinner with some good friends. While we dined, our hearts relaxed some. Good friends make that happen.



Wade Paris

The prophet Isaiah was suffering similarly when he prayed this prayer: "Come down, Lord. Oh, that you would burst from the heavens and come down!... When you came down long ago, you did awesome deeds beyond our highest expectations.

And, oh, how the mountains quaked! For since

the world began, no ear has heard and no eye has seen a God like you, who works for those who wait for Him!" (Isaiah 64:1-4)

The prophet said God works (does good) for those who wait on him. Waiting is hard. I have never been good at it. The agony of waiting is what I am experiencing now. Therefore, I am claiming the promise of the Psalmist, "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart. Wait, I say, on the Lord." (Psalm 27:14)

I am waiting. I pray God will give me "good courage."

Wade Paris writes a weekly syndicated newspaper column, "The Shepherd Calls." A book of his selected columns titled Angels We Have Heard is available from store.believerspress.com and amazon.com.

The commandment (most) Baptists break

The brilliant composer and musician Mozart once said, “I can tell a good musician by the way he plays the rests.” What an amazing insight. Mozart knew that the rests are what give the composition structure. The rests give us the space to enjoy the delightful sounds of the musical selection. Perhaps this is true for all of life. Maybe we are all known by how well we play the rests.

Sadly, we live in a culture which praises and rewards burnout. “Look at how she works from sun-up to sundown,” we say admiringly. “He never takes a day off,” we exclaim. Sabbath rest is one of “The Big Ten” (commandments), yet we actually encourage breaking it. Can you imagine such cheering if we intentionally broke one of the other nine commandments? “Wow, look at him shoplift...such a good stealer!” Or, “She commits adultery with such deception!”

In making a virtue out of Sabbath-breaking, we are caving to culture’s values. And we do so at our own peril. As Barbara Brown Taylor has written, “Busyness keeps us from lingering on anything long enough to engage it at any depth.” Busyness tyrannizes us, convincing us there is always more to do. It exhausts, embitters and discourages people.

We are so focused on to-do lists that even our attempts at taking a vacation can be exhausting. As one person said, “How come it takes four suitcases and a car-top carrier to get away from it all?” Consider the strangest oxymoron of all — “working vacation.” Observe how our churches work our people to exhaustion on the Sabbath, with committee meetings and special training sessions. And all of this after a full morning of study and worship.

Let’s be clear about something. When we talk about “keeping Sabbath,” we are not revisiting the old Puritan

GUEST OPINION

Doyle Sager



practice of making Sunday a day of drudgery and deprivation. We live in a nation which no longer has many “blue laws.” Most stores and businesses are open on Sunday. Many people are required to work on Sunday (myself included!). The Hebrew word “shabbat” comes into our language as “Sabbath” and simply means to take a break. Stop talking. Stop doing. Cease striving. The point is that we take some kind of break on the Lord’s Day (or an alternative day), to acknowledge that this time is different from the rest of the week.

Interestingly, the two biblical accounts of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5) both list Sabbath-keeping as the fourth commandment, but each for a different reason. In Exodus, we are to keep Sabbath because God also rested (20:11). Was God tired? Of course not. God took a break for the same reason a painter steps back from the canvass to assess and enjoy her work, or a farmer walks out to his corn field in early June, or a parent watches her child play with a toy train — to enjoy life’s creative mystery.

Ask yourself this simple question: “How many rights am I missing because of my obsession with my tasks? When God created the Sabbath, you and I were

handed the gift of time — time to smell the roses, at least once every seven days.

In the second Decalogue text, Deuteronomy 5, we are commanded to rest because God liberated the Hebrew slaves from bondage (v. 15). We live to work; we do not work to live. People have value and worth beyond what they can produce. The Egyptian (pagan) way of looking at life says, “If I don’t work, I won’t eat.”

God’s people know better. Even while we rest, God is still working. God provides! Every Sabbath we are declaring our independence from human systems and our dependence upon God. A very successful businessman once told about his practice of hiking in the mountains one week each year. While he was away, he would ask his wife to keep all the newspapers delivered that week. After his return, he would read each day’s paper, just to remind himself that all these things happened without him!

God wired us. God knows what we need. Just as Mozart knew that beautiful music needs to be set off by well-placed rests, so God knows that our work is more effective when it is punctuated with breaks. The quality of our rest will impact the quality of our work, whether that work relates to our paycheck or to church responsibilities.

Jesus said, “Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me — watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace” (Matthew 11:28-29, The Message).

Doyle Sager is senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Jefferson City, Mo. His column appears monthly in Word&Way.

Deepening prayer

Christians know that we are supposed to pray. From earliest childhood, that is our instruction, often getting more practice in Sunday School than at home. Families who pray together are an endangered species these days; spiritual practices are intimate, and loss of intimacy characterizes many households. I fear that both clergy and congregations are suffering from lack of prayer.

Sarah Coakley, professor at Cambridge University, puts it this way: “Without the daily public witness of a clergy engaged, manifestly and accountably, alongside their people, in the disciplined long-haul life of prayer, of ongoing personal and often painful transformation, the church at large runs the danger of losing its fundamental direction and meaning.”

Twice a year I spend time with other leaders of theological schools — all women — for professional development and fellowship. We call ourselves the WiTS (Women in Theological Schools), and we pray that we will always have our WiTS about us as we lean into our vocations. Wits are often in short supply as we juggle the relentless requests that come across our desks!

When together we present case studies, reflect on the challenges of our institutions and share our personal struggles, all under the code of silence or “seal of the confessional.” I am helped immensely by this collegial gathering, gaining perspective I would not otherwise have.

A focal topic on a recent weekend was to think about our spiritual practices. One seminary president remarked, “The longer I am in this work, the longer I need to pray.” She sounds like Martin Luther, who had so much to do that he just had to pray two hours a day in order to get the rest of it done!

The Gospel reading for a recent Sunday included Jesus’ bold instruction about prayer: “If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it” (John 14:14). The

GUEST OPINION

Molly T. Marshall



sense the reader gets from this passage is that Jesus is inviting his followers into the same sort of conversation he had regularly with his Abba. Later in the Gospel, we learn that this kind of prayer is only possible because the Spirit will remind us of his teaching.

There is always a sense of ambiguity about prayer, for we never master the practice. We have Jesus’ encouragement to pray as he prayed, and we hear Paul’s poignant insight, “We do not know how to pray as we ought.” What we do know is that “deep prayer” (Coakley’s description) is transformative to the one praying and the circumstances for which he or she intercedes.

Yet, prayer is not simply about expressing our needs to God. It is about listening. Rather than attempting to grasp God, it is a “sense of being grasped, of the Spirit’s simultaneous erasure of human idolatry and subtle reconstitution of human selfhood in God,” again Coakley’s words. This is surely a long-haul process — seeking God through attentive waiting in the holy presence.

Moving beyond the theoretical problematic of how prayer “works” is necessary. It is the practice of showing up, regularly, which presses one to relinquish “efficiencies” and control. Darkness and unknowing will always be a part of this experience, and the stripping

away of pretense leaves one vulnerable before God.

Yet, we cannot but intercede for those we love, as my teacher Glenn Hinson taught us. Not to pray for those beset with suffering and grief would demonstrate callous disregard. We add the energies of our love to that of God’s outpouring love, as Hinson wrote in *A Serious Call to a Contemplative Lifestyle*. Together we craft a future that God does not impose, but waits with openness for human participation.

For what do I need to pray as the spiritual leader of Central Baptist Theological Seminary? Each morning I pray for wisdom, compassion and patience. These seem to be essential ingredients to leadership, and keeping these in balance can temper judgment. There are many ways to mess up in my position.

At this time in the seminary’s life, I pray for those who are graduating. Many are already in significant places of ministry; others will be seeking new positions. I pray for our board. Trustees function as wise stewards of the seminary’s mission and resources. I pray for our leadership team as it works closely with the board. I pray for our faculty as they complete the long haul of the semester’s work. Their labor in forming students serves the church and larger community in essential ways. I pray for the staff, also. Without their attentiveness to details, the celebrations surrounding commencement would not happen!

Faithful Christian witness through congregations and in public life requires deep grounding in prayer. And it can become the centering reality of our lives as we respond to God’s desire to be near us. (ABPnews/Herald)

Molly T. Marshall is president and professor of theology and spiritual formation at Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Shawnee, Kan.



Mental illness and the church

BY BILL WEBB

Word&Way Editor

Human kind has struggled with the matter of mental disorders — or mental illness — as long as people can remember.

Mental illnesses, after all, are not like measles, mumps or the flu. Chemotherapy won't eradicate the illness, nor will a couple of cardiac bypasses improve the health of the person who suffers from such a disorder.

Mental health is complex. Mental disorders can have devastating effects on a person, and they can result in behavior that may be confusing.

In the Gospels, Jesus acknowledged several people whose symptoms and behavior resembled those of people today who have been diagnosed with mental disorders. The fact that Christ acknowledged such people was somewhat unusual because generally they were either treated as outcasts or kept hidden by their families. They were a source of shame and embarrassment to their families.

Even religious leaders were dismayed and angered that Jesus would not only give the time of day to such people but that he chose to offer conversation and relief to these tormented and abused souls, often in a miraculous way.

In Jesus' day — and today — people feared what they didn't understand. And fearful people come up with their own rationale for what they witness in the lives of a few. Some people still act as though mental disorders are self-inflicted — indicative of presumed sin against God or prompted by a lack of faith.

The stigma of disorders like clinical depression, bipolar disorder

and schizophrenia should not be so great these days in America. Mental disorders are like divorce and cancer in the sense that almost every family has been touched by them. Such disorders are pervasive, but they also are more treatable than ever before through counseling, therapy and medications.

Mental illness is on the agenda of schools, businesses and law enforcement today in part because it is so prevalent in society and day-to-day events in common public places.

What is not so clear these days is how churches can intentionally reach out to members and others struggling with mental disorders. Few would argue that churches do not care. On the contrary, a number provide a myriad of ministries to hurting people.

Doyle Sager is senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Jefferson City, Mo., which has offered support groups for families of suicide trauma and regularly provides meeting space for groups that provide support such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness, Al-Anon and Dementia Care Givers.

"I mentioned in a more recent sermon that I felt the church should start saying the words 'mental illness' out loud to get over the stigma," he told Word&Way.

Talking about mental illness is a good first step for churches, added Kevin Payne, pastor at First Baptist Church of Independence, Mo.

"I personally find myself mentioning the issue of mental illness and modern treatments fairly often in sermons," he said. "I also talk about it quite often with members. Just in the last two months, I have referred two different members to a local Christian-oriented counseling organization here in Independence.

"One of the things I think pastors need to do frequently is to give permission for Christians to seek

help in this area of life, with either therapy, medication or both," Payne said. "There are still those who see mental health issues and the use of psychiatric treatments as something Christians should avoid."

Walter Coplen of Coplen Christian Counseling, based in Columbia, Mo., said he is glad to hear people like Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Church with multiple California sites, talk more about mental illness. Warren and wife Kay lost their son, Matthew, who had suffered with mental illness for many years, to suicide.

Kristen Sager, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, who is a clinical counselor in the Office of Counseling Services at High Point (N.C.) University and has a private psychotherapy practice, has some thoughts that might help churches and Christians.

"At the risk of stating the obvious, we tend to avoid discomfort, including things we don't understand," she said. "I would guess that most churches, like most individuals, lack basic knowledge about mental illness, its origins, its treatment and its prognosis.

"On a similar note, I think there may still be church diehards who lack the understanding that we can't 'pray away the blues,'" she said. "Don't get me wrong, I believe prayer is a powerful

thing. But unless mental illness has touched someone personally, it can be very difficult to conceive of its debilitating forces.

"We still struggle to treat mental disorders like physical disorders or diagnoses," she said.

"There is often an unspoken blame or judgment that we don't apply to physical ailments. Churches could benefit from the de-stigmatizing that comes with exposure."

Myths still abound, particularly for relatively unknown disorders like psychotic ones, Sager maintains. "For example, many people think mental illness is synonymous with violence," a myth perpetuated by a spate of school, theater and mall shootings by people later revealed to have a mental illness.

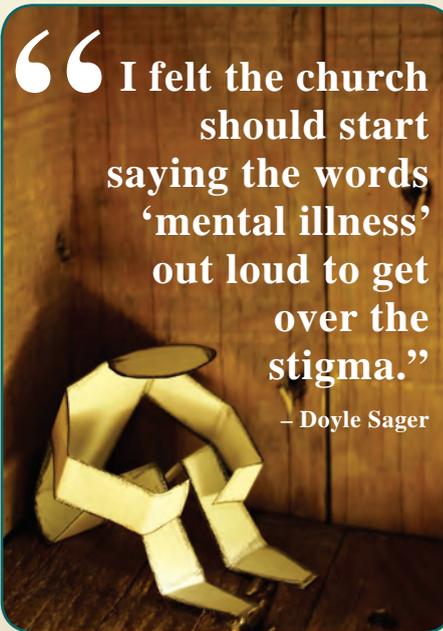
"Those who lack education on mental illness may lack understanding of how to communicate with those about their illness or how to communicate with them in general — fear of 'triggering' them, fear of hearing their troubles then not knowing how to respond, discomfort with how to set boundaries," she said.

Churches are all about connecting, and when we don't know how to connect with someone who has a mental illness, we inevitably encounter obstacles to welcoming them into our circles."

Sager recommends Mental Health First Aid, a national program for training "first-responders" on mental health issues, suicide prevention, etc. (mentalhealthfirstaid.org).

“I felt the church should start saying the words ‘mental illness’ out loud to get over the stigma.”

— Doyle Sager



SBC Mental Health Advisory Council named

NASHVILLE (BP) -- SBC Executive Committee President Frank S. Page has named a 23-member volunteer advisory body of local church leaders and professionals in the mental health field to advise him on possible ways of better communicating with Southern Baptists about mental health ministry needs in their churches and communities as well as ministry resources to address those needs.

Kentucky pastor Tony Rose of LaGrange Baptist Church will chair the Mental Health Advisory Council.

In keeping with the advisory nature of other advisory groups named by Page, the mental health advisory group is designed to assist him and other SBC entity leaders by 1) reviewing current mental health ministries offered through SBC ministry entity, state convention, associational and local church initiatives; 2) assessing the best practices of such ministry initiatives; and 3) suggesting ways in which these ministry initiatives can or should be formalized through other means.

"The group's goal is to consider ways to assist SBC entity leaders and local church leaders in their common task of reaching all people with the transformative Gospel of Jesus Christ," according to SBC LIFE, journal of the Executive Committee.

SBC LIFE further noted: "The advisory group will neither launch nor execute official SBC ministries, although individual members may develop their own ministry affinity networks to further engage churches in ministries to individuals and families with mental health needs. Its role is to provide information, insight and counsel to EC staff concerning the special needs and concerns of persons and families experiencing mental health issues in the Southern Baptist network of churches.

"Since the advisory group is not an official committee of the Convention, no budgetary funds have been allocated for its meetings. It is comprised of a representative set of mental health providers, local church practitioners, and other

ministry specialists who have agreed to serve as part of the advisory group and to meet at their own expense.

"The advisory group will issue a report to the EC president to assist him in framing these ideas into a presentation model for discussions about mental health needs with members of the SBC Great Commission Council and ministry leaders in state conventions, associations, and local churches, with a goal to leverage such discussions toward a more comprehensive mental health ministry strategy."

The Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, during its Feb. 17-18 meeting in Nashville, concurred with the spirit of a motion referred from the 2013 SBC annual meeting regarding mental health ministry. The EC voted to amend an annual ministry report form it solicits from the SBC's entities to include questions asking appropriate entities what they are doing to assist Southern Baptist churches in equipping and ministering to people with mental health challenges.

The Executive Committee also voted to "continue to seek ways to work in cooperation with SBC entities and others to address the severe challenges imposed by mental illness."

The Executive Committee was responding to a motion by Ronnie Floyd, senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, at last year's annual meeting in Houston.

Floyd's motion asked "that the messengers of the 2013 Southern Baptist Convention ... request that the Executive Committee and the Bylaw 14 entities of the Southern Baptist Convention work in cooperation to assist our churches in the challenge of ministry to those suffering from mental health issues, and that each entity in their written annual ministry report inform the messengers what they have done, are doing, and will do annually to assist our churches in equipping and ministering to the people in our churches and communities who suffer with mental health challenges."

Bylaw 14 of the SBC constitution names as entities the International and North American mission boards, LifeWay Christian Resources, GuideStone Financial Resources, the Ethics & Liberty Commission and the SBC's six seminaries.

Messengers to the 2013 SBC annual meeting also approved a resolution on "Mental Health Concerns and the Heart of God," affirming the "immeasurable value to God" of those with mental health concerns, committing to "affirm, support and share God's love and redemption with those with mental health concerns" and opposing "all stigmatization and prejudice against those who are suffering from mental health concerns."

The resolution affirmed messengers' support for "the wise use of medical intervention for mental health concerns when appropriate" and "research and treatment of mental health concerns when undertaken in a manner consistent with a biblical worldview."

The resolution affirmed that "those in Christ cannot be separated from the eternal love of God that is in Christ Jesus" and asked Southern Baptists and their churches "to look for and create opportunities to love and minister to, and develop methods and resources to care for, those who struggle with mental health concerns and their families."

Committed to "affirm, support and share God's love and redemption with those with mental health concerns" and opposing "all stigmatization and prejudice against those who are suffering from mental health concerns."



Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee President Frank Page is shown with his eldest daughter Melissa. Page wrote the book, "Melissa, A Father's Lessons from a Daughter's Suicide," as a ministry to families who have suffered a suicide and to individuals who might be considering taking their own lives and the pastors who serve them.

Baptist leader urges better police training about how to interact with mentally ill

BY BOB ALLEN
ABPnews/Herald

Better police training about how to interact with people with mental health conditions and developmental disabilities can prevent needless tragedy, an American Baptist official told a Senate panel April 29.

“Recent high-profile tragedies demonstrate the need for law enforcement officers to receive additional training to safely address crisis situations involving persons with mental health conditions,” Curtis Ramsey-Lucas, managing director of resource

Violence (tinyurl.com/AAPD-mentalhealth) for congregational leaders, disability advocates, and others concerned that ongoing debate around gun violence might further stigmatize people with mental illness.

In preparing the report, Ramsey-Lucas said coalition members learned that most violence is carried out by people who are not mentally ill and that persons with mental illness are far more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators.

training that is rooted in such an approach may better prepare officers to adapt to the situation without negative judgment and to offer understanding rather than only trying to de-escalate the situation,” he said.

Ramsey-Lucas said improving officer awareness and understanding of mental illness would improve police response to incidents involving persons with mental health conditions.

Police liaison offices deploying specialized police officers or civilians, like police chaplains trained



Curtis Ramsey-Lucas says police are increasingly first responders to people with mental health conditions in crisis and that inadequate training too often leads to tragedy.



development at the American Baptist Home Mission Societies, said in testimony submitted to the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights.

Earlier this month, a Dallas police officer was indicted for aggravated assault for shooting and seriously wounding a 52-year-old mentally ill man last October. Police in Madison, Wis., recently shot and killed three suspects in as many days who authorities say had a history of mental illness and became violent.

A 2012 investigation by the Portland Press Herald and Maine Sunday Telegram reported that at least half of the estimated 375 to 500 people shot and killed by police each year in the United States have mental health problems.

“Given the inadequate mix of social and mental health services, law enforcement officers have increasingly become the first responders for people with mental illness or developmental disabilities who are in crisis,” Ramsey-Lucas testified on behalf of the Interfaith Disability Advocacy Coalition. “In these situations it is important that officers be adequately trained to respond effectively and properly to the needs of all concerned.”

Ramsey-Lucas represents American Baptists on the steering committee of the interfaith coalition, a program of the American Association of People with Disabilities formed to mobilize the religious community to speak out and take action on disability policy issues with Congress, the president and administration and society at large.

Last April the AAPD published *Grounded in Faith: Resources on Mental Health and Gun*

The Baptist leader said such insight is relevant to lawmakers because “misconceptions about violence and mental illness can cause discrimination and unnecessarily hamper the recovery of the nearly 20 percent of all Americans who experience some form of mental illness each year.”

“Moreover, misconceptions about violence and mental illness, prevalent in society at large, also shape law enforcement perceptions and approaches to persons with mental health conditions,” he said.

Ramsey-Lucas said states and localities that have employed innovative solutions like crisis intervention teams have seen fewer injuries and deaths among both officers and people with mental illness or developmental disabilities, increased jail diversion rates, fewer lawsuits and stronger ties to the mental health and disabilities communities.

Ramsey-Lucas recommended that police training seek to “demystify” mental illness and overcome prejudice and stereotypes.

“Training materials that refer to situations involving people with developmental disabilities and mental illnesses as problems or generally violent predisposes the person and situation as adverse,” he said. “Resources that describe the prevalence of mental health conditions and that use alternative language to describe individuals as ‘living with a mental health condition’ as opposed to ‘mentally ill,’ or that describe a person as ‘living with a disability’ as opposed to ‘disabled’ will help officers relate to the whole person rather than perceiving an individual as defined by their condition or disability.”

“When confronting a situation that involves people with disabilities or mental health conditions,

in crisis intervention, can help with specialized knowledge, skills and expertise in responding to situations involving mental illness.

For example, he said, verbal engagement can sometimes de-escalate a person in an agitated state when the use of restraint and coercive commands might do the opposite.

Ramsey-Lucas said the criminal justice and mental health communities must collaborate so that police officers have options other than arrest or hospitalization when responding to those with a mental illness.

“Beyond these more immediate concerns involving law enforcement, as a society we must do more to address the stigma associated with mental illness,” he concluded. “It is estimated that almost half of all Americans will experience symptoms of a mental health condition — mental illness or addiction — at some point in their lives. Yet, today, less than one in five children and adolescents with diagnosable mental health conditions receive the treatment they need.”

“When proper treatment and supportive services are not received, crisis situations can arise affecting individuals, families, schools and communities — situations in which law enforcement officers too often find themselves to be the first responder,” he said.

“While we must do all we can to adequately train police officers to respond effectively in such situations, we must also do more to address the needs of individuals and families before they reach a point of crisis.”

Missions Banquet Features Ukraine, Guatemala Reports

Not too Late to Give to Offering

The Missions Banquet at last month's Churchnet Annual Gathering featured reports from work in Ukraine and Guatemala, as well as possibilities for future endeavors. With the Annual Gathering theme, "Share Hope: The World is Waiting," the Missions Banquet offered a perfect kickoff for the weekend gathering. This year's Missions Banquet Offering goal is \$12,000, 100 percent of which will go to help missions efforts in the two nations. A little more than half of the offering goal will help Guatemalan pastors and church leaders attend Churchnet training events, with the rest of the goal supporting a church planter in Ukraine. Even if you did not attend the Missions Banquet, you can still support those efforts by sending your contribution marked "Missions Banquet Offering." Please join us as we *share hope* around the world.

Churchnet Missions Mobilization Team Leader Gary Snowden opened the banquet by sharing a report and pictures sent from Andriy Pismenyuk, a church planter with the European Baptist Federation. The Spirit of Life Church is about four years old and ministers in the eastern European nation that has often made international headlines in recent months.



Spirit of Life Church in Ukraine

In addition to financially supporting the ministry, Churchnet urges Missouri Baptists to pray for the work and witness of Pismenyuk and other Baptists during these critical times.

Snowden also gave an update during the Missions Banquet about recent training events in Guatemala. Additionally, David and Susan Holman shared about a recent medical missions trip they took to Guatemala. One story they included in their account was of Mariela, a young woman who was crippled from birth. A lady from the Judah Baptist Church in Quetzaltenango met her a month or so before the medical missions team arrived in July. She befriended Mariela, a beggar whose only form of mobility was to pull herself across the ground by using her hands and arms. Mariela pushed a small bowl in front of her as she begged people for money. The friend brought Mariela to the school on the side of the mountain in a village called Tierra Colorada where the team held clinics the first two days. The team helped Mariela with some reading glasses and some medications for pain and stomach disorders. The team learned that the church had checked out the possibility of providing her a wheelchair but had been unable to do so due to the cost. However, First Baptist Church of Farmington had sent some funds with the instructions to use it where most needed and not to bring it home. When the chair was presented to Mariela by the team that was attending the Judah Baptist Church that morning, there was not a dry eye in the building. She wept lots of tears of joy and then was photographed as she left the building with a huge smile on her face.

During the Missions Banquet, Ned Walsh also spoke about the possibility of traveling to Cuba with Churchnet (see information below). Please join us in supporting these missions efforts.

Travel to Cuba with Churchnet

Oct. 8-15

We are excited to announce an opportunity to travel to Cuba (the country, not the city!) this fall to support our Cuban Baptist brothers and sisters. The mission excursion takes place Oct. 8-15 and will provide the travelers an opportunity to participate in the 40th anniversary of COEBAC, a Cuban Baptist ministry to students and workers. Those who join the trip will visit and worship with Cuban Baptists, see the historic city of Havana, meet with Baptist pastors ministering in the Province of Pinar del Rio, visit a Baptist seminary and explore the potential of becoming a "sister church" to a church in Cuba. A Baptist pastor will serve as the English-speaking tour guide.

This trip will be a unique opportunity to learn from our Cuban Baptist brothers and sisters and to encourage them as they minister in their nation. Missouri Baptists were among those who served as missionaries in Cuba prior to the Cuban Revolution of 1959, and those traveling on this excursion will be able to see some of the areas where the missionaries worked. Trip participants will meet with Baptists from all four Cuban Baptist conventions. Like Churchnet, each convention is a member body of the Baptist World Alliance.

The cost of the trip will be \$1,350 per person, which includes all costs except two meals and roundtrip airfare. Application deadline (with a \$200 deposit) is July 1. To join this trip, you must have a U.S. passport that will be valid for at least six months following the date of return to the U.S. If you are interested, please contact Edward "Ned" Walsh at SiCuba910@nc.rr.com or 919-936-0498. More information, including a planned itinerary and an application form can be found on Churchnet's website (www.theChurchnet.org). We hope you will consider joining us on this historic trip.



Camp Connect: June 11-13 at Windermere

Camp Connect, a mission-oriented Christian camp experience for children, returns to Windermere Baptist Conference Center on June 11-13. Jeff Langford will be the camp pastor. Camp Connect is a great time for students to grow closer to God and to each other. This will be the seventh year of Camp Connect. This year's theme will be "Fiesta!" The camp will host mighty fiestas, including an Olympic-themed night of games and a festival focusing on exploring the culture, food and traditions of Guatemala. The missions emphasis for the week will be learning about the Tabitha Ministry in Guatemala City that ministers to children and mothers living in or near the city dump. Camp participants will even visit the trash dump at Windermere and spend a few minutes walking in the shoes of the children who find the necessities of life by combing through other people's trash. The missions offering for the week will go 100 percent to the Tabitha Ministry.

The purpose for Camp Connect is to provide a quality church camp experience with a mission emphasis for children grades 4-6. Camp is an important part of a child's development. At Camp Connect, students will be challenged to grow mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually through games, outdoor activities, Bible study, worship, mission projects and much more! Daily recreation will be filled with fun and games as well as free time for swimming and all of the wonderful recreation opportunities that abound at Windermere.

Churchnet is excited to help sponsor Camp Connect, and Churchnet supports the Tabitha Ministry. Visit Camp Connect's website for a basic overview of the exciting week or to register: www.campconnect.org. Make plans now to join this week of fun and missions!



Mariela leaving church with her new wheelchair



2014 Word&Way Mid-Year Planning and Event Calendar

Word&Way publishes its Planning and Event Calendar semi-annually as an informational guide to special events throughout the year. All events are located in Missouri unless otherwise noted. Many events are free, but a program fee may be charged. Lodging prices will vary.

To include your event in the next calendar, contact Ken Satterfield at ads@wordandway.org or 573-635-5939, ext. 8, for the 2015 Events Calendar that will run in the Dec. 18 issue.

You can link your site to Word&Way's online calendar (wordandway.org/calendar).

On Mission through Sports, First Baptist Church, Raytown

11 a.m. — Appetizers, meet & greet and silent auction

1 p.m. — Lunch and program

Cost: Free (donations accepted)

Sports Crusaders celebrates its 20th anniversary with a family-friendly program, featuring founder Bobby Shows, Executive Director Tricia Alberts, staff, missionaries and alumni.

Registration: RSVP by May 25 at sportscrusaders.org/20years or 866-482-9833.



2-Aug. 1 — Sports Crusaders camps, various sites

Sports Crusaders connects people with Jesus Christ and the local church, by using sports and recreational activities through life-changing common ground ministries. We offer fundamental basketball, softball, baseball, soccer, volleyball and cheerleading weeklong camps led by summer student-athlete missionaries throughout Missouri, Texas, Arkansas and Illinois. We come to you and provide a high-quality experience for you and your ministry. Our ministry expands to a weekly radio show, inner-city camps and an at-risk camp called P82.

Information and schedule: 866-482-9833 or websites:

sportscrusaders.org (general), sportscrusaderslive.org (radio) or Camp82ministries.com (at-risk camp).

Registration: Contact local churches.

7 — Missouri Baptist Children's Home Strawberry Festival, First Baptist Church, Arnold.

9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Location: 2012 Missouri State Rd.

Information: 800-264-6224 or mbch.org.

11-13 — Camp Connect, Windermere Baptist Conference Center, Roach

Camp Connect is a missions-oriented Christian camp experience for children in grades 4-6, as students grow closer to God and each other. Camp pastor is Jeff Langford. This year's theme, "Fiesta!" includes a nightly fiesta, an Olympic-themed night of games and a festival exploring the culture, food and traditions of Guatemala. Missions emphasis will be the Tabitha Ministry in Guatemala City, ministering to mothers and children near the city dump, with 100 percent of the mission offering going to them. Camp Connect is sponsored by Windermere, Churchnet and CBF Heartland.

Camp Connect information and registration: 800-873-2950 or campconnect.org.

Windermere information: Janet Hill, 573-346-5200, ext. 2610, or

jhill@windermereusa.org.

13 — Churchnet Board of Directors' meeting, First Baptist Church, Jefferson City

10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Location: 301 E. Capitol Ave.

Information: 888-420-2426 or help@theChurchnet.org.

14 — HomeComing, The Baptist Home-Chillicothe

A festive celebration emphasizing visits with residents from home churches and families. Traditional bake sale benefits residents. Music and entertainment with picnic lunch served in and around the gazebo. Our Auxiliary will provide some innovative activities for residents and visitors alike.

Information: Connie Garber or Joyce Stark, 660-646-6219 or cgarber@thebaptisthome.org.



June 2-Aug. 1 — Sports Crusaders camps, various sites

See June 2 listing.

6-12 — Baptist World Alliance Annual Gathering, Izmir, Turkey

Information: tinyurl.com/2014BWAgathering, 888-420-2426 or help@theChurchnet.org.

12 — Missouri Baptist Children's Home Ozarks Berry Festival, Remington's Entertainment Complex, Springfield

9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Location: 1655 W. Republic Rd.

Information: 800-264-6224 or mbch.org.

25 — Board of Trustees meeting, The Baptist Home-Chillicothe

Information: Kathie Jones, 573-546-2709 or desk@thebaptisthome.org.



June 2-Aug. 1 — Sports Crusaders

camps, various sites

See June 2 listing.

7-17 — 2014 Missouri State Fair, Sedalia

Tickets: \$8 (adult), \$6 (seniors, age 60+), \$2 (child age 6-12) and free (age 5 and under). Parking: Free.

Theme: Harvest the Fun!

The 2014 Missouri State Fair will celebrate its 112th year as the state's largest agricultural showcase. Enjoy hours of quality family entertainment, plus scrumptious fair food and a thrilling carnival midway. Among eight concerts will be MercyMe on Aug. 14.

Schedules, concert lineup and special discounts: 800-422-FAIR (3247) or mostatefair.com.

14-15 — The Global Leadership Summit, Columbia and other locations

9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Location: Parkade Baptist Church, 2012 N Garth Ave.

Cost: WCA Member group rate (15+ people): \$159; WCA Member rate (1-14 people): \$199; Individual rate: \$249; Military: \$99; Student/Faculty rate: \$79. Scholarships and discounts are available through Churchnet.

The Global Leadership Summit exists to transform Christian leaders around the world with an injection of vision, skill development and inspiration for the sake of the local church. It is telecast live from Willow Creek Community Church near Chicago.

Information: Scott Smith, 573-443-4585.

Information and additional area locations: willowcreek.com/summit.

Scholarship and discount information: theChurchnet.org.

21-24 — 2014 Welcome Week, Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar

New student orientation week.

Information: 800-526-5859 or sbuniv.edu/welcomeweek.

30 — Auction & Home Coming, The Baptist Home-Arcadia Valley

Annual auction now in its 35th year, for benefit of residents.

Information: Sherri Snider or Connie Francis, 573-546-7429 or cfrancis@thebaptisthome.org.

THE BAPTIST HOME

JUNE 14, 2014

CHILICOTHE HOMECOMING

The Baptist Home - Chillicothe, Missouri ~ www.thebaptisthome.org/events
For more information contact: Connie Garber or Joyce Stark ~ (660) 646-6219 ~ cgarber@thebaptisthome.org

AUGUST 30, 2014

ARCADIA VALLEY AUCTION & HOMECOMING

The Baptist Home - Ironton, Missouri ~ www.thebaptisthome.org/events
For more information contact: Sherri Snider ~ (573) 546-7429 ~ ssnider@thebaptisthome.org

SEPTEMBER 22-25, 2014

OZARK CONFERENCE FOR SENIOR ADULT MINISTERS

First Baptist Church - Geyer Springs, Arkansas ~ www.thebaptisthome.org/events
For more information contact: Max Pyron ~ mpryon@gsfbc.org

SEPTEMBER 26, 2014

ARCADIA VALLEY GOLF TOURNAMENT

Crown Pointe Golf Club, Farmington MO ~ www.thebaptisthome.org/golf
For more information contact: Becky Barton ~ (866) 454-2709 ~ bbarton@thebaptisthome.org

SEPTEMBER 29 - OCTOBER 1, 2014

IMMEASURABLY MORE ADULT RETREAT

Windermere Conference Center - Lake of the Ozarks
Registration: (800) 346-2215 ext. 2001
For more information contact: Janet Hill ~ jhill@windermereusa.org
www.windermereusa.org



The Baptist Home
PO Box 87, Ironton MO 63650
866-454-2709 ~ desk@thebaptisthome.org
www.TheBaptistHome.org



facebook

THE GLOBAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT
August 14-15
Register at parkadebaptistchurch.org/gls
or call 573-443-4585

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS



1-30 — State Missions Emphasis Month, Churchnet

Information and materials: 888-420-2426 or theChurchnet.org.

9 — Jeremy Camp in Concert, SEMO District Fair, Arena Park, Cape Girardeau

7 p.m.
Cost: \$30 (includes admission into the SEMO District Fair).

Contemporary Christian artist Jeremy Camp is in concert at the SEMO District Fair Grand Strands, sponsored by KHIS Radio — His Message in Your Music, 107.9 and 89.9 FM (khisradio.org). Come out and support contemporary Christian radio and eat some great fair food!

Tickets: khisradio.org and click the "Jeremy Camp" link, 800-455-3247 or 573-334-9250 or purchased at the Arena Park Building.

12-13 — Churchnet Board of Directors' Retreat, Windermere Baptist Conference Center

13 — Missouri Baptist Children's Home Apple Festival, First Baptist Church, Peculiar

9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Location: 11902 E. 213th Ct.
Information: 800-264-6224 or mbch.org.

16 — Missouri Baptist Foundation Annual Conference, Lodge of Four Seasons, Lake Ozark

Cost includes breakfast and lunch. Annual conference to educate, motivate and investigate the financial market, stewardship and communication of ministry and mission efforts.

Guest Speakers are: Holly Snell and Heather Gilion, co-authors of *Dancing on My Ashes*.
Information: 800-776-0747.
Updates and RSVP: www.mbf.org/annualconference.

19 — The Baptist Home Foundation, Board of Trustees meeting, Truman Hotel, Jefferson City

Information: Kathie Jones, 573-546-2709 or desk@thebaptisthome.org.

22-25 — Ozark Conference for Senior Adult Ministers, First Baptist Church, Geyer Springs, Ark.

Location: 12400 Interstate 30, Little Rock.
Information: Max Pyron, mpyron@gfsbc.org.

26 — Seventh Annual Baptist Home-Arcadia Valley Golf Tournament, Crown Pointe Golf Course, Farmington

Location: 4215 Hunt Rd.
Information: Becky Barton, 573-546-2709 or bbarton@thebaptisthome.org.

29-Oct. 1 — Senior Adult Retreat

@ Windermere, Lake of the Ozarks

Experience the best 55+ adult retreat in the Midwest, designed to actively engage and inspire you. Sponsored by Windermere Baptist Conference Center.

Registration: 800-346-2215, ext. 2001.

Information: Janet Hill, 573-346-5200 or jhill@windermereusa.org.



Sept. 29-Oct. 1 — Senior Adult Retreat @ Windermere

See Sept. 29 listing.

3-4 — Homecoming, SBU, Bolivar

Root for the Bearcat football team as they host Missouri Baptist University!

Information: 800-526-5859 or sbuniv.edu/Alumni.

4 — Fall Spartan Preview Day, Missouri Baptist University, St. Louis

9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Experience a hands-on morning that is sure to yield answers and incite enthusiasm about life at a premiere Christian university, academically and spiritually.

Information and registration: 877-434-1115 or mobap.edu/admissions.

6-7 — Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty Board meeting, Washington, D.C.

Information: bjcpa.org, 888-420-2426 or help@theChurchnet.org.

8-15 — Travel to Cuba with Churchnet, Cuba

Cost: \$1,350 (includes all costs except two meals and roundtrip airfare).

Application deadline: July 1
Take advantage of the opportunity to travel to the country of Cuba and participate in the 40th anniversary of COEBAC, a Cuban Baptist ministry to students and workers. Worship with Cuban Baptists, see Havana, meet Baptist pastors and visit a Baptist seminary. Passport required.

Trip and partnership information: Edward "Ned" Walsh, 919-936-0498 or SiCuba910@nc.rr.com.

Trip itinerary and application: theChurchnet.org.

10 — Friday @ Southwest Visit Day, SBU, Bolivar

A great day for students and families to tour the campus, visit with faculty in various academic areas, have financial aid questions answered, interact with current students, visit with athletic coaches and more. Dress casual, bring questions and plan for a great day!
Information: 800-526-5859 or sbuniv.edu/visit.

11 — Rollin' on the River Cruise, Hannibal

9 a.m.-noon.
Location: Mark Twain Riverboat,

100 Center St.

Cost: \$50
Benefit for Missouri Baptist Children's Home.
Information: 800-264-6224 or mbch.org.

20-23 — Les Miserables, MBU, St. Louis

20-22: 7:30 p.m.
23: 2 p.m.

MBU Theatre takes on one of the most beloved musicals of all time. Based on the novel of the same name (wikipedia.org/wiki/Les_Miserables) by French poet and novelist Victor Hugo (wikipedia.org/wiki/Victor_Hugo), this Broadway musical tells a story of redemption and mercy through a French peasant in the early 19th century.

Information and tickets: 314-392-2345 or mobaptickets.com.

24 — Friday @ Southwest Visit Day, SBU, Bolivar

A great day for students and families to tour the campus, visit with faculty in various academic areas, have financial aid questions answered, interact with current students, visit with athletic coaches and more. Dress casual, bring questions and plan for a great day!
Information: 800-526-5859 or sbuniv.edu/visit.



1 — Fall Preview Day, SBU, Bolivar

A great day for students and families to tour the campus, visit with faculty in various academic areas, have financial aid questions answered, interact with current students, visit with athletic coaches and more. Dress casual, bring questions and plan for a great day!
Information: 800-526-5859 or sbuniv.edu/visit.

7 — Board of Trustees meeting, The Baptist Home-Ozark

Information: Kathie Jones, 573-546-2709 or desk@thebaptisthome.org.

11 — Harvesters Holiday Luncheon, Jefferson City

Location: Missouri Baptist Building Gold Room. 400 E. High St.
11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Harvesters are former employees who have worked for any Missouri Baptist institution, agency or association, or their surviving spouses.

Information: 573-761-0717 or dstevens@mbfn.org.

21 — Fall Spartan Preview Day, MBU, St. Louis

9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Experience a hands-on morning that is sure to yield answers and incite enthusiasm about life at a premiere Christian university, academically and spiritually.

Information and registration: 877-



Churchnet Missions Mobilization Team Leader Gary Snowden (left) visits with attendees at the 2013 55+ adult retreat.

434-1115 or mobap.edu/admissions.



1-31 — Churchnet World Mission Emphasis & Offering for World Missions

Information and materials: 888-420-BGCM or theChurchnet.org.

12 — Churchnet Board of Directors' meeting, First Baptist Church, Jefferson City

10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Location: 301 E. Capitol Ave.
Information: 888-420-2426 or help@theChurchnet.org.

19 — Commencement, SBU

7 p.m.
Information: 800-526-5859 or SBUuniv.edu/visit.



Jan. 19 — Monday @ Southwest,

SBU, Bolivar

Visit day with academic fair.
Information: 800-526-5859 or SBUuniv.edu/visit.

Feb. 16 — Monday @ Southwest, SBU, Bolivar

Visit day with academic fair.
Information: 800-526-5859 or SBUuniv.edu/visit.

March 14-15 — Bearcat Days, SBU, Bolivar

Visit event for seniors and transfer students that includes an overnight stay in the dorms, the Mr. and Miss Southwest Pageant and informational sessions.
Information: 800-526-5859 or SBUuniv.edu/visit.

April 6 — Monday @ Southwest, SBU, Bolivar

Visit day with academic fair.
Information: 800-526-5859 or SBUuniv.edu/visit.

May 16 — Commencement, SBU

10 a.m.
Location: Bolivar Campus.
Information: 800-526-5859 or sbuniv.edu.

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Springfield church opens chapel for a new Chin congregation

BY WAYNE BARTEE

Special to Word&Way

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. — Members of University Heights Church here have opened their doors to a refugee congregation from Burma (Myanmar) — Chin Community Church.

Since April 27, the group worships each Sunday afternoon in the University Heights chapel. On May 4, UHBC members welcomed the Chin during the congregation's annual Missions Recognition Service. Afterward, they honored the group with a reception sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union.

American Baptist missionaries, following in the footsteps of Adoniram and Ann Judson, went to the Chin homeland in Northwest Burma more than 100 years ago. They saw God move, and now some 80 percent of the Chin people are Christian.

Being Christian and an ethnic minority have been very difficult in Buddhist Burma, especially since the military took power in 1962. Policies of oppression and persecution led to violence and war in this nation of 1.5 million, causing thousands to flee for their lives. The situation became so bad that the American government granted refugee status to allow the Chin to come to the U.S.

Ngun Iap, pastor of Chin Community Church, came as a refugee, graduated from an American seminary, and then came to Springfield for a business opportunity to sell sushi. Seeing the need, he organized a church to minister to incoming Chin refugees.

The group grew to more than 150 and needed a larger and better place to meet than the gym in another church.

"We who are your children are very grateful for University Heights Church letting us use your beautiful chapel," Nguniap said on May 4.

"You are not our children, but now our brothers and sisters in Christ," University Heights Pastor Danny Chisholm responded.

For the reception, WMU Director Lois McCullars brought a large cake with the words



Chen Pastor Ngun Iap stands by a cake made especially to welcome members of Chin Community Church to University Heights Baptist Church in Springfield, Mo. The Chin now worship in the UHBC chapel.

"Warm Welcome to Chin Church" in the Chin language written on it. She reminded everyone that UHBC has been a missions-supporting church since its beginning in 1945 and has especially focused on Burma.

The church supported the Hackett family for many years and employed Bill Hackett on its staff after his retirement as an ABC missionary.

The church trustees, chaired by Patti Penny, are working to renovate the chapel basement so that the Chin may use it for children's ministry and social activities.

This new cooperation between a missions-minded American church and a congregation of refugees promises to be a blessing to both. It adds new meaning to the Bible's words, "Cast your bread upon the waters and you will find it after many days" (Ecclesiastes 11:1).

Use a 529 plan to save for education

My wife and I had our lives forever changed in September 2009 with the birth of our first child — followed in one-minute intervals by the birth of our second and third. On April Fool's Day that year, we discovered we were going to have a baby.

We had the first ultrasound shortly after to confirm. The shock of a lifetime came when the doctor showed us three little blobs marked A, B and C. We were having triplets!

After a few weeks of worry, I came to terms with the implications. I praised God for this unique blessing and began to get excited.

But as a CPA, my mind soon went into financial-planning mode. I started thinking about diapers, formula, daycare, extra-curricular activities, food, cars — and college.

According to collegeboard.org, in-state tuition and fees for a public four-year university averaged \$8,893 per year in 2013-2014. Add in room and board, books, transportation, etc., and the annual cost approaches \$15,000-\$20,000 per year. These costs usually increase annually.

My wife and I started putting money the kids received from various sources into a savings account to start their college fund. We supplemented these funds with extra savings. We wanted to ensure that the savings would be secure, but knowing that college was still 18 years away, we began exploring options that would allow for growth, as well. We chose a 529 college savings plan.

The 529 plan gets its name from section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code that lays out the plan's tax advantages. The plans are typically sponsored by states and have federal tax benefits, including tax-deferred growth on investments and tax-free distributions on withdrawals used for qualified educational expenses.

Depending upon the plan, there may be state tax benefits as well, such as deductions on contributions or income exemptions on education expense withdrawals. Some states even provide matching grants for residents. Control over the account rests with the donor and beneficiaries can be

changed as needed. You are not restricted to your home state plan, so it is a good idea to explore plans of other states.

Monies in the 529 plan can be used for qualified expenses at any eligible institution. Qualified expenses may include tuition, fees, housing and books. According to the IRS website, "An eligible educational institution

is generally any college, university, vocational school or other postsecondary educational institution eligible to participate in a student aid program administered by the U.S. Department of Education." The institution does not have to be in your home state or in the state in which

your 529 plan is set up.

A 529 portfolio can include a wide variety of investment options such as equities, bonds, fixed income assets and mutual funds. Some plans offer investments that automatically rebalance the portfolio over time from a more aggressive approach as the child is young to a more conservative approach as the child finishes high school. This is the approach we chose.

We have elected monthly automatic withdrawals from our checking account to ensure we are consistent in our saving. Currently, we pay what amounts to more than a mortgage payment in monthly daycare costs, but when our children reach elementary school, we plan to increase our monthly college contributions.

For all you grandparents: Putting money into your grandchildren's 529 plan is a great way to make a gift to them that will help secure their future.

Even if you are unable to fully save for your child's education, the fund will be a great supplement to other forms of student aid, such as loans, grants and scholarships.

Last October, we discovered Baby Long number 4 would arrive in May. We plan to start saving for our new addition's future right away and in about 18 years we expect to have a nice financial gift to get all of them started.

John Long is the Missouri Baptist Foundation trust accounting manager.

Finance



John Long

HLGU graduates nearly 300

HANNIBAL, Mo. — Nearly 300 graduates received diplomas in special ceremonies May 3 at Hannibal-LaGrange University, with HLGU President Anthony Allen as commencement speaker.

Allen's message centered on Proverbs 3:1-8 and the uncertainty of the future.

"In these moments of uncertainty, God's charge to us is the same as it was to Joshua, 'be strong and of good courage,' so you can face the future with great confidence," he said.

Allen encouraged students to follow the Lord's path so that they could be confident in the future.

Also at commencement, the Parkway Distinguished Professor Award was presented to Mark S. Quintanilla. The award, given by Parkway Baptist Church in St. Louis, is based on outstanding professional and personal contributions to Christian education. Quintanilla has been a history professor for 10 years. In 2012, he became HLGU's first Fulbright Scholar, serving as a visiting professor at two academic institutions in the West Indies, and was the first U.S. Fulbright Scholar to be sent to St. Vincent and Dominica. While there, Quintanilla worked with college and government officials to preserve legal documents dating back to the 1700s and 1800s.



Amy Jansen (left), Anna Bautista and Bryce Kelly pause for a photo following commencement at Hannibal-LaGrange University on May 3.

HLGU also named Cindy Hammock as Staff Member of the Year. On staff since 2007, she is the accounts payable clerk in the business office. She has been a member of Calvary Baptist Church for 24 years where she ministers to high school and college students. She also ministers to international students at HLGU.

Comfort those who are mourning a loss

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

— Matthew 5:4 (NIV)

The word to “mourn” is the strongest Greek word that means to mourn or grieve for a dead loved one. In the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament, this word is used to describe Jacob’s mourning when he thought his son, Joseph, was dead (Genesis 37:34).

Jesus identified mourning as a blessing because when we mourn the death of our loved one, God will make sure we are comforted.

God uses fellow believers as comforters to those who are mourning.

In their books, Hardy Clemons and Paul W. Powell identify several actions believers can do to be effective comforters to meet the needs of mourning friends. These are caregiving actions that begin at the funeral visitation and continue for many months to help a mourning friend.

Some comforter actions to offer at a funeral visitation:

Attend the visitation — Give the gift of your presence. Be brief with words of support. Our words may not be our friend’s primary need. Our presence is what counts. In the months to come, they will not remember what we said to them but they will remember we came to the visitation.

Be a listener — Mourners need the comfort of talking. Talking is an effective means of releasing emotions, fears, joys and sadness.

Talking is the beginning of the mourner’s healing process. So let her or him talk about everything connected with losing a loved one.

Listening will help as much as anything you do. Oh, and be comfortable with times of silence while the mourner is thinking before speaking.

He or she may also just want to sit with you for a while. That is okay because sitting with the individual is an act of ministry.

Be a good questioner — Ask brief, specific questions about the loved one who has died. Ask how family members are feeling about and are dealing

with the death.

Do not ask about the weather, sports teams, politics or other community events. At this time, for the mourner and the family, the lost loved one is the focus of this visit.

Comfort the children — Jesus took time for children and so should we. If the mourner has children at the visitation, realize these children are grieving, too. Often, they are neglected during the visitation time.

The greatest gift a comforter can give the children is time to sit with them with a listening ear and allow them to express their feelings, too.

Some comforter post-funeral actions include:

Grief goes on — After the funeral, the mourner begins serious grief work. The individual needs to know grieving takes a long time.

It is a personal battle but God will help them, and the comforter will help, too. Both God and the comforter will listen when the mourner needs to share feelings of pain, grief and aloneness.

Advise the mourner to wait on major decisions — Explain to the mourner that while deep in grief, he or she may decide to sell a home, quit a job, move to a new town or change financial investments. Then later, he or she may regret such actions.

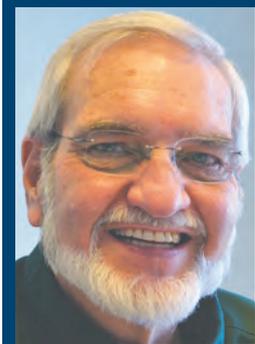
Encourage the mourner to wait to make such decisions until after the time of deep grief.

Offer specific help — Match your skills with the person’s needs. Ask if there are some specific things you can do to help. Be specific: “Do you need me to mow your lawn? Do you need transportation? May I take you out to eat once a week? Do you need housecleaning help?”

Be an encourager — Holidays are the worst times of the year for mourners. Comforters have found sending Christmas, New Year’s, Easter, birthday and other holiday cards as great encouragers to mourners.

Being a comforter is a wonderful ministry as we help friends heal their broken hearts. Be willing to answer God’s call to be a comforter in your church and community.

55+ Adults



Frank Fain



Students pray together during a commissioning service at Southwest Baptist University May 12 for nearly 80 students and team leaders who will participate in mission projects this summer.

SBU students, faculty, staff pray over mission volunteers

BOLIVAR, Mo. — Nearly 80 Southwest Baptist University students who will participate in international mission projects this summer were commissioned in a special service May 12. Students will serve through SBU’s Center for Global Connections.

Zach Atchley and Nate Jones led worship for the service. Fellow students, faculty and staff covered student-missionaries and team leaders in prayer.

“Each project participant goes into this chapel service with someone who has committed to praying for him or her, and many other students voluntarily join in prayer,” said Diana Gallamore,

director of the Center for Global Connections.

“It is so uplifting to see so many students, faculty and staff uniting in prayer for these students who are demonstrating servant leadership around the world.”

Summer destinations for global projects are Cheyenne River in North Dakota, Africa, Guatemala City, Mongolia, New York, Northern Asia, the Pacific Rim, Peru and the Pyrenees.

The CGC organized 10 winter projects that included 119 students and sponsors that took place last December and January. During spring break in March, 63 students and sponsors participated in four trips.

HLGU moves MSE to online platform

HANNIBAL, Mo. — Hannibal-LaGrange University’s Master of Science in Education degree program will move to a completely online format beginning this fall.

Started in 2007, the program has had 90 graduates to date. It offers two tracks that benefit teachers at any grade level — teaching/learning track and literacy.

The move to a fully online format is part of an initiative to reach more students. The previous blended format of online and on-campus classes limited the program to regional students. The fully online version will be available to any accepted

graduate student, regardless of location.

HLGU is currently taking applications for the MSE program. Summer courses will remain in the hybrid online/in-seat format. Those include differentiated learning, technology applications, vocabulary and fluency development and writing to enhance learning. Classes begin in June.

Individuals interested in more information about the program should contact Jane Schafer at 573-629-3108, or via email at bscha@hlg.edu, or visit the website at hlg.edu/mse.

Family shares care struggle

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (RNS) — Rabbi Charles S. Sherman has not heard his son’s voice for 28 years. Since suffering a stroke after surgery to remove a brain tumor, Eyal Sherman has not been able to breathe, eat or walk on his own.

Sherman, 69, writes about his journey dealing with a severely disabled son and the faith that sustained him in *The Broken and the Whole: Discovering Joy after Heartbreak*.

The book describes the relentless physical work of treating Eyal at home, the family’s determination to give him a normal life and the way the family found joy amid great pain and despair.



Security forces in the city of Donetsk watch over government buildings recently seized by pro-Russia demonstrators.

Ukrainian churches' future in wake of turmoil is shaky

DONETSK, Ukraine (BP) -- In Tom Long's* city in eastern Ukraine, life is "fairly calm" — except that people are carrying baseball bats and packing semi-automatic rifles.

And Long is packing his bags — all of them.

"It's difficult. We don't know what the situation is like or if I'll be able to come back," Long, an IMB representative who has called the city of Donetsk home for the past four years, said. "It's hard. I care about the people. I have grown to love this city, and I wish I could stay."

The Donetsk area and the neighboring region of Luhansk passed referendums May 11 to withdraw from Ukraine and move toward joining the Russian Federation. The Ukrainian government in Kiev — along with the U.S. and the European Union — called the move illegal, and international leaders called for Ukraine to be reunified.

But ever since Russia absorbed Crimea in March, Ukraine's "normal" is shaky in both the short and long-range forecast, the International Mission Board representative said. The nation is on edge for the rapidly approaching presidential election May 25. No one knows what the future may hold, he said.

Donetsk's government offices are closed for now, keeping Long from renewing his residence permit and forcing him from his home indefinitely.

The crisis is also affecting day-to-day life for Ukrainian nationals, Tim Johnson,* an IMB representative in Kiev, said.

Border checks have become increasingly complicated, and Ukrainians find their wallets pummeled by a falling currency and rising prices.

"This isn't Cairo, Somalia or the West Bank," Johnson said. "We are not accustomed to this. This (kind of crisis) is new territory for us."

The financial shift caused by the crisis hurts Ukrainians at the gas pump and the grocery store, but most of all it hurts the ones with mortgages, he said.

"Some purchase a home with a loan backed with (U.S.) dollars, and when their currency loses ground against the dollar, their house payment goes up," Johnson said. "We know many people dealing with some form of debt like that for whom payments have suddenly just gotten really hard."

For national believers, it's impacting work on the ground, too, he said. "When you lose 30

percent of the value of your currency, it affects your ministry."

The church in general is holding its breath to see how life may change as the crisis develops, Johnson said. In Crimea, Baptist churches are already seeing the effects of the power shift, he said.

"The churches in Crimea now have to reregister and re-form to meet Russian Federation criteria," Johnson said.

Crimean Baptists' relationship setup is shifting as a result, he explained.

"Their historical relationships have formerly been with the Ukrainian Baptist Union," he said, "but to comply with the laws they will have to reregister their churches and maintain an official relationship with the Russian Baptist Union when all of their relationships are with the Ukrainian Baptist Union."

(*Name changed.)

Moore: Christian radio causes people to 'hate Christianity'

BY BOB ALLEN

ABPnews/Herald

A Southern Baptist official is standing by a recent comment about Christian talk radio that prompted a network head to request publicly that he apologize or at least explain.

Russell Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Convention Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, used Christian radio as an illustration of Christians who condemn others without offering a word of reconciliation.

"I listened on the way back up here from my hometown to some Christian talk radio this week, against my doctor's orders," Moore said during a 50-minute message at the April 21-23 ERLC Leadership Summit in Nashville, Tenn. "And honestly, if all that I knew of Christianity was what I heard on Christian talk radio, I'd hate it, too."

"There are some people who believe that fidelity to the gospel simply means speaking, 'You kids get off my lawn.' That is not the message that has been given to us," he said. "If the call to repentance does not end with the invitation that is grounded in the bloody cross and the empty tomb of Jesus, we are speaking a different word than the word that we have been given."

Janet Mefferd, whose nationally syndicated radio show airs on 100 radio stations across the United States, was first to take offense.

"I find that really offensive,

for a few reasons," Mefferd said April 24. "First of all, I can think of an awful lot of people in the Old Testament who were pretty darn bold preaching the truth and God was awfully pleased with them."

Mefferd said she doesn't know if Moore was referring to her program, but she doesn't know anyone in the industry who is indifferent to whether or not people are saved.

The president of 95-station Bott Radio Network copied more than 70 Southern Baptist and evangelical leaders in a May 5 letter to Moore asking him to apologize for or at least clarify what he meant by his remark.

Moore appeared May 9 on the Erick Erickson Show, which airs on secular radio, and defended his comments in the context of his message that Christians who respond to sin only with condemnation without an offer to repent and believe aren't preaching the whole gospel.

"That doesn't mean everybody who is in Christian talk radio," Moore said. "There are just a ton of people who are doing good, gospel-centered work, but most people when they think of Christian talk radio, it's the same thing when someone says 'televangelist' in the last generation, most people didn't think of the people who were doing it right. They thought of the typical paradigm that they often hear."

Seeking: Word&Way Trustees

Word&Way is seeking qualified and committed Baptist men and women to serve on its Board of Trustees.

Word&Way covers news and happenings among Baptists in Missouri and among certain Baptist groups in the broader Midwest with the intent of informing, encouraging, inspiring and motivating to action its print and electronic constituency.

Trustees may be ministers or laypersons. Terms of service are three years. The Board itself fills trustee openings.

If interested in serving or recommending another person, contact Editor Bill Webb at (573) 635-5939, ext. 6; bwebb@wordandway.org; or 3236 Emerald Lane, Suite 400, Jefferson City, MO 65109.

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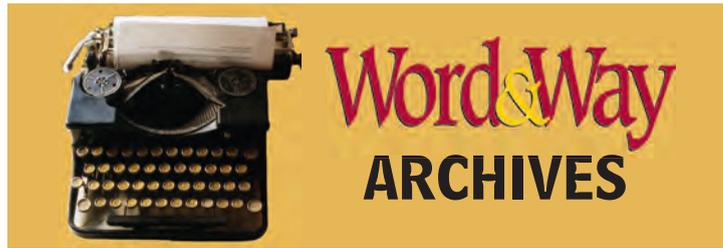
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10 YEARS AGO — MAY 2004

- Arthur “Art” Koehler, long-time manager of Windermere Baptist Assembly, died May 17 at his home at the age of 79. When he and his wife, the former Marjorie “Marge” Jones, retired in January 1990 — she as food services manager — they had served for 32 years. The Windermere Board of Advisors dedicated a new lodge — Koehler Lodge — after the couple on Sept. 8, 2001, in recognition of their selfless service. Koehler was the first Windermere administrator after the Missouri Baptist Convention acquired the property. In 1987, William Jewell College awarded the couple the W.E. Yates Medallion for Distinguished Service in Religion, the school’s highest non-degree award.
- Troy/Wentzville education site director and assistant professor Mark D. Engelhardt received Missouri Baptist University’s Distinguished Teaching Award for 2004. President Alton Lacey presented the honor at commencement on April 24.
- Judith Lemons, assis-

tant professor of education at Hannibal-LaGrange College, received the Parkway Distinguished Professor Award during commencement on May 8. The \$1,000 award is given annually by Parkway Baptist Church in St. Louis.

25 YEARS AGO — MAY 1989

- Melvin Hill, executive director of Blue River-Kansas City Baptist Association, died May 12 at Baptist Medical Center in Kansas City, Mo., after a four-month battle with cancer. He was 60. A former pastor, he had served the 125-congregation, three-county association since 1982.
- A total of 769 students graduated this spring from Missouri Baptists’ four institutions of higher learning. Hannibal LaGrange College awarded 78 four-year degrees and 44 two-year degrees; Missouri Baptist College, degrees to 87 students and advanced certificates to three students in its certificate program; Southwest Baptist University, degrees to 262 students; and William Jewell College, 298 degrees.

Ex-Muslim preacher Ergun Caner loses copyright claim

BY BOB ALLEN
ABPnews/Herald

For the second time in a month, a Georgia Baptist college president has lost a legal battle to block the online posting of videos of him giving contradictory versions of a famous “Jihad to Jesus” testimony popular in Southern Baptist preaching circles after 9/11.

U.S. District Judge Norman Moon in Lynchburg, Va., granted summary judgment May 14 against Brewton-Parker College President Ergun Caner’s copyright claim to two videos posted online by Jonathan Autry, a blogger who attended Liberty Theological Seminary while Caner was dean.

Autry, represented by his brother, attorney Joshua Autry of Lancaster, Pa., claimed in his defense that he once supported Caner but lost confidence in him after blogs and news articles began casting doubts on the veracity of claims that he was raised overseas and trained as a terrorist before his dramatic conversion to Christianity prevented him from carrying out an act like the terrorist attacks against America on Sept. 11, 2001.

Caner sued last August, claiming that he owned the

copyright to videos of him speaking in training sessions to U.S. Marines about what they needed to know about Islam before being deployed in 2005, and that Autry and another blogger posted them online without his permission.

The judge, however, determined that Autry’s posting of the material constituted “fair use,” because it was for the purpose of making “religiously based criticism against a public figure on a matter of public concern” based on Autry’s sincerely held religious beliefs that “it is morally wrong to lie, and especially wrong to lie in a church and to U.S. Marines.”

Copyright is the right of an author to control the reproduction and use of a creative expression fixed in forms like paper or a computer disk. Not all unauthorized use of copyrighted material, however, is infringement.

Courts have recognized a doctrine of “fair use” for purposes including criticism, commentary and news reporting, taking into account factors such as the purpose and character of use, nature of the copyrighted work, the amount of copyrighted material used and any effect on its market value.

During an oral hearing April 30, Caner’s lawyer introduced an argument not in the written complaint that Autry was “not qualified” to make a fair use claim, because he is a disgruntled former employee motivated by revenge and using a copyright defense to hurt Caner financially by engaging in “cyber-terrorism.”

Judge Moon called that an “astounding” claim that is “ludicrous on its face.”

“The First Amendment’s protections, advanced by the fair use defense, have never applied to some bizarre oligarchy of ‘qualified’ speakers,” Moon ruled.

The judge observed in a footnote differences in what Caner told Marines about his background in 2005 and what is published in a book that he co-wrote with his younger brother published in 2002.

According to Unveiling Islam: An Insider’s Look at Muslim Life and Beliefs, the judge noted, Caner’s father and mother met at a university in Sweden, where Ergun was born in 1966, then moved to America, where his brother, Emir, “was born after we arrived in Ohio,” in 1970.

BIBLE CROSSWORD

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Across

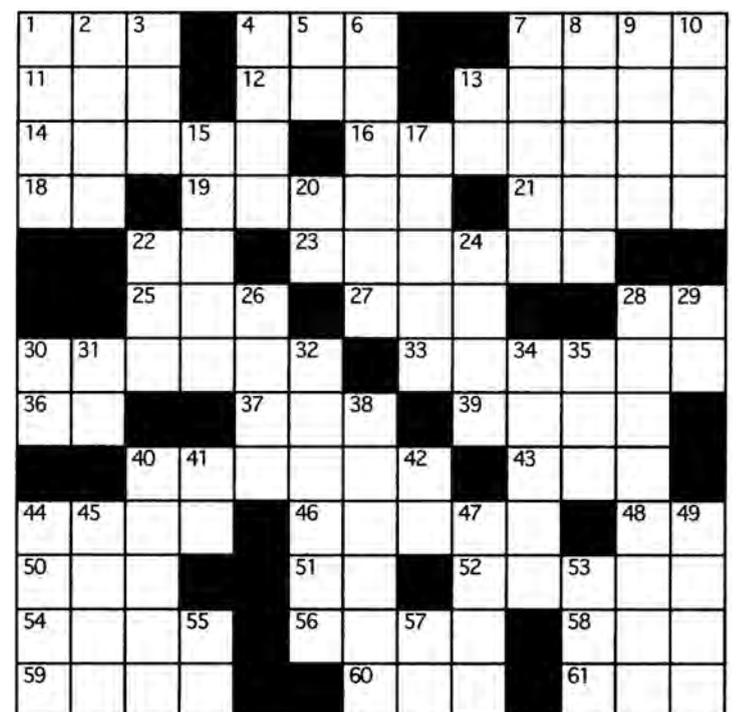
- Tax preparer (abbr.)
- Music recorders (abbr.)
- Jezebel’s spouse
- Curve
- Foil (abbr.)
- “___ cometh one mightier than I” (Mark 1:7)
- Question
- Father of Jezebel
- Mouth
- Compensate
- “The city of ___ the father of Anak” (Joshua 15:13)
- Kansas City state (abbr.)
- “I have a secret ___ unto thee” (Judges 3:19)
- “That which growth of ___ own accord” (Leviticus 25:5)
- Gate (2 Kings 11:6)
- Baton Rouge is it capital
- “Let him ___ evil, and do good” (1 Peter 3:11)
- Son of Cush

- “All that thou sayest...I will ___” (Ruth 3:5)
- “Saul the son of ___” (Acts 13:21)
- “The ___ and stars to rule by night” (Psalm 136:9)
- Chewed
- Dwelling (abbr.)
- Distant
- Car parts
- Middle Eastern nation (abbr.)
- Investment result (abbr.)
- Metallic element symbol
- “Amasa was a man’s son, whose name was ___ an Israelite” (2 Samuel 17:25)
- Son of Issachar (1 Chronicles 7:1)
- Prevalent
- Infantry officer (abbr.)
- Pace
- Saw
- Cook’s measure (abbr.)

Down

- Churl
- Experts
- Biking group (abbr.)
- Cot
- Condensation temperature

- (abbr.)
- “Their ___ into pruning hooks” (Micah 4:3)
- Son of Abishur (1 Chronicles 2:29)
- “And God ___ the voice of the lad” (Genesis 21:17)
- “___, and Dumah, and Eshean” (Joshua 15:52)
- Son of Benjamin
- Weekday (abbr.)
- Soup
- Tyre (variation)
- Typesetter’s mistake (abbr.)
- Old Testament prophet
- “Kemuel the father of ___” (Genesis 22:21)
- Denomination
- “Cometh thither with ___ and torches” (John 18:3)
- Electricity measure (abbr.)
- Publisher’s staff member (abbr.)
- “___ have we been in thy sight” (Isaiah 26:17)
- Dry up
- Praise oneself
- Upper surface
- “The third to Harim, the fourth to ___” (1



- Chronicles 24:8)
- “From ___ of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God” (2 Samuel 6:2)
- Erin (abbr.)
- “And there shall be ___ more curse” (Revelation 22:3)
- Trivium

- “Crushed Balaam’s ___ against the wall” (Numbers 22:25)
- Food planning
- Croak
- With up, upset
- Sent ones (abbr.)
- Iron’s symbol

For answers, see page 18.

The Lord is worthy of prayers of praise

BY MICHAEL K. OLMSTED

As a college freshman, I attended worship at a rural Baptist church in southwest Oklahoma and was captivated. My



M.K. OLMSTED

church experience had been largely in more formal liturgical settings, so I was curious about the informality and impressed with the spontaneity of the prayers. Those folks whom I came to love and, subsequently

prayed from deep within, lifting up the sick, seeking blessings on the children, asking for rain and a good wheat harvest — and praising God repeatedly.

Now 40 years later in retirement, I find myself as interim at St. John's United Church of Christ, leading a carefully planned liturgical worship in which many of the prayers are printed and read responsively, the Lord's Prayer is recited, and the Doxology and *Gloria Patri* are sung as prayerful responses.

What I had come to consider "rigid orthodoxy" has surprised me with a new joy in worship. Like the reading of the Psalms, this more formal worship is influencing my personal prayer life to include more praise.

The next five lessons, taken from the Psalms, will help us strengthen the many dimensions of prayer — praise, thanksgiving, confession, lament and commitment. No area of life is excluded

from the experience of prayer as we rediscover God is listening and that he will answer.

Consider how our prayers can encompass joyful praise and agonizing need at the same time. Remind yourself that prayer builds your relationship with God and deepens a stronger bond of love with our Father. Remember, it is in prayer that we find strength to live in hope and purpose in this challenging world.

The early church used Psalm 145 as a prayer for the midday meal. Within Judaism, this psalm made

up the majority of the "Ashrei," a prayer recited three times a day, which tradition claimed would give a person a share in the world to come. They were not teaching salvation by repeating the words, but the cultivation of a heart filled with praise for the God who creates, establishes and blesses us in life.

The beginning words lay the foundation of trust, hope and joy: "I will lift you up high, my God, the true king. I will bless your name forever and always" (v. 1, Common English Bible). The Hebrew word "bless" contains the idea "to bow down," and is used in Genesis 24:11 to describe how a camel must kneel down so its owner can get up on its back.

"Bless" includes the idea of adding value or importance to someone, a pic-

ture of placing coins on a scale to balance something of great value. When we "bless" God's name or "lift" God up high, we are celebrating the unequalled importance of God in our life. The flow of poetry in this psalm places God above everything we can know and experience in life!

The exalted praise language of this psalm reminds me of the throne of heaven scene in Revelation 4 describing God on his eternal throne, with a rainbow overhead, flashing lightning, angels praising, and the elders bowing and casting their crowns before

Almighty God. Nothing compares to God.

We speak of offering our body as a gift to God. We consider using our abilities and gifts as giving self to God. Actually, our life and abilities are gifts God has given us! The only true gift we have to offer God — the only sacrifice that is ours alone to offer God — is the kind of praise modeled by this psalm.

Psalm 145 is the only psalm bearing the title "Praise" (*tehillah*). Structured as an acrostic based on the Hebrew alphabet, it introduces the concluding five praise hymns of the Psalter.

Often when we are dealing with depression or problems, we are counseled to think positively. The solution the psalms propose is to start with God,

to focus on all he is and all his grace provides, to think beyond the present circumstances to the astounding truth of God who is the eternal bedrock of all that exists.

We are free of the long winter season at last and nature graphically reveals the beauty and majesty of what God has created. I enjoy cutting my grass, digging in the soil and planting and tending my garden. I am reminded that it was in the garden called Eden that God first sought fellowship with our original parents.

Can you see these days as a time to think about the marvelous ways the Eternal God has shown us his love and grace, the amazing events that show us he cares, the unfolding revelation of his written word, and the unparalleled act of Jesus' death and resurrection?

If you need assistance in praying, begin by reading Psalm 145 as the first words of your prayer. Each day read part of the text and then talk to God about how those words become real in your life. No matter what you feel, no matter the need you face, God's love and grace remain constant.

Life is not a moment — it is forever. Before the dawn of our universe, God existed, and at the end of our universe, God is! Bless his holy name, seek his generous strength and trust his unflinching love.

Retired after 45 years in pastoral ministry, Michael K. Olmsted enjoys family, supply preaching and interim work, literature, history, the arts and antiques.

Formations

June 1

Scripture:

Psalm 145:1-13a

Give thanks in both good times and bad

BY MICHAEL K. OLMSTED

The 50 verses of this complex and majestic psalm are given to the director of temple music for use in Israel's worship. Considered a royal psalm of thanksgiving, it celebrates God's powerful deliverance of King David from the threats of his enemies and Saul. An almost identical version of this psalm appears in 2 Samuel 22.

A review of David's life easily reveals the tragedies, hardships, mistakes and threats that dogged him and the gracious power of God that sustained David through everything. This song of thanksgiving concludes with the reminder that God's kindness is also available to David's descendants forever (v. 50).

Psalm 18 lays out the foundational premise of true thanksgiving: "I love you, Lord my strength" (v. 1, Common English Bible). It is all too easy to thank and praise God when life is good and blessings are abundant, but this prayer of thanksgiving comes from the heart of a man who faced the death threats of King Saul, murderous foreign armies, political intrigues and even the attempt of his son, Absalom, to take the throne.

The Hebrew word for David's "love"

for God in verse one carries the idea of a mother's strong or insistent compassion for her children. David never claims to deserve God's deliverance and blessing, instead, describing a relationship in which God can be trusted in every circumstance to hear his children and respond.

Words are never enough when we try to express gratitude to God, but David constructs a mountain of metaphors for God his Savior: "my solid rock, my fortress ... my shield, my salvation's strength, my place of safety" (v. 2, CEB).

What words do you use when giving thanks to God? Notice each of David's metaphors is preceded by the possessive pronoun "my." This is a strong expression of David's confidence, his assurance that God truly cares about him. When we think about God's very real love, we can do nothing less than bow in gratitude.

While we may not fear someone is actually plotting to kill us as David did

on many occasions, we can relate to the psychological pain, uncertainties and fears David expresses as "death's cords" (v. 4) that encompassed him, "rivers of wickedness that assailed him" (v. 4), "the shackles of the grave" that bound his spirit (v. 5) and "death's traps" that challenged his peace of mind.

Add to these the picture of a small stream that becomes a raging flood threatening to overcome. I remember from my days in New Mexico the very real danger of arroyos flooding when sudden rains fell in the hills and mountains, producing powerful streams that swept away anything in their path.

Equally powerful are the images of God who hears our prayers and answers: "the earth rocked and shook; the bases of the mountains trembled and reeled because of God's anger" (v. 7); "smoke went up from God's nostrils: out of his mouth came a devouring fire" (v. 8); and "God parted the skies and came down" (v. 9).

The list of fearsome images piles up!

Nothing compares to this God who blesses his people.

As I write this lesson, I am in Virginia and terrible storm fronts are sweeping across the mid-South into the southeastern states, producing devastating floods and killer tornadoes. So many of the survivors interviewed on television are expressing thanks to God "for life.... Even though we have lost all our things, we still have one another.... Folks from a neighboring church are helping us dig through the rubble and they are providing hot meals." In the face of destruction they are thanking God for his blessings.

Hear the psalmist as he reminds us God is our shield, rock, refuge, help, provider and protector. David never claimed exemption from the problems and suffering of life. He reminds us that God is God no matter what transpires.

In Philippians 4:6-7, Paul encourages: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (New American Standard Version).

Formations

June 8

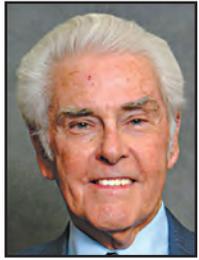
Scripture:

Psalm 18:1-15

God is holy, separate from, above all creation

BY JOHN HOWELL

The congregation rose to its feet as the organ pealed out the vibrant melody of “Holy, Holy, Holy; Lord God



JOHN HOWELL

Almighty! Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee; Holy, Holy, Holy, Merciful and Mighty! God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!”

Worship had begun once again, catching the church up in the powerful music of an ancient hymn that united the worshippers in the song of hope.

God’s holiness and sovereignty is the theme of Psalm 99. The psalm is divided into three stanzas and each stanza concludes with the exclamation of God’s holiness. Psalm 99 not only declares the holiness of God, but also describes his holiness in light of his righteous and just character.

It is not easy to define the term “holy” but it is important to do so for an understanding of God, of worship and of God’s people.

One significant meaning is “to set apart.” God is set apart from rational understanding, but it is essential that we as believers in God also seek a personal relationship with him as we seek holiness in our personal lives.

Holiness is in tension with this rela-

tional personhood since it tends toward separation and uniqueness. Personhood inspires love and the wish to be near. Both are in the Bible as necessary ways to think of and experience God. Holiness seems to imply the fullness and completeness of God and godliness in all its meanings.

Christians are called to holy living.

Being made holy for Christians is a work of the Holy Spirit based upon the atonement of Jesus Christ, which creates our new personhood achieved through faith in his sacrifice for us.

God is separate from and above all creation (vv. 1-3). The reigning God sits between the cherubim. This term may refer to an article of temple furniture or to living angels seated on each side of God. When the text describes the earth as shaking, the cherubim seem to be the living angels whose presence causes this movement. God’s name is above all the nations. God is holy!

God loves justice (vv. 4-5). One of Yahweh’s distinguishing qualities is concern for the people of Israel (Jacob). He acts with fairness; therefore, his people must exalt him. He is holy!

God seeks reverent worship from his people (vv. 6-9). The psalmist drew from

Israel’s history by reminding the people that Moses and Aaron were among God’s priests and that Samuel also called upon God’s name in the journey from Egypt to Israel. God spoke to the people from the pillar of fire, giving them his decrees and they “kept his statutes and the decrees.”

In this psalm’s final stanza, God was a listening ruler and a forgiving God. “O Lord our God, you answered them [Israel].” They sinned on that journey. God punished but was also forgiving. They sinned against the sovereign God while camped at Mount Sinai. When they

were punished for their sinful behavior that involved Aaron and the golden calf (1 Samuel 1:18-19:24), they were forgiven. The call to them was to “exalt the Lord our God and worship at his holy mountain [Sinai]” for “the Lord our God is holy.”

The quality of holiness also defines the places where God is present and can be worshipped. The tabernacle and the temple fulfill this need for a holy place where those God called to serve him are also called to a holy lifestyle.

The Holy Spirit is the agent of holiness for the church and its leaders. Being sanctified, or made holy, is a work of the Holy Spirit on the basis of Christ’s atone-

ment that calls for obedient submission from those who have been saved by faith.

On April 27, the Roman Catholic Church set apart two bishops with canonization for significant ministry during the 20th century. In an unprecedented event, Pope Francis invited retired Pope Benedict XVI to join him on the altar of St. Peter’s Square. The entire enterprise seemed focused on restoring the holiness and spirituality of the Roman Catholic Church after a turbulent history of clergy sexual abuse of women and children for years. It is “the first time a reigning and retired pope have celebrated Mass together in public in the 2,000-year history of the church” (Kansas City Star, 4/28/2014).

A well-known hymn that invites worshippers to sing praises to God as Creator is “How Great Thou Art.” The hymn echoes some of the reasons for praise that we find in Psalm 99. The hymn writer praises God’s creative activity in bringing the world into being: “O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder consider all the worlds Thy hands have made, I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder, Thy pow’r thro’-out the universe displayed. Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee; How great Thou art, How great Thou art! Then sings my soul, My Savior God to Thee; How great Thou art; how great Thou art!”

John Howell is academic dean emeritus at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.

Bible Studies for Life

June 1
Scripture:
Psalm 99:1-9

God demonstrates love as Savior and Lord

BY JOHN HOWELL

The Apostle John wrote 1 John and possibly 2 and 3 John as well. First John was written to encourage believers, to lead them to avoid sin and false teachings, and to help them know that because of their faith in God as Savior they have eternal life. The meanings of love permeate the letter. The brief section as our text for today is basically the heart of the letter. We focus on God’s love and the need to love one another in this early Christian fellowship.

The nature of God (vv. 7-8). Two fundamental qualities of God’s nature are included in these verses — God is love and God is loving.

In the Greek text, we are introduced to the agape form of love that describes God’s love for us at its most demanding level. This is God’s nature and is used in the New Testament to highlight what God’s love is willing to do as its ultimate expression of love.

When we have accepted God’s love as foundational, we are challenged to apply God’s loving nature to our shared unity with each other. John declares that authentic love comes from God and only those who have been born of God can truly practice authentic love.

How can we become lovers in this unique sense? In his helpful study of 1 John, Lloyd John Ogilvie declares that such love is “a gift of God. He [God]

alone can break the bind of self-depreciation and free us to enjoy ourselves” (When God First Thought of You, p.123). He is the source of the love-gift that ultimately finds expression through Jesus Christ.

God demonstrates love (vv. 9-10). In the Old Testament, we are introduced to God’s love in creative actions. Two passages guide us: “Now may the Lord’s strength be displayed, just as you have declared: The Lord is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion” (Numbers 14:17-18); and “know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to

a thousand generations to those who love him and keep his commands” (Deuteronomy 7:9).

Two New Testament passages provide an important contribution: “And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us” (Romans 5:5); and “if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal

bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you” (Romans 8:11).

When that intensely personal relationship with God is established through the work of the Holy Spirit, God’s love must penetrate the depths of our personality. That, in turn, “results in a totally different quality of relationships with people. We are set free to love as we have been loved” (Ogilvie, p. 125).

In The Go-Between God, John V. Taylor points out that the “Kingdom of God is a new creation brought out of nothingness through the working of the Creator Spirit” (p. 103). The connection between the love that God is demonstrating in the New Testament and the

coming of the Holy Spirit is a powerful testimony to the new life he gives.

God loves as Savior (vv. 11-12). One key element in God’s love and savior-hood is the need for forgiveness over events that have happened in the past. When Isaiah reflected on God’s relationship to him, he offered a prayer of thanksgiving for God’s care. “In your love you kept me from the pit of destruction; you have put all my sins behind your back” (38:17).

In his death, Jesus offered the forgive-

ness of sin that enabled him to become the Savior of all who trusted their lives to him. “[H]e died forgiving us. We know this, not simply because Luke said so, but because he never learned how to withhold love,” John Taylor commented (p. 103).

After the resurrection, Jesus met with his disciples and commissioned them to establish the church with its ministry to the world. Paul describes that ministry as a ministry of love in which the lost can be reached and trained to faith in Jesus Christ.

“Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself in love, as every part does its work” (Ephesians 4:14-16).

Verses 9-10 summarize God’s love for us: “God showed how much he loved us by sending his only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love. It is not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins” (The New Living Bible).

Rejoice, the Lord is King!

Bible Studies for Life

June 8
Scripture:
1 John 4:7-12

June WMU PrayerWays

1. New Puebla and Partnership Missions Liaison **Luis Adrian Herrera** in Puebla and Tlaxcala, Mexico; **Rhonda Simon** (Missouri); and **Carol Barbour** (retired, Southern Africa).
2. Lesotho: **Jim Flora** as he trains 'Ntate Rakoane to lead the church at Ha Maphike and that the government will approve the request for the land where the church is to be built; **Bonnie Carter** (student specialist, Missouri Woman's Missionary Union).
3. **Ida Claiborne** (retired, Kansas) and **Betty Sams** (retired, Ohio).
4. **DeNiel Gillen** (American Peoples) and **Bruce Muskrat** (retired, American Peoples).
5. **Stephen Hagen** (Southeast Asian Peoples).
6. Lesotho: Summer missionaries **Kylan, Cara, Emily** and **Lindsey** as they arrive tomorrow and lead discipleship classes through mid-July for 14 girls who have accepted Christ.
7. **Jeff Christopherson** (Canada) and **Perry Wolfe** (director of missions, Laclede Association, soon to retire).
8. **Brenda Lee** (Nebraska), **Donna Willcoxon** (retired, Utah) **Linda Abanathy** (DOM spouse, Southeast Missouri Association) and **Connie Craig** (adult specialist, Missouri).
9. **Ken McCune** (Missouri), **Joyce Payton** (retired, Montana) and **Phil Brewster** (retired, Pacific Rim, and DOM, St. Francois Association).
10. **Richard Carter** (retired, American Peoples).
11. **Charles Ruede** (American Peoples), **Lynelle M.** (North Africa, Middle East), and **John and Sharon Yeats, Rick and Sandee Hedger, and Tamara Parry** on mission in Hudson Valley Association, New York, for the next three days.
12. Lesotho: Members of First Baptist Church, Perryton, Texas, arriving today in the Matsoku Valley of the Maluti Mountains.
13. **Linda Palmer** (DOM spouse, Heartland Association) and **Heather Tanner** (DOM spouse, Cane Creek/Stoddard Association).
14. **Tammie Emerson** (Illinois), **Martha Logan** (retired, Missouri) and **Kathy Scott** (past Missouri WMU director).
15. **Rachel Weigand** (Sub-Saharan African Peoples).
16. **Betty Jo Hall** (American Peoples) and **Travis Hamm** (Missouri).
17. Lesotho: **Teresa Flora**, prayer for a new grandson to be born later this month and his mother.
18. **Stephanie Darst** (Missouri) and **Bill Affolter** (retired, Illinois).
19. **Shane Stamm** (Missouri) and **Loy Reed** (retired, Florida).
20. Missionary Kid **Kennedy Wilbanks** (12, European Peoples), **MK Matthew Hamline** (14, East Asian Peoples) and **Norma Altis** (past Missouri WMU president).
21. **Rob Phillips** (teaching in Pastors Conference in Puebla, Mexico) and **MK Samuel Robertson** (12, Sub-Saharan African Peoples).
22. **Rick Hedger** and Freshwater Church, Springfield, Mo., team in Northern Puebla, Mexico, this week.
23. **MK Blake Brandt** (5, Sub-Saharan African Peoples).
24. Missouri Baptist Disaster Relief workers as they share the love of Jesus with people in need.
25. Wisdom for state executive directors as the Heartland Interstate Strategy to develop churches along the I-29 corridor continues to develop.
26. **Jeanne Wright** (retired, East Asia) and **Paul Garcia** (retired, Missouri).
27. **David Stow** (American Peoples), **Darwin Payton** (retired, Montana), **Loren Turnage** (retired, European Peoples) and **Russell Adams** (DOM, Dallas County Association).
28. **C.C.** (Journeyman, Southeast Asia).
29. **Linda Hess** (Missouri), **Glen Johnson** (retired, American Peoples), **Wayne Willcoxon** (retired, Utah), **Joe Coppedge** (DOM, Mid-Lakes Association) and **MK Michael Frealy** (3, American Peoples).
30. **Kyle Hoover** (Virginia), **June Seat** (retired, Western Pacific) and **MK Grace Bredbenner** (9, American Peoples).

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, FERGUSON (SBC), in St. Louis County, Mo., is prayerfully seeking a full-time senior pastor. Please send resumes to pas_torsearch@fbcferguson.org.

NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH, Centertown, Mo. (SBC), is seeking a bivocational pastor. Please mail resumes to Randy Hunziker, 11123 Mud Creek Rd., Centertown MO 65023-3122 or email newhopecentertown@hotmail.com.

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PARKADE BAPTIST CHURCH, COLUMBIA, Mo., seeks a music worship leader with experience in choral directing and congregational music worship with a working knowledge of traditional Baptist hymns and contemporary Christian music. Send inquiries and submissions to Jeffrey H. Blaylock, jblaylock@fpb-law.com.

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CHILDREN/FAMILIES

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (CBF and Churchnet affiliated), is seeking a full-time associate pastor of children and families. This position will develop, administer and promote a seamless ministry spanning birth through childhood, which will help cultivate strong, godly families and loving relationships in our fellowship and community. This position also coordinates all-age recreation with the assistance of a part-time recreation associate. A Bachelor's degree in a related field is required (Master's preferred). Please send resumes to Dr. Doyle Sager, Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church, 301 E. Capitol Ave., Jefferson City, MO 65101, or e-mail doyle@fbcjc.org. A complete job description is available at www.fbcjc.org/jobdescription.

YOUTH

GALLOWAY BAPTIST CHURCH is seeking a part-time youth pastor. Resumes may be sent to ty@gallowaybaptist.org or mail to Galloway Baptist Church, PO Box 14289, Springfield, MO 65814.

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ABC leader condemns death sentence of Sudanese women

An American Baptist leader has spoken out against a death sentence imposed May 16 on a Sudanese woman who news reports say refused to recant her Christian faith in front of a court which considers her to

be Muslim.

"American Baptists condemn the sentencing of Meriam Yahya Ibrahim Ishag to death for apostasy as a violation of the fundamental human right to religious liberty," said American Baptist Churches USA General Secretary A. Roy Medley in a press release.

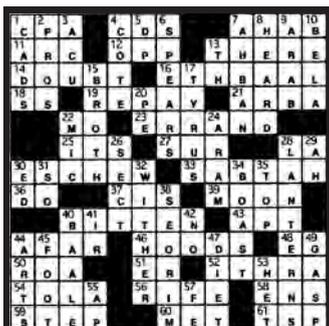
"We call upon the international community to voice their opposition to such a heinous act," he said. "We continue to be deeply concerned for the Christian community here and elsewhere where they are a minority faith and subject to acts of violence and discrimination, even as we have voiced our condemnation of the oppres-

sion of the Rohingya in Burma."

The Rohingya are a Burmese ethnic group which practices Islam and which the United Nations says is persecuted by the Buddhist-majority government in Burma.

CNN reports that a Khartoum court not only sentenced Ishag, who is said to be pregnant, to death, but also convicted her of adultery with a penalty of 100 lashes because her marriage to a Christian man is considered void under Sharia law.

"We pray for our sister in Christ, that angels might minister to her and grant her strength even as we pray for her release," said Medley. (ABPnews/Herald)



Answers to Page 15 Puzzle

What do you like about Word&Way? "News & Ideas." Gregory L. Smith, Saint Joseph, Mo.

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Right or Wrong?

FRIENDS SAY THEY LEFT CHURCH BECAUSE OF ITS TOP-DOWN ORGANIZATION AND MINIMAL EMPHASIS ON SPIRITUAL DIRECTION. HOW DID WE GET INTO THIS SITUATION? HOW CAN WE GET OUT OF IT?

Sadly, the scenario you described is all too common. As one who believes in shared leadership in Baptist life, I would encourage you to take this matter seriously and begin with an honest evaluation.

Perhaps you could start by asking a few questions: How are decisions made in our church? Does our church have an active committee structure? Is the membership involved in planning and executing ministries and projects? Are there avenues for members to be involved in creating and casting a vision for the church?

Now ask these questions: Do we leave the role of creating and casting a vision to the staff of our church? Is our membership involved in the important role of managing our resources and selecting our leadership? Are we a well-informed congregation?

The answers to these questions can help determine how you respond to the complaints of those who left your membership. If you are able to affirm members actively participate in the work of the church, then perhaps the problem lies with those who left. Early in my ministry, a wise director of missions said, "Those who join your church angry with their previous pastor will, in time, leave your church angry with the pastor."

If, on the other hand, these questions caused you to recognize that the staff or a few people who are unelected by the membership manage the direction of the church and its resources, it is time to have a conversation.

You have asked, "How did we get into this?" The answer is: Slowly. It is easy for the membership to fall into the habit of letting the staff take care of daily matters. Involvement requires time. Serving the church means time away from work, children's activities and aging parents, and so we consent to "let the staff take care of things." One thing leads to another, and pretty soon, the staff possesses the information and makes the decisions.

To change from a staff-led church or a church led by a few people, members need to begin a series of difficult conversations — and these will be difficult. People seldom want to give up power.

Conversations should be conducted among the servant leaders of the church, the deacons. Insist that your church have a healthy and functioning committee process, members who are charged with various tasks and responsibilities. This process gives members a chance to invest in the process, to cast a vision and the responsibility to see it through.

It can be painful when members leave the church. But if the church gives an honest self-evaluation, the future can be a blessing as members invest themselves in the work of the gospel.

Stacy Conner, pastor
First Baptist Church
Muleshoe, Texas

For NBA teams, religion can be unifying or divisive

By SAM AMICK

USA Today

(RNS) — Long before head coach Doc Rivers found himself defending his Los Angeles Clippers players who were the unwelcome participants in team owner Donald Sterling's racist comments, he was concerned about another sensitive subject: religion.

It was late 1999, the start of Rivers' first season as coach of the Orlando Magic, and he saw a situation in the locker room that he felt needed to be addressed. As his players took part in the routine pregame prayer, Rivers noticed something he didn't like.

"I looked up in one of the prayers, and Tariq (Abdul-Wahad) had his arms folded, and you could see that he was really uncomfortable with it," Rivers said. "So the next game, we were standing up in a circle, and I said, 'Hey guys, we're no longer praying.'"

Rivers calls himself a "very religious" man, having grown up in Second Baptist Church in Maywood, Ill., and praying on his knees every night in his home to this day. But he prefers to practice privately and is quick to note that he has attended church only for funerals the past 15 years.

So that day, he decided his teams would keep their religious practices private as well.

"We're no longer praying," Rivers recalled saying to his team. "I want to take a minute. Everybody close their eyes. We all can have different religions; we have different gods. We can just take a minute to compose. If you guys want to pray individually, you can do it. If you want to meditate, do whatever you want."

"Then, after that game, Tariq Abdul-Wahad walks in to me, gives me a hug with his eyes tearing and said, 'Thank you. That is so important to me. No one has ever respected my (Muslim) religion.' He said, 'I'm going to give you everything I've got.'"

This NBA season has been unprecedented when it comes to the blending of basketball and unresolved social issues — from Jason Collins becoming the first openly gay athlete to play in a major professional league, to Royce White, who has dealt with mental illness, to the Sterling situation. There has been a widespread push for increased tolerance on all fronts. Yet the conversation about religion and how it's best handled remains fluid.

With Rivers handling his work

world one way and Golden State Warriors coach/ordained minister Mark Jackson another, there's no better sign of the breadth of this debate than in the recent matchup of the two teams.

After all, their growing rivalry reached this point in part because of an Oct. 31, 2013, controversy over pregame chapel and the Clippers' decision to break league tradition and force the Warriors to pray on their own.

son, Austin, has integrated the two in his own way since becoming the New Orleans Pelicans' coach in 2010. Stars such as the Oklahoma City Thunder's Kevin Durant, the Houston Rockets' Dwight Howard and the Warriors' Stephen Curry are vocal about their beliefs.

Every arena in the NBA has a room reserved for pregame chapel in which interested players on both teams can, save for the Clippers' outlier, take part at the same time. The Thunder even have a pregame invocation at center court of Chesapeake Energy Arena, in which a nondenominational prayer is given.

According to The New York Times, those delivering the pregame prayer have ranged from Protestants to Roman Catholics to rabbis to Native American spiritual leaders. The report indicated that the Thunder and the NFL's Carolina Panthers are the only ones among the 141 North American men's professional teams to do so.

Mark Jackson also cites Phil Jackson, the legendary coach with the "Zen Master" nickname whose spiritual ways have been lauded by most throughout the years because of his unprecedented success. While his Buddhist beliefs are seen by many as more innocuous than the more-devout style of a Mark Jackson or a Williams, the 68-year-old who grew up with Pentecostal ministers as parents paints a different picture in his latest book, *Eleven Rings*.

Before training camps with the Chicago Bulls and Los Angeles Lakers, Phil Jackson — who said he borrowed this technique from NFL coaching legend Vince Lombardi — would line his players up in a row on the baseline and say: "God has ordained me to coach you young men, and I embrace the role I've been given. If you wish to accept the game I embrace and follow my coaching as a sign of your commitment, step across that line."

Former Lakers small forward Matt Barnes, now with the Clippers, said Phil Jackson's baseline ritual was no longer in use by the time he played for him in the 2010-11 season that was his last as a coach. But the meditation sessions that were always a part of Jackson's routine, he said, were still in full effect.

Mark Jackson cited the two buses on Easter Sunday as an example of how he always respects others' beliefs, and he said players who don't share his worldview need not fear for their playing time or worry about their role on his team. But Jackson clearly sees his spirituality as a way to inspire his co-workers and gets excited when he speaks of having a positive influence on others.



Golden State Warriors head coach Mark Jackson during the 2nd half of the Warriors 113-103 loss to the Los Angeles Clippers in Game 5 of the first round of the 2014 NBA Playoffs at Staples Center.

Jackson's strong Christian beliefs and practices are well-chronicled: The former All-Star point guard who found God later in life and has perhaps the most devout locker room in the league sees great value in sharing his spirituality with his players.

This has been the case since the start of his time as coach in 2011. But it was never more obvious than Easter Sunday, when eight of his 15 players made the 18-mile trek from their Beverly Hills hotel, through Los Angeles traffic on the team bus, and to Jackson's nondenominational church in Van Nuys, Calif., then on to practice at UCLA. A second bus to the practice site had been arranged for those who didn't want to attend church.

Jackson is hardly alone when it comes to mixing religion and rims. Monty Williams, who coaches Rivers'

If you have a comment about this column or wish to ask a question for a future column, contact Bill Tillman, consulting ethicist for "Right or Wrong?" at btillman150@gmail.com.

Vatican's doctrine chief blasts U.S. nuns; nuns seek communication

BY DAVID GIBSON

Religion News Service

Catholic nuns in the U.S. have been thumbing their nose at Rome's demands to toe the doctrinal line and they need to obey or face serious consequences, the Vatican's enforcer of orthodoxy said in a surprisingly tough talk to women representing most American sisters.

But the sisters' leaders refuse to give up easily, preferring to find a way to communicate more effectively and to talk through the issues.

"The Holy See believes that the charismatic vitality of religious life can only flourish within the ecclesial faith of the church," Cardinal Gerhard Mueller, head of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, told four members of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious.

Mueller said the LCWR — which represents about 80 percent of the more than 50,000 Catholic nuns in the U.S. — is dependent on the Vatican for its bona fides as a church body. He indicated that the group's status, and the Catholic faith of the sisters, was at risk if they did not heed Rome's directives.

"Canonical status and ecclesial vision go hand-in-hand, and at this phase...we are looking for a clearer expression of that ecclesial vision and more substantive signs of collaboration," Mueller said.

Mueller's talk was dated April 30, apparently at the opening of talks with the four LCWR leaders, and published by the Vatican on May 5.

The cardinal twice acknowledged that his talk was "blunt," and indeed his remarks were the toughest since the Vatican takeover of LCWR was announced in 2012. "What I must say is too important to dress up in flowery language," he said at one point.

While his comments seemed to reverse expectations that the crisis was on the way toward a resolution, the LCWR leaders who met with Mueller appeared to downplay the impact of the cardinal's criticisms.

"As articulated in the cardinal's statement, these remarks were meant to set a context for the discussion that followed," the sisters said May 5 from Rome, where they held talks with Vatican officials.

"The actual interaction with Cardinal Mueller and his staff was an experience of dialogue that was respectful and engaging," the LCWR leaders — Sisters Carol Zinn, Florence Deacon, Sharon Holland and Janet Mock — said.

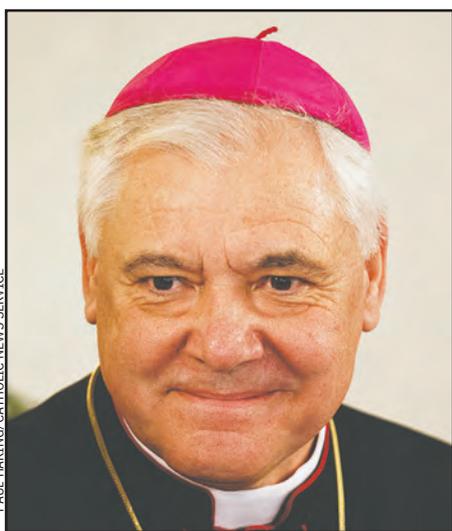
When the Vatican censure was announced, both Rome and American bishops took a lot of heat from Catholics and the wider public, who embraced the nuns and bristled at the takeover.

Rome justified the move as necessary to ensure the group's orthodoxy.

The Vatican accused the sisters of being too focused on social justice work, and said they did not sufficiently promote church orthodoxy, especially on issues like gay marriage and abortion.

The Vatican appointed three U.S. bishops, led by Seattle Archbishop Peter Sartain, to have final say on speakers at the LCWR's annual meeting and approval over other matters.

As some American bishops worked behind the scenes to ease the tensions, Pope Francis' election last year also seemed to signal a detente. As a Jesuit, Francis is a



Archbishop Gerhard Ludwig Mueller, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, blasts U.S. nuns over orthodoxy.

member of a religious order himself and has often expressed solidarity with other religious orders of men and women.

Last June, he told a group of priests and sisters from Latin America not to worry too much if they get a critical letter from Mueller's office, but to deal with it and move on. The pope also retained officials at Vatican congregations who are seen as more sympathetic to the LCWR.

But Francis also kept on Mueller, who was appointed by Pope Benedict XVI soon after the action against the LCWR was unveiled. The cardinal told the nuns that he was particularly upset by two developments:

One was the LCWR's ongoing focus on a topic called "conscious evolution," which was the subject of the LCWR's annual conference two years ago. In Rome, it's seen as a nebulous, New Age-sounding concept of spiritual development that critics say is unmoored from traditional Christian doctrine.

"The fundamental theses of conscious evolution are opposed to Christian revelation and, when taken unreflectively, lead almost necessarily to fundamental errors," Mueller said, warning that the American nuns were straying from the basics of the faith and from the Catholic Church itself.

A second point of contention, Mueller said, is that the LCWR is

honoring a prominent Catholic theologian, Sister Elizabeth Johnson of Fordham University, at this year's conference in August despite the fact that one of Johnson's recent books was challenged by the U.S. bishops as straying from accepted doctrine.

Johnson vigorously rejected those charges — and was supported by a broad swath of the Catholic theological guild — as she sought to engage the bishops in discussions. But the overture was rejected.

The choice to honor Johnson without Sartain's approval, Mueller said, "will be seen as a rather open provocation against the Holy See.... Not only that, but it further alienates the LCWR from the bishops as well."

Mueller said that if Sartain had been informed, Johnson may not have been chosen. He said he would not attempt to undo the invitation to Johnson but said that Sartain must have final say over next year's LCWR convention, adding that the Vatican mandate is now "fully in force."

The nuns responded on May 8, saying their "attempts to clarify misperceptions have led to deeper misunderstandings" between Rome and the organization.

"It was not an easy discussion, but its openness and spirit of inquiry created a space for authentic dialogue and discernment," the four sisters representing the LCWR said.

"This work is fraught with tension and misunderstanding," they said. "Yet, this is the work of leaders in all walks of life in these times of massive change in the world."

The four sisters of the LCWR said in their statement that "despite maximum efforts through the years, communication has broken down and, as a result, mistrust has developed" at Mueller's office.

They said that this negative experience was not true of their visits with other departments in Rome, which were "marked by genuine interaction and mutual respect."

The nuns did stress, however, that the frank conversations with Mueller and Sartain were "constructive" and they deepened their commitment "to stay at the table and talk through differences."

"What created an opening toward dialogue in this meeting was hearing first-hand the way the CDF perceives LCWR," they said. "This is a very complex matter, yet LCWR was heartened by the attempt of both CDF and LCWR to find a way through that honors the integrity and mission of both offices."

"We have come to believe that the continuation of such conversation may be one of the most critical endeavors we, as leaders, can pursue for the sake of the world, the Church and religious life."

There was no word on when the two sides would meet again.



IRANIAN WOMEN SHED VEILS FOR FACEBOOK PAGE.

Thousands of Iranian women are sending photos of themselves without their hijab, or veil, to a new London-based Facebook page. Called "Stealthy Freedom of Iranian Women," the page was set up by Iranian journalist Masih Alinejad and has attracted almost 150,000 likes. Alinejad has been inundated with messages and photos since launching it May 3. She said on the site that she tries hard to verify the pictures were sent from genuine accounts and asked people for permission before publishing them, but does not reveal their full names. She said she was not personally opposed to the hijab, but believes people should have the freedom to choose. While Iranian women frequently test the requirement, the religious police try to enforce it with frequent crackdowns and arrests.

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH CONDEMNS EUROVISION CONTEST WINNER.

Vladimir Legoyda, chairman of the church's information department, strongly denounced the Eurovision Song Contest's selection of a drag queen as its winner, saying it was a sign of the world's moral decline and part of an effort to "reinforce new cultural norms." Conchita Wurst, the stage name of Austrian former band singer Tom Neuwirth, won with a song titled "Rise Like a Phoenix," which she performed May 11 as a bearded woman in a form-fitting gold dress. The Eurovision contest has become a point of national pride in Russia, which began competing in the 1990s. Both the Kremlin and the Moscow Patriarchate have been positioning Russia as a moral bastion in contrast to Europe and the United States.

ENGLISH FASHION DESIGNER LAUNCHES UPDATED CLERICAL LINE FOR WOMEN.

London-trained fashion designer Camelle Daley, who founded the label House of ilona, has launched a new range of clerical wear for women in the Church of England. Daley's collection, now selling briskly, includes peplum dresses and tops, classic black dresses and a fitted green blouse with chiffon detail. She has received hundreds of orders from women, who now make up one-third of the clergy in England's established church. The launch of her clerical clothes coincides with the 20th anniversary of the ordination of women as priests in the Church of England. Within a year or so it's likely that women will be consecrated as bishops. "The style is not about flaunting the body," Daley said. "It is about clothes that accommodate the female shape in cut and fit."

ATHEISTS LOSE FIGHT OVER "UNDER GOD."

The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court upheld the legality of the phrase "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance on May 9, dealing a blow to atheist groups that challenged the pledge on anti-discrimination grounds. In *Doe v. Acton-Boxborough Regional School District*, the court said the daily, teacher-led recitation of the pledge in state public schools does not violate the state's equal rights amendment and is not discriminatory against the children of atheists, humanists and other nontheists. The ruling marked the second legal loss for atheists in early May. On May 5, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that sectarian prayers given before government meetings were not a violation of the First Amendment's guarantee of separation of church and state.