

Poverty trumps hot-button issues with most voters

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Poverty trumps hot-button issues with most voters

By Hannah Elliott

Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (ABP)—“Kitchen-table” issues like poverty and greed were more important to voters in this year’s midterm elections than issues usually trumpeted by religious groups, recent surveys revealed.

Commissioned by [Faith in Public Life](#) and [Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good](#), the survey reported that faith groups who told voters to consider kitchen-table issues when voting had a 20 point higher national favorability rating than religious groups that told people to vote for candidates according to views on abortion and same-sex marriage.

“More than twice as many voters named poverty, greed and economic crisis as the biggest moral problems in the United States than abortion. When voters hear from groups that are emphasizing these issues, they like what they hear.”

Program gives poor families reason to give thanks

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Two HOPE program participants present Shontoya Watt (center) with a surprise turkey delivery just before Thanksgiving. Sarah Eubank, HOPE program supervisor, looks on in the background.

Program gives poor families reason to give thanks

By **Miranda Bradley**

Children at Heart Ministries

ROUND ROCK—Shontoya Watt works hard to provide for her family, but living in a low-income housing complex, she hasn't always found it easy to give thanks.

This Thanksgiving was different, due largely to [Texas Baptist Children's Home's](#) HOPE program.

TOGETHER: From Thanksgiving on to Christmas

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TOGETHER: From Thanksgiving on to Christmas

This season always comes as a special gift to me. Caught up between Thanksgiving and Christmas, my spirit begins to soar a bit more, like a bird riding the updrafts of sun-warmed air rising from overheated fields of

freshly plowed earth or miles of urban asphalt.

Some of the exhilaration is purely family and memories. I have been blessed with family trips, warm welcomes and slowed-down schedules that hover around me like benedictions.



Executive Director
BGCT Executive
Board

One snowy day, we piled into our Volkswagen Beetle to hurry from my folks' home to Rosemary's folks' home so we could spend part of Christmas day with both families. Racing across Oklahoma's rolling hills, suddenly the front hood sprung loose and flew back against the windshield.

Three children were riding in the tiny backseat and "cubby space." They squealed in amazement and then concern. "Daddy, don't let the presents fall out!"

Wade to release Valley probe to law-enforcement officials

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Wade to release Valley probe to law-enforcement officials

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

MCALLEN—Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Director Charles Wade will give law-enforcement officials complete copies of a BGCT-commissioned investigative report and all relevant exhibits regarding alleged misuse of convention church-starting funds in the Rio Grande Valley.

BGCT leaders are attempting to schedule a meeting with law-enforcement officials in an effort to gauge their interest in the documents.

• [See complete list of Valley funds scandal articles](#)

NBC puts seasoning back in Veggies

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NBC puts seasoning back in Veggies

By Chansin Bird

Religon News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Fans of Bob the Tomato and Larry the Cucumber may notice a welcome change in the VeggieTales episodes aired on NBC's Saturday morning cartoon lineup—less editing of religious content than originally feared.

“The last batch of episodes are airing with very little editing,” VeggieTales creator Phil Vischer said. “Not none whatsoever, but very nearly none whatsoever. Much less than earlier episodes.”

Pro-lifers blast Warren for inviting Obama

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Pro-lifers blast Warren for inviting Obama

By Hannah Elliott

Associated Baptist Press

DALLAS (ABP)—Members of Rick Warren’s [Saddleback Church](#) in Southern California hosted a [two-day summit on the global AIDS crisis](#) in an effort to “serve the hurting like Jesus did.” But the event was not without critics—including some conservative Christians.

The event, which began Nov. 30 and concluded on World AIDS Day Dec. 1, was slated to feature [Bono of U-2](#), [Bill and Melinda Gates](#), and [Sen. Barack Obama \(D-Ill.\)](#), among others.

BaptistWay Bible Series for

December 10: Have a little talk with Jesus

December 1, 2006

Posted: 11/30/06

BaptistWay Bible Series for December 10

Have a little talk with Jesus

• John 3:1-16

By David Wilkinson

Bible Studies for Life Series for December 10: Christian hope extends beyond here and now

December 1, 2006

Posted: 11/30/06

Bible Studies for Life Series for December 10

Christian hope extends beyond here and now

• 1 Peter 1:3-13,18-21

By Kenneth Lyle

BaptistWay Bible Series for December 3: John reminds of Christ's eternal nature

December 1, 2006

Posted: 11/28/06

BaptistWay Bible Series for December 3

John reminds of Christ's eternal nature

• John 1:1-18, 29-36, 43-45

By David Wilkinson

Explore the Bible Series for December 3: Seize the opportunities God provides

December 1, 2006

Posted: 11/28/06

Explore the Bible Series for December 3

Seize the opportunities God provides

• Ezra 1:1-6; 3:1-3, 10-11

By Howard Anderson

Diversified Spiritual Associates, San Antonio

The Jews' return from Babylonian captivity seemed like a second exodus, sovereignly patterned in some ways after Israel's first redemption from Egyptian bondage. The book of Ezra begins with the decree of Cyrus for the Jews to return to Jerusalem (circa 538 B.C.), and chronicles the reestablishment of Judah's national calendar of feasts and sacrifices, including the rebuilding of the second temple (begun in 536 B.C. and completed in 516 B.C.).

Bible Studies for Life Series for December 3: Live out the gift of faith you have been given

December 1, 2006

Posted: 11/22/06

Bible Studies for Life Series for December 3

Live out the gift of faith you have been given

- Hebrews 11:1-2,5-7,32-38; 12:1-2

By Kenneth Lyle

Cybercolumn by Berry Simpson: At home again

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CYBER COLUMN: At home again

By Berry Simpson

I just finished reading *The Year of Magical Thinking* by Joan Didion, a powerful book that will haunt me (in a good way) for a long time. In fact, the reason it sat on my too-be-read shelf for over a year was because I'd heard enough about it to know it would have a big impact on me and I didn't want to read it until I was ready. But my friend Carol kept asking if I'd read it yet and I couldn't keep telling her I was waiting to start.

Berry D. Simpson

I can't write about most of what Didion said because I haven't experienced the losses she had—the loss of her spouse and the loss of control to help her family—and I just don't feel qualified. I don't think I'm grown up enough to write about all of that. But I can write about this—something she said about being at home. She wrote: “In California, we heated our houses by building fires. We built fires even on summer evenings, because the fog came in. Fires said we were home, we had drawn the circle, we were safe through the night. I lit the candles.”