

Evangelical groups voice support for immigration reform

April 13, 2006
Posted: 4/13/06

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By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

WASHINGTON—More than 50 evangelical leaders and a dozen organizations—including the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission—wrote President Bush and members of Congress in favor of an immigration bill that supports guest worker programs and citizenship for undocumented aliens already in the United States.

Jesus's agenda demands justice for immigrants, Reyes

says

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Texas Baptist Communications

WASHINGTON—The current immigration reform debate should be informed for Christians primarily by one question: “Does Jesus still have a mission to the poor and the oppressed?” Albert Reyes, president of the Baptist University of the Americas and immediate past president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, believes.

Encampments shaped life of Sabine Creek manager

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Encampments shaped life of Sabine Creek manager

By George Henson

Staff Writer

ROYSE CITY—The depots on Eddie Walker’s spiritual journey have been Baptist encampments, and he’s thrilled to have added another potential stop for others.

Builder finds his life’s purpose at Camp Buckner

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By George Henson

Staff Writer

BURNET—Jerry Ratliff loves Camp Buckner—not just because he built it,

works there or lives there, but because he believes it fulfills Christ's purpose for his life.

WMU sets \$5.1 million offering goal

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By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

DALLAS—Woman's Missionary Union of Texas' board of directors approved a \$5.1 million goal for the 2006 Mary Hill Davis Offering for Texas Missions.

Providential connections speed

church-planting in Mexico

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The Catholic Church in Candelaria, Mexico, has been without a priest since 1995 but this man faithfully sweeps the yard clean and keeps the inside in good repair.

A Baptist Child & Family Services program has made initial contact with local leaders about beginning a Bible study, and later a church, in the small mountain village.

(BCFS photos by Craig Bird)

Providential connections speed church-planting in Mexico

By Craig Bird

Baptist Child & Family Services

DURANGO, Mexico—Rob and Gloria Rolison believe God always goes before them on church-planting mission trips among unreached Indian tribes in the Mexico mountains. But occasionally, he is really way ahead of them—sometimes by almost 40 years.

Carter gathers diverse Baptist leaders

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Carter gathers diverse Baptist leaders

ATLANTA (ABP)—Leaders of Baptist conventions and organizations comprising more than 20 million adherents in North America explored “additional opportunities for fellowship and cooperation” in Atlanta April 10.

President Jimmy Carter, a lifelong Baptist lay leader and Sunday school

teacher, sponsored the gathering at the Carter Center. Bill Underwood, president-elect of Mercer University in Macon, Ga., helped recruit the participants.

Carter noted the historic nature of the meeting, which attracted a diverse array of groups. He urged participants to transcend their differences—including race, culture, geography and convention affiliation—and seek common purpose.

Around the State

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More than 450 people gathered to celebrate the opening of the Piper Children's Center on the campus of the South Texas Children's Home.

The 15,000-square-foot complex houses a play therapy center, a sponsor center, a child play area, staff offices for childcare personnel, as well as, a new commissary, clothing center, and library and learning center.

Around the State

- The College of Nursing at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor will conduct the spring community nursing symposium April 18 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The symposium is held each semester and is presented by the senior UMHB nursing students enrolled in the community health nursing course.

- Lake Lavon Baptist Encampment's senior adult retreat will be held May 15-17. The camp theme will be "Fulfilling My Destiny." Phil Briggs will be the camp pastor, and Rosemary Hoover is the Bible teacher. For more information, call (972) 736-2273.

- The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor will hold its annual Senior Saints Summit May 15-19. The conference is for people 55 or older. Participants stay on campus for four days of singing, worship, fellowship and Bible study. Russell Dilday will be the preacher, Charlie Robinson the Bible teacher, Larry Putman the worship leader, Don Newberry the banquet entertainer and Dan Gibbs the banquet emcee. For more information, call (254) 295-4606.



First Church in Fresno recently held a note burning ceremony to commemorate the retirement of the church's debt on 19 acres of land and its sanctuary. The church was started in 1997. Pictured are original members Dale Wellborn, John Borden, Carol Stoneham and Carol Borden. In the background is Interim Pastor Harold Sellers who helped start the church prior to his retirement as director of missions of Coastal Plains Area.

Baptist Briefs

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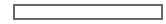
Book Reviews

American Theocracy: The Peril and Politics of Radical Religion, Oil, and Borrowed Money in the 21st Century By Kevin Phillips (Viking Adult)

In *Wealth and Democracy*, maverick political and economic thinker Kevin Phillips urged readers to consider how “plutocracy”—from the Greek, meaning rule by the rich—is a fitting characterization of our nation’s

governance. His point was that money has become the driving force of government in the United States.

Three years later, in his 12th book, Phillips examines another powerful political motivator—religion. This time, the richly experienced analyst approaches the subject with no irony. He bluntly calls this one American Theocracy and fills more than 400 pages with a blistering vision of the decline of the separation of church and state.



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Corts named college council president. Former Baptist college president Paul Corts has been named the fifth president of the 30-year-old Council for Christian Colleges and Universities—an association of more than 170 Christian institutions worldwide. He will assume the office in June. Corts has served as assistant attorney general for administration for the U.S. Department of Justice since 2002. Previously, he worked nearly 12 years as president of Palm Beach Atlantic University, a Florida Baptist school. Before that, he was president of Wingate University in North Carolina and held administrative and teaching positions at Oklahoma Baptist University and Western Kentucky University. His brother, Tom, recently retired as president of Samford University, an Alabama Baptist

school.

Ouachita names president. Rex Horne, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church of Little Rock, Ark., for 16 years, has been named president-elect of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark., effective May 1. Ouachita trustees unanimously elected Horne at a called meeting April 6. He was the unanimous choice of the 18-member presidential search committee. Horne served as a pastor in Louisiana, Texas and Oklahoma before becoming pastor at Immanuel, where former President Bill Clinton was one of his church members. As the 15th president in Ouachita's 120-year history, Horne follows Andy Westmoreland, who begins June 1 as president of Samford University of Birmingham, Ala. Horne completed his freshman year at Ouachita and completed his bachelor's degree at Arkansas College—now Lyon College—in Batesville, Ark., where he served on staff at First Baptist Church of Batesville. He earned a master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth and a doctor of ministry degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Horne and his wife, Becky, have four grown children.

Salvador headlines CBF summit on HIV/AIDS. Salvador—a popular Latino Christian music group originally from Austin—will perform a free concert at 8 p.m., June 21, in the Sidney Marcus Auditorium of the Georgia World Congress Center as a part of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's HIV/AIDS Summit, "Breaking the Silence: Compassion for an HIV Positive World."

Cartoon

April 13, 2006

Posted: 4/13/06

“Actually,
we hired
you as an
outreach
minister
because
you
blog.”

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and around the world.

Church group focuses on fighting poverty

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Church group focuses on fighting

poverty

By Kevin Eckstrom

Religion News Service

ATLANTA (RNS)—Leaders of 34 church bodies in the United States—including the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship—officially launched the broadest Christian-unity organization in American history and announced a fight against poverty as its first priority.