

Faith Digest

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Colorado megachurch approves Haggard's successor. New Life Church, the Colorado megachurch whose leader Ted Haggard was dismissed last year after a sex and drug scandal, has approved a new senior pastor. Brady Boyd, pastor at Gateway Church in Southlake, received more than 95 percent approval in a vote by the Colorado Springs congregation, a church secretary/treasurer announced in a message posted on New Life's website.

Kennedy retires from Florida church. D. James Kennedy, who used his Florida-based television ministry to establish himself as a leading voice for religious conservatives, has retired from Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale. Kennedy, 76, suffered a cardiac arrest in late December and has not returned to his pulpit of more than 48 years since falling ill. Kennedy started the congregation, affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in America, in 1959. He became a well-known Christian broadcaster through his presidency of Coral Ridge Ministries, which broadcast his sermons. He also pioneered the Evangelism Explosion personal Christian witness training.

National Primitive Baptists mark 100 years. The [National Primitive](#)

[Baptist Convention](#) has been modernizing some old beliefs and practices, but this year the group has been busy celebrating its past. The convention is observing its centennial year, including a weeklong meeting in Birmingham, Ala., that ended Aug. 24. The predominantly black denomination was organized in Huntsville, Ala., in 1907 and has about 1,500 churches and 600,000 members nationwide. When Primitive Baptists banded together to form a national group in 1907, many preferred to remain unaffiliated. That's still the case. They cling to practices such as singing hymns without instruments. Nowadays, most churches in the convention have a mix of the old and the new. Worship usually starts with a cappella hymns from the traditional hymnal. But most churches now also have instrumental praise bands to augment the music at other points in the worship.

South African church lauded for AIDS work. A predominantly white congregation in South Africa has been awarded top honors for its fight against AIDS among blacks by two U.S.-based religious groups. Fish Hoek Baptist Church received the Courageous Leadership Award, a joint project by the Willow Creek Association and the Christian development organization World Vision. The South African congregation was selected from a pool of 100 entries and will receive \$120,000 for its HIV-AIDS efforts. In 1999, the church established Living Hope Community Centre to combat the Cape Peninsula's mounting health crisis. Living Hope today employs 147 paid staff members and has spread into six communities, offering services such as hospice and home-based care, food distribution, HIV testing and a range of counseling services. At the same time, it occasionally has come under stinging criticism from South Africa's leading anti-AIDS lobby group, Treatment Action Campaign, for mixing evangelism with HIV/AIDS treatment and training.

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Baptist churches, in Texas, the BGCT, the nation and around the world.