

New school rises near site of Amish killings

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A construction crew works at the site of a new Amish school in Nickle Mines, Pa. The school it replaces was torn down last year after a gunman entered and killed five children and wounded five others. (RNS photo by Gary Dwight Miller/*The Patriot-News*)

New school rises near site of Amish killings

By **Monica Von Dobeneck**

Religion News Service

NICKEL MINES, Pa. (RNS)—An Amish one-room schoolhouse takes shape in a field at the end of a private drive behind a row of houses, within walking distance of the site of the school where [a gunman shot 10 Amish girls Oct. 2](#), killing five of them.

An Amish man who did not give his name said the construction crew expects to open the school in March but would not comment further. The Amish community knocked down the original schoolhouse Oct. 12.

Around the State

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Around the State

- The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor College of Christian Studies and church relations office are partnering with Bell Association to present a seminar titled “Avoiding the Rattlesnakes: Integrity in Ministry.” The seminar will begin at 8:30 a.m. Feb. 10 at Memorial Church in Temple. Featured speakers include Bill Carrell, dean of the College of Christian

Studies; David Howard, director of the Marriage and Family Christian Counseling Center; and Tom Henderson, director of missions for Bell Association. For more information, call (254) 295-4606.

- The seventh annual Baylor University Sacred Harp Singing is set for Feb. 10 in the Great Hall of Truett Theological Seminary. Singing school led by Donald Ross will be held from 9:30 a.m. until 9:50 a.m. The singing will be held from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. with a break for lunch. For more information, call (254) 644-2181.



The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor Writers' Festival afforded participants a variety of opportunities, including poetry workshops, a chance to share their work with others and an art class. About 75 writers participated in the weekend gathering. Authors Myra McLarey and Michael Lythgoe and reader Scott Cairns were the keynote speakers. The festival, in its 10th year, brought together writers from across the country.

- Dallas Baptist University has announced a doctoral program for educators—the Ed.D. in educational leadership. It will include both higher education and K-12 study tracks. The 60-hour program will require about three years to complete.

- Howard Payne University has announced the addition of five faculty members. Full-time faculty are Bill Fowler, assistant professor of Christian studies; and Derek Smith, assistant professor of physical science. Adjunct faculty additions include Donna Bowman, Christian studies; Peggy Hickey, modern languages; and Debra Powell, business administration.

Beatles' spiritual journey followed long & winding road

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Beatles' spiritual journey followed long & winding road

By Bob Carlton

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Rock music writer Steve Turner grew up in a Christian home in Daventry, England. Like other teenagers who came of age in the 1960s, Turner was a huge Beatles fan.

“At that time, Christians weren’t too keen on rock and roll music, so people in the church generally weren’t too keen on the Beatles,” Turner said. “Yet, after a few years, the Beatles became interested in religious topics, so there was this interplay between religion and rock music that I became interested in.”

Texas CP 2006 receipts up slightly

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Texas CP 2006 receipts up slightly

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

DALLAS—Texas Baptists’ giving to the [Baptist General Convention of Texas](#) Cooperative Program increased by 2 percent in 2006.

Texas Baptists contributed nearly \$40.9 million to the Texas Cooperative Program in 2006, enabling the BGCT to reach 99 percent of its adopted budget.

Book Reviews

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Book Reviews

[Beyond Racial Gridlock: Embracing Mutual Responsibility](#) by George Yancey

(IVP Books)

University of North Texas sociologist George Yancey is willing to ask the hard questions and talk about the tough issues that build barriers between races in this country. And he does it out of love of God and love for God's people. This is a book written mainly for the church—that it would take the lead in racial reconciliation.

Yancey critiques four major models the secular world uses to try to fix racial problems in America. These approaches don't work, he says, because they don't take into account that sin is a reality and that humanity is full of it—depraved.

Off the Bookshelf
What's everyone reading anyway?

What are you reading that other Texas Baptists would find helpful? Send suggestions and reviews to books@baptiststandard.com.

Baptist Briefs

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Baptist Briefs

Ethics conference scheduled. [Christian Ethics Today](#) will sponsor an ethics conference June 27 in Washington, D.C., to address “The minister and politics: How to be prophetic without being partisan.” The free conference is scheduled prior to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship’s general assembly, June 28-29. Featured presenters are prominent evangelical author Tony Campolo, [Sojourners](#) founder Jim Wallis, Minneapolis pastor Greg Boyd and Melissa Rogers, former general counsel for the [Baptist Joint Committee on Religious Liberty](#).

Organizers deny politics behind Atlanta convocation. An ambitious plan to unite Baptists in North America around the compassionate message of the gospel is not secretly a plan to get Baptists to elect Hillary Clinton as president, one of the plan’s leaders said. [Bill Underwood](#), a co-organizer of the effort with former President Jimmy Carter, said former President Bill Clinton’s offer to lend his star power to the upcoming [Celebration of a New Baptist Covenant](#) is not a covert political move. On Jan. 9, leaders of 40 Baptist denominations and organizations in the United States and Canada—led by Carter and “cheered,” as he put it, by President Clinton—announced a commitment to put aside social and theological

differences to unite most Baptists behind an agenda of compassionate ministry. The effort will begin with the celebration, which is set for January 2008. But [Richard Land](#), head of the [SBC Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission](#), and [Rick Scarborough](#), a Lufkin-based Baptist minister who heads the [Vision America](#) organization, questioned the timing. Scarborough noted the January 2008 celebration is “not coincidentally nine months away from the next presidential election.”

Carter defends Palestine book at Jewish university

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Carter defends Palestine book at Jewish university

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald

Religion News Service

WALTHAM, Mass. (RNS)—Former President Jimmy Carter faced critics at predominantly Jewish Brandeis University, apologizing for failing to make clear in a new book that terrorism is never justified as a political tool.

But Carter defended his book’s controversial title—[Palestine Peace Not](#)

[Apartheid](#)—by telling a capacity crowd of about 1,700 that he aims to be “provocative” and draw attention to the fact “Palestinians are being terribly treated” in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Former
President
Jimmy Carter
addressed
critics at
Brandeis
University amid
complaints
about his book
Palestine Peace
Not Apartheid.
(RNS photo
courtesy Mike
Lovett/Brandeis
University)

Cartoon

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Duluth
Theological
Seminary
promises
its
graduates a
position in
a pulpit
somewhere.

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

DOWN HOME: How neat: Scholars defend messiness

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DOWN HOME: How neat: Scholars defend messiness

Joanna walked into the room, a look of triumph lighting her lovely face. She carried a new edition of *Time* magazine, opened to a book review, which

she laid in my lap.

“See?” she said.

What she meant was: “See, I’ve been telling you this for 30 years. I’m right; you’re wrong. Now, somebody has gone out and done a bunch of research that debunks your myth. It’s in a book, for everybody to read. So, I’m right and you’re wrong.”

That’s what she meant. But we’ve been together so long, all she had to say was, “See?”

EDITORIAL: Confusing, illogical, irresistible prayer

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EDITORIAL: Confusing, illogical, irresistible prayer

Sometimes, technology can be a burden. These days, it shadows most of us wherever we go. E-mail piles up faster and deeper than snow in a Panhandle blizzard. Take a trip, and you come home to a stream of voicemails long enough to make your ear fall off. And don’t even get me started about programming the video recorder.

But one area of modern technology is absolutely sweet, golden, wonderful. That would be speed dialing on my cell phone. At any moment, I can punch one of three numbers, and a moment later, I'm talking to one of the three most precious women in my life—my wife and our two daughters. They're scattered from Coppell to Waco to Orlando. But thanks to cellular technology, their voices are never more than seconds away.



Maybe my mind is quirky, but I thought about my love affair with four cell phones—mine, and Joanna's, Lindsay's and Molly's—as I contemplated our feature story in this edition of the paper. In a way (and I know this is a mundane analogy), prayer is very much like cellular technology. Hard as it is to imagine when I think about how much I love talking to my three girls, prayer is even better. Can you comprehend the significance of prayer? You can pause, redirect your thoughts and, in an instant, converse with the Creator of the universe, God Almighty.

Seems like I've been praying all my life. In fact, I can't remember a time when prayer was not central. Almost as soon as I could speak, my parents taught me to pray—simple prayers of thanksgiving to God. As a child and later as a parent, mealtime prayers spiced breakfast, lunch and dinner as much as the black pepper and Tabasco sauce I love to pour on food. Most workday mornings for the past 11 years, I've "redeemed" the almost-unbearable Dallas morning commute by communing with God. And my favorite moments of our worship service are when the lights dim, heads bow and we spend time in solitude with God.

Faith Digest

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Faith Digest

Christian literature distributors to merge. Two of the world's largest distributors of Christian literature— the Colorado-based [International Bible Society](#) and British-based [Send the Light](#)—have announced their intention to merge. The Bible society, founded in 1809, has been focused on distribution of Bibles, working with partners such as the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and Campus Crusade for Christ, as well as churches and individuals who use its Bibles for evangelism. Send the Light, founded in 1957, helps Christian companies in the United States distribute a range of products—including books, music, tracts and home schooling materials—to European and other international locations.

Church of the Nazarene reports growth. Worldwide membership in the [Church of the Nazarene](#) has increased by one-third during the past decade, according to its recently released annual report. The church has 1.6 million members, having gained nearly 700,000 members since 1999. The church's biggest increases have been outside the United States. Last year the church grew by 5.7 percent overseas, while domestic growth was less than 1 percent. The church has experienced a slight decline in service attendance in the United States and Canada, although Sunday school

participation has gone up 1 percent. There are nearly 19,000 Church of the Nazarene parishes across the world; about 700 new churches were added in the last year.

Employees of Justice, Homeland Security receive religion training

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Employees of Justice, Homeland Security receive religion training

By Katherine Boyle

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The departments of Justice and Homeland Security have begun training employees to better understand and protect the civil liberties of American Muslims, Sikhs and other minority ethnic and religious groups in the wake of Sept. 11.

They also are attempting to involve Muslims and Sikhs in the homeland security effort “in a positive way,” said Daniel Sutherland, who was appointed as the first officer for civil rights and civil liberties at the

[Department of Homeland Security](#) in 2003.