

# Politics not behind plan to unite Baptists, Underwood insists

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## Politics not behind plan to unite Baptists, Underwood insists

**By Robert Marus**

*Associated Baptist Press*

MACON, Ga. (ABP)—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.

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## Baptists in Beirut endangered

# as violence escalates

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## Baptists in Beirut endangered as violence escalates

**By Robert Marus**

*ABP Washington Bureau*

BEIRUT (ABP)—An urgent communiqué from a Lebanese Baptist leader warned that escalating violence is threatening the [Beirut Baptist School](#).

Nabil Costa, executive director of the Lebanese Society for Educational and Social Development, sent an e-mail message Jan. 25 to friends and colleagues at Baptist institutions worldwide requesting prayer for Lebanon and for the school, which serves preschool through high-school age students. It is located near Beirut's commercial and cultural heart.

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## BaptistWay Bible Series for February 4: What Jesus Wants

# For His Followers

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**BaptistWay Bible Series for February 4**

## What Jesus Wants For His Followers

• John 17

**David Wilkinson**

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## Bible Studies for Life Series for February 4: The Word From God

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**Bible Studies for Life Series for February 4**

## The Word From God

• John 1:1-18

**By Kenneth Lyle**

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# **Holiday visit with Kenyan orphans changed students' perspective on world**

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UMHB  
students  
Terah  
Sellers  
(left) and  
Katie  
Speckman  
sit with all  
the boys  
who live  
at the  
Good  
Hope  
Children's  
Home in  
Nairobi,  
Kenya,  
while  
visiting for  
Christmas.

## **Holiday visit with Kenyan orphans changed students' perspective on world**

**By Jennifer Sicking**

*University of Mary Hardin-Baylor*

BELTON—Instead of spending her Christmas with her family, [University of Mary Hardin-Baylor](#) senior Katie Speckman opted to spend it with 40

children in Africa.

“It was really hard. It was the first time I’d ever done it,” said Speckman, an elementary education major from New Braunfels, about spending the holiday away from home.

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# Authorities investigating fires at North Carolina churches

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## Authorities investigating fires at North Carolina churches

**By Hannah Elliott**

*Associated Baptist Press*

GREENVILLE, N.C. (ABP)—Suspicious fires damaged two Baptist churches and a break-in was discovered at a third in Greenville, N.C., the night of Jan. 13.

Memorial Baptist Church and Unity Free Will Baptist, located near each other in the city about 50 miles east of Raleigh, burned in fires that authorities have labeled “suspicious.” Losses are estimated at \$ 1 million, according to local reports.

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# SBC officials accuse Carter of “voodoo ecumenism”

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## SBC officials accuse Carter of ‘voodoo ecumenism’

**By Greg Warner**

*Associated Baptist Press*

ATLANTA (ABP)—Southern Baptist officials harshly rejected [Jimmy Carter’s effort](#) to unite all Baptists in North America under a compassion agenda, calling the ambitious plan “voodoo ecumenism” and a thinly veiled Democratic strategy to woo values voters.

But other Southern Baptists, including some reform-minded younger conservatives, called the SBC response un-Christ-like and prejudicial criticism from “fundamentalist elites.”

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# **Planned 2008 convocation grows from desire for a new Baptist voice**

January 26, 2007

Updated: 1/19/07





Former  
Presidents

Jimmy  
Carter (at  
podium)  
and Bill  
Clinton  
(behind  
him) with  
Mercer  
University  
President

Bill  
Underwood  
(right)

introduce a  
gathering  
of more  
than 30

Baptist  
leaders at  
The Carter  
Center. The

group is  
calling for a  
convocation  
of Baptists  
next year.

(CBF Photo  
by Billy  
Howard)

# Planned 2008 convocation grows from desire for ‘new Baptist voice’

**By Robert Marus & Greg Warner**

*Associated Baptist Press*

ATLANTA (ABP)—The nation’s two living Baptist ex-presidents have called for a historic convocation in Atlanta next year, intended to improve the negative image of Baptists in North America and unite the majority of Baptists into a loose-knit network to address social ills.

President Jimmy Carter and President Bill Clinton will announce the 2008 convocation in a Jan. 9 press conference in Atlanta, following a meeting of about 80 diverse Baptist leaders at the [Carter Presidential Center](#).

## **See Related Articles:**

- [Carter, Clinton use convocation to call Baptists to compassion](#)
  - Planned 2008 convocation grows from desire for ‘new Baptist voice’
- [Texas Baptist leaders applaud call for inclusive convocation’](#)
- [Baptist leaders insist covenant offers chance to heal racial wounds’](#)

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# **Ad hoc group monitors progress on church-starting changes**

January 26, 2007  
Updated: 1/19/07

## **Ad hoc group monitors progress on church-starting changes**

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

DALLAS—An eight-person group appointed to monitor the timely implementation of investigator-recommended steps to prevent further misuse of Baptist General Convention of Texas church-starting funds met for the first time Jan. 5.

Jim Nelson, chairman of the group, said he was pleased with the five-hour-plus meeting, during which members addressed all related motions approved by the BGCT Executive Board. They included:

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# Faith leaders tell Congress: Deliver on promises made to values voters

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## Faith leaders tell Congress: Deliver on promises made to values voters

**By Hannah Elliott**

*Associated Baptist Press*

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Faith leaders are calling for members of Congress to deliver on promises made to values voters during the 2006 mid-term elections.

In a Jan. 9 panel discussion, representatives from [Sojourners/Call to Renewal](#), the [National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference](#), [Let Justice Roll](#), [Christian Peace Witness for Iraq](#), the [National Association of Evangelicals](#) and the [National Religious Campaign Against Torture](#) asked Congress to “deliver concrete gains on issues of deep concern to religious voters.”

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# **BGCT president's wife donates building to Lubbock ministry**

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## **BGCT president's wife donates building to Lubbock ministry**

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

LEVELLAND—Donna Vernon is donating a Texas Baptist Men-constructed building she won in a drawing at the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting to [My Father's House](#), Lubbock.

TBM volunteers had constructed the building on-site at the BGCT annual meeting as an exhibition of the organization's church-building ministry.

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## **Students learn to own their**

# faith during college years

January 26, 2007

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## Students grow up, learn to make faith their own during college years

**By Teresa Young**

*Wayland Baptist University*

PLAINVIEW—A teenager might have been the leader of the pack at the church youth group during high school. Or maybe she was the quiet, loyal one who showed up every Sunday and every fellowship. Or maybe he wasn't very interested at all in church things.

Regardless how involved in church teens were before high school graduation, things are certain to change somewhat when they reach college, whether they're living in the same town or miles away. But Gary Manning, professor of religion at [Wayland Baptist University](#), insists parents have no reason to panic.

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Campus religious events, such as the weekly Plumblin worship service held at Wayland Baptist University, are intended to help students explore their faith and grow spiritually while in college.

**Related  
Articles:**

- Students learn to own their faith during college years

- [Young adults will leave church if they're overlooked, study says](#)