

Global peace a growing priority for Christian groups

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Global peace a growing priority for Christian groups

By Hannah Elliott

Associated Baptist Press

DALLAS (ABP)—Worldwide, about 1.6 million people each year die due directly to violence. Violence is responsible for 14 percent of deaths among males aged 15 to 44 and 7 percent of deaths for females of the same age, the [World Health Organization](#) reports. And it's up to Christians to stop it, several groups working to promote peace around the world insist.

Steve Bostian, U.S. director of [Hope Unlimited](#), said his group's focus on investing in children in a Christ-centered way separates it from other attempts to eradicate violence among Brazil's 10 million street children. That investment in individuals rather than broad social change is a model for peace that Bostian—a former American Baptist missionary—hopes to spread.

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Time to call a mediator when focus turns from problems to personalities

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Time to call a mediator when focus turns from problems to personalities

DALLAS—When church members who disagree stop looking for solutions to problems and start focusing on personalities, it's probably time to call a mediator, said Sonny Spurger, a church mediation specialist with the [Baptist General Convention of Texas](#).

Sonny Spurger

Spurger points to five levels of conflict, identified by Speed Leas of the Alban Institute, as helpful markers for identifying how problems escalate to church fights.

- **A problem develops that needs to be solved.**

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Some people may have conflicting goals or values, and interaction may be uncomfortable. But at this point, the conflict still is problem-oriented, rather than personality-centered. If the problem is not solved at this level,

it likely will escalate to the next level where it becomes personal.

MAKING PEACE: Creating a congregational culture of peacemaking takes time

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MAKING PEACE: Creating a congregational culture of peacemaking takes time

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

NACOGDOCHES—Helping a church become a peaceable fellowship is a never-ending battle, Pastor Kyle Childress acknowledged. But as Christians wage peace within church, they learn skills that help them build bridges in a divided world, he added.

“It’s a round-the-clock, long-term thing,” said Childress, pastor of Austin Heights Baptist Church in Nacogdoches. “In the 17 years I’ve been here, one of the major challenges I consistently have had is helping people learn and practice reconciliation with one another.”

(Photo
illustration by
David Clanton)

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TBM chainsaw teams serve in Oklahoma

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TBM chainsaw teams serve in Oklahoma

By Barbara Bedrick

Texas Baptist Communications

DALLAS—Four Texas Baptist Men chainsaw teams headed to McAlester, Okla., to help residents hit hard by ice storms.

About three dozen volunteers from Harmony-Pittsburg Baptist Association, Collin Baptist Association, Lake Pointe Church in Rockwall and Paramount Baptist Church in Amarillo made the trek to Oklahoma.

Texas Tidbits

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Texas Tidbits

Hispanic Mission Network to debut. Leaders of Hispanic Texas Baptist churches that are engaging members in missions—along with representatives from [Baptist University of the Americas](#), [WorldconneX](#) and [Buckner International](#)—will launch a Hispanic Mission Network at the [Hispanic Evangelism Conference](#), Feb. 2-3 in San Antonio. Participants plan to conduct a global/local mission project within the network's first year that could provide a model for Hispanic church involvement. About 30 Hispanic leaders and missions practitioners met at Baptist University of the Americas recently for a Plaza Global two-day event to discuss the network and explore emerging trends in global missions.

Hardin-Simmons, ETBU athletic trainers honored. The athletic training staffs at [Hardin-Simmons University](#) and [East Texas Baptist University](#) each were named by their peers as division winners of the American Southwest Conference athletic training staff of the year awards for 2005-06. Hardin-Simmons was presented the west division award, and ETBU took the east division honor. The [University of Mary Hardin-Baylor](#) won the west division honor the previous academic year.

TOGETHER: If Baptists were

â€œtoo much like Jesusâ€œ

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TOGETHER:

If Baptists were ‘too much like Jesus’

Baptists across North America are saying with a clear voice that it is time for a “Jesus agenda.”

What does it mean to pursue a Jesus agenda?

Look at what Jesus did when the synagogue leaders gave the scroll of Isaiah to him and asked him to read. He could have chosen any passage, but he picked this one:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord” (Luke 4:18-19 and Isaiah 61:1-2).



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BGCT intercultural mission trip slated for Vancouver

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Up to 40,000 Japanese call Vancouver home, and Pastor Yutaka Takarada wants Texas Baptists to partner with Canadian Baptist counterparts to reach them.

BGCT intercultural mission trip slated for Vancouver

By Barbara Bedrick

Texas Baptist Communications

DALLAS—When Yutaka Takarada flew to Vancouver, British Columbia, last year, he found ample salmon, Japanese restaurants and views of the harbor.

But what he didn't see worried him. Even though Vancouver has a sizeable Japanese population, the president of the Japanese Southern Baptist Churches of America couldn't find many Japanese Baptist churches.

Childless young adults want ministry, not sympathy

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Childless young adults want ministry, not sympathy

By David Briggs

Religion News Service

CLEVELAND (RNS)—Tina Barta and many of her evangelical peers do not like the term “single.” In church and in society, single implies a person who is not whole, not complete, they say.

“That’s such an awful way to look at it,” said Barta, 27, who believes fulfilling her spiritual destiny is not dependent on meeting a man. “I am in a relationship with Christ. Yes, I’m single, but I’m pursuing Christ, and he’s pursuing me.”

Cybercolumn by Berry D. Simpson: Search for understanding

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CYBER COLUMN: Search for understanding

By Berry D. Simpson

I have a friend who has effectively separated himself and his family from the world, from their church and from their family.

They closely guard their children’s exposure to the outside world, which includes their own cousins. They won’t go to church, even the church he

grew up in, but instead have home church. They won't send their children to school, but instead home school. They most recently opted out of their larger family's Christmas celebration; I'm not sure if it was to guard against commercialization and secularization of a holy day or simply to save money. Either way, they missed out on the joy that always surrounds this family at such an important time.

Berry D. Simpson

RIGHT or WRONG? Geneva conventions

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RIGHT or WRONG? Geneva conventions

Appeals have been made to the Geneva Conventions regarding prisoners of war. What is the basis for such assertions? And what reference material is available?

BaptistWay Bible Series for January 28: God prunes with a wise, loving hand

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BaptistWay Bible Series for January 28

God prunes with a wise, loving hand

• John 15:1-17

By David Wilkinson

Bible Studies for Life Series for January 28: Faith can conquer chaos

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Bible Studies for Life Series for January 28

Faith can conquer chaos

- Genesis 11:1-9: Proverbs 28:2-5; 29:2-4

By Kenneth Lyle