

Virginia Baptists change budget for educational entities

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Virginia Baptists change budget for educational entities

By Robert Dilday

Virginia Religious Herald

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP)—Virginia Baptists increased their support for a variety of state, national and international ministries—and for the second year in a row persuaded their budget committee to modify its proposal because of concerns about funding for educational institutions.

The \$14.36 million 2008 budget is \$160,000 more than this year's. A new feature includes a reduction in direct allocations to affiliated academies and colleges but also new allocations to each of the institutions offering scholarships to students. In addition, a newly created student- and ministry-formation scholarship fund will assist students at any college or seminary.

Child killed following accident involving TBM volunteers in Mexico

November 21, 2007

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Child dies following accident involving TBM volunteers in Mexico

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

DALLAS—A Texas Baptist Men team on its way to feed victims of flooding in Southern Mexico was involved in a traffic accident Nov. 15 that resulted in a child's death.

A group of children surrounded a van carrying the TBM team while it travelled through a small village in Mexico. The children were darting around the slow-moving vehicle, attempting to sell items when one of them misjudged the van's speed and ran into the side of it.

Baptists offer relief to Bangladesh after killer cyclone hits

November 21, 2007

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Baptists offer relief to Bangladesh after killer cyclone hits

Baptists joined an international relief effort in Bangladesh after a Nov. 15 cyclone killed more than 3,400 people in the Ganges River delta along the Bay of Bengal.

[Baptist World Aid](#), the relief and development arm of the Baptist World Alliance, is working in partnership with the Bangladesh Baptist Church Sangha and the Bangladesh Baptist Church Fellowship.

Both conventions are providing food to storm survivors. The relief department for the Bangladesh Baptist Church Sangha also has made a commitment to help 150 families rebuild their homes.

“Once again, the poorest of the poor have been hit worst and need our full support,” said BWAid Director Paul Montacute. “We will be working with Baptists in Bangladesh, the [Asia Pacific Baptist Federation](#) and other Baptist groups in providing help and assistance.”

RIGHT or WRONG? Stuffing the temple

November 21, 2007

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RIGHT or WRONG? Stuffing the temple

Reading what the Apostle Paul said about our bodies being “the temple of God,” I became convicted about what I allow my children to eat—too many sweets, etc. But my husband resists my words of caution and models an unhealthy diet to the children. What can I do?

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November 21, 2007

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Coverage of the BGCT Annual Meeting in Amarillo

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Around the State

November 21, 2007

Posted: 11/16/07

Around the State

- **N.T. Wright**, the bishop of Durham Cathedral in the Church of England and a leading New Testament scholar, will be the featured speaker at a pastors and church leaders retreat at the Laity Lodge Retreat Center Nov. 25-27. Wright is the first speaker in a series made possible by a \$500,000 grant from the M.D. Mathews Foundation of Houston. For more information, call (830) 792-1210.
- **East Texas Baptist University** will hold a "Shadow Day" for high school

seniors and college transfer students Nov. 29-30. Visiting students will have the opportunity to spend the night in the dorm, socialize with current students, visit with professors and attend classes. There also will be an activity on Thursday evening. Pre-registration is required, and a \$15 nonrefundable fee must be paid. For more information, call (800) 804-3828.

First Church in Sanger held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the opening of its family life center. The 21,000-square-foot facility also will be used for education space as well as the headquarters of a sports ministry. A full-service kitchen also is one of the building's components, and it was used to feed 500 people at the building's dedication banquet. The church recently called Jeff Dooley as minister of education and activities to maximize the building's ministry capabilities. The facility cost \$1.7 million. E.L. McNeal is pastor.

- **Howard Payne University** will hold a “Southern Gospel Christmas” concert Dec. 18 at 6:30 p.m. Featured guests will be the Melody Boys Quartet from Little Rock, Ark. Tickets are \$10 per person. Seating is limited, so advance tickets are strongly encouraged. For more information, call (325) 649-8006.

- **The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor** recognized several people during homecoming activities. Kay Anderson, who taught at the university 30 years and continues to volunteer as the museum curator, received the Distinguished Alumnus Award. Siblings Rick, George, Cecilia and Lynda Solis received the Parker Award, given to a multimember alumni family.

Book Reviews

November 21, 2007

Posted: 11/16/07

Book Reviews

[*A Dream That Came to Life: The History of the Laity Lodge Retreat Center*](#) by **Howard Hovde (Smyth & Helwys)**

Laity Lodge Director Emeritus Howard Hovde paints a wonderful picture of a place described as “like going to heaven without having to pass through the Pearly Gates.” Hovde shares background stories of the Holdsworth and Butt families that united through the marriage of Mary Holdsworth to Howard E. Butt Sr., founder of the HEB grocery company. Together, they

created a nonprofit foundation to “help meet needs of families, children and the community.” The foundation eventually purchased a 1,900-acre ranch near Leakey for children to enjoy. Their oldest son, Howard Jr., expanded the dream to include a retreat center where lay people could learn about “integrating faith and love into everyday living.”



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

Hovde intersperses philosophy, organization and history with interesting stories of people who influenced the direction of Laity Lodge. For good measure, he adds heart stories of those influenced by the center, including author Madeleine L'Engle (*A Wrinkle in Time*) and The Message translator Eugene Peterson, who wrote while staying at Laity Lodge. A valuable appendix, including leadership tips, poems and a list of significant books, completes the work.

Inspiring stories turn what could be a dry history into a quick read.

Baptist Briefs

November 21, 2007

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Baptist Briefs

IMB stats show growth. The International Mission Board's annual statistical report covering calendar year 2006 includes a summary of church-growth indicators reported by Southern Baptist missionaries and their overseas Baptist partners. The report noted 25,497 new churches, 12,856 new outreach groups, 609,968 baptisms, about 9.86 million church membership, 4.6 million in Bible study, 567,413 new Christians in discipleship training and more than 1.26 million total church members in discipleship training. The statistics were released during the International Mission Board trustees' recent meeting in Springfield, Ill.

Virginia schools reach agreement. The John Leland Center for Theological Studies, a moderate Baptist seminary in Arlington, Va., and Hampton University, an African-American college in Hampton, Va., have reached a degree-granting agreement for undergraduate students. The agreement allows Leland students who have completed the seminary's diploma in theology program to count all of their 48 hours of credit toward a bachelor's degree in religion from Hampton.

N.C. Baptists expel gay-

affirming Charlotte church

November 21, 2007

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N.C. Baptists expel gay-affirming Charlotte church

By Norman Jameson

N.C. Biblical Recorder

GREENSBORO, N.C. (ABP)—North Carolina Baptists expelled [Myers Park Baptist Church in Charlotte](#) from their statewide group because the church accepts gay members into leadership.

The [Baptist State Convention of North Carolina](#) Executive Committee ruled Nov. 12 that the church was not in compliance with membership articles. While convention messengers voted overwhelmingly to hear an appeal by Myers Park the next day, they voted similarly to reject it.

Cartoon

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2nd Opinion: A young Baptist's reason to remain

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2nd Opinion: A young Baptist's reason to remain

Five years ago, while studying at Texas A&M University, I took a job as the youth minister of a small Baptist church in the Conroe area north of Houston. Having been born and raised in a large Bible church, I entered the Baptist world relatively oblivious to the situation I was getting myself into. Needless to say, it was not long after I began to identify myself as a Baptist that I became aware of the stigma associated with that name; stigma, may I add, that was well-deserved.

I was a young Baptist minister living in a time when the leaders of my denomination were more concerned with the sexual orientation of Disney characters than the fact that roughly 7,000 children were dying of malnutrition each night. I was embarrassed that my denomination chose to use its resources to defend archaic scientific theories and remove women from leadership positions rather than to let justice roll on like a river, and I was enraged by the pettiness of it all.

It was a time when a small number of powerful leaders had so corrupted

the word “Baptist” that a large number of churches found it necessary to strike it from their name, keeping their denominational affiliation secret in order to maintain some level of credibility. And it was a time when I was willing to do the same.

But although I felt hurt by the actions of some contemporary Baptists, what compelled me to stay within the denomination was the legacy left by Baptists of the past. These were men and women who shared a conviction that the freedom to work out one’s faith was more important than the transmission of right doctrine, and they believed that social concern was an integral part of that faith. They organized themselves so that each body of believers was free to choose its own path, answering only to God. They had a high view of the Holy Spirit’s power to direct the church without their assistance, and they refused to be restricted by any creed or statement of faith.