

It's not easy being green

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It's not easy being green

By Hannah Elliott

Associated Baptist Press

This isn't your mother's environmentalism.

Footage of polar bears on shrinking glaciers and hummingbirds in sparse rainforests used to have a prominent place in films about the need to "go green." But now some Christian environmentalists are engaging believers with a new message: Humans actually suffer the most when economic exploitation afflicts the environment.

âIn God We Trustâ motto still mints controversy after 50 years

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'In God We Trust' motto still mints controversy after 50 years

By Adelle Banks

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON—Fifty years after “In God We Trust” first appeared on U.S. paper currency, those four little words have proven to be the source of big debate in the courts.

Michael Newdow, the California atheist known for trying to strip “under God” from the Pledge of Allegiance, has asked the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to declare “In God We Trust” an unconstitutional mingling of church and state. In Indiana, the American Civil Liberties Union has gone to district court, arguing it’s unfair for the state not to charge administrative fees for “In God We Trust” license plates when a plate advocating for the environment carries extra fees.

State Department reports Iraqi insurgency hurts religious freedom

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State Department reports Iraqi insurgency hurts religious freedom

By Adelle Banks

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The continuing insurgency in Iraq is significantly harming the freedom of worship in that country, the State Department said in its [2007 International Religious Freedom Report](#).

The recently released report lists Iraq among 22 countries it notes for either particular abuses or positive steps related to religious freedom.

Couple brings joy to nursing home, children's hospital patients

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Couple brings joy to nursing home, children's hospital patients

By Jessica Dooley

Communications Intern

PAIGE—John and Dianne Jones have no easy answer for why they launched a ministry that serves patients in nursing homes, Alzheimer’s facilities and children’s hospitals in a three-county area of South Central Texas.

“I have no clue why we started, except God led,” Jones said.

Texas Baptist Forum

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Texas Baptist Forum

Faith is central

Faith is whatever you center your life around. If it’s making money, then money is your faith. If you center your life on God and living his way, then God is your faith.

The first faith is idolatrous and leads to self-destruction. The second faith is true, for it is creative and builds life. Both are faith, for each is the organizing principle in someone’s life.

• [Jump to online-only letters below](#)

Letters are welcomed. Send them
to
marvknox@baptiststandard.com;
250 words maximum.

Out ((Loud))

“It amazes me that Jesus could call a Matthew and a Simon both to be his disciples. Matthew was a tax collector, a conservative of the conservatives. Simon was a zealot, the liberal of the liberals. ... They were farther apart than Ted Kennedy and Rush Limbaugh could ever dream of being. ... What’s amazing is that you don’t find Jesus whispering a word about which one he thought was better. ... Jesus is the lord of a transpolitical kingdom.”

Greg Boyd

Pastor of Woodland Hills Church in St. Paul, Minn., speaking at a forum on ministers and politics sponsored by Christian Ethics Today (RNS)

“In order to be an effective leader, you can’t just be president of the Christians. It insults our intelligence to assume that we would let difference separate us.”

T.D. Jakes

Dallas megachurch pastor, writing a letter to the editor in *Time* magazine in response to an article on Democrats and religion (RNS)

But even true faith contains doubt. Take biblical Abraham, for example. He was certain he experienced a call from God. But he struggled with doubt about whether he was getting the call of God right. Scripture says that after Abraham experienced God's call, "he went out from his homeland, Babylonia, to he knew not where."

Small church reaches nursing home residents

September 29, 2007

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Volunteers from Ephesus Baptist Church in Jewett lead a worship service for nursing home residents.
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Small church reaches nursing home residents

By George Henson

Staff Writer

EWETT—Worshippers tapped fingers and feet as they sang songs closest to their hearts—"I'll Fly Away," "I've Got a Mansion" and "I'm in the Gloryland Way." A guitar, keyboard and tambourine accompanied a five-member choir.

The worship service filled with glory—and gusto—was in a nursing home.

Students sign petition for freedom and justice

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Students sign petition for freedom and justice

More than 1,000 Texas Baptist college students signed a Baptist World Alliance petition in support of freedom and justice worldwide during the Focus conference in Arlington.

By signing the petition, the students stated their agreement with the BWA Centenary Congress goal of religious freedom and justice for all people: “We oppose all forms of slavery, racism, apartheid and ethnic cleansing and so will do all in our power to address and confront these sins.”

The students also pledged to “urge all Christians to pray, to unite and to speak out to protect the rights of every person to worship God without fear of death, torture, imprisonment or economic exclusion.”

The BWA seeks to have 10,000 signatures for the petition that ultimately will be presented to the North American Baptist Fellowship, the BWA Freedom and Justice Commission and the BWA representative to the United Nations.

Texas Tidbits

September 29, 2007

Posted: 9/29/07



Texas Tidbits

Historical Society meeting set. The Texas Baptist Historical Society will hold its fall meeting at 10:30 a.m. Oct. 29, immediately prior to the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting. The society’s lunch meeting will be held in the Gilliland Education Center at the Globe-News Performing Arts Center, directly across from the Amarillo Convention Center. The agenda includes the election of officers, recognition of the

history award winners, and a presentation by Terrell Blodgett from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas about Pat Neff, former governor of Texas, president of Baylor University and prominent Baptist layman. Cost is \$10 per person, payable at the door. The reservation deadline is Oct. 22. To make reservations, contact the Texas Baptist Historical Society at (972) 331-2235 or Autumn.Hendon@bgct.org.

BGCT hotel block full; more housing options added. The block of 700 hotel rooms reserved by the Baptist General Convention of Texas for the BGCT annual meeting is full, but the convention has added additional housing options to the annual meeting website, www.bgct.org/annualmeeting.

TOGETHER: Board made the responsible decision

September 29, 2007

Posted: 9/29/07

TOGETHER: Board made the responsible decision

The BGCT Executive Board faced the challenge this past week of dealing with a decrease in funds available next year to support our work together.

To meet our 2008 budget, changes in benefits, spending and staff reductions must be addressed. The board did not want to approve a budget where 25 to 30 staff positions would be affected by those reductions. But after a great deal of very open discussion, they reluctantly—but responsibly—voted to recommend the budget to the annual meeting in Amarillo.



Executive Director
BGCT Executive
Board

The finance subcommittee had been working with and examining options since August, and the Administration Support Committee met prior to the full board meeting. Both groups believe the way in which the budget addresses the reduction is the most appropriate option.

Some staff responsibilities will be reassigned, some tasks and roles combined and some jobs eliminated. Some employees will be eligible to retire, and some will be eligible for various benefit payouts per current policies. Everyone affected will receive a severance. As some begin searching for new opportunities, our human resources department will provide outplacement services to assist with resumes, Internet and job search access, and search strategies. The transition assistance being provided still does not make this task any easier for anyone involved, but it allows us to show how much we care and how much we appreciate their

service.

We believe the end result of the changes will make us even more effective in using the missions and ministry dollars given by the churches which support the critical work of our staff with churches and the amazing work of our ministry and educational institutions.

Venezuelan Baptists hit their stride, enter partnership with BGCT

September 29, 2007

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Members of
Church at
Brooks Hills
in
Birmingham,
Ala., support
the Venezuela
mobile
medical clinic
with
volunteers,
games and
food. The
clinic is one
of many
ministries
Texas
Baptists can
support in
Venezuela. It
is in need of
food medical
professionals,
medicine and
Christians to
run games
and build
relationships
with children.
(Photos by
John
Hall/BGCT)

Venezuelan Baptists hit their stride, enter partnership with BGCT

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

CARACAS, Venezuela—By age 50 or so, some people have become mired in mid-life crisis or start downshifting into pre-retirement gear. But Venezuelan Baptists are just hitting their stride.

The National Baptist Convention of Venezuela, which was started in 1951, is experiencing unprecedented growth. Last year, the nearly 500-church convention launched a strategic plan to double the number of churches in the convention by 2010. Venezuelan Baptists started 70 churches during the first year, and they hope to start another 70 by the end of 2007.



For more information about mission opportunities in Venezuela, call BGCT Texas Partnerships at (888) 244-9400.

[View a slideshow of photos from Venezuela.](#)

Many existing congregations either are starting or are in the midst of construction projects in an effort to keep pace with growth. Often, the increase in membership is so rapid, Sunday school classes are forced to meet in half-constructed facilities.

WorldconneX fund helps churches send and support their missionaries

September 29, 2007

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WorldconneX fund helps churches send and support their missionaries

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

[WorldconneX](#), the missions network launched by the Baptist General Convention of Texas, is establishing a fund to help churches send out their own missionaries.

The WorldconneX board of directors voted to establish a church-sending mission fund. WorldconneX will receive designated contributions from churches and individuals that it will direct according to the donors'

instructions to support missions personnel deployed by missions-sending churches.

Storylist for 10/01/07 issue

September 29, 2007

Storylist for week of 10/01/07

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- [BaptistWay Bible Series for September 30: Faith is the way](#)

- [Bible Studies for Life Series for Sept. 30: Reading the handwriting on the wall](#)

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- [Bible Studies for Life Series for October 7: Quality is Job #1](#)

- [Explore the Bible Series for Oct. 7: Watch your words](#)

- [BaptistWay Bible Series for October 7: It's a wonderful life](#)

Previously Posted

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- [Rap tells story of foster child's forgiveness of mother](#)
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- [Church offers motorists bargain gas and full service](#)
- [Trustees question Roberts' leadership after VP resigns from Midwestern Seminary](#)
- [Enrollment, student test scores up at many Texas Baptist schools](#)
- [Students see dramatic difference at Sul Ross](#)
- [Baylor students take âFirst Step' into community service](#)
- [Missouri Baptist conference center wins latest round in legal battle](#)
- [Official confirms church-starting fund probe in U.S. Attorney's Office](#)
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