

2nd Opinion: The importance of letting go

September 14, 2007

Posted: 9/14/07

2nd Opinion: The importance of letting go

By Bob Campbell

Two years ago, I retired from a large church in Houston after almost 15 years of pastoral service. The day I retired, I gave up my role as “pastor” of the church.

I have elected to stay in the church with the many friends I made over the past 15 years. However, all of my friends will testify that I do not allow them to “talk” church business with me. I always refer them to the current leadership. Any member of the church will tell you that I have not said or done anything that could be construed as “pastoral” ministry in the church. I visit prospects as any member might. I never identify myself as the “former” pastor.

No pastor can stay with a congregation he has pastored if he does not recognize that he no longer holds the office of pastor. I told my congregation I wanted to stay under the following self-imposed conditions:

DOWN HOME: Lessons learned at a busy intersection

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DOWN HOME: Lessons learned at a busy intersection

Commuting is a microcosm of life.

Many folks, bless their souls, live in small towns, where commuting is nothing. But those of us who drive miles through city traffic every day view the gamut of human nature on the streets and expressways and overpasses of our lives.

This morning on the way to work, I witnessed the extremes of kindness and reckless selfishness within 15 seconds.

The Good Samaritan appeared first. Her dark-blue SUV grabbed my attention, because it was stopped on the left side of the road—out of the traffic lanes and partway onto the grass.

EDITORIAL: Good news from MTV, of all places

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EDITORIAL: Good news from MTV, of all places

The best way to ensure the happiness of teens and young adults is to envelope them in the embrace of family.

A new study sponsored by MTV and the Associated Press revealed the most significant factor contributing to teen happiness is family. Spiritual faith also is a vital contributor to teens' and young adults' emotional well-being. Conversely, many of the supposed happiness-providers that dominate teen- and young-adult-oriented media—money, fame, sex and drugs—finished far down the list. And some of them even cause unhappiness, survey respondents said.



The majority of American young people lead happy lives, the poll found. Sixty-three percent of survey participants aged 13 to 24 said they are very happy (21 percent) or somewhat happy (42 percent). Another 22 percent

said they are “neither happy nor unhappy.” Only 15 percent said they are somewhat unhappy or very unhappy.

Parents and family are the far-and-away dominant factors in young people’s happiness. Asked to cite the “one thing in life that makes you happy,” 46 percent of young people named spending time with family, friends and loved ones. Seventy-three percent of survey respondents said they are very happy (41 percent) or somewhat happy (32 percent) with their relationship with their parents. Eleven percent said they are somewhat unhappy with their parents, and only 2 percent are very unhappy.

Faith Digest

September 14, 2007

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Faith Digest

Religious activists fast for debt relief. A group of religious activists began a 40-day fast Sept. 6 to advocate for legislation that would cancel the debts of the world’s 67 poorest countries, according to the [Jubilee USA Network](#), an alliance of more than 80 religious denominations and faith communities. 2007 is a Sabbath year, according to Jubilee USA, which in the Old Testament meant creditors were expected to cancel the loans of fellow Hebrews. In June, Reps. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., and Spencer Bachus, R-Ala., introduced the 2007 Jubilee Act in the House of Representatives. Jubilee USA says its goal is to get a hearing on the bill and similar legislation introduced in the Senate.

Confucius joins Jesus at courthouse. Napoleon, Confucius, Hammurabi and more than a dozen other historical figures have joined Jesus Christ on the wall at a Louisiana courthouse in a bid to reassure visitors that the court wanted nothing more than to showcase people who helped to create the laws of civilized nations. Officials mounted the additional portraits one week before a scheduled court hearing at which the Louisiana ACLU planned to ask a federal judge to remove the Jesus portrait. The ACLU has sued the court, the city of Slidell, St. Tammany Parish and Judge Jim Lamz, saying the portrait and the accompanying words, "To know peace, obey these laws," violates the First Amendment and the separation of church and state.

Hearing the Call

September 14, 2007

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Hearing the Call

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

Hearing God's call to vocational service may not be as easy in a Baptist church as it once was, but some congregations are determined to change that.

Once upon a time, a public invitation at the close of the sermon in many

Baptist worship services routinely included an appeal to “surrender to God’s call” to vocational ministry. Not so today. And unless trends are reversed, some observers fear a clergy shortage in years ahead.

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- [Hearing the Call](#)
- [Ministers hear call through many voices](#)
- [East Texas church gives stamp of approval to 82-year-old's ministry](#)
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- [Call clarification important at Baptist schools](#)

East Texas church gives stamp of approval to 82-year-old's ministry

September 14, 2007

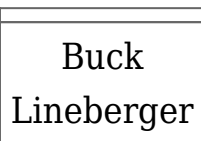
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East Texas church gives stamp of approval to 82-year-old's ministry

By George Henson

Staff Writer

HALLSVILLE—First Baptist Church in Hallsville licensed one of its own to the gospel ministry earlier this year—Buck Lineberger, age 82.



It was 65 years after Lineberger initially felt God's calling to ministry—and more than 60 years after he believed a brief, unsuccessful marriage disqualified him for service.

When it comes to missions, thereâ€™s something in the water in Red Springs

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Red
Springs
Baptist
Church
Pastor Gary
Godkin and
long-time
members
Bobbie
Morgan
and Senna
Winn stand
before a
brush arbor
constructed
for the
church's
recent
centennial
celebration.
Many of
the former
pastors
who went
on to
mission
service
returned to
participate.

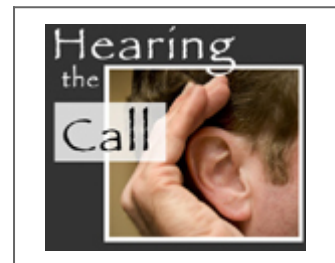
When it comes to missions, there's something in the water in Red Springs

By George Henson

Staff Writer

ED SPRINGS—Hay fields surround Red Springs Baptist Church, stretching as far as the eye can see.

Looking out the front door of the church, located more than 60 miles southwest of Wichita Falls, some might become so entranced by the wide-open spaces of the Northwest Texas Plains that they never would want to leave. But at least 10 of its pastors have walked through its doorway with a missionary calling and a vision to change a much larger world.



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Ministers hear call through many voices

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A 1951
photograph
shows 10
young adults
from one
small
congregation,
Fieldale
Baptist
Church near
Martinsville,
Va., who
answered
what they
considered
God's call to
full-time
Christian
service.
(Photo
courtesy of
Virginia
*Religious
Herald*)

Ministers hear call through many voices

By Jim White

Virginia Religious Herald

God uses a variety of voices in calling people to Christian service, veteran ministers agreed, pointing to their own experience.

In Joel Thielepape's case, two voices figured prominently—a representative of the New York Yankees who delivered a discouraging word and a young preacher who presented a message of hope.

Kyle Lake Foundations launches memorial golf tournament

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Kyle Lake Foundations launches memorial golf tournament

Baylor University's [Truett Theological Seminary](#) will serve as honorary sponsor the [Kyle Lake Foundation's](#) inaugural golf tournament, Sept. 28 at Cottonwood Creek Golf Course in Waco. Tee time for the four-man shotgun scramble is 1:30 p.m. after a free lunch for participants. Hole sponsorships selling for \$250.

Individual players will be accepted, limited to the first 25 teams. The Kyle Lake Foundation was established as a nonprofit organization in March in memory of the former pastor of University Baptist Church in Waco. Lake was the author of two books—*Understanding God's Will* and *(RE)Understanding Prayer*. He was electrocuted on Oct. 30, 2005, before

800 worshippers while preparing to baptize a former Baylor University student. For more information, contact Arthur Hadden at (254) 717-3106 or Byron Weathersbee at (254) 772-0412.

Texas Baptist Forum

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Texas Baptist Forum

Little impact upon lives

I find it somewhat unsettling that “faith changes little over a lifetime” (Aug. 6). I thought Sunday school, Training Union, prayer meeting and regular attendance at preaching services were to help the saints grow in the faith—put away childish things.

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

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

Out (Loud)

“Too often the church today is slow to speak forcefully about right and wrong, about out-of-wedlock births, about AIDS, about acceptance of criminal behavior, even about being a good parent. If we can just get the church to find its voice, it will (be) a powerful part of the solution.”

Juan Williams

Author and radio/TV analyst (*World magazine/RNS*)

“This clash (between evolution and creationism) is an absurdity because on the one hand there is much scientific proof in favor of evolution, which appears as a reality that we must see and which enriches our understanding of life and being as such.”

Benedict XVI

Roman Catholic pope, on the debate between creationism and evolution. He added evolution falls short of answering “the great philosophical question, ‘Where does everything come from?’” (*Reuters/RNS*)

“Mother Teresa’s ministry with the poor won her the Nobel Prize and the admiration of a believing world. Her ministry to a doubting modern world may have just begun.”

James Martin

Jesuit priest and author, responding to a new book of Mother Teresa’s writings, in which she often struggles with faith and doubt (*New York Times/RNS*)

If the research applies only to “religiosity in early adulthood” and later life, it seems we are not having much impact on adults.

A.T. Maker

Book reveals Mother Teresa’s prolonged ‘dark night of the soul’

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Book reveals Mother Teresa’s prolonged ‘dark night of the soul’

By Shona Crabtree

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Ten years after her death, a new book of Mother Teresa’s personal letters illustrates a profound and private spiritual struggle—much of it unknown to the world that would come to admire her for her work with the poor and outcast lepers in Calcutta, India.

[*Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light*](#), released Sept. 4, is a collection of Teresa’s personal letters to her spiritual advisers. For the most part, they are letters she never intended to become public and—in fact—had asked to

be destroyed.

Federal court says Seattle-area high school can deny charter to Bible club

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Federal court says Seattle-area high school can deny charter to Bible club

By Robert Marus

Associated Baptist Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (ABP)—A federal appeals court ruled a Washington state high school is not required to charter a Bible club, since the club allows only Christians to be full members.

In *Truth v. Kent Public School District*, a unanimous three-judge panel of the Oregon-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said Kentridge High School in Kent, Wash., does not have to offer official recognition to the Truth Bible Club.