

Relationships key to helping immigrants, Baptist workers say

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FREDERICKSBURG, Va. (ABP)—Every afternoon, Felicitas does something she thought might never happen. She meets the school bus near her Virginia apartment complex to pick up her son, Carlos, as he returns from another day of elementary school.

Carlos has spina bifida, which prevents him from walking. When Felicitas first came to the United States, she spoke little English and had neither a job nor transportation. Her husband had difficulty maintaining a steady job, and Child Protective Services was preparing to take Carlos away from them because of his low weight and poor health.

Then Felicitas met Greg and Sue Smith, who helped connect her with Spanish-speaking doctors and lawyers. They gave her food and encouraged her to start a business in her home. And they worked with the school system to ensure Carlos' needs were met in the classroom.

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- [Almost any immigration reform better than nothing, advocates say](#)
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- [How can churches legally minister to illegal immigrants?](#)
 - Relationships key to helping immigrants, Baptist workers say
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The Smiths are co-founders of [LUCHA Ministries](#), an organization in Fredericksburg, Va., created to help Latinos cope with a new life in the United States. “Lucha” means “struggle” in Spanish, but LUCHA also is an acronym for the Spanish equivalent of “Latinos United through Christ in Brotherhood and Support.”

Immigration laws have an

impact on who a church can call as pastor or hire as staff

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Immigration laws have an impact on who a church can call as pastor or hire as staff

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

SAN ANTONIO—Claudia Munoz feels called to serve on church staff and is doing everything she can to prepare herself to fulfill that calling. She received a student visa and traveled from her home country of Chile to enroll at Baptist University of the Americas. She went on to graduate and began optional career training, working as a graphic artist at the school, the same position she hopes to hold one day on a church staff in Chile.

Months before her student visa expired, she applied for a religious visa so she could work on a church staff in the United States while her husband finished his master's degree. Months after it expired, she continues waiting. Munoz remains in the country legally, but she can't legally hold a job. She and her husband, who also is on a student visa, are living off the support they receive from their parents.

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“I’m still waiting, hoping and praying I receive it soon because I need to work,” she said.

Almost any immigration reform better than nothing, advocates say

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Almost any immigration reform better than nothing, advocates say

By Robert Marus

ABP Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON (ABP)—As Congress begins to take up immigration-reform proposals, some Christian immigration activists say there is no perfect legislation in the pipeline. But time is of the essence in getting something passed, nonetheless, they insist.

A reform bill with broad bipartisan support already has been introduced in the House. The Senate is likely to begin its consideration of the issue in May.

Texas Baptist Forum

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Texas Baptist Forum

God & Allah

My wife and I served as International Mission Board missionaries in the Middle East for almost 30 years. Baptists in each country in the area [call God "Allah."](#) It is the generic Arabic name for God.

Christians and Muslims agree on some of the characteristics of God/Allah. We agree he is the one and only Supreme Being; he created all things, including human beings. He is a moral God, so those who “do good” are assured a place in heaven and those who disobey are assured of punishment in hell.

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

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



"If I make exceptions to following God's rule, even if it is only once, there will be more exceptions that will follow."

Elliot Huck

Fourteen-year-old who made it to the Scripps National Spelling Bee in 2005 and 2006, but refused to compete in the Bloomington, Ind., regional bee this year because it was scheduled on a Sunday (*World/RNS*)
"Evangelical Christians are the most incompetently portrayed group in America—in TV, in fiction, in the news. When Christians say the media gets them wrong, Christians are absolutely right."

Ira Glass

Host of Public Radio International's *This American Life* (*The Forward/RNS*)

"I'm afraid that people have gotten to the point where they are worshipping America. I want to be loyal to America as a nation, but my loyalty ultimately belongs to Jesus. I respect America and want to serve American interests, but if those interests run contrary to serving Jesus Christ, then in fact I must stand against my nation."

Tony Campolo

Evangelical author (*The Washington Times/RNS*)

After that, our view of the basic character of God/Allah varies greatly. Christians believe in one God expressed in the Holy Trinity. Muslims believe in one Allah expressed only as Supreme power and will.

Ministers rank high in job satisfaction

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Ministers rank high in job satisfaction

By Marcia Nelson

Religion News Service

CHICAGO (RNS)—If you want to be rich, get an MBA. If you want to be happy, go for an M.Div.

Members of the clergy rank highest in job satisfaction, according to a report released by the [National Opinion Research Center](#) at the University of Chicago. More than 87 percent of clergy said they were satisfied with their jobs, followed by firefighters (80 percent) and physical therapists (78 percent).

On the Move

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On the Move

- **Josh Adair** has resigned as youth minister at First Church in Tom Bean.
 - **Larry Ashley** has resigned as pastor of First Church in Centerville.
 - **Calvin Bell** to Pleasant Hill Missionary Baptist Church in Whitney as pastor.
 - **Paul Briggs** to Axtell Church in Axtell as pastor.
-

Most physicians will agree: Religion does a body good

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Most physicians will agree: Religion does a body good

By Melissa Stee

Religion News Service



CHICAGO (RNS)—Most physicians say religion and spirituality have a significant impact on health, according to a new study, while just 6 percent of doctors believe religion or spirituality changed “hard” medical outcomes.

The survey, part of a University of Chicago study published by the [Archives of Internal Medicine](#), showed more than half (54 percent) of doctors said “God or another supernatural being” can intervene in a patient’s health.

Families urgently needed to adopt Russian orphans

April 28, 2007

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Dima	Kristina	Sergey

Families urgently needed

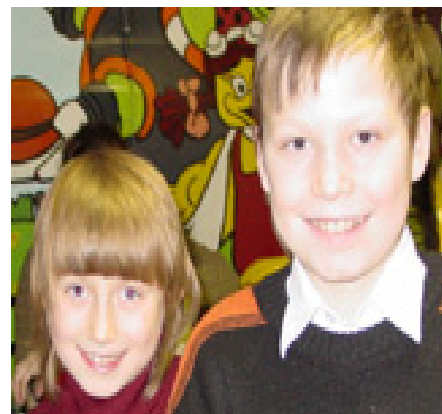
to adopt Russian orphans

By Analiz González

Buckner International

ALLAS—[Buckner Adoption and Maternity Services](#) urgently needs to find families for Russian orphans who soon will age out of orphanage care.

Once the children turn 16, they can't be adopted internationally. In essence, that means they won't get adopted at all, said Debbie Wynne, director of Buckner Adoption and Maternity Services.



Kostya and Ella

**For more information on
adopting children
internationally through
Buckner, contact Phil
Brinkmeyer or Irina
Shytova at (214)
381-1552 or call toll-
free(866) 236-7823**

Texas Baptists offer relief to victims of widespread storms

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Texas
Baptist
Men
responded
to help
victims of
storms
that
struck
across the
state in
April.

Texas Baptists offer relief to victims of widespread storms

By Barbara Bedrick

Texas Baptist Communications

From suburban Fort Worth to the Panhandle plains to the Rio Grande,

Texas Baptists provided disaster relief after a series of violent storms swept through the state.

High winds, heavy rain and a tornado killed two people and damaged more than 150 homes in Tarrant County April 13, and another storm system followed a similar path 11 days later. Haltom City, just north of Fort Worth, experienced some of the worst damage from the first wave of storms.



Texas Tidbits

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Texas Tidbits

Scholarships endowed at Wayland. Three families recently endowed scholarships at [Wayland Baptist University](#). The McDougal Scholarship honors Delbert and Carolyn McDougal of Lubbock. He served more than 10 years on the Wayland board of trustees, including service as chairman and vice chairman of the board and chairman of the property management

committee. The Norman and Louise Wright Scholarship, established by their children, honors longtime members of First Baptist Church in Plainview. He served on Wayland's board of trustees. The Bill and Nell Hardage Scholarship was begun with gifts provided by the Hardages and completed with memorial gifts made at the time of his death one year ago. He was associated with Wayland more than 40 years—first as a student and member of the track and field team, and then later as a coach and administrator. He served, at various times, as director of special services, academic vice president, advancement vice president and executive vice president.

Foundation grants scholarship to Wayland San Antonio. [Baptist Health Foundation of San Antonio](#) made a \$60,000 scholarship gift for the 2007-2008 academic year to the San Antonio campus of Wayland Baptist University. The funds will be available for local students in the undergraduate nursing program, and in the master's- level Christian ministry and counseling degree programs. The gift is a \$10,000 increase over last year.

Estate gift benefits Howard Payne. [Howard Payne University's Douglas MacArthur Academy of Freedom](#) will receive about \$1.7 million for scholarships from the estate of Terry and Ouida Dunsworth of Bedford. With the addition of this gift, the academy's total endowment is valued at \$7 million, said Howard Payne President Lanny Hall.

Baptist communicators honored. Public relations representatives from several Texas-based Baptist agencies and institutions were honored in the Wilmer C. Fields Awards competition, sponsored by the [Baptist Communicators Association](#). The marketing and public relations office at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor received the exceptional achievement award in interactive communications and first place in the website division. Miranda Bradley of Children at Heart Ministries won first place for a single feature article and second place for a series in the newspaper or newsletter

division. Erin Tooley with Woman's Missionary Union of Texas won first place in the poster or flyer division and first place for a direct mail kit or campaign. Dallas-based Guidestone Financial Resources' communications department won first place in the special events category, and Guidestone's Lisa Hennington won first place in the single direct mail category.

New director for Laity Lodge named. The H. E. Butt Foundation has named Steven Purcell director of the [Laity Lodge Christian retreat center](#). Purcell, a native Texan, is a former managing director of Schloss Mittersill, a Christian retreat and conference center in Austria with ties to Regent College in Vancouver, British Columbia. Owned and operated by the H.E. Butt Foundation, Laity Lodge has been presenting adult retreats since 1961 at its 1,900-acre facility in the Texas Hill Country.

TOGETHER: Simple ideas put emphasis on missions

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TOGETHER:

Simple ideas put emphasis on missions

A group of Texas and world Baptist leaders put missions at the top of their agendas last week when they met for a Missions Exchange in Waco. The discussion generated many great ideas—some big and strategic, others small and practical. Here's a sampling:

- **Encourage pastors** to place a world map on their desks to remind them the whole world should be on the heart and mind of the church.



Executive Director
BGCT Executive
Board

- **Have a missions website** with a global map that helps people connect with efforts being done by churches and institutions and with ways for people to discover where they could get involved.
- **Understand** missions must be done from the inside out, with people first gaining an internal passion for missions before it is expressed in an outward fashion. Help churches discover their “Mission DNA” and call members to a missions lifestyle.

Six Baptist-affiliated students among 32 dead at Virginia Tech

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Six Baptist-affiliated students among 32 dead at Virginia Tech

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP)—At least six of the 32 dead in the April 16 massacre at Virginia Tech had ties to Baptist churches in Virginia, Baptist leaders in the state said.

Here is what is known about the six with Baptist ties, based in part on reporting by MSNBC:

- **Brian Bluhm**, 25, was active in the Baptist collegiate ministries at Virginia Tech and attended Blacksburg Baptist Church, adjacent to the campus. Bluhm, who received a degree in civil engineering, was preparing to defend his graduate thesis about water resources. Born in Iowa and raised in Detroit, he already had accepted a job in Baltimore. Bluhm's parents moved to Winchester, Va., while he was in school, so Blacksburg became his real home, said Bluhm's close friend Michael Marshall of Richmond, Va.

See Related Stories:

- [NO EASY ANSWERS: Campus ministers struggle to explain the inexplicable](#)
- Six Baptist-affiliated students among 32 dead at Virginia Tech
- [Tech students gather at Baptist campus center](#)
- [Texas students pray, remember peers at Virginia Tech](#)

Bluhm was an ardent fan of the Detroit Tigers baseball team, which announced his death before last Tuesday's game against Kansas City. "He went to a game last weekend and saw them win, and I'm glad he did," Marshall said. Bluhm also loved Virginia Tech's Hokies football team and often traveled to away games with a close group of friends.