

Retooling required for reaching others

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Retooling required for reaching others

By Barbara Bedrick

Texas Baptist Communications

Urging ministers to retool their thinking about reaching others for Christ so they may retool the lives of church members and nonbelievers more effectively, Baptist pastor Charles Booth delivered the keynote speech at the African American Leadership Workshop March 9-10 at the George W. Truett Theological Seminary.

Quoting scripture, poetry and a scientist, Booth urged ministers at the 3rd annual conference sponsored by Baptist General Convention of Texas, to propagate by changing themselves.

Charles Booth
Watch a video clip of Booth's address to the conference.

With nearly 600 ministers and church leaders listening, Booth urged the Baptist leaders to “dip the bucket into an old well and prayerfully bring up fresh water,” to make Jesus the difference in their lives, the lives of church members and non-believers.

Texas rural poverty ministry helps residents in colonias

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By Carla Wynn

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

MCALLEN—In rural communities along the U.S.-Mexico border, many Hispanic families live in extreme poverty, in houses with dirt floors, no indoor plumbing and no electricity. But some are finding hope for a better life through a partnership between [Together for Hope](#), the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship’s rural poverty initiative, and [Buckner Border Ministries](#).

In the colonias—unincorporated communities along the border—many residents came to the United States from Mexico in pursuit of a better,

more prosperous life.

Southwestern, McKissic back away from ‘tongue’-lashing

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By Robert Marus & Greg Warner

Associated Baptist Press

FORT WORTH (ABP)—Board leaders at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and an embattled trustee have agreed to meet and discuss their differences—with [a threat to remove](#) Texas pastor Dwight McKissic from the board taken off the table.

McKissic, pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Arlington, and trustee officers issued a joint statement announcing a private meeting to be held immediately prior to Southwestern trustees’ spring meeting.

TOGETHER: Two events need prayer & support

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Two events just ahead need your prayers and support.

First, please pray for the Missions Exchange gathering at Truett Seminary in April. About 100 invitations have gone out to representatives of the churches, institutions, associations, mission organizations and staff who relate to the BGCT. We want to encourage greater collaboration on the part of all our partners in this convention as we engage our Texas resources—people and money, passion and experience, organizational strength and creative energy—to touch Texas and the world. The results of this conversation will be publicized and will be used to shape the program and activities of the annual meeting in Amarillo this fall so that all Texas Baptists can be involved in this mission synergy.



Executive Director
BGCT Executive
Board

Please pray God will be present at this Missions Exchange and the participants will be truly attentive.

Second, a call has gone out to Baptists across North America to gather in Atlanta Jan. 30-Feb. 1, 2008, for the celebration of the [New Baptist Covenant](#). Baptists will be challenged to hear and follow Jesus' agenda: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18-19).

Texas Tidbits

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Board OKs changes to scholarship program. The Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board approved an increase in the amount of money given to each 2007 recipient of the Mary Hill Davis Ethnic/Minority Scholarship. Each full-time student will receive \$800 a semester, double what was offered in 2006. Members of ethnic and minority congregations affiliated with the BGCT who are planning to attend a BGCT-affiliated university can apply for the scholarship by April 15. More information about the scholarship and an online application can be found at www.bgct.org. The application and information also can be obtained by calling Tom Ruane or Amber Young at (888) 244-9400. The scholarship is provided by funds through the Mary Hill Davis Offering for Texas Missions.

Numbers add up for ETBU math scholarship. The Rutledge McClaran Mathematics Scholarship now honors the longtime mathematics professor and administrator at [East Texas Baptist University](http://www.etbu.edu). McClaran retired from full-time responsibilities last August, but he still is a part-time consultant at the university. He is an ETBU graduate and served on the faculty more than 41 years. He has been professor of mathematics, chair of the department of mathematics and computer science, academic dean, dean of instruction and dean of liberal arts. In 1989, he became the director of institutional planning, assessment and research. Gifts can be made to the McClaran Mathematics Scholarship by calling the ETBU office of institutional advancement at (903) 923-2070.

Cybercolumn by Berry D. Simpson: Reading habits and expanded horizons

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CYBER COLUMN: Reading habits and expanded horizons

By Berry D. Simpson

I read books all the time. When I was a kid, we would go to the library once a week as a class, and I always checked out a book. I remember one year—I don't remember which grade, I think fourth or fifth, or which teacher, Morris or Henry, but I can picture the layout of the library in my mind—the librarian telling us boys to stick to *Boys Life* magazine and stop looking at the pictures in *Seventeen*. She also told me I should read something different. She thought I was reading too many books about war. She thought I should branch out a bit.

Berry D. Simpson

I remember thinking at the time, in my smart-alecky boy logic, that I was reading more books and thicker books than anyone else in class, certainly more books than any other boy, and shouldn't my teacher have been satisfied with that? Why did she have to boss me around about which book I was reading, especially when this was leisure reading and not book-report

reading?

NAE rebuffs Bush administration in joining anti-torture statement

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NAE rebuffs Bush administration in joining anti-torture statement

By Robert Marus

Associated Baptist Press

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. (ABP)—The nation's umbrella group for evangelicals has endorsed a statement that takes aim at the Bush administration's alleged use of torture in the war on terrorism.

Directors of the [National Association of Evangelicals](#) have endorsed a document called "An Evangelical Declaration Against Torture: Protecting Human Rights in an Age of Terror." The endorsement came at the board's March 8-9 meeting in Minnesota.

Gingrich, potential GOP '08 candidate, admits affair while pursuing Clinton

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By Robert Marus

Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., chose one of the nation's most popular evangelical radio programs to admit he had an extramarital affair while pursuing impeachment charges against former President Bill Clinton.

The admission came on James Dobson's "Focus on the Family" broadcast. Some political observers surmised that Gingrich—by choosing Dobson's show for his forum and making the admission early in the 2008 presidential election cycle—is fishing for GOP nomination support from conservative evangelical Christians.

Franklin Graham's son injured in Iraq

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BOONE, N.C. (BP)—Capt. Edward Graham, the youngest son of evangelist Franklin Graham, has sustained shrapnel wounds to his arms, legs and back in Iraq.

Graham, a 27-year-old Army Ranger and West Point graduate, did not suffer life-threatening injuries and is recovering at an undisclosed hospital, according to news reports.

"We know that he is fine and has asked for prayers for his men," Jeremy Blume, a spokesman for Franklin Graham, told the *Citizen-Times* newspaper in Asheville, N.C., adding he had no more details on the incident. "Rangers aren't allowed to disclose much information—even where he is."

Glenn Wilcox, a close friend of the Graham family, told the *Citizen-Times* Graham is serving his second tour in Iraq and that his father is extremely proud of him.

Terror victims receive relief for soles, hope for souls

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Staff and volunteers with Russian Ministries, a partner of Buckner and Shoes for Orphan Souls, personally delivered shoes to children in Beslan and Chechnya which helped open doors for further Christian ministry in the mostly Muslim-populated region. (Photos courtesy of Russian Ministries)

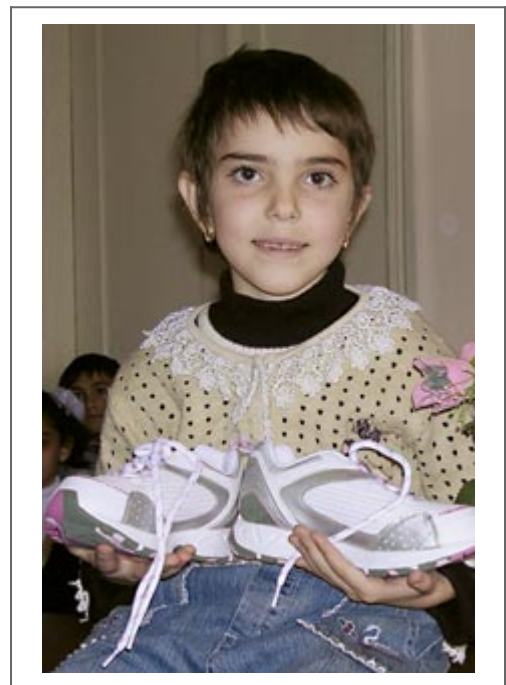
Terror victims receive relief for soles, hope for souls

By Russ Dilday

Buckner International

Thousands of children in war-torn regions of Beslan, Russia, and Grozny, Chechnya, recently received thousands of pairs of shoes donated through the [Buckner Shoes for Orphan Souls](#) drive.

Russian Ministries, a Christian group that collaborates with Buckner for ministry, distributed the shoes as part of a larger evangelistic effort to reach children and their families in the mostly Muslim-populated areas with the message of Christ.



Children orphaned by the terrorist attacks on Sept. 1, 2004 in Beslan received new shoes last December thanks to the Buckner Shoes for Orphan Souls shoe drive.

Evangelical leaders turn up heat on Cizik for global-warming warning

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Evangelical leaders turn up heat on Cizik for global-warming warning

By Adelle Banks

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The National Association of Evangelicals has affirmed its stance on caring for the environment—indirectly rebuffing complaints that a staffer was too environmentally friendly—and endorsed a statement condemning torture.

Focus on the Family Chairman James Dobson and two dozen other evangelical leaders had asked the board to consider ousting Richard Cizik, the NAE's vice president for governmental affairs, because of his "relentless campaign" against global warming.

Richard Cizik

BWA committee nominates first non-white general secretary

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By Robert Marus

Associated Baptist Press

FALLS CHURCH, Va. (ABP)—Neville Callam will make history for Baptists around the world if elected general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance.

If elected in July, the 55-year-old Jamaican pastor will be the first non-white chief executive of the group, which represents about 110 million Baptists in national and regional bodies across the planet. He would also be the first general secretary in the group's 101-year history to hail from somewhere

other than the United States or Europe.

Neville Callam
