

# Archaeologists, evangelicals critique “Tomb” documentary

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## Archaeologists, evangelicals critique “Tomb” documentary

**By Hannah Elliott**

*Associated Baptist Press*

DALLAS (ABP)—Archaeologists, biblical scholars and Christian leaders are casting doubt on explosive claims about the life of Jesus in a new documentary from Hollywood director-producer James Cameron.

The film, called [\*The Lost Tomb of Jesus\*](#), presents evidence producers say could prove Jesus was married to Mary Magdelene and had a son.

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## African Children’s Choir symbolizes hope for future

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# African Children's Choir symbolizes hope for future

**By Barbara Bedrick**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

ABILENE—Like most boys his age, 8-year-old David dreams about what he'll be when he grows up. This week, he wants to be an air traffic controller.

A year ago, he probably never dreamed he'd be in the United States. Born in one of the most impoverished areas of Uganda, he had little hope of getting an education.

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## Around the State

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As University of Mary Hardin-Baylor Christian studies faculty look on, President Jerry Bawcom; Jane and Paul Meyer, for whom the building will be named; and Henry Adrion III, chairman of the board of trustees, turned dirt at the site of the Paul and Jane Meyer Christian Studies Center, which is scheduled for completion in 2008. The 18,815-square-foot two-story building will have five classrooms, conference rooms, the dean's office, a reception area and a chapel on the first floor. The second floor will include additional classrooms, faculty offices, a reading room and lounge area for students.

## Around the State

- Martin Wilson, associate pastor at La Verdad Community Church in El Paso, will offer the opening prayer for the U.S. House of Representatives March 7 in Washington D.C. He also is a U.S. Border Patrol chaplain.
- The Piecemakers, a knitting and crocheting group at Crestview Church in George-town, will send knitted and crocheted baby blankets and children's sweaters with a team of volunteers who will travel to Romania in early May. Others who want to participate can go to [www.forgive490.com](http://www.forgive490.com) and click on "Blankets for Romania" for patterns and more information. Blankets should be made with soft cotton yarn and children's sweaters with wool or wool-blend yarn. Yarn donations also are being accepted.
- Ollie Finney has been named adviser of the year at Dallas Baptist University. A DBU alumna, she began serving in the college of adult education in 2000.

### Anniversaries

- Gilbert Gonzales, fifth, as pastor of One Cross Three Nails Church in Lubbock, March 10.
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## Friends bring friends to Jesus

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# Friends bring friends to Jesus

**By David Coffield**

*Hardin-Simmons University*

ABILENE—When Autumn Moran committed her life to Jesus during a recent Bible study at Hardin-Simmons University's Friendship House, nobody was happier than Danyel Rogers.

Although Moran had been reluctant, Rogers invited the young woman to the Bible study and earned her trust one step at a time.

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## Baptist Briefs

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## Baptist Briefs

**Hammond recommended as NAMB president.** The [North American Mission Board](#)'s presidential search committee has recommended Geoffrey Hammond to become the agency's next president. Hammon is senior associate director of the Souther Baptist Conservatives of Virginia. The NAMB board will vote on the recommendation at its March 20-21 meeting. Hammond, 49, is a graduate of Spurgeon's Seminary in London and earned a doctor of ministry degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

**Final Arizona defendants sentenced.** The five final defendants affiliated with a fraud scandal at the Baptist Foundation of Arizona [have been sentenced](#). Donald Dale Deardoff, former BFA treasurer, received four years in prison and was ordered to pay \$150 million in restitution. Sentenced to three years of supervised probation and ordered to pay restitution after accepting plea agreements were Harold Dewayne Friend, a businessman who allegedly participated in fraudulent financial transactions; Jalma W. Hunsinger, director of two BFA subsidiaries; Edgar Alan Kuhn, former president of two BFA subsidiaries; and Richard Lee Rolfes, former owner of a firm that provided accounting services for some BFA subsidiaries. Last September, former BFA President William Crofts and former legal counsel Thomas Grabinski were sentenced to eight and six years, respectively, on fraud and racketeering charges.

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## **2nd Opinion: Peril of the church on the defensive**

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## **2nd Opinion: Peril of the church on the defensive**

**By John Pierce**

The counterculture approach that Jesus took and taught focused on loving enemies, embracing outcasts and giving second chances to those soundly condemned by the religious establishment. I never thought of Jesus as a culture warrior on the defensive.

However, many modern church leaders—including some high-profile Baptists—seem to relish that role.

The church on the defensive is neither attractive nor effective. It is driven by fear and sees all sorts of sociological and scientific changes—as well as most theological rethinking—as threatening.

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## **DOWN HOME: What's better than Wheel O'Meals?**

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### **DOWN HOME: What's better than Wheel O'Meals?**

"Where do you want to go for dinner," Joanna asked.

"I don't care," I replied. "Where do you want to go?"

"Doesn't matter. You pick."

"No, I picked last time. It's your turn."

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# **EDITORIAL: Two issues resolved, 3rd straight ahead**

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## **EDITORIAL: Two issues resolved, 3rd straight ahead**

The last time we met on this page, we waited to see how the Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board meeting Feb. 26-27 would turn out. The board faced three key issues. It deftly resolved two of them, but the third still stands as Texas Baptists' most crucial challenge:

- **Church-starting scandal.**

A special oversight group presented a positive report on the convention's response to misappropriation of church-starting funds in the Rio Grande Valley. Executive Board staff took the lead and, supported in some cases by Executive Board directors and others, moved to implement all seven recommendations offered by outside investigators who uncovered the extent of the scandal. Although some parts of a few recommendations are not completely functional, progress has been solid. (See story, page 2.)

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“Vigilance” is the watchword for moving forward in BGCT church-starting. But Texas Baptists can feel confident lessons have been learned, accountability processes are being put in place and we will benefit from a stronger, more reliable church-starting program.

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## **Politics plays role in hunger elimination, Beckmann says**

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## **Politics plays role in hunger elimination, Beckmann says**

**By Hannah Elliott**

*Associated Baptist Press*

AUSTIN (ABP)—The movement to eradicate hunger and extreme poverty for millions of people around the world is not a lost cause, the president of

[Bread for the World](#) stressed.

In fact, despite the population explosion, the number of people who are undernourished is slightly lower now than it was in the early 1970s, David Beckmann said. He participated in the Ethics Without Borders conference in Austin, organized by the Baptist General Convention of Texas' [Christian Life Commission](#).

David Beckmann of Bread for the World says he believes it is possible to cut hunger and poverty in half before 2015. (Photo by John Hall)
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# ‘Clash of civilizations’ view too simplistic, expert says

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## ‘Clash of civilizations’ view too simplistic, expert says

**By Hannah Elliott**

*Associated Baptist Press*

AUSTIN (ABP)—The “clash of civilizations” view of Muslim and Christian conflict only prolongs problems and encourages dangerous forms of fundamentalism, a prominent scholar told participants at the Ethics Without Borders conference.

Charles Kimball, who has visited the Middle East 40 times and worked closely with Congress, the White House and the State Department, spoke at the event, organized by the Baptist General Convention of Texas’ [Christian Life Commission](#).

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Charles Kimball,  
a religion  
professor at  
Wake Forest  
University, says  
an “us-versus-  
them” mentality  
toward Islam  
shows a deep  
bias on the part  
of Westerners.  
(Photo by John  
Hall)

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# **Networked church key to ministering in 21st century**

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## **Networked church key to ministering in 21st century**

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

AUSTIN—A “networked” church is poised for ministry in the 21st century, Anna Robbins of the [London School of Theology](#) claimed.

The world is being stretched by the simultaneous emphasis on context and culture as well as belief in a worldwide bond, Robbins said.

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# **Development key in Texas Baptist fight against world hunger**

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## **Development key in Texas Baptist fight against world hunger**

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

The Texas Baptist [Offering for World Hunger](#) feeds people today, tomorrow and long into the future.

Funds given through the offering are used to purchase food for starving families around the world, but more than half of the donated money is used to empower people to support themselves.