

# **Concern for needy people is gospel truth, not partisan politics, CBF's Vestal insists**

May 9, 2008

Posted: 5/09/08

## **Concern for needy people is gospel truth, not partisan politics, CBF's Vestal insists**

**By Marv Knox**

*Editor*

WACO—God identifies with the poor and the powerless, and Christians encounter Christ when they serve the weakest of the world's citizens, Daniel Vestal told participants in the [Baylor University School of Social Work's](#) annual "family dinner."

"Concern for the poor and the powerless is not partisan politics. It is central and integral to the gospel of Jesus Christ," stressed Vestal, staff leader of the Atlanta-based Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

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Daniel Vestal,  
executive  
coordinator of  
the Cooperative  
Baptist  
Fellowship,  
addresses a  
dinner gathering  
sponsored by the  
Baylor School of  
Social Work.  
(PHOTOS/Baylor)

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# Looking for guidelines for Christian blogs? Start with the New Testament

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## Looking for guidelines for Christian blogs? Start with the New Testament

**By Ken Camp**

*Managing Editor*

The New Testament book of James compares the tongue to raging fire and a wild beast that cannot be tamed. And the author of that book never was “flamed” on a blog or in a chat room.

Words have power, whether spoken or written in cyberspace. And Christians don’t get a free pass to ignore the Golden Rule when they log on to their computers, according to ethicist Bill Tillman.

	
Bill Tillman	David Gushee

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## Blogging Baptists

May 9, 2008

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## Blogging Baptists

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

For some people, blogs are like a family reunion where people barely know

each other. There's a lot of talking going on, but there's little agreement on much of anything.

**See  
Related  
Articles:**

- Blogging Baptists
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But for many of the increasing number of Baptist bloggers, that's the beauty of it.

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**Blogs            become            Baptist**

# battleground

May 9, 2008

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## Blogs become Baptist battleground

**By Robert Marus**

*Associated Baptist Press*

WASHINGTON (ABP)—One classic joke about Baptists is that wherever two or three are gathered, there are four opinions among them.

The same can be said of bloggers, and Baptists seem to have taken to blogs with particular gusto, on both the institutional and individual levels. But as a democratically governed and notoriously fractious bunch, blogging Baptists also seem to have put a new virtual twist on the time-honored tradition of contentious business meetings.



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- [Blogging Baptists](#)
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- Blogs become Baptist battleground

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# Faith Digest

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## Faith Digest

**Panel cites 11 religious freedom offenders.** A federal watchdog panel announced 11 countries should be named “countries of particular concern” for their records on religious freedom, including three not currently on the

State Department's list. The [U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom](#) urged the inclusion of Vietnam—removed from the State Department's list in 2006—along with Pakistan and Turkmenistan. The other countries recommended for the designation of “countries of particular concern” are Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Uzbekistan, which have been on the State Department's list since 2006. The commission also cited countries on its “Watch List” that require monitoring because of religious freedom violations permitted or implemented by the governments—Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia and Nigeria.

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**Have a Bible question? Ask a Pole.** Americans are more likely than Europeans to own and read a Bible, but Poles are most likely to have a basic knowledge of Scripture, according to a Vatican report. The statistics are among preliminary findings of a study of Bible reading in the United States and eight European countries conducted by an Italian market research firm in preparation for an international synod of Catholic bishops. More than 90 percent of American households contain at least one copy of the Bible, the highest level among the countries studied, according to the study. Three out of four Americans had read at least one passage of Scripture over the previous year, compared to only one out of four Spaniards, who ranked last in that respect. Not surprisingly, exposure paid off in familiarity with the book. When asked seven basic questions about the Bible's contents and authorship, 17 percent of Americans were able to answer all correctly, compared to an average of 15 percent in all the countries studied. But Poles took the prize for biblical knowledge, with 20 percent earning perfect scores on the test. The lowest rank went to the Russians, only 7 percent of whom were able to answer all the questions right.

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# Willis, Hunt jump in crowded field vying for SBC presidency

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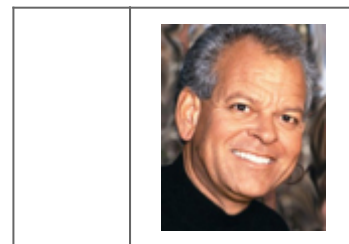
## Willis, Hunt jump in crowded field vying for SBC presidency

**By Robert Marus**

*Associated Baptist Press*

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. (ABP)—A crowded field of hopefuls for the Southern Baptist Convention presidency appears to be developing, with two high-profile candidates set to join three already-announced nominees.

Retired SBC [International Mission Board](#) executive Avery Willis and Atlanta-area pastor Johnny Hunt reportedly will be nominated for the denomination's top position. SBC messengers will elect a new president and conduct other business during the body's annual meeting, scheduled for June 10-11 in Indianapolis.



Avery Willis	Johnny Hunt
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# Texas Tidbits

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## Texas Tidbits

**BGCT serves breakfast during SBC, CBF annual meetings.** The [Baptist General Convention of Texas](#) will sponsor come-and-go continental breakfasts for pastors during the annual meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. The BGCT meal during the SBC meeting will be 7 to 9 a.m., June 10, in Room 208 of the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis. The BGCT breakfast during the CBF General Assembly is scheduled 7 to 9 a.m., June 20, in Ballroom B of the Memphis (Tenn.) Cook County Convention Center.

**Galveston outreach changes lives.** About 80 Texas Baptists met with more than 700 people during a Galveston Beach Reach weekend event. Volunteers prayed with 180 people, 35 made professions of faith in Christ and eight rededicated their lives to Christ, according to Gerald Davis, Baptist General Convention of Texas community development specialist who helped lead the beach outreach.

**McBeth named Elder Statesman.** Baptist historian Leon McBeth will receive the Texas Baptist Elder Statesman Award at a presentation June 1

at Independence Baptist Church in Independence. McBeth taught 43 years at [Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary](#) and has written extensively, including *The Baptist Heritage and Texas Baptists: A Sesquicentennial History*. Events begin at 10 a.m. with Sunday school, taught by Jesse Fletcher, president emeritus of Hardin-Simmons University. During the 11 a.m. worship service, Independence Association President Bill Pitts of Waco will present the Elder Statesman Award. Russell Dilday, former president of Southwestern Seminary and chancellor of the B.H. Carroll Theological Institute, will preach. A church picnic will follow, and guests are asked to bring a covered dish.

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## **UMHB students reach out, dig in to help families in crisis**

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University of  
Mary Hardin-  
Baylor junior  
Hallie  
Jacobson and  
freshman  
Lindsey  
Weaver help  
with a  
cleaning  
project at the  
Families in  
Crisis Center  
during a day  
of Reaching  
Out. (Photos  
by Lindsey  
Sisk/UMHB)

## UMHB students reach out, dig in to help families in crisis

**By Laura Frase**

*University of Mary Hardin-Baylor*

BELTON—Between looming storm clouds, plenty of mud and even several flat tires on wheelbarrows, nothing stopped [University of Mary Hardin-Baylor](#) students from reaching out to their community. More than 200 students participated in UMHB's recent Reaching Out community service program.

“As Christians, we’re called to serve,” UMHB junior Hallie Jacobson said. “It’s really important to focus off yourself and on others—and it’s fun.”

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# Wayland grad records life’s journey on walls of church

May 9, 2008

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## Wayland grad records life’s journey on walls of church

**By Teresa Young**

*Wayland Baptist University*

PLAINVIEW—When Wendi Vanlandingham received her degree from [Wayland Baptist University](#) at spring commencement, it marked the end of a 12-year journey filled with twists, turns and detours.

In a sort of lasting testament to that road, Vanlandingham recently completed a large mural in the children’s department at [College Heights Baptist Church](#).

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Wendi  
Vanlandingham  
stands in the  
hallway of the  
children's  
department at  
College  
Heights Baptist  
Church, where  
she completed  
a mural.  
(Wayland  
Photo)

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# Waylanders plan to answer their Macedonian call

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## Waylanders plan to answer their Macedonian call

**By Teresa Young**

*Wayland Baptist University*

PLAINVIEW—In preparation for a two-week mission trip to Macedonia, a group of [Wayland Baptist University](#) students is collecting clothing and other items to be distributed in a village on their trip.

The group, headed by Rick Shaw, director of the Wayland Missions Center and assistant professor of religion, will leave May 29 for the area, traveling first to Macedonia, then to Kosovo, then taking in some sights in Greece.

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Rick Shaw  
(on piano)  
leads the  
mission team  
heading to  
Macedonia  
in a worship  
song in the  
language in  
special  
classes  
preparing  
Wayland  
Baptist  
University  
students to  
worship and  
share  
testimonies  
in  
Macedonia.  
Melanie  
Vasquez,  
Taylor  
Phillips,  
Khirstyne  
Eckerd,  
Micah  
Evans,  
Amber  
Hamilton  
and Kevin  
Burrow  
(front)  
rehearse a  
song.

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# **Explore the Bible Series for May 18: Make major life adjustments**

May 9, 2008

Posted: 5/09/08

**Explore the Bible Series for May 18**

## **Make major life adjustments**

- Genesis 46:1-7, 28-30; 47:7-12

**[By Donald Raney](#)**

*First Baptist Church, Petersburg*

A wise person once said the only thing constant in life is change. Life often requires we alter our plans or routines. Issues related to our job, finances, health or family may force us to adjust our lives in order to accommodate new circumstances or resolve problems.

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# Storylist for 5/12/08 issue

May 9, 2008

## Storylist for week of 5/12/08

**TAKE ME TO:** [Top Story](#) | [Texas](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Baptists](#) | [Faith & Culture](#) | [Book Reviews](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Departments](#) | [Bible Study](#)



- [BGCT launches Texas Hope 2010 evangelism initiative](#)



- [Blogging Baptists](#)



- [New HPU lectureship weds evangelism to ethics](#)
- [Abilene church leads drive to sweeten ministry to troops in Iraq](#)
- [Concern for needy people is gospel truth, not partisan politics, CBF's Vestal insists](#)
- [BCFS garners highest praise from children](#)
- [Russell joins Standard staff as marketing director](#)
- [Student worship leader keeps collegiate ties](#)
- [Baptism rates follow cycles, Texas Baptist statistician says](#)

- [UMHB students reach out, dig in to help families in crisis](#)
- [Wayland grad records life's journey on walls of church](#)
- [Waylanders plan to answer their Macedonian call](#)
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- [Texas Tidbits](#)

### **Blogging Baptists: A whole lotta talkin' goin' on**

- [Blogging Baptists](#)
- [Looking for guidelines for Christian blogs? Start with the New Testament](#)
- [Blogs become Baptist battleground](#)



- [Willis, Hunt jump in crowded field vying for SBC presidency](#)
- [Baptist Briefs](#)



- [Methodists vote to retain policies on homosexuality](#)
- [Faith Digest](#)



- [Reviewed in this issue:](#) *Questions To All Your Answers: The Journey From Folk Religion to Examined Faith* by Roger Olson,
- *Why Jesus Makes Me Nervous: Ten Alarming Words of Faith* by Joy Jordan-Lake and
- *Connecting Women: A Relational Guide for Leaders in Womens Ministry*

by Linda Lesniewski.



- [Classified Ads](#)
- [Cartoon](#)
- [Texas Baptist Forum](#)
- [Around the State](#)
- [On the Move](#)



- [EDITORIAL: Why can't we all disagree agreeably?](#)
- [DOWN HOME: Her world grows & also shrinks](#)
- [IN FOCUS: Hopeful conversations across Texas](#)
- [2nd Opinion: The morning of many miracles](#)
- [RIGHT or WRONG: Prudence vs passion?](#)
- [Texas Baptist Forum](#)



- [BaptistWay Bible Series for May 11: When the going gets tough](#)
- [Bible Studies for Life Series for May 11: Communication is key in relationships](#)
- [Explore the Bible Series for May 11: Work toward reconciliation](#)
- [BaptistWay Bible Series for May 18: The only hope](#)

- [Bible Studies for Life Series for May 18: Be trustworthy](#)
- [Explore the Bible Series for May 18: Make major life adjustments](#)

**Previously posted:**

- [Expert offers tips to manage mix of religion and politics](#)
- [Ground-rules recommended for religion in public schools](#)
- [Future Focus Committee examines Cooperative Program giving trends](#)
- [Research findings to be presented at social work colloquium](#)
- [Kelsi Kelso in Nigeria with HandsOn Missions](#)
- [Baptist Immigration Services offers help to people 'left hanging'](#)
- [Howard Payne students learn about Islam firsthand in North Africa](#)
- [Prayer must undergird compassion, missionary doctor insists](#)
- [Baylor nursing students meet life-and-death needs in Africa](#)
- [Cameron Byler, SBC pioneer in recreation, disaster relief, dies at 79](#)
- [Ethics and evangelism focus of inaugural lecture at Howard Payne](#)
- [Cancer survivor, age 4, throws out first pitch](#)
- [Baptist Children's Youth Ranch accepts 75 children removed from FLDS compound](#)
- [See articles from the previous 4/28/08 issue here.](#)