

Delayed life choices demand new strategies, scholar insists

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Delayed life choices demand new strategies, scholar insists

By Ted Meyer

Religion News Service

PRINCETON, N.J. (RNS)—As increasing numbers of young people postpone marriage and children, other life choices—like returning to church—are affected as well, according to a leading scholar of American Protestantism.

As a result, Princeton University's Robert Wuthnow said, religious groups need new ways to lasso these strays from the flock.

Around the State

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Volunteers from First Church in Allen spent spring break on a mission trip to help complete the new sanctuary at Adamsville Church in Lampasas Association. Some brought their own lodging in RVs, campers or motor homes. Others brought only sleeping bags and bedded down in the church's fellowship hall, and a few others were welcomed into private homes. Two other mission trips to work on the sanctuary was provided by Volunteer Christian Builders last year.

Around the State

- **Randel Everett**, newly elected executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, will speak at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor April 16 at 11 a.m.
- **The Center for Ministry Effectiveness and Educational Leadership** at Baylor University will sponsor a symposium on the renewal of congregational song May 8 at 9 a.m. The symposium will include demonstration of various types of congregational song, a panel on theological and pastoral perspectives; and three versions of the practice of congregational singing. A lunch will follow. The symposium is free. For more information, call (254) 710-4677.
- **Tickets are on sale** for the fifth annual “Singin’ with the Saints” Southern Gospel concert for senior adults sponsored by Howard Payne University. The concert will begin at 1:30 p.m. on May 15 at Coggin Avenue Church in Brownwood. The featured performers are The Dove Brothers Quartet and Gold City. Tickets are \$12 and can be ordered by calling (800) 950-8465.
- **Hardin-Simmons University** has inducted six people into Hall of Leaders. Honorees are Nita Lewallen, one of the university’s first Six White Horse Riders, in 1940; Consuelo Kickbusch, who earned her commission as a second lieutenant through HSU’s Reserve Officer Training Corps and was the first woman commissioned as an ROTC officer in the state of Texas and retired after a 20-year career as a U.S. Army lieutenant colonel; John Clayton, a 1964 HSU graduate, who was the first American ever to be asked by Cambridge University to deliver the prestigious Stanton Lectures in philosophy of religion; Jack Martin, a 1948 HSU graduate who at the time of his retirement was the winningest active basketball coach in Texas and currently is a brigadier general in the Texas Air National Guard;

Marion McClure, director of the Cowboy Band from 1934 until his death in 1973, except for his years of military service during World War II; and Moxley Featherston, a 1935 magna cum laude graduate who became a lawyer and federal judge.

MLK's generation of pastors makes way for new vision, new generation

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Anthony
Johnson sits
at a
monument
to heroes of
the civil
rights
movement in
Birmingham,
Ala.,
including his
grandfather,
N.H. Smith
(left).

Johnson said
his
generation
faces
different
challenges
in the fight
for civil
rights than
his
grandfather.

(RNS
photo/Joe
Songer/*The
Birmingham
News*)

MLK's generation of pastors makes way for new vision, new generation

By **Greg Garrison & Val Walton**

Religion News Service

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (RNS)—They were pastors and civil rights leaders who broke the back of unjust segregation laws and set in motion the transformation of America into a more racially tolerant nation.

Forty years after the violent death of Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4, 1968, the generation of pastors whose passion and commitment to civil rights rang from pulpits, stirred marches and rallies, and even filled jail cells, is fading.

Book Reviews

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Book Reviews

[***A City Upon a Hill: How Sermons Changed the Course of American History*** by **Larry Witham \(HarperOne\)**](#)

Sometime in 1630, John Winthrop delivered a sermon to the Puritans. He

preached, “We shall be as a city upon a hill” Journalist Larry Witham borrows the phrase to title his book, *A City Upon a Hill: How Sermons Changed the Course of American History*.

Witham chronicles both the positive and negative power of the preacher/pastor and traces the impact of sermons on American life using three divisions: The Colonial Period (1607-1800), National Period (1800-1900) and Modern Period (1900-today).

He indicates that sometimes a single sermon changes the course of history, such as the 26-year-old Martin Luther King Jr.’s sermon on Dec. 5, 1955, that led to the Montgomery bus boycott or his later “I Have a Dream” address.



What are you reading that other Texas Baptists would find helpful? Send suggestions and reviews to books@baptiststandard.com.

Baptist Briefs

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Baptist Briefs

Missouri Baptist Convention faces countersuit. The Missouri Baptist Convention could face paying more than \$10 million to a developer over land formerly owned by [Windermere Baptist Conference Center](#). William Jester of Springfield, Mo., has filed a counterclaim to legal action convention officials originally filed against him and the conference center in 2006. Jester accuses the original plaintiffs of hurting his business and defaming his character through the lawsuit and publicity associated with it. As part of a debt-restructuring plan to cover costs of expansion, Windermere transferred 943 acres to National City Bank of Cincinnati in 2005. The bank then sold the property to Jester's Windermere Development Company. The convention sued, seeking to stop all land transactions at Windermere pending the outcome of a separate convention-filed suit against the conference center and four other institutions that removed themselves from the convention's control in 2000 and 2001. In 2002, the convention filed suit to regain control of the agencies' boards. In that case, a circuit court judge ruled Windermere had acted legally when its trustees changed the center's corporate charter to appoint their own successors. The convention plans to appeal that ruling.

Missouri layman proposes peace committee. As battles continue to roil the Missouri Baptist Convention, prominent layman Kent Cochran is proposing a miniature recreation of the Southern Baptist Convention Peace Committee. Cochran wants the convention's executive board, scheduled to meet April 14-15, to establish a 14-member committee representative of both sides within the embattled convention. "I'd be in favor of everything I could do to promote and bring about peace, but I'm not sure a peace committee is going to be an answer," convention President Gerald

Davidson said, adding that based on his recollection of the SBC Peace Committee in the 1980s, “the peace committee didn’t solve many problems at that time.”

Good leaders in business and church possess some of the same qualities

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Good leaders in business and church possess some of the same qualities

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

The same leadership skills that make many of the best business leaders successful also can enable church leaders to fulfill their potential, some Christian business experts note.

“In both worlds, ... leaders go first. Leaders set the culture,” said Craig Howard, a human resources executive with Coca-Cola and former bivocational pastor.

Churches taking care of business

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Churches taking care of business

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

Churches can learn from business —the good, the bad and the ugly.

Some best practices in the corporate world translate well to the nonprofit sector, including churches, experts insist. And at the same time, churches can benefit by looking at some lessons failed businesses learned the hard way.

Cartoon

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DOWN HOME: Is it a bathroom or spiritual metaphor?

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DOWN HOME: Is it a bathroom or spiritual metaphor?

Call it The Law of Unintended Home Improvements.

Or maybe call it The Difference Between Husbands and Wives.

I'm not sure what you call it, but we've got Exhibit A at our casa in Coppell.

Where to start? Where to start? I guess at our "beginning."

EDITORIAL: Ring the bell to end feeding frenzy

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EDITORIAL:

Ring the bell to end feeding frenzy

One of the problems with feeding frenzies is the invitation never says when the feeding is supposed to finish and the frenzy is supposed to fizzle.

That's what we're up against as the mantle of Baptist General Convention of Texas executive leadership passes [from Charles Wade to Randel Everett](#). For the past couple of years or so, the frenzy focused on Wade and his leadership among Texas Baptists, particularly the Executive Board staff. Some criticism was justified; some was not. But the feeding frenzy became a habit. Now, we're left wondering if blaming, name-calling and finger-pointing have become a reflexive template for corporate behavior. If so, the result will be wholly unfair to Everett, who just got here after many years out of Texas and who inherited, but did not create, the status quo.



So, will the sharks swim away and give Everett room to start fresh? Or will they continue to circle and bite, exacting a price for the simple sin of accepting the job and showing up? We'll see.

Over and over, the feeding frenzy focused on three issues that need to be laid to rest so Everett can begin with blessing:

Faith Digest

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Faith Digest

Most ministries submit materials to Grassley. Two-thirds of the prominent ministries Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, is investigating are cooperating with requests to provide financial information. Bishop Eddie Long's New Birth Missionary Baptist Church in Lithonia, Ga., said it will provide information April 15, Grassley's staff announced. A lawyer for Randy and Paula White, who led Without Walls International Church in Tampa, Fla., told Grassley's office materials had been sent. The senator's office already had received materials from Joyce Meyer Ministries in Fenton, Mo., and Benny Hinn Ministries of Grapevine. Creflo Dollar Ministries in College Park, Ga., has refused to submit financial records, and Kenneth Copeland Ministries near Fort Worth responded to the request but hasn't provided sufficient materials. Grassley, top-ranking Republican on the Senate Finance Committee, plans to "continue dialogue" with those two ministries, his office said.

Ten percent of voters wrong about Obama's religion. One American voter in 10 believes Sen. Barack Obama is Muslim, despite the presidential candidate's frequent descriptions of his Christian faith and a high-profile flap over his former pastor. According to a survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, a majority of voters—53 percent—correctly identify Obama as a Christian. But 16 percent of conservative Republicans, 16 percent of white evangelical Protestants, 19

percent of rural Americans and 10 percent of voters overall believe the Illinois senator is Muslim. Confusion over the candidate's religion crosses party lines. Fourteen percent of all Republicans, 10 percent of Democrats and 8 percent of independents think he's Muslim, according to the survey.

Feds say minister diverted flood aid

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Feds say minister diverted flood aid

By Bruce Nolan

New Orleans Times-Picayune

NEW ORLEANS (RNS)—Federal prosecutors have charged the former pastor of a church damaged by Hurricane Katrina with diverting thousands of dollars in private donations and public flood relief money to his private bank account.

The U.S. attorney's office said it filed a bill of information charging Noah A. Thomas Jr., former pastor of Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church, with a single count of mail fraud. He led the church until October 2006, authorities said.