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February 29, 2008

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- [Team-based ministry changing church culture](#)
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Anne Rice explores Jesus' public ministry in new novel

February 29, 2008

Posted: 2/29/08

Anne Rice explores Jesus' public ministry in new novel

By Benedicta Cipolla

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Don't ask novelist Anne Rice about *The Da Vinci Code* unless you want an earful. Rice, who returned to the Catholic Church in 1998 and soon abandoned vampires, her former stock in trade, calls it a "load of nonsense."

Her latest novel, [Christ the Lord: The Road to Cana](#), is in many ways an orthodox response to the popular thriller that imagined Jesus and Mary Magdalene married.

Around the State

February 29, 2008

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Around the State

- **Howard Payne University** will hold the fourth annual HPU Woman's Club Yellow Rose Scholarship luncheon March 4. Humorist and author Rose-Mary Rumbley will be the featured speaker. The 2008 Yellow Rose scholarship also will be presented to a female junior student who has demonstrated outstanding leadership skills and scholastic accomplishments. Tickets are \$15 and available at the HPU Harrison House or by calling (325) 649-8006.

- **Houston Baptist University** will unveil its new museum complex in the Joella and Stewart Morris Cultural Arts Center at 3 p.m. March 25. Three museums are included in the space: the Dunham Bible Museum, the Museum of American Architecture and Decorative Arts, and the Museum of Southern History. The Dunham Bible Museum houses one of the most extensive collections of rare American Bibles available to the public, including the only existing copy of one of oldest New Testaments in America, the Francis Bailey New Testament printed in 1780, and the 1782 Aitken Bible, the first English Bible printed in America.

Wildwood Church in Village Mills has broken ground for a family life center. The 13,310-square-foot building is being planned not only to minister to the congregation but the community as well.

Participating in the groundbreaking were, from left, MaKayla Linn, representing the future generation; Pastor Jimmy Linn; Barry Johnson, president of the board of the

Wildwood property owners association; Calvin Cryer; Jerry Redkey, director of missions of Sabine Neches Area; Ben Worthy; Ken Mercer; Ron Huffpauir; Sibyl Allen; Marvin

Fannin; and Frances Dismukes, a charter member of the church.

- **Dallas Baptist University** has announced a \$1 million donation in land and building costs by DBU trustee Patsy Smith. The land, located in Hurst, will be home to the Herman and Patsy Smith Center, which is soon to be under construction and will be the future location of DBU's new academic center in Tarrant County, known as DBU-Tarrant.

- **Dallas Baptist University, Houston Baptist University and Howard Payne University** have been named by the Corporation for National and Community Service to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for exemplary service efforts and service to disadvantaged youth. DBU was given the additional honor of being one of three Texas universities to receive the honor roll with distinction designation.

Book reviews

February 29, 2008

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Book reviews

[*How to Talk to Your Doctor: Getting the Answers and Care You Need*](#), by **Patricia Agnew (Quill Driver Books)**

On a recent Sunday, I visited a church where a surgeon is one of the deacons. He operated on me more than 30 years ago when I was in pain, and he solved the problem. I never had talked with him since, and this gave

me a chance to say “thank you.”

Patricia Agnew is almost my age. She has written this how-to book of less than 100 pages to focus on the awkward patient-to-physician position. Witty but clear, its thoroughness almost guarantees your next appointment will be better than the last one.



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

So, I'm going to write down some questions. Take a list of my medications. Ask somebody to go with me so that I don't misunderstand. Bring up first the main reason I came. Make the most of my 15 minutes with the doctor. And if I still need details, use the computer or the public library for follow-up.

Books probe God factor in U.S. politics

February 29, 2008

Posted: 2/29/08

Books probe God factor in U.S. politics

By Daniel Burke

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—According to the old saying, there are two things a person never should discuss at a dinner party—religion and politics. But nothing says people can't read about them. And as the presidential campaign season heats up, American publishers are releasing a flood of books on faith and public life.

Frank Lambert's [*Religion in American Politics*](#) traces the tense interplay between pulpits and the public square through nearly two centuries of U.S. history. Some things, Lambert writes, never change.

Baptist Briefs

February 29, 2008

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Baptist Briefs

Mohler faces surgery, bows out of SBC race. Al Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and spokesman for conservative social causes, will bow out of the race for Southern Baptist Convention president. Mohler, 48, will undergo surgery for a pre-cancerous tumor in his colon, according to a release posted on the seminary website. Doctors

discovered the tumor during a routine colonoscopy, and a subsequent biopsy revealed it was pre-cancerous. Three other candidates for the SBC presidency already have been announced—Georgia pastor Frank Cox and Californians Wiley Drake and Bill Wagner.

Tornado causes minimal damage to rare books. The Ryan Center for Biblical Studies at Union University lost about 10 percent of its holdings when a tornado swept through the Jackson, Tenn., campus last month. The center is located on the top floor of Jennings Hall, which had half its roof ripped off in the tornado. Most of the damage was caused by water, mildew or mold. A nearly 400-year-old Geneva Bible, the oldest book in the library's possession, was untouched since it is kept in a glass case along with three other rare books—an English Hexapla, a Basal New Testament and a copy of the Wycliffe New Testament.

Cartoon

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Cash receipts and disbursements present challenges for churches

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Cash receipts and disbursements present challenges for churches

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

DALLAS—Handling cash presents some of the greatest challenges—and potential problems—for churches in terms of finances, said Roger Hall, retired chief financial officer and treasurer for the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

“The biggest risk involves cash before it gets on the books,” said Hall, who works part-time as business administrator for First Baptist Church in Waxahachie and serves as a consultant with several nonprofit ministries.

See Related Articles:

- [Follow the Money](#)
- Cash receipts and disbursements present challenges for churches

Follow the Money

February 29, 2008

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Follow the Money

Churches' budgets reveal something about priorities - but what?

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

Most observers of congregational life agree—a person can tell a lot about a church by looking at its budget. But exactly what conclusions can be drawn about a church's priorities remains an open question.

"It's a question I've raised with students in my classes for years," said Bill Tillman, who holds the T.B. Maston Chair of Christian Ethics at Hardin-Simmons University's Logsdon Seminary.

"The whole matter of economic and financial stewardship is such a vital part of the practice of the Christian life, whether for an individual, a family or a congregation."

A church's budget reflects its priorities, he noted. How much a church

spends on ministries inside its walls and how much it devotes to ministries beyond itself offers one measure, but Tillman warns against rushing to judgment.

See Related Articles:

- Follow the Money
- [Cash receipts and disbursements present challenges for churches](#)

“What happens always has to be held in tension and viewed in context,” he urged. “For instance, we can’t say a church never should build a new facility. A new building may be what is needed in a particular community.”

2nd Opinion: Sermons, storytelling & novels

February 29, 2008

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2nd Opinion: Sermons, storytelling & novels

Bill Moyers, the ol’ East Texas boy who did good, interviewed novelist John Grisham recently on his PBS program *Bill Moyers’ Journal*. After Grisham talked about his storytelling ability, Moyers asked if he had heard a lot of sermons.

Grisham said he had heard them all, “from the long sermon on Sunday morning to the revivalist, tent crusades ... where the whole town turned up. It was kind of exciting at times and boring at times. But I’ve heard a lot of sermons.”

Then Moyers asked the question seldom asked on national television, “Were you born again?”

“Sure,” Grisham replied, “When I was 8 years old, I felt the call to become a Christian. I felt the need to. I talked to my parents. I talked to my pastor. And I accepted Christ when I was just a little small boy. That was very much a part of growing up.”

Does God protect selected disaster victims but not others?

February 29, 2008

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Students gather
for prayer and
support at Union
University in
Jackson, Tenn.,
after a tornado
tore through
campus. (RNS
photo/Morris
Abernathy/Union
University)

Does God protect selected disaster victims but not others?

By Brittani Hamm & Adelle Banks

Religion News Service

JACKSON, Tenn. (RNS)—As Kristen Fabrizio felt the vibrations preceding the [tornado](#) that ripped across the campus of Union University in Jackson, Tenn., last month, she clung to her friends, who in turn clung to their faith.

“You can definitely see God’s hands if you look at our campus,” said Fabrizio, a history major at the Baptist-affiliated school. “No one’s supposed to be alive.”

DOWN HOME: Coming in 1st place in a dog contest

February 29, 2008

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DOWN HOME: Coming in 1st place in a dog contest

“You’re better company than the dog,” Joanna told me the other night, shortly after I returned home from a three-day trip.

My wife really knows how to dish out the compliments. Jo went on to compare my behavior favorably to the habits of our puppy, Topanga. She listed several canine proclivities I won’t mention in a family newspaper. Thankfully, I’ve never attempted any of them.

Since Jo laughed, then kissed me and hugged me and treated me to a terrific home-cooked dinner, I assume she really enjoys my company.

But contrasting my company with Topanga’s wasn’t exactly high praise. At least not from my wife. She’s had this duty before, when our daughters were toddlers and I traveled and she couldn’t get a moment of privacy, much less peace and quiet, until way after bedtime.