

# **New Baptist Covenant criticism continues to come from both left & right**

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## **New Baptist Covenant criticism continues to come from both left & right**

**By Hannah Elliott**

*Associated Baptist Press*

NEW YORK (ABP)—Although organizers hailed a recent Baptist gathering as a success, some critics have leveled a wide array of charges against the celebration of a New Baptist Covenant.

Critics of the event, held in Atlanta in late January and early February, include conservatives who continue to accuse it of having a thinly veiled liberal political agenda. But they also include moderates and liberals who say the gathering was not inclusive enough of ethnic and sexual minorities.

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[See  
complete  
coverage  
of the  
New  
Baptist  
Coverage  
meeting  
here.](#)

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# Endorsement prompts IRS to investigate California pastor

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## Endorsement prompts IRS to investigate California pastor

**By Robert Marus**

*Associated Baptist Press*

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Outspoken California pastor and former Southern Baptist Convention officer Wiley Drake is being investigated by the Internal Revenue Service.

The candidate for the SBC presidency this year is under scrutiny for using

his church letterhead and church-sponsored radio show last year to endorse Mike Huckabee.

Wiley Drake
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# **San Antonio parenting education program seeks to break cycle of abuse**

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Parent  
education  
facilitator  
Fili Garcia  
shares her  
experiences  
in a  
“Precious  
Minds, New  
Connections”  
class to  
teach  
positive  
parenting  
skills.  
(Photos by  
Craig  
Bird/BCFS)

## **San Antonio parenting education program seeks to break cycle of abuse**

**By Haley Smith**

*Baptist Child & Family Services*

SAN ANTONIO—Through its Precious Minds, New Connections program, Baptist Child & Family Services is trying to break the cycle of child abuse by offering specialized parent-training courses.

According to the Center for Public Policy Priorities, the number of confirmed victims of child abuse in Bexar County was 5,755 in 2006—and

most abusers reportedly were parents or caregivers.

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# Craig Turner to step down as Hardin-Simmons president

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## Craig Turner to step down as Hardin-Simmons president

ABILENE—Craig Turner, [Hardin-Simmons University's](#) 14th president, will resign effective May 31, 2008, to become president of [Catawba College](#), a private liberal arts school in Salisbury, N.C.

“The two most important words in this transition are the names Payton and Madeline—the names of my granddaughters,” Turner said. “This position is an opportunity to be near family, and that’s been the critical factor in this decision.”

Turner was inaugurated Sept. 11, 2001, during the attack on the World Trade Towers and Pentagon, and said he wanted the university to become “the best small Christian university in the Southwest.”

Craig Turner
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During his tenure, Hardin-Simmons exceeded or met his goals to increase endowment, establish an honors program, dedicate resources to community outreach, and improve spirit, pride and ownership of the University by all its constituents. Turner moved HSU into the Top Tier of peer universities.

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## **Scam callers preying on churchesâ€™ compassion**

February 22, 2008

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### **Scam callers preying on churches' compassion**

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

SAN ANTONIO—Scam artists are preying on churches' generosity to extort money from them by describing tense situations in which purported members of the congregations need funds.

Neil Bennett, pastor of Churchill Baptist Church in San Antonio, received a phone call just before a recent Sunday morning service from a man who identified himself as a deputy sheriff in rural West Virginia. The man indicated he was with an African-American family who needed money to repair their car.

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# CLC files ethics complaint against gambling PAC

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## CLC files ethics complaint against gambling PAC

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

AUSTIN—Texas Baptists' public policy agency has filed a complaint with the Texas Ethics Commission against a political action committee of horserace track owners and supporters of video slot machines.

The Baptist General Convention of Texas Christian Life Commission filed the complaint against Texans for Economic Development, alleging the group could be using corporate funds inappropriately to try to influence legislative races.

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# **At Northeast Texas therapeutic ranch, âWe see a miracle just about every dayâ**

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Runnin' WJ  
Ranch horses  
seem to  
imbue their  
riders with  
their  
strength. The  
special-needs  
children  
seem to find  
a reservoir of  
strength and  
confidence  
within  
themselves  
when they  
mount up.

**At Northeast Texas therapeutic ranch,**

# **‘We see a miracle just about every day’**

**By George Henson**

*Staff Writer*

TEXARKANA—It’s easy to lift the spirits of a special-needs child, Sam Clem insists. Just put the child on the back of a horse ready to do his bidding.

Clem directs the Runnin’ WJ Ranch outside Texarkana, a therapeutic riding ranch that draws more than 90 special-needs children a week from Texas, Arkansas and Louisiana. Six schools bring children to participate in the program, which draws support from churches throughout the area.

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## **Rural poverty initiative takes Dallas church to five areas in five years**

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Perry  
County, Ala.,  
families  
picked up  
backpacks  
for their  
children at a  
family  
festival  
sponsored by  
Royal Lane  
Baptist  
Church in  
Dallas.  
(Photos  
courtesy  
Jason  
WalkerCraig)

## **Rural poverty initiative takes Dallas church to five areas in five years**

**By Carla Wynn Davis**

*Cooperative Baptist Fellowship*

DALLAS—The more than 1,200 backpacks stuffed with school supplies that Royal Lane Baptist Church in Dallas gave away last summer wasn't the only impressive statistic about its mission trip to Perry County, Ala.

The Alabama trip capped a five-year tour of all five regions focused on by Together for Hope, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's rural poverty

initiative.

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# **BaptistWay Bible Series for March 2: Unveiling the weakness of a king**

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**BaptistWay Bible Series for March 2**

## **Unveiling the weakness of a king**

• 1 Kings 2:10-12; 3:1-15

**[By Kenneth Jordan](#)**

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## **Explore the Bible Series for March 2: Responding to God in**

# faith

February 22, 2008

Posted: 2/20/08

**Explore the Bible Series for March 2**

## Responding to God in faith

- Genesis 28:1-5, 11-22

**By Donald Raney**

*First Baptist Church, Petersburg*

We see them everywhere and if we are honest, we would have to admit we have been one of them at times. They are individuals who claim to be believers but show little evidence outside the walls of the church.

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## Persistence pays off for ETBU graduate

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Tyler television  
reporter Clay  
Falls interviews  
East Texas  
Baptist  
University  
graduate June  
Jones after fall  
commencement.  
Jones, who has  
been at ETBU  
as an employee  
11 years and as  
a student nearly  
10 years,  
graduated with  
a bachelor of  
music degree.  
(ETBU/Mike  
Midkiff photos)

## **Persistence pays off for ETBU graduate**

**By Mike Midkiff**

*East Texas Baptist University*

MARSHALL—For June Jones, “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again” is more than an old adage. The saying has been a guiding light to her.

More than three decades after her high school graduation, Jones finally

reached her goal of earning a bachelor's degree. And she did it in style. After nearly 10 years attending classes, she graduated with honors in the top 20 percent of her class at East Texas Baptist University.

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# **RIGHT or WRONG? Preventing scandal**

February 22, 2008

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## **RIGHT or WRONG? Preventing scandal**

**So many current and former pastors and other church staff people have been in the news lately involved in sexual and financial scandals. What kind of background checks can a search committee legitimately implement to attempt to keep these kinds of scandals at a minimum?**