

Inmates at Mexican women's prison find escape in music

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A group of prison inmates pose for a picture with their instruments.

These women have taken classes from Jorge Quezada, a member of Iglesia Bautista Horeb.
(Photos by Jorge Quezada/Buckner)

Inmates at Mexican women's prison find escape in music

By Analiz González

Buckner International

MEXICO CITY— The windows at Santa Marta Prison face in, so the inmates can never look out to see the surrounding peaks, which rise around the prison at night like solid beacons of hope. All they ever see is gray—walls, floors, ceilings.

Delia Ramirez is 19, but could pass for 14. She was assaulted by a man who tried to rape her. So she killed him. Now she sits in prison with a khaki uniform, which means she's still awaiting trial. She is a child among women.

Atlanta meeting may prompt real change, some Baptists insist

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Atlanta meeting may prompt real change, some Baptists insist

By Hannah Elliott

Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA (ABP)—The [Celebration of a New Baptist Covenant](#) meeting will feature some big-name guests—Bill Clinton, Jimmy Carter, Al Gore, Tony Campolo and John Grisham, to name a few. But after the star-studded dust settles, what will emerge from the convocation?

Some say it's too soon to tell what exactly will come of the gathering, scheduled Jan. 30-Feb. 1 in Atlanta. Organizers hope it will improve

Baptists' image and unite them in a new wave of social activism. Others wonder whether it will lead denominational bodies to work closer together or urge grassroots entities to band together—or both.

• [See latest photos](#) and the latest [video clips](#) from the New Baptist Covenant Meeting. [\(And go here to see our complete coverage of the event\).](#)

Unity the focus of New Baptist

Covenant gathering, organizers insist

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Unity the focus of New Baptist Covenant gathering, organizers insist

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

ATLANTA—If a spirit of unity prevails at the Celebration of a New Baptist Covenant, organizers of the historic interracial meeting said they will consider the gathering a success.

And participants in the event will remain focused on the biblical mandate to show compassion and care for the needy, not become distracted by partisan politics “if we can prevent it,” former President Jimmy Carter added.

Jimmy Carter

Baptist unity takes center stage as New Covenant meeting opens

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A choir
sings at the
opening of
the
Celebration
of a New
Baptist
Covenant
meeting in
Atlanta,
Ga. (Photo
by Billy
Howard)

Baptist unity takes center stage as New Covenant meeting opens

By Marv Knox & Greg Warner

Baptist Standard & Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA—Baptist unity took center stage during the opening night of the New Baptist Covenant convocation in Atlanta Jan. 30.

About 10,000 African-American, Anglo, Asian-American and Hispanic Baptists gathered at the urging of former President Jimmy Carter and Mercer University President Bill Underwood.



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([And go here to see our complete coverage of the event](#)).

Campolo asks Baptists, “Which Jesus should we preach?”

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Campolo asks Baptists, “Which Jesus should we preach?”

By Jim White and Robert Dilday

Virginia Religious Herald

ATLANTA—Author Tony Campolo challenged Baptists from across North America to examine which Jesus they preach—the one who incarnates American values or the one who incarnates God.

Campolo, professor emeritus at Eastern University near Philadelphia, and children’s advocate Marian Wright Edleman headlined a Jan. 31 morning plenary session at the New Baptist Covenant convocation. The session explored the devastating effects of poverty in America and around the world.

“We’ve got to get our values straightened out,” Campolo said.

Tony Campolo

Christians called to tear down walls, not build them, South

Texas pastor says

February 4, 2008

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‘Incarnation’ is key for Baptists engaging policy, speakers stress

By Robert Marus

Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA (ABP)—Christians should become involved in transforming public policy, a diverse group of Baptists heard Jan. 31, because Christ first set the example by transforming the world and bidding Christians to follow.

“God believed in incarnation so much that he hasn’t given up on it yet,” said Suzii Paynter, director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas Christian Life Commission. “It didn’t end with Jesus. It continues.”



Paynter and two other Baptists engaged in social advocacy spoke in Atlanta on the subject of faith and public policy at one of a host of breakout sessions during the Celebration of a New Baptist Covenant meeting Jan. 31.

Individual, church response crucial to alleviating poverty

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Individual, church response crucial to alleviating poverty

By Carla Wynn Davis

CBF Communications

ATLANTA—Breaking the cycle of poverty begins with taking seriously the Bible, people in need and the church's call to respond. And speakers reminded participants at a Baptist gathering that addressing poverty isn't optional for Christians and churches who are serious about following Christ.

These ideas, along with motives and models for alleviating poverty, were explored by panelists Jan. 31 during the "Breaking Cycles of Poverty" special interest session at the Celebration of a New Baptist Covenant in Atlanta.

"I have begun to wonder whether we can follow Jesus without addressing poverty," said Tom Prevost, who works with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's rural poverty initiative in 20 of the poorest U.S. counties. "I'm not even sure it is possible."

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“Incarnation” is key for Baptists engaging policy, speakers stress

February 4, 2008

Posted: 1/31/08

Christians called to tear down walls, not build them, South Texas pastor says

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

ATLANTA—Christ came to tear down walls that divide people, a South Texas pastor told Baptists at a prophetic preaching conference. So, he asked, can Christians find any real security in a fence built along an “imaginary line” to separate two nations?

“Jesus didn’t come to build walls. He didn’t come to build fences. He came to tear them down,” said Ellis Orozco, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in McAllen.

Silence, shame and stigma—the unholy trinity of AIDS

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Silence, shame and stigma— the unholy trinity of AIDS

Tony W. Cartledge

Baptists Today

ATLANTA—Churches must recognize the spread of HIV/AIDS as a justice issue and overcome pervasive stigmas about the disease if they are to live out the gospel in their communities, panelists told Baptists in Atlanta.

The issue is plagued by “an unholy trinity of silence, shame and stigma,” said Raphael Warnock, pastor of the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. Warnock was among the panelists who participated in a special interest session on “The HIV/AIDS Pandemic” during the New Baptist Covenant celebration Jan. 31.

Baptists called to combat ignorance about religious liberty

February 4, 2008

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Baptists called to combat ignorance about religious liberty

By Jeff Huett

Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty

ATLANTA—In an increasingly pluralistic culture, ensuring religious freedom for all requires more education about religion, further understanding about the proper relationship between church and state, and an emphasis on the historic Baptist principle of religious liberty, said a panel at the New Baptist Covenant Celebration.

Cheryl Townsend-Gilkes, professor of Sociology and African-American Studies at Colby College in Waterville, Me., suggested that the very definition of religious liberty in America “fosters and sustains tremendous religious and cultural diversity.” However, she warned, “the tremendous religious and cultural diversity sometimes challenges our commitment to the separation of church and state.”

North American Baptist plan to work together on disaster relief

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North American Baptist plan to work together on disaster relief

By Steve DeVane

Biblical Recorder

ATLANTA—The 30 Baptist organizations in the North American Baptist Fellowship plan to form a network to coordinate disaster relief efforts.

Terry Raines, disaster relief coordinator for the Baptist General Association of Virginia, announced the initiative Jan. 31. He made the announcement during a special interest session on responding to natural disasters that was part of the Celebration of a New Baptist Covenant.

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Gore Urges New Covenant Baptists to Take Up Mantle of Creation Care

February 4, 2008

Posted: 2/01/08

Gore Urges New Covenant Baptists to Take Up Mantle of Creation Care

Bob Allen

Baptist Center for Ethics

ATLANTA—Former Vice President Al Gore challenged 2,500 fellow Baptists at a Thursday luncheon with prophetic zeal to take up the mantle of reversing global warming.

Speaking to a luncheon crowd at this week's New Baptist Covenant Celebration, Gore recalled words of an old Sunday school teacher who taught the purpose of life is to glorify God.

Former Vice President Al Gore speaking at the New Baptist Covenant meeting in Atlanta, Ga.
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