

Bible Studies for Life Series for Sept. 16: Facing the fiery furnace

September 6, 2007

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Facing the fiery furnace

• Daniel 3:1-2,4-6,8,12-14,16-18,24-26a,28

[By Steve Dominy](#)

Campus minister shared story of Jesus, kept his own wartime story to himself

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Donnal Timmons served as Baptist Student Union director at the Texas College of Arts and Industries—now Texas A&M University-Kingsville—from 1949 to 1961.

Campus minister shared story of Jesus, kept his own wartime story to himself

Retired Baptist Student Union Director Donnal Timmons described his experiences as a World War II prisoner of war in vivid detail to his family and a few close friends.

Sixty captive soldiers were crammed into a single boxcar after marching days without food. Using a Gideon Bible, Timmons shared the New Testament plan of salvation with another frightened GI. His attempt at personal evangelism was interrupted by bullets that pierced the railway car and splinters that flew everywhere when fighter planes strafed the train.



At a
reunion
in Irving,
Donnal
Timmons
accepts
a crystal
'praying
hands'
award
from
former
students
whose
lives he
touched
during
his
service
as a
Baptist
Student
Union
director.

Timmons' select audience was mesmerized by his stories. But former college students who knew Timmons five decades earlier as their spiritual mentor were surprised to learn about his wartime trauma, which they learned about only in the last few years.

He served as Baptist Student Union director at the Texas College of Arts and Industries—now Texas A&M University-Kingsville—from 1949 to 1961.

James Kennedy, elder statesman of Religious Right, dead at 76

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James Kennedy, elder statesman of Religious Right, dead at 76

By Robert Marus

Associated Baptist Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (ABP)—Presbyterian minister James Kennedy died Sept. 5, little more than a week after he retired from the pulpit that helped him launch both evangelistic and political ministries.

Kennedy, who was 76, had served for nearly half a century as pastor of [Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.](#) But he was also one of the pioneers of television ministry, a seminary founder and the head of an activist empire devoted to what he believed was the restoration of the United States as a “Christian nation.”

James Kennedy

Missionaries from Texas ride out Hurricane Felix

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Missionaries from Texas ride out Hurricane Felix

By Ferrell Foster

Texas Baptist Communications

PUERTO CABEZAS, Nicaragua— Southern Baptist missionaries Jim and Viola Palmer of Athens and a team of volunteers from a Florida church rode out the brunt of Hurricane Felix Tuesday morning in Puerto Cabezas, a port city of about 25,000 in Nicaragua.

“We got smacked pretty hard,” said Jim Palmer. But most of their house and the Baptist churches in Puerto Cabezas survived the storm.

Bivocational church leader Ray plans to retire this fall

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Bivocational church leader Ray plans to retire this fall

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

DALLAS—Baptist General Convention of Texas bivocational/small church affinity group director Bob Ray will retire this fall.

Ray, who helped start the Bivocational/Smaller Membership Ministers and Spouses Association in 1993, will retire some time this fall and move to Fairy, where he has served Fairy Baptist Church more than 40 years as pastor. He will be the first congregation's first pastor to live in Fairy in the church's 125-year history.

TBM volunteers respond to

Minnesota floods

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TBM volunteers respond to Minnesota floods

WINONA, Minn.—Texas Baptist Men volunteers are in Minnesota helping with clean-out efforts following severe flooding—and more are on the way, according to Ernie Rice of First Baptist Church in Stockdale.

Eight Texans were on the ground in Winona Sept. 4 by early afternoon, and six more were scheduled to arrive later in the day, said Rice, the coordinator for the TBM disaster relief effort. Thirty-five Texans were expected by the end of the week.

The Texans and volunteers from 10 other state Baptist convention were called out by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board Sept. 1. The Texans were led by Gambrell Association, and Second Baptist Church of LaGrange cleanout units responded.

Southeastern Minnesota was flooded Aug. 18-19, with 15 inches of rain following in four hours in Winona, Rice said. The area has been declared a federal disaster area.

Combined youth choirs âconvergeâ on San Marcos

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Youth
choirs
from
Tallowood
Baptist
Church in
Houston,
South
Main
Baptist
Church in
Pasadena,
First
Baptist
Church in
Abilene,
Central
Baptist
Church in
Marshall,
First
Baptist
Church in
Valley
Mills and
First
Baptist
Church in
San
Marcos
gathered
for
Converge
'07.

Combined youth choirs 'converge' on San Marcos

By George Henson

Staff Writer

SAN MARCOS—Youth choirs from six churches around Texas met in San Marcos to sound a note for unity.

Converge '07 involved more than 150 teenagers from Tallowood Baptist Church in Houston, South Main Baptist Church in Pasadena, First Baptist Church in Abilene, Central Baptist Church in Marshall, First Baptist Church in Valley Mills and the host church, First Baptist Church in San Marcos.

EDITORIAL: We can bridge the chasm of race

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EDITORIAL: We can bridge the chasm of race

Every parent eventually encounters moments that send a clear signal: Your children are growing up in a world far removed from the little sphere of

your childhood.

One of those transcendental times occurred when Lindsay and Molly, our daughters, were young—kindergarten- or early elementary-school age. Joanna and I sat in the school cafeteria as the principal read off the names of students who earned special recognition. I tried not to doze so I wouldn't miss my own daughter's name as she droned through the list of typical names of kids their age: Caitlin, Katy, Sara, Courtney, Dustin, Justin, Michael, Mohammad.



Mohammad? Now, there's a name never mentioned when roll was called in the schoolrooms of my youth. Sure enough, a beautiful child with jet-black hair, olive skin and deep-brown eyes walked up to receive his certificate. He bore the look, and his parents spoke the soft accent, of a place far, far away.

That was the first of our family's innumerable experiences with our public school systems' amazing multi-culturalism. Through the years, our girls made friends with children whose families originated on six continents. They were called by a symphony of names, most of which I no longer can spell, that always sounded exotic and melodic, especially when pronounced by their parents.

For 10 years, Christian

Women's Job Corps has been changing lives

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For 10 years, Christian Women's Job Corps has been changing lives

By Jessica Dooley

Communications Intern

Supporting a family can be hard when a person is unemployed, but it can be even harder to find the skills necessary for a decent-paying job. And without money to receive higher education or specialized training, learning those skills becomes almost impossible.

But [Christian Women's Job Corps](#) and Christian Men's Job Corps, make the process easier—teaching not only job skills, but also life skills in a Christian context.

Baptists active on both sides in

the Little Rock integration battle

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Elizabeth Eckford, one of the Little Rock Nine, is pursued by a mob outside Little Rock's Central High School. (UPI Photo/Library of Congress)
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Baptists active on both sides in the Little Rock integration battle

By Robert Marus

Associated Baptist Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (ABP)—The story of Lakeshore Drive Baptist Church in Little Rock, Ark., encapsulates the little-recounted role that white Baptists played during the Civil Rights Movement—on both sides.

The church owes its existence to the 1957-59 struggle to integrate Little

Rock Central High School, when pro-integration members were kicked out of another congregation pastored by an outspoken segregationist. Dignitaries will gather in Little Rock Sept. 25 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Central High's desegregation.

Aging minister recalls price paid for recognizing God's image in all people

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Aging minister recalls price paid for recognizing God's image in all people

By Bill Webb

Word & Way

CHILLICOTHE, Mo.—When Norman Shands made a vow to God 65 years ago, he couldn't have imagined that it would thrust him into the center of the Civil Rights Movement in Atlanta.

The vow—that he would view and treat every person as someone created in the image of God—contradicted the south Georgia native's upbringing.

Bob Shands wrote a book in 2006 titled *In My Father's House: Lessons Learned in the Home of a Civil Rights Volunteer*. It chronicles his father's contributions bridging racial barriers and the impact those times had on him as a youngster.

TOGETHER:

Relevant

denominations have a future

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TOGETHER:

Relevant denominations have a future

Many observers today raise serious questions about the future of denominations. Years ago, Baptists themselves were critical of denominations because they were so focused on autonomy of the local church that the idea of anything more than an association of churches seemed too cumbersome and restrictive. We began to work together, slowly and painfully, because of the birth of the modern missionary movement. William Carey went from England to India in 1793 under the conviction that God had called him to go preach and teach the gospel of Christ, and he depended on the churches for support. In the early 19th century, Luther Rice traveled on horseback up and down the Atlantic coast to raise support for missionaries Adoniram and Ann Judson. This awakened Baptists to the cause of missions. They began to see the need for cooperation in supporting the Judsons and calling out more missionaries.



The Triennial Baptist Convention was the earliest attempt to bring Baptists

together in a national body. But by 1845, this fragile cooperation ended when the Southern Baptist Convention was formed in Augusta, Ga. State conventions of Baptists began to develop to support missionaries, colleges, church planting, ministry to orphan children and other needs. And, in 1848, the first Texas state convention of Baptist churches was formed.

Through the years, denominations have provided an identity around valued biblical principles, common history and the opportunity for involvement in a network of sister congregations. They also encourage the flow of influence. The churches influence one another and the denomination, and the denomination influences the local churches and helps the influence of the local church to have broader impact.

The idea that we are moving into a “post-denominational” age is not so frightening to Texas Baptists as it might be to others. Lyle Schaller, who has worked with churches of all denominations as a pioneer church consultant, said only the denominations that figure out how to start new churches, train and equip effective leaders, and work together to meet human needs are going to survive. That, of course, is what the BGCT has been about since the beginning. But we do face enormous challenges because many of our churches have neglected to keep fully informed about the missions, evangelism, education and benevolent ministries of the BGCT. You can go to our website— www.bgct.org—and see for yourself the ways you are making a difference in people’s lives for Christ every week with the offerings you give through the BGCT Cooperative Program.