

Former SBC missions leader Tanner dead at 77

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BELTON (ABP)—William Tanner, former head of home missions for the Southern Baptist Convention, died June 10 in Belton at age 77.

Tanner was president of the SBC Home Mission Board from 1976 to 1986.

Under his leadership, the mission board began the Mission Service Corps volunteer missionary program , increased its emphasis on language missions, and strengthened partnerships between the agency and state Baptist convention partners.

Geoff Hammond, president of the North American Mission Board, expressed his gratitude for the legacy Tanner left for the home mission field.

Calvinist churches targeted by

Florida Baptist Convention

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Calvinist churches targeted by Florida Baptist Convention

By Greg Warner

Associated Baptist Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (ABP)—Some Florida Baptists insist the Florida Baptist Convention is intimidating and demonizing churches that believe in Calvinism—and doing it with money contributed by the churches.

Convention executive director John Sullivan recently sent recordings of sermons by Sullivan's former pastor Jerry Vines to every church in the state, apparently at convention expense, that identify Calvinism as a threat to Baptist life.

**WMU joins directors of
missions as associations**

celebrate 300 years

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Russell Cook (left), director of missions for Pottawatomie-Lincoln Baptist Association in Oklahoma, was elected president of the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Directors of Missions at that organization's annual meeting June 10-11 in San Antonio. Wesley Pitts, DOM of Long Run Baptist Association in Kentucky, will serve as first vice president.

Ron Davis (not pictured) of Greenville Baptist Association, Greenville, South Carolina, was elected second vice president.

Tampa Bay Baptist Association DOM Tom Biles (right) will serve on the SBCADOM executive committee for 2007-08 as immediate past president.

WMU joins directors of missions as associations celebrate 300 years

By Vicki Brown

Special Assignment

SAN ANTONIO—Unless associational leaders pray for and work with their churches, they run the risk of becoming “as obsolete as a horse and buggy in a NASCAR world,” Jim Henry of Orlando, Fla., admonished Southern Baptist directors of missions.

Henry, a former Southern Baptist Convention president and pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church in Orlando, was the featured speaker as the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Directors of Missions celebrated 300 years of associational work in the United States June 10.

Cybercolumn by Berry D. Simpson: Drinking coffee

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CYBER COLUMN:

Drinking coffee

By Berry D. Simpson

Every morning when I get to my office, I go through the same routine: I turn on my computer and enter the password so it can run through the boot-up process. Then I walk down the hall to the breakroom coffee maker, move the half-filled pot of regular coffee up to the second warmer and start brewing a pot of decaf . While I wait for the pot to fill, I stand around and crack some jokes or talk about books or movies or theology and then fill my black coffee mug (black mugs don't have to be washed as often as other colors; in fact, maybe they never have to be washed) and go back to my office and enjoy my coffee and read my morning e-mails.

Berry D. Simpson

The first cup of coffee is the best cup of my day. I never stop for coffee on the way to the office, and if I go somewhere for breakfast, I usually drink a Diet Coke. I don't drink a lot of coffee—at most about three cups in a given morning. I seldom drink coffee in the afternoons unless it is very cold outside. I don't drink much coffee at home, since Cyndi doesn't drink it even though she often offers to make it for me.

Around the State

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The 2007 Young Maston Scholars were named as a part of the T.B. Maston Christian Ethics Lectures held at Hardin-Simmons University's Logsdon Theological Seminary.

Scholars and presenters pictured are (front row, left to right) Tommy Brisco, dean of Logsdon Seminary; Taryn Nash, Houston Baptist University; Leslie Strickland, Hardin-Simmons University; Bill Tillman, Maston Professor of Christian Ethics; and Allen Verhey, professor of Christian ethics at Duke University and guest lecturer. Second row, Josh Gibb, HBU; Ryan Saenz, HSU; Chris Talleri, East Texas Baptist University; Chris Bertolino, University of Mary Hardin-Baylor; and Andrea Dale Huffman, Howard Payne University. Third row, Katherine Schnell, Baylor University; and Austin Fischer, UMHB. Fourth row, Gary Price, ETBU; Galan Hughes, Baylor; and Andy O'Quinn, HPU.

Around the State

- **Rob Nash**, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship global missions coordinator, will be the featured speaker at the Truett Theological Seminary luncheon scheduled during the CBF general assembly in Washington, D.C. The luncheon will be held from 12:15 p.m. to 1:45 p.m. Friday, June 29, at the Grand Hyatt, Constitution Ballroom C/D. Reservations are required, and the cost is \$50. For more information, call (318) 442-7773.
- **Four students received doctor of ministry degrees** at Baylor University's Truett Theological Seminary spring commencement ceremony. Receiving doctorates were Angela Bryant of Picayune, Miss., Charles Chu of Austin, Dean Meade of Victoria and James Palmer Jr. of Marshall. Three students also earned master of theological studies degrees, and there were 40 master of divinity graduates.
- **Four Howard Payne University students** have been selected to receive the Hatton W. Sumners Foundation scholarship in the Douglas MacArthur Academy of Freedom Honors Program. The recipients, all juniors, are Emily Gore of Grand Prairie, Jennifer Middleton of Katy, Jordan Humphreys of Arlington and Tricia Rosetty of Houston. The scholarship provides \$9,000 a year for two years.



A team from First Church in Georgetown travelled to Brazil and ministered in a variety of ways, including bestowing bags of small gifts and toiletries to children involved in an after-school ministry called Projecto Vida in Novo Hamburgo. This young boy was so excited, he immediately took his bag to his mother to show off his treasures. The team also participated in house-church meetings and assisted three missionary couples in reaching out to the German Brazilian people living in the area.

- **Dallas Baptist University** honored Jeannette Sadler and the Methodist Health System with its Good Samaritan Award at its annual partnership dinner. Sadler has been a member of Cliff Temple Church in Dallas 80 years and recently began work with Buckner International and the church to fund a community outreach center that will bear her and her late husband's names. She also has served DBU as a member of the board of trustees and a financial donor. Methodist Health Systems was recognized for more than 80 years of meeting the health needs of North Texans.

What to do if a minister is accused of sexual misconduct

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What to do if a minister is accused of sexual misconduct

By Jim White

Virginia Religious Herald

Most pastors and staff members are aware that ministry sometimes puts them in unique circumstances with all kinds of people. Most also are aware that a rumor of wrongdoing often is enough to end an otherwise fruitful ministry. For this reason, wisdom requires taking precautions to protect one's reputation and ministry.

Occasionally, however, the unthinkable will occur. Someone will accuse a minister of sexual misconduct. Because church members are trusting people, and because such allegations are rare, most never have considered what they would do if such charges were made against one of their ministers.

See Related Articles:

- [The recycle of clergy abuse](#)
 - What to do if a minister is accused of sexual misconduct
 - [Breaking the cycle](#)
 - [Stepping over the line: Should sexually straying clergy be restored to ministry?](#)
 - [Sexual predators often fly under the radar at church](#)
 - [Sex-abuse victims speak up to help others & find healing themselves](#)
 - [Ministers not immune from sexual addiction](#)
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Breaking the cycle

June 13, 2007

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Breaking the cycle

How can churches escape the trap of recycling sex abusers?

By Greg Warner

Associated Baptist Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.(ABP)—What can churches do to prevent clergy sex abuse and break the pattern of recycling abusers? Even among activists and experts, there is no consensus—and sometimes loud disagreement—about the steps to be taken.

Stepping over the line: Should sexually straying clergy be restored to ministry?

June 13, 2007

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Stepping over the line: Should sexually straying clergy be restored to ministry?

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

DALLAS—Some Baptists consider sexual misconduct by clergy the unpardonable sin when it comes to hiring church staff, and many survivors of abuse agree. But others say it depends on which scarlet letter the minister wears—“W” for “wanderer” or a “P” for “predator.”

Ethicist Joe Trull accepts the distinction between wanderers and predators. He explained the difference between the two types of offenders in a book he and James Carter, former director of church-minister relations with the Louisiana Baptist Convention, wrote on ministerial ethics.

Sexual predators often fly under the radar at church

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Sexual predators often fly under the radar at church

By Hannah Elliott

Associated Baptist Press

EW YORK (ABP)—Most people think they can spot a sexual predator. He's the pale loner with greasy hair and quivering lips or the grinning lech who hugs too long and slowly rubs the backs of female co-workers—or church members.

Could be. But for every overt pervert, there are plenty more who go unnoticed—and unsuspected.

Predators gravitate to vulnerable people. They move into places where they are the highest authority and where that authority remains unquestioned. In some cases, that place is the local church.

Experts say there is no standard profile of a predator, no personality trait or background history that would link them in one group. Rather, predators have similar behavior patterns and desires, no matter whom they victimize. Pastors who have affairs, for instance, are much different from those who molest children. The former are morally wrong but usually not criminals. The latter are both.

Some experts insist philandering men typically fall into two categories. The “wanderer” gets emotionally involved with a woman, crosses boundaries, gives in to temptation and regrets it later. The “predator” actively looks for vulnerable women, takes advantage of them and moves on to other victims.

Whether with a vulnerable woman or a naïve child, however, the abuser always breaks a bond of trust. And while there's no unique predator profile,

in the end, they're all the same— abusers rarely offend once, whether or not they planned the event and whether or not they regret it.

“We have this feeling that we could pick out a child molester in the crowd, but they look like your average, normal, trustworthy person. Sometimes they look more-than-average trustworthy,” Dave Mallinak, pastor of Berean Baptist Church of Ogden, Utah, said. “Another thing is we have this conceit that we could pick out a liar from a crowd—that I would know if someone is lying to me.”

Mallinak should know. He is working on a book for pastors counseling sex-abuse victims and has spent years tracking a former pastor whom he said molests teens in local churches before church leaders find out and fire him. Mallinak recently outed the accused pastor on his blog, sharperirony.blogspot.com.

The naiveté of people who think they can discern a liar coupled with the trust people give to pastors can be a dangerous combination, Mallinak said.

“They become good liars,” he said. “Of course, we naturally want to trust our pastor and believe him, but once they’ve crossed that line, telling a lie is certainly not a hard thing.”

Gregory Sporer, an author and founder of Keeping Kids Safe Ministries, has spent almost 20 years counseling both abusers and the abused.

Staff or church member sex-offenders have two weaknesses, he said. The “give-away categories of behaviors” are boundary violations and generally suspicious behaviors. Most church offenders have months of boundary violations, or “grooming,” prior to the first sexual offense. They’ll choose children who seem emotionally vulnerable and gain their trust with seemingly innocuous contact. For most, he said, it’s a gradual spiral down from there.

“Pastor sex-offenders are not mentally ill, and they rarely have a criminal history,” Sporer said. “Christian men and women do not become sex-offenders overnight. For many, it starts with porn or an emotional bond with a teen or child, and over a period of time, a secret sexual sin with the teen or child emerges.”

Many predators start out as men or women addicted to porn or inappropriately attached to specific children, Sporer said. And according to Sexual Abuse, a Journal of Research and Treatment, church attendance and religious practices in sexual offenders is positively related to the number of their victims and the number of their sexual offense convictions.

Sporer said in his 35,000 hours of sex-abuse counseling, he has seen that dynamic multiple times.

“Some use adult porn, which may lead to teen porn,” he said. “Eventually, the porn doesn’t meet their sexual needs, and they look for teens or kids. Some pastors ... develop emotional attachments to kids. Eventually the emotional attachments become sexual, and a child is molested.”

The cycle of pornography leading to abuse grows darker and deeper on a gradual basis, Sporer said, noting many offenders reported hating sex offenders before they became one.

What’s more, many predators report that after each offense, they would go weeks avoiding their victims, have intense self-loathing, increase Bible reading and beg God to “take their sin away” so they don’t go to jail.

And contrary to popular opinion, many sexual abusers were not themselves abused.

In the 1980s, Sporer said, several reports claimed most sex offenders were molested as children. It was used as an excuse for the chain of abuse, he said, but times have changed since then, especially with increased use of

the polygraph test.

“Offenders thought they gained more sympathy if they lied about being molested as a child,” Sporer said. “There are some offenders with a history of being molested as a child, but it is not as significant a number as once thought.”

What is significant is that all clergy predators seem to desperately need what they abuse their position to get—power, pleasure, admiration and autonomy.

Mallinak, who became outraged when he saw a former pastor grope teen girls, said the pastor was obviously taken with the pursuit of pleasure and idle amusement. He also loved to be admired, Mallinak said.

“There was something intoxicating about the adoring eyes of his followers,” Mallinak said, adding that even he looked up to the pastor as a hero. Sadly, Mallinak later wrote on his blog, the pursuit of admiration “is like a tapeworm. It is always eating and never filled. A man who craves admiration, no matter how much he gets, will never be satisfied.”

The root of that commonality is sin, Mallinak tells his congregants. It’s not a “fundamentalist” problem or an organizational problem, he said. “It comes from (the predator’s) own flesh.”

Even though the cause of the abuse comes from within, historic Baptist autonomy can be a problem in tracking predators, experts agree. For Mallinak’s Utah congregation, which is an Independent Baptist church, “ultra-autonomy” is something of which to be proud. Predators take advantage of that, he said.

That tension between Baptist autonomy and accountability is one factor in learning to profile predators. Another is the question of whether predators can be rehabilitated.

Mallinak said all predators should spend the rest of their life in jail or “something more severe than that.” In his opinion, predators must never be allowed back in the pulpit in any capacity, since they have “violated a trust and are incurable.”

“Repentance—genuine repentance as opposed to the kind that demands that everybody forgive me right now—would involve a confession that what he did has limited his future,” Mallinak said. “In other words, if he really repented, then he would never seek another pulpit.”

Sporer, on the other hand, has called the idea that sex offenders do not change a “myth.” According to him, many of the 550,000 registered sex offenders in the United States attend church. Most of the church-attenders claim to be Christians with a strong desire to serve Christ, and most offenders who have been convicted and are registered are successful at not re-offending, according to a 2001 report by the Center for Sex Offender Management. The report said the average sex-offence recidivism rate, defined as re-arrest or reconviction, was 12 percent for child molesters over a five-year period.

Mallinak tells embittered victims that clergy predators are counterfeits who stand in the place of a real pastoral shepherd.

“When a pastor violates their trust ... I think we have to remember that this is why we need Jesus Christ. This is exactly the reason. We have to rest on his grace and rely on that,” he said. “If it weren’t for the grace of God, none of us would make it.”

Sex-abuse victims speak up to help others and find healing themselves

June 13, 2007

Are atheists now becoming the new fundamentalists?

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Are atheists now becoming the new fundamentalists?

By Benedicta Cipolla

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Despite its minority status, atheism has enjoyed the spotlight recently, with several books that feature vehement arguments against religion topping bestseller lists.

But now even some secular humanists are saying they should embrace more than the strident rhetoric poured out in books like [Richard Dawkins'](#) *The God Delusion* and [Sam Harris'](#) *The End of Faith* and *Letter to a*

Christian Nation.

East Texas cousins keep Bible Drill competition all in the family

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Cousins
Tanner
Shirley and
Jessie Price,
both from
First Baptist
Church in
Atlanta, were
scheduled to
compete at
the National
Bible Drill
competition
in North
Carolina June
8. Shirley, a
sophomore,
won the
Texas Bible
Drill senior
high
competition,
and Price, an
eighth
grader, won
the Texas
junior high
Bible Drill
division.
(Photo by
Ferrell
Foster/BGCT
)

East Texas cousins keep Bible Drill competition all in the family

By Barbara Bedrick

Texas Baptist Communications

ATLANTA—A family legacy took two East Texas teenagers to the national stage.

Fulfilling a commitment they made to their great-grandmother, cousins Tanner Shirley and Jessie Price from First Baptist Church in Atlanta advanced to the national round of Bible Drill competition in North Carolina June 8.