

Book Reviews

June 8, 2007

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Book Reviews

The AIDS Crisis *By Deborah Dortzbach and W. Meredith Long*
(InterVarsity Press)

Baptist churches in Texas, as elsewhere, are becoming more open in talking about AIDS. Twenty years ago, we discovered how the virus is spread. But we haven't yet discovered a cure. Worldwide, 8,000 people are dying every day. By 2010, it is estimated, 25 million children will have been orphaned.

How will we respond? The authors, working with World Relief, are experienced in the attempt. They tell stories about victims in Africa and Asia, and these people do not seem far away. Then they encourage American Christians to get proactive in our own communities, locking arms with any organization concerned with ministry to AIDS victims.

Off the Bookshelf
What's everyone reading anyway?

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

Abstinence from sexual relations before marriage is championed. Yet the book faces the fact that education must go further. "Our youth have to know now. Our strategies in youth groups and our instructions in homes and churches need to be fresh and relevant."

Baptist Briefs

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N.C. colleges may elect trustees, lose funding. Five colleges affiliated with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina would be able to elect their own trustees under a plan adopted by the convention's board of directors, but the schools will lose the convention's direct financial support. The plan, which would be phased in over four years, is intended to avoid a showdown over how much control the Baptist convention should have over the schools—Campbell University, Chowan University, Gardner-Webb University, Mars Hill College and Wingate University. The board overwhelmingly approved the proposal from the state convention's council on Christian higher education. To become policy, messengers to the Baptist State Convention must approve it two consecutive years.

N.C. state paper set to elect editor. Norman Jameson has been recommended as the new editor of the Biblical Recorder, the North Carolina Baptist state newspaper. The paper's board of directors was

expected to vote June 7. Jameson, executive leader for public relations for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, would succeed Tony Cartledge, 55, who has announced plans to become a professor at Campbell University Divinity School in Buies Creek, N.C. Cartledge will remain editor through July 31. Jameson, 54, graduated from Oklahoma Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He worked for the Colorado Springs Gazette Telegraph, was feature editor of Baptist Press, associate editor of the Oklahoma Baptist Messenger and communications director for Baptist Children's Home in North Carolina before joining the North Carolina state convention staff. Jameson and his wife, Sue Ellen, have three adult children and are members of Hayes Barton Baptist Church in Raleigh, N.C.

Kentucky paper names news director. Drew Nichter, an associate director and news producer for a television station in Louisville, Ky., has been named news director of the Western Recorder, the Kentucky Baptist newspaper. Nichter, 30, succeeds David Winfrey, who resigned after 10 years to accept a position as a marketing strategist. He is a graduate of Indiana University Southeast, where he was assistant editor of the university's campus newspaper.

Asian Federation changes name. At the recent Asian Baptist Federation Congress in Chiang Mai, Thailand, the group voted to change its name to the Asia Pacific Baptist Federation. Officials said the new name more accurately reflects the composition of the regional body, which includes countries in the South Pacific such as Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Australia and New Zealand. The federation consists of 60 conventions and unions in 20 countries with about 30,000 churches that claim more than 5 million members.

Princeton Review recognizes Mercer. The *Princeton Review* has named Mercer University in Georgia one of the nation's best value undergraduate institutions. Mercer is featured in the 2008 edition of America's Best Value

Colleges. The guide profiles 165 colleges chosen for their excellent academics, generous financial aid packages and/or relatively low costs of attendance. Mercer was one of only 75 private institutions to be named a “best value.” The Princeton Review selected the schools based on data obtained from administrators at more than 650 colleges during the 2005-06 academic year and surveys of students attending the schools.

Buckner seeks supplies for international orphans

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Buckner seeks supplies for international orphans

DALLAS—Humanitarian aid supplies are rapidly decreasing from the Buckner Center for Humanitarian Aid in Dallas, leaving orphanages without basic personal, medical, infant and educational supplies, officials with the agency reported.

Around 1,200 people will travel with Buckner on mission trips this year, and many of them fill backpacks or suitcases with supplies from the warehouse to distribute to the orphanages in which they will serve.

“Many bags are going to orphanages empty because our supplies are rapidly depleting,” said Matt Asato, Buckner humanitarian aid coordinator.

Buckner needs supplies for:

Harral to begin term as CBF moderator

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Harral to begin term as CBF moderator

ATLANTA—Harriet Harral, a member of Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth and an organizational consultant, will begin her one-year term as moderator of the national Cooperative Baptist Fellowship at the conclusion of the Fellowship’s general assembly in June.

“Harriet brings so many gifts of leadership to the responsibility of moderator,” said Daniel Vestal, the Fellowship’s executive coordinator. “She also has a well of love and life wish for CBF that is contagious. I look forward to working with her next year.”

A native of Devine, Harral is the president of The Harral Group, a consulting firm that specializes in organizational effectiveness. As

moderator, Harral will preside over the Fellowship's Coordinating Council, which meets three times a year, and the 2008 general assembly.

2nd Opinion: Called to witness Christ's peace

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2nd Opinion: Called to witness Christ's peace

By Beth Newman

A few nights ago, just at bedtime, my husband and I heard some kind of owl—at least we assumed it was an owl—announcing its presence among the oaks in our backyard. A little research on the Internet led us to believe it was a screech owl. I was excited, because I'm a budding bird enthusiast; my husband was excited, because he saw an end to his mole problems. According to what he read, once an owl establishes a territory, he will hunt it over until he exhausts the prey.

Unfortunately, as we waxed eloquent about the bloody demise of the rodents tunneling through our yard, our 6-year-old son overheard and burst into tears over the slaughter of his friends whom he pronounced "tiny and shiny black."

“Isn’t there enough room for the owl and mole and us?” he wondered.

It was the neighborhood version of Rodney King’s “Why can’t we all just get along?”

DBU students reach out to orphans in Guatemala

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DBU students reach out to orphans in Guatemala

By Blake Killingsworth

Dallas Baptist University

ELA, Guatemala—Twenty-five Dallas Baptist University students shared the love of Christ with orphans during a recent 12-day trip to Guatemala—and fell in love with the children in the process.

For the last four years, DBU students have made the trek to Latin America under the auspices of Buckner International. Recently, DBU entered a formal partnership agreement with Buckner. In addition to the school’s pledge to continue its hands-on involvement in Guatemala and Buckner’s promise to facilitate the trips, DBU also established a scholarship for

Buckner's Guatemalan staff to take classes through the school's online education program.

Dallas Baptist University student Lindsay Springer blows bubbles with a child in the Xela orphanage in Guatemala.
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DOWN HOME: Who knew 28 is the âwaterâ anniversary?

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DOWN HOME:

Who knew 28 is the 'water' anniversary?

Well, that was a wedding anniversary we won't forget.

Late Saturday afternoon, I hopped in the shower after a day of yardwork and other chores. A moment later, Joanna ran into our bathroom.

My wife is not known for ecstatic utterances or glossolalia, but I immediately guessed she had taken to speaking in tongues. Couldn't understand what she was talking about.

She dashed away as quickly as she appeared. The look of fright and panic communicated the point of her message as I thought hard and translated three distinct words: "den," "floor" and "water."

[\[Link\]](#)

EDITORIAL: Hold churches accountable for abuse

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EDITORIAL: Hold churches accountable for abuse

We need another directory to document clergy sexual abuse. When we

learn churches knowingly allow—or force—an abusing minister to move on without doing something to warn others, let's publish their names.

This sounds harsh. But it's nothing compared to the pain and anguish victims go through when their ministers violate their trust and abuse them sexually. So, churches that know about it but don't help stop it should be shamed as if they actually aided and abetted this heinous act. They did.



Because of our polity, Baptists have struggled with deciding how to report sexual abuse by their ministers. We don't have an ecclesiastical hierarchy to enforce rules and regulations, no bishop to render justice or warn other congregations. We don't require ordination for service, so we can't pull a clergy's credentials to block a job with a church after violating trust with another congregation. And, of course, we don't tell churches what to do, so we can't require them to report abuse, just as we can't tell them who or who not to hire as ministers.

Baptists also have been understandably cautious about reporting sexual abuse. Short of legal conviction or confession, making a claim of clergy misconduct is fraught with legal peril. Churches and convention officials have been reticent to risk charges of libel and slander in order to stop a perp from plaguing a new set of parishioners. And they have been appropriately reticent to publicize names of accused perpetrators unless the charges have been substantiated.

Elder statesman Fletcher lauded as educator, writer

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Bill Pitts (left)
of
Independence
Association
presents this
year's Elder
Statesman
Award to
Jesse
Fletcher.

Elder statesman Fletcher lauded as educator, writer

By Ferrell Foster

Texas Baptist Communications

INDEPENDENCE—Texas Baptists honored educator and author Jesse Fletcher as recipient of this year's Elder Statesman Award in a special service at Independence Baptist Church June 3.

The award is given each year by the Independence Association to honor significant contributions to Baptist education in Texas.

Faith Digest

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Faith Digest

Creation Museum opens. The Answers in Genesis Ministry opened a \$27 million Creation Museum in Petersburg, Ky., just across the state line from Cincinnati, Memorial Day weekend. The main hall of the 60,000-square-foot building features animatronic dinosaurs and figures of young children playing near each other in a way its owners believe life really occurred some 6,000 years ago. The state-of-the-art museum includes vibrating seats and sprays of water in a theater that depicts Noah's flood, and extensive exhibits that claim the Grand Canyon could have formed around the time of that flood rather than millions of years ago as suggested by most scientists.

Crusade crew reunites for library opening. Song leader Cliff Barrows, 84, and soloist George Beverly Shea, 98, joined their longtime crusade partner Billy Graham in a rare public appearance at the dedication of the Billy Graham Library in Charlotte, N.C. Graham, 88, also was joined by his son, Franklin, who heads his father's ministry and by three former

presidents—George H.W. Bush, Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton—who took turns praising the evangelist. The \$27 million library and history complex includes a barn-styled building reminiscent of the dairy farm where Graham spent his boyhood years, with a 40-foot glass cross as its entrance.

Immigration issues reveal disparity between views in pulpits and pews

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Immigration issues reveal disparity between views in pulpits and pews

By Daniel Burke

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—As Congress debates immigration policy, many prominent religious leaders—from all shades of the theological spectrum—have called for a “comprehensive and compassionate” reform of existing laws. It’s part of what they see as their biblical mandate to care for the stranger.

But it’s unclear if their flocks in the pews agree. More than 60 percent of

white evangelicals said immigrants are a “burden” to the United States because they take jobs, housing and health care, according to a 2006 poll conducted by the non-partisan Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life.

Texas Baptist Forum

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Texas Baptist Forum

Falwell's legacy

I was surprised at the article concerning Jerry Falwell's legacy ([May 28](#)). No mention was made of the evangelical outreach that showed the road to salvation for thousands and thousands of souls over his 50-year ministry.

Actual evangelism as an evangelical Christian will always be his greatest legacy. It wasn't the television, radio, university or controversial comments that his ministry was built upon. It was the winning of souls at every opportunity.

- [Jump to online-only letters below](#)

Letters are welcomed. Send them to marvknox@baptiststandard.com; 250 words maximum.



"The tragic thing is to think how many churches this Sunday will be treated to safe, nice, harmless, insignificant, intramural and Trivial Pursuit sermons. There are going to be an awful lot of sermons preached in Christian churches ... that actually probably help the world become a worse place."

Brian McLaren

Author and former pastor (ABP)

"I feel like I've been attending my own funeral."

Billy Graham

Evangelist, joking about the dedication ceremony of the Billy Graham Library in Charlotte, N.C. (RNS)

"I share with my comedian friends who primarily work comedy clubs that if they want a real challenge, come try to make a roomful of Baptist deacons laugh without a two-drink minimum! Then we'll see how funny you really are!"

Chondra Pierce

Christian comedian (Today's Christian/RNS)

That is the thing that all ministries should be based upon.