

Cadets learn Islam as part of ‘winning the peace’

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Mohammed Aly (right), a member of the Islamic Center of Jersey City, N.J., introduces himself to West Point cadet Chris Beeler. (RNS/Saed Hindash/*The Star-Ledger* of Newark, N.J.)

Cadets learn Islam as part of ‘winning the peace’

By Wayne Woolley

Religion News Service

JERSEY CITY, N.J. (RNS)—The lights in a Jersey City mosque flickered at dawn, and more than a dozen West Point cadets stirred in sleeping bags scattered across the prayer room.

As Imam Hussein Wahdan began the melodious call to prayer in Arabic, bearded men filed past the cadets, kneeled and then bowed to the floor to begin their morning worship.

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Chaplain strives to be the presence of Christ in war zone

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Baptist
Chaplain
Alan
Rogers
talks
with
Marines
in Iraq.
(Photo
courtesy
of Alan
Rogers)

Chaplain strives to be the presence of Christ in war zone

By Bob Perkins Jr.

Associated Baptist Press

L ANBAR, Iraq (ABP)—Chaplain Alan Rogers has baptized a Marine in an

Iraqi river under armed protection. Needless to say, it was a quick job.

A Marine Corps corporal asked Rogers to baptize in the Euphrates River in Iraq, near the Syrian border.

Southern Baptist tapped as Army chief of chaplains

May 25, 2007

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Southern Baptist tapped as Army chief of chaplains

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

Chaplain Douglas Carver has been nominated to serve as the next U.S. Army chief of chaplains—the first Southern Baptist to lead the Army's chaplain corps in more than 50 years.

Carver, 55, also has been recommended for promotion in rank from brigadier general to major general. Pending Senate confirmation, he will be promoted to his new position at a July 12 ceremony at Fort Belvoir, Va.

Family collects tributes to fallen soldier as ‘sacred relics’

May 25, 2007

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Family collects tributes to fallen soldier as ‘sacred relics’

By Wayne Woolley

Religion News Service

OUTH AMBOY, N.J. (RNS)—It happens every time a U.S. soldier or Marine dies in Iraq. The bad news immediately spreads across the base like wildfire, and in the troop recreation centers, Internet connections are shut down.

Commanders don't want word of the death to reach the soldier's family before military officials personally deliver the news. Once the knock at the family door comes between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m., the electronic blockade back in Iraq is lifted and a torrent of e-mails flows from the battlefield to the dead soldier's family in America.

Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Sebban, 29, died in Iraq this spring. Sebban's family received a flood of supportive e-mails and letters from soldiers who served with him in Iraq. (RNS/courtesy 82nd Airborne Public Affairs Office.)

Chaplains prep West Point cadets for spiritual warfare

May 25, 2007

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Chaplains prep West Point cadets for spiritual warfare

By Gregory Tomlin

Baptist Press

EST POINT, N.Y. (BP)—Southern Baptist chaplains Col. John Cook and Lt. Col. Darrell Thomsen, along with other chaplains at West Point, mourn the loss of 51 academy graduates since the war began.

Still, new cadets keep coming with a desire to serve. Among the cadets are Cook's twin sons, both "plebes"—first-year students. Despite the risks involved with service, Cook said he is proud his sons, Jonathan and Joshua, have chosen to attend West Point.

U.S. Army Chaplain
Col. John Cook, a
graduate of Southern
Baptist Theological
Seminary, points to the
grave site of 2nd Lt.
Emily Perez, the first
female West Point
graduate to be killed in
Iraq. Cook is the U.S.
Military Academy
chaplain and senior
adviser to the
superintendent on
religious affairs. (BP
Photo)

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San Antonio volunteers serve wounded warriors

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San Antonio volunteers serve wounded warriors

By George Henson

Staff Writer

SAN ANTONIO—Two teams of volunteers at First Baptist Church in San Antonio are working to minister to soldiers and families during some of their most trying times.

Tom and Nell Kolterman lead a team of volunteers who provide and serve a meal to soldiers and their families at Powless House, a residential facility at Fort Sam Houston for wounded soldiers who need long-term outpatient care provided by Brooke Army Medical Center.

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2nd Opinion: Leave judgment in the parking lot

May 25, 2007

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2nd Opinion: Leave judgment in the parking lot

By Robert Tucker

The challenge of a classically trained musician to adapt to new worship styles without abandoning the old was both daunting and rewarding. My commitment to providing the finest in worship experiences led me to a crossroads in my musical journey. The desire to incorporate and become a part of the emerging church in a praise-and-worship setting meant that I needed to know something about it and to learn how to become a part of it. The old adage “if you can’t beat them, join them” has never been more true than in my case of trying to become a part of the praise-and-worship team—“team” in the broad sense of the term.

Specifically, our church had a team—a small group that included a few singers, a drummer, a bass player, a guitar player, and a pianist and organist. Perhaps out of default or due to my jazz background on the piano, suddenly it became my duty and obligation to provide leadership at the keyboard. I met this requirement with a mixture of excitement and

trepidation. Probably similar to a skydiver on his first dive or in my case a solo French horn player in an orchestra, I was confident of my basic skills but completely at a loss on how to use them. Can I fit in and learn this new system, and am I capable? Will I enhance the worship experience for the people, or will I ruin it? Is this good for the church?

As I played and sought to fit in with the team, I noticed the response of the people was not negative or bored but rather was worshipful and meaningful. In addition, the sounds emanating from the guitar were intriguing due to the added tones used for harmonic color and musical interest. Furthermore, the rhythm was multi-dimensioned, with a syncopated complexity that almost defied notation. The music was engaging, creative, spontaneous and emotionally charged.

In other words, my entire training and musical thought processing were altered, and I began to rethink some things.

When it comes to counting church members, the devilâs in the details

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When it comes to counting church members, the devil's in the details

By Amy Green

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The [Southern Baptist Convention](#), with about 16.2 million members on the books, claims to be the nation's largest Protestant denomination. But Tom Ascol believes the active membership really is a fraction of that.

Ascol, pastor of Grace Baptist Church in Cape Coral, Fla., points to a church report showing that only 6 million Southern Baptists attend church on an average Sunday.

DOWN HOME: Adjustment needed in half-empty nest

May 25, 2007

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DOWN HOME: Adjustment needed in half-empty nest

Joanna and I are negotiating a phase of parenthood I've never seen written

up in any book.

That's amazing in and of itself. How could any aspect of parenthood go unexamined, unchronicled, unsold to desperate moms and dads frantic to figure out how to raise Junior and Bitsy to responsible adulthood?

Maybe this part got overlooked precisely because it's so close to adulthood. Nobody thought to, well, think about it.



I'm talking about summer during college.

EDITORIAL: The future of Texas depends on this

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EDITORIAL: The future of Texas depends on this

The Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board made several far-reaching decisions during its spring meeting May 21-22. As significant as all of them were, the influence of one could extend well beyond the others.

First, the board [approved a 15-member search committee](#) to nominate the convention's next executive director. This leader will help shape and focus the convention during the coming years, and the influence could extend for

decades.



Second, the board [accepted the suggestion](#) of Stephen Wakefield, the convention's attorney, not to file lawsuits to recover funds lost in the Rio Grande Valley church-starting scandal. "The likelihood of recovery of significant funds is speculative at best," Wakefield told the board. Although many Texas Baptists are disappointed, his logic is solid. And while criminal charges still may be filed, this brings one portion of this sad saga to a close.

Third, the board allocated proceeds from a recent gift to help retire the debt on Breckenridge Village at Tyler. The ministry to special-needs adults has been strapped since it opened about a decade ago. By ensuring financial viability, the board can secure care for many of God's children for generations.

Faith Digest

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Faith Digest

Many professors take dim view of evangelicals. About half of nonevangelical university faculty acknowledge they don't have warm feelings about evangelical Christians, a new survey shows. A survey released by the San Francisco-based [Institute for Jewish & Community](#)

[Research](#) found 53 percent said they have “cool/unfavorable feelings” toward evangelical Christians. In comparison, 30 percent said they had favorable feelings toward them, 9 percent were neutral, 4 percent said they didn’t know and 4 percent refused to answer. One-third of non-Mormon faculty reported unfavorable views of Mormons. Views about other religious groups were more positive, with Muslims getting a 22 percent unfavorable rating, followed by atheists (18 percent), Catholics (13 percent), persons not practicing any religion (10 percent), nonevangelical Christians (9 percent), Buddhists (4 percent) and Jews (3 percent). Faculty from any particular group were excluded from rating other members of their faith. Results of the online survey were based on a sample of 1,269 faculty members at 712 four-year colleges and universities. The margin of error was plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Archaeologists uncover Herod’s tomb. Israeli archaeologists believe they have discovered the tomb of King Herod. Professor Ehud Netzer from the [Institute of Archaeology at the Hebrew University](#) in Jerusalem said his team discovered the tomb during ongoing excavations at Herodium, a once-magnificent palace located nine miles south of Jerusalem, in what is now the West Bank. Pointing to intricately carved remains from the excavation, Netzer said his team discovered a grave, fragments from a sarcophagus and a mausoleum on Mount Herodium’s northeastern slope. “The location and the unique nature of the findings, as well as the historical record leave no doubt that this was Herod’s burial site,” Netzer said. Herod, who was appointed by the Romans, ruled Judea from 37 to 4 B.C. The New Testament says Jesus was born during Herod’s reign and Joseph and Mary fled to Egypt because the king planned to kill the infant Jesus.

Granbury church believes in old-time religion—first-century Christianity

May 25, 2007

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Granbury church believes in old-time religion—first-century Christianity

By George Henson

Staff Writer

GRANBURY—Pastor C.C. Risenhoover and worship leader David Humphrey of Gateway Community Church in Granbury have more than 100 years ministry experience between them, and they say they are tied to tradition. But the tradition they seek to follow is the first-century church, as illustrated in the second chapter of Acts.

Recently, the church ordained eight members to serve as pastors for the church's various ministries—Chad Carroll for evangelism, Randa Carroll for administration, Terry King for discipleship, Joanne King for fellowship, Jackie Solomon for media and youth, Margie Solomon for youth, Johnnie Couch for children and Lindsay Luedeker for children and outreach.