

Holiday visit with Kenyan orphans changed students' perspective on world

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UMHB
students
Terah
Sellers
(left) and
Katie
Speckman
sit with all
the boys
who live
at the
Good
Hope
Children's
Home in
Nairobi,
Kenya,
while
visiting for
Christmas.

Holiday visit with Kenyan orphans changed students' perspective on world

By Jennifer Sicking

University of Mary Hardin-Baylor

BELTON—Instead of spending her Christmas with her family, [University of Mary Hardin-Baylor](#) senior Katie Speckman opted to spend it with 40 children in Africa.

“It was really hard. It was the first time I’d ever done it,” said Speckman, an elementary education major from New Braunfels, about spending the holiday away from home.

Authorities investigating fires at North Carolina churches

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Authorities investigating fires

at North Carolina churches

By Hannah Elliott

Associated Baptist Press

GREENVILLE, N.C. (ABP)—Suspicious fires damaged two Baptist churches and a break-in was discovered at a third in Greenville, N.C., the night of Jan. 13.

Memorial Baptist Church and Unity Free Will Baptist, located near each other in the city about 50 miles east of Raleigh, burned in fires that authorities have labeled “suspicious.” Losses are estimated at \$ 1 million, according to local reports.

SBC officials accuse Carter of “voodoo ecumenism”

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SBC officials accuse Carter of ‘voodoo ecumenism’

By Greg Warner

Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA (ABP)—Southern Baptist officials harshly rejected [Jimmy Carter's effort](#) to unite all Baptists in North America under a compassion agenda, calling the ambitious plan “voodoo ecumenism” and a thinly veiled Democratic strategy to woo values voters.

But other Southern Baptists, including some reform-minded younger conservatives, called the SBC response un-Christ-like and prejudicial criticism from “fundamentalist elites.”

Planned 2008 convocation grows from desire for a new Baptist voice

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Former
Presidents

Jimmy
Carter (at
podium)
and Bill
Clinton

(behind
him) with
Mercer

University
President

Bill
Underwood
(right)

introduce a
gathering
of more
than 30

Baptist
leaders at
The Carter
Center. The

group is
calling for a
convocation
of Baptists
next year.

(CBF Photo
by Billy
Howard)

Planned 2008 convocation grows from desire for 'new Baptist voice'

By Robert Marus & Greg Warner

Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA (ABP)—The nation's two living Baptist ex-presidents have called for a historic convocation in Atlanta next year, intended to improve the negative image of Baptists in North America and unite the majority of Baptists into a loose-knit network to address social ills.

President Jimmy Carter and President Bill Clinton will announce the 2008 convocation in a Jan. 9 press conference in Atlanta, following a meeting of about 80 diverse Baptist leaders at the [Carter Presidential Center](#).

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- [Baptist leaders insist covenant offers chance to heal racial wounds'](#)

Ad hoc group monitors progress on church-starting changes

January 24, 2007

Updated: 1/19/07

Ad hoc group monitors progress on church-starting changes

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

DALLAS—An eight-person group appointed to monitor the timely implementation of investigator-recommended steps to prevent further misuse of Baptist General Convention of Texas church-starting funds met for the first time Jan. 5.

Jim Nelson, chairman of the group, said he was pleased with the five-hour-plus meeting, during which members addressed all related motions approved by the BGCT Executive Board. They included:

Faith leaders tell Congress: Deliver on promises made to values voters

January 24, 2007

Updated: 1/19/07

Faith leaders tell Congress: Deliver on promises made to values voters

By Hannah Elliott

Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Faith leaders are calling for members of Congress to deliver on promises made to values voters during the 2006 mid-term elections.

In a Jan. 9 panel discussion, representatives from [Sojourners/Call to Renewal](#), the [National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference](#), [Let Justice Roll](#), [Christian Peace Witness for Iraq](#), the [National Association of Evangelicals](#) and the [National Religious Campaign Against Torture](#) asked Congress to “deliver concrete gains on issues of deep concern to religious voters.”

BGCT president's wife donates building to Lubbock ministry

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BGCT president's wife donates building to Lubbock ministry

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

LEVELLAND—Donna Vernon is donating a Texas Baptist Men-constructed building she won in a drawing at the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting to [My Father's House](#), Lubbock.

TBM volunteers had constructed the building on-site at the BGCT annual meeting as an exhibition of the organization's church-building ministry.

Students learn to own their

faith during college years

January 24, 2007

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Students grow up, learn to make faith their own during college years

By Teresa Young

Wayland Baptist University

PLAINVIEW—A teenager might have been the leader of the pack at the church youth group during high school. Or maybe she was the quiet, loyal one who showed up every Sunday and every fellowship. Or maybe he wasn't very interested at all in church things.

Regardless how involved in church teens were before high school graduation, things are certain to change somewhat when they reach college, whether they're living in the same town or miles away. But Gary Manning, professor of religion at [Wayland Baptist University](#), insists parents have no reason to panic.

Campus religious events, such as the weekly Plumblin worship service held at Wayland Baptist University, are intended to help students explore their faith and grow spiritually while in college.

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- [Young adults will leave church if they're overlooked, study says](#)

Young adults will leave church if they're overlooked, study says

January 24, 2007

Updated: 1/19/07

Young adults will leave church if they're overlooked, study says

By Libby Lovelace

LifeWay Christian Resources

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—More young adults are falling away from church and finding church irrelevant to their lives because their needs are not being met, new statistics released by [LifeWay Christian Resources](#) revealed.

In 1980, more than 100,000 people age 18 to 34 were baptized in Southern Baptist churches. But in 2005, that number fell to 60,000—a drastic drop considering the United States population has climbed above 300 million.

Research Project

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- [Most important spiritual opportunities for young adults who attend church regularly](#)
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Texas Baptist leaders applaud call for inclusive convocation

January 24, 2007

Updated: 1/19/07

Texas Baptist leaders applaud call for inclusive convocation

By Barbara Bedrick

Texas Baptist Communications

ATLANTA—Texas Baptist leaders affirmed former President Jimmy Carter's call for an inclusive convocation of North American Baptists next year.

Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Director Charles Wade joined Carter and more than 80 leaders of about 40 Baptist groups in

announcing plans for convocation, tentatively slated for Jan. 30-Feb.1, 2008, in Atlanta.

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Baptist leaders insist covenant offers chance to heal racial

wounds

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Baptist leaders insist covenant offers chance to heal racial wounds

By Greg Warner

Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA (ABP)—Advocates of the New Baptist Covenant championed by former presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton predicted it will help heal the racial divide that has separated Baptists in America since before the Civil War.

William Shaw, president of the National Baptist Convention USA, said a New Baptist Covenant championed by former President Jimmy Carter holds the potential for Baptists across racial lines to address issues in “nonpartisan ... (but) prophetic ways.” (RNS file photo by Aimee Jeansonne)

Speaking on behalf of 40 Baptist denominations and organizations in the United States and Canada Jan. 9, Carter and Clinton—two of the world’s most famous Baptist laymen—announced the groups had committed to put aside more than a century and a half of social and theological differences to

unite behind an agenda of compassionate ministry.

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Reyes sees move to Buckner as natural progression

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Reyes sees move to Buckner as natural progression

By **Marv Knox**

Editor

Although Albert Reyes' recent career change caught many Texas Baptists by surprise, he sees it as the next step in God's plan for his life: An opportunity to minister to millions of orphans whose lives may make an impact on the world.

Nearly eight years ago, Reyes became president of [Baptist University of the Americas](#), a multi-cultural training school for ministers in San Antonio. Under his leadership, BUA multiplied its enrollment, gained certification to grant academic degrees, earned national accreditation and launched a campaign to construct a new campus.

Albert Reyes
