

# **BAPTIST BRIEFS: Rankin discusses private prayer language**

March 2, 2006

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## **BAPTIST BRIEFS**

**Birmingham church named national landmark.** 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala., the site of a 1963 bombing that killed four girls, has become a national historic landmark. The bombing brought national attention and outrage, speeding passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Three former Klansmen were convicted in the bombing. U.S. Secretary of Interior Gale Norton signed a proclamation that gives the church building the nation's highest historic distinction. National status protects the church from being destroyed for any federal project and could make it easier to raise money to maintain and restore the building. A church foundation has raised just under \$3.3 million in a \$3.8 million restoration campaign.

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**Yemeni executed for killings of Baptist medical workers.** The Yemeni gunman who killed three Southern Baptist medical workers in 2002 was executed by firing squad Feb. 27, according to wire reports. Abed Abdul Razak Kamel was shot in the central prison of the southern Ibb province as judicial officials observed, Yemen's Saba state news agency reported. Kamel was convicted for the Dec. 30, 2002, shooting deaths of Jibla Baptist Hospital director William Koehn, physician Martha Myers and purchasing agent Kathleen Gariety. A pharmacist was seriously wounded but later

recovered. Kamel admitted in court to coordinating the attack with Islamic militant activist Ali al-Jarallah. Al-Jarallah was executed Nov. 27 for plotting the medical workers' deaths and for assassinating a prominent national politician. The Jibla Baptist Hospital provided care for thousands of people in the impoverished Middle Eastern nation for more than 30 years after it was started in the Ibb province by Southern Baptist workers. It was reopened in 2003 by the Yemeni government's health ministry.

**LifeWay names VP.** Trustees of LifeWay Christian Resources named Tom Hellams vice president and executive associate to newly installed President Thom Rainer. Hellams will be chief coordinating staff member of the executive management team. Since 1997, he was executive assistant to President Al Mohler at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

**Mission Center names building for McWhorter.** A new building for Houston's Gano Mission Center has been named for home missionary Mildred McWhorter, who retired in 1992 after 30 years as director of the Houston Baptist Centers. The Mildred McWhorter Missionary Building will provide dorm rooms for short-term volunteers, three private apartments for long-term volunteers, two conference rooms, dining and kitchen facilities, offices and a prayer room. The 7,400-square-foot facility is scheduled for completion in May. The Gano Mission Center, just north of downtown Houston, is one of three Baptist mission centers in the city.

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# Cartoon

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"I can get you into this location for the low cost of 10% of your income. This little number is located conveniently near the Sunday schools and previously was used only by little old ladies on Sundays."

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention ( SBC ) and around the world.

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# Partnership yields church building for Chinese Christians

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## Partnership yields church building for Chinese Christians

**By Lance Wallace**

*Cooperative Baptist Fellowship*

YANTING, China—Seventy Christians in a Chinese city of 200,000 people have a new place to worship, thanks to an unusual partnership between Chinese Christians, a Houston Baptist church and Anglican relatives of one of Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's Global Missions field personnel.

CBF Global Missions field personnel Bill and Michelle Cayard brought together these partners to play a crucial role in the life of a small church that had sought their help to make their dream of a church building a reality.

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## Down Home: Grace & patience,

# or a big ol' crash

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## Down Home: Grace & patience, or a big ol' crash

Road construction ought to be labeled Texas' State Business. You know, like the mockingbird is the State Bird and the monarch butterfly is the State Insect.

Almost anywhere you go across the Lone Star State, particularly in the cities and suburbs and along the interstate highways, you confront road construction. We're growing so fast, and our roads are so run-down, we can't build them or repair them fast enough. (Note to parents: If you want your children to be employed all their lives, set them up as paving contractors.)

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All this road building has prompted a singular desire: Just one day before I retire, I will drive all the way to and from work without taking a construction detour or passing a construction cone. When I describe this dream, my spiritually sensitive friends stammer in wonder: "You really do believe in miracles, don't you?" Most lack such faith. "It'll never happen," they predict.

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# **Fairview church discovers: â€œA little child shall lead themâ€œ**

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Pastor Paul Wrightsman says an influx of children has brought an additional energy to Fairview Community Church, which was recovering from the effects of changing demographics in the surrounding community. The church, primarily made up of senior adults, now boasts many children, especially on Wednesdays.

# Fairview church discovers: 'A little child shall lead them'

**By George Henson**

*Staff Writer*

COPPERAS COVE—The aptly named Fairview Community Church sits well off the main drag in Copperas Cove, next to an elementary school and in the midst of houses.

It's what Pastor Paul Wrightsman calls a neighborhood church—a church built primarily to reach people in its immediate vicinity.

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## Technology enables hearing-impaired to experience worship

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Michelle  
Varner  
watches as  
Susan  
Jones  
translates  
for Esther  
Kelly,  
while John  
Palmer and  
Eddie  
Jones also  
participate.

## Technology enables hearing-impaired to experience worship

**By George Henson**

*Staff Writer*

RICHARDSON—A Texas Baptist church is using technology to make worship more accessible to hearing-impaired members and guests.

Through the use of Computer Access Real-Time—CART—translation, hearing-impaired worshippers at The Heights Baptist Church in Richardson can read the words of songs and sermons from a computer screen.

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# Executive Board approves Texas/Missouri partnership

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| Baptist<br>General<br>Convention<br>of Missouri<br>Executive<br>Director<br>Jim Hill<br>shakes<br>hands with<br>BGCT<br>Executive<br>Director<br>Charles<br>Wade. |
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## Executive Board approves Texas/Missouri partnership

**By Ken Camp**

*Managing Editor*

DALLAS—At its inaugural meeting, the reconstituted Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board approved a three-year partnership

linking Texas Baptists with the Baptist General Con-vention of Missouri.

The board ratified a strategic partnership agreement with the Baptist General Con-vention of Missouri, a fellowship of 125 churches formed when fundamentalists gained control of the Missouri Baptist Convention.

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## On the Move

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## On the Move

- **Henry Adrion** to Iola Missionary Church in Iola as interim pastor.
  - **Bruce Ammons** has resigned as pastor of ministry development at First Church in Katy to teach the Conquering Debt God's Way seminar full-time. He can be contacted at (806) 780-7615.
  - **Bobby Atwell** to First Church in Joshua as transitional pastor.
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# **Panhandle-Plains conference taps changing demographics**

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Jesse Rincones, pastor of Alliance Baptist Church in Lubbock, addresses a point about reaching the Hispanic population in a panel discussion to kick off the Panhandle-Plains Pastors' and Laymen's Conference at Wayland Baptist University. With Rincones are (from left) Stacy Conner, pastor of First Baptist Church of Muleshoe, Mateo Rendon, a consultant for West Texas with the BGCT, and Charles Davenport, a retired Tulia pastor and a BGCT congregational strategist.

# Panhandle-Plains conference taps changing demographics

**By Teresa Young**

*Wayland Baptist University*

PLAINVIEW—Reaching the changing West Texas populations with the gospel will require intentional efforts, a worker mentality and an attitude of acceptance, panelists told participants at the 85th annual Panhandle-Plains Pastors' and Laymen's Conference at Wayland Baptist University.

Panelists invited participants to examine changing demographic trends—particularly the explosive growth of the Hispanic population, as noted by Jesse Rincones, pastor of Alliance Baptist Church in Lubbock. He pointed out 1,300 of the 5,700 Baptist churches in Texas are Hispanic, and within the next decade, half of the Hispanic population in Texas will be age 25 or under.



Newly elected officers of the Panhandle-Plains Pastors' and Laymen's Conference are President David Lowrie (center), pastor of First Baptist Church in Canyon; President-elect Richard Lavery (right), pastor of First Baptist Church in Perryton; Secretary/Treasurer Charles Bassett (left) of Wayland Baptist University; (not pictured) First Vice President Ackey Martinez, youth director at First Baptist Church in Brownfield, and Second Vice President Carl Williams, layman at Colonial Hill Baptist Church in Snyder.

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## **Rankin discusses private prayer**

# language

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## Rankin discusses private prayer language

**By Trennis Henderson**

*Kentucky Western Recorder*

BANFF, Alberta (ABP)—Acknowledging he has practiced a private prayer language for more than 30 years, Jerry Rankin candidly shared his views about the Southern Baptist International Mission Board trustees' recent action on the issue.

Rankin, president of the mission board since 1993, addressed the topic during a question-and-answer session with Baptist editors meeting in Banff, Alberta, Canada, for the 2006 Association of State Baptist Papers annual meeting.

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## Red River senior adult VBS sparks mission trip

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# Red River senior adult VBS sparks mission trip

**By George Henson**

*Staff Writer*

PARIS—Senior adults in Red River Valley Baptist Association decided they weren't too old for Vacation Bible School, and that led them to realize they weren't too old to participate in missions, either.

Last August, Gloria Parker—whose husband, Don, was pastor of First Baptist Church in Roxton—was upset when her church elected not to have Vacation Bible School for its children.

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## Sri Lanka ministries continue despite political unrest

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A Texas  
Baptist  
Men  
volunteer  
assists as  
Andrew  
Bentley,  
from  
Baptist  
Child &  
Family  
Services,  
removes  
a  
wooden  
splinter  
from the  
leg of a  
tsunami  
victim in  
Sri  
Lanka.

## **Sri Lanka ministries continue despite political unrest**

**By Craig Bird**

*Baptist Child & Family Services*

BATTICALOA, Sri Lanka—Texas Baptist ministries in Sri Lanka continue

despite ongoing political tensions.

Two Baptist General Convention of Texas-related groups—Baptist Child & Family Services and Texas Baptist Men—have worked in the Indian Ocean island-nation since January 2005. Both groups have based their ministries in the east coast town of Batticaloa, which straddles the uneasy ceasefire line between government troops and their adversaries for the past 23 years, the Tamil Tigers.