

Evangelicals sitting on sidelines in immigration debate

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By G. Jeffrey MacDonald

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Advocates at World Relief, the humanitarian arm of the National Association of Evangelicals, usually can expect a warm greeting from large evangelical groups wielding clout in the halls of Congress.

But this year, they're getting a downright chilly reception to one of their priority agenda items—immigration reform.

View of God often shaped by life experiences, pastor insists

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View of God often shaped by life experiences, pastor insists

By Ken Walker

Special to the Baptist Standard

TUCSON, Ariz.—Native Texan Roger Barrier started praying about ministry in an unchurched area after Roy Fish, his evangelism professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, told students, “You’d better be sure you’ve got a call from God to stay in Texas, because Texas doesn’t need any more preachers.”

For 30 years, Barrier has served Casas Church in suburban Tucson, a Baptist congregation that has grown from 70 to 4,500 members during his tenure.

TOGETHER: An inspiring, courageous servant leader

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TOGETHER: An inspiring, courageous

servant leader

Phil Strickland was one of the greatest leaders Texas Baptists have ever known. He could have been an incredibly successful attorney. He could have been a great Texas governor.

But he chose to be a good and great advocate for justice and righteousness in Texas.

He came to the task of director of the Christian Life Commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas as a very young man. He was not a pastor/preacher, but he was a wonderful speaker of truth. He attended seminary after law school because he wanted to be sure that what he did in the field of law was informed as much as possible by his deep biblical faith.

What he learned as a boy growing up in First Baptist Church of Abilene kept growing in his heart and mind. He loved the gospel of Jesus Christ, which sets us free and keeps us free. He loved the Bible and treasured its truth and authority as he made decisions about life and ethics. He was grateful to God in all things and knew the power and blessing of prayer in the most intimate and spiritually meaningful way.

TEXAS TIDBITS

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Texas Tidbits

Baylor's endowment ranks high. Baylor University, with a \$750 million endowment, ranks 77th among U.S. colleges and universities with the largest endowments, according to a survey released by the National Association of College and University Business Officers. Baylor's endowment increased more than 11 percent in 2005, up from \$672 million in 2004. Baylor's investment return rate of 14.2 percent on its endowment for fiscal year 2005 ranked the university in the top 6 percent of all U.S. colleges and universities—44th out of nearly 750 institutions.

Baylor's Success Center receives \$3 million gift. Paul Foster, president and chief executive officer of Western Refining in El Paso, has given \$3 million to Baylor University for its Success Center. The center will house six departments—academic advisement, academic support services, career counseling, career services, student-athlete services and the office of access and learning accommodation—to allow students convenient access to services. Foster received his bachelor's degree in business administration from Baylor in 1979.

Hispanic Evangelism Conference scheduled. "Proclaiming ... Reaching ... Teaching ... the Good News" is the theme of the Baptist General Convention of Texas Hispanic Evangelism Conference, Feb. 24-25 at First Baptist Church in Arlington. The event features Mario Gonzales, pastor of Primera Iglesia Bautista in El Paso; Javier Elizondo, Baptist University of the Americas vice president of academic affairs; and Victor Rodriguez, pastor of South San Filadelfia Baptist Church in San Antonio. The conference starts Feb. 24 at 1 p.m. and ends Feb. 25 at 1 p.m. The conference also includes a concert by Hombres de Valor from Orlando, Fla., Feb. 24. A track for students begins Feb. 24 at 6:30 p.m. with a pizza party in the youth building of First Baptist Church. The student track continues Feb. 25. For more information, contact Frank Palos at (214) 828-5266 or

Frank.Palos@bgct.org.

Hardin-Simmons names university chaplain. Hardin-Simmons University has named Kelly Pigott as its first university chaplain—a newly created position intended to manage the school’s chapel program and provide pastoral care for its students, faculty and staff. Pigott graduated from Samford University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. His wife, Susan, is professor of Old Testament and Hebrew at Hardin-Simmons’ Logsdon School of Theology. They have two children—Nathaniel David and Eliana Marie.

Social justice center at HPU nears completion. Howard Payne University is completing restoration of its historic Coggin Academy Building, new home of the Bettie and Robert Girling Center for Social Justice. The center will house an undergraduate multidisciplinary program involving the departments of social work, sociology, criminal justice and legal studies. It will include a simulated courtroom featuring 19th century fixtures from the Brown County Courthouse.

Historical society meeting set. At the spring meeting of the Texas Baptist Historical Society, Andrew Hogue of Baylor University will present a paper exploring the political and religious impact since 1988 of Richard Land of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. Michael Parrish of Baylor University will respond to the presentation. The meeting will be held in conjunction with the Texas State Historical Association at 2:30 p.m., March 2, in the Trinity A Room of the Renaissance Hotel, 9721 Arboretum Blvd. in Austin. For more information, contact Alan Lefever at (972)331-2235 or alan.lefever@bgct.org.

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.

Texas Baptist Men move to Dixon building

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Texas Baptist Men move to Dixon building

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

DALLAS—Texas Baptist Men has relocated most of its offices from the Baptist General Convention of Texas offices in Dallas to the Dixon Missions Equipping Center in east Dallas, where much of its disaster relief equipment is housed.

The Dixon building has the office space and infrastructure to host Texas Baptist Men, said Leo Smith, TBM executive director.

Strickland provided voice for poor, powerless

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Strickland provided voice for poor, powerless

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

Phil Strickland believed his mission was to provide a voice for the powerless in the halls of government and speak prophetically to Texas Baptists on moral and ethical issues.

After a long battle with cancer, resultant pneumonia silenced that prophetic voice Feb. 11 at age 64.

Phil Strickland

Proposal could allow casino-

style slot machines

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Proposal could allow casino-style slot machines

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

AUSTIN—A proposal meant to give the Texas Lottery Commission more flexibility in developing new games and taking advantage of new technology could put casino-style slot machines across the state, said Suzii Paynter, director of citizenship and public policy for the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission.

The changes would allow the Lottery Commission to make some of their games electronic, enabling instantaneous financial gains and losses via a computer network.

Segregated churches hinder evangelism

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Segregated churches hinder evangelism

By Marv Knox

Editor

WACO—Christians undermine their ability to reach society with the gospel because they segregate their churches by race, sociologist/author George Yancey told participants in a workshop aimed at racial reconciliation.

George Yancey

Yancey, assistant professor of sociology at the University of North Texas and author of several books, including *Beyond Racial Gridlock: Embracing Mutual Responsibility*, presented two keynote speeches at “Becoming a Racially Reconciled Church & Community.” Mission Waco, an inner-city ministry in Waco, sponsored the event.

Notre Dame model for Baylor generates debate

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Notre Dame model for Baylor generates debate

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

WACO—Baylor University supporters agree the school is “Texas Baptists’ crown jewel,” but should it aspire to become the “Protestant Notre Dame”? And in a larger sense, what can Roman Catholics teach Baptists?

Doug Henry

Since former university President Robert Sloan led the school to adopt its Baylor 2012 long-range plan and open its Institute for Faith & Learning, supporters have pointed to Notre Dame as an example of a religiously affiliated school that successfully integrates faith and learning.

Rx for marital success: Worship together

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Rx for marital success: Worship together

By Catherine O'Donnell

Religion News Service

ANN ARBOR, Mich. (RNS)—Husbands and wives who attend religious services together are less likely to divorce, new research from the University of Michigan shows.

The study, conducted by researchers connected to the Institute for Social Research, examined how religion affected the risk of divorce for both black and white couples in the first seven years of marriage. Data came from 373 couples initially interviewed in 1986, their first year of marriage, as part of the Early Years of Marriage project at the university.

Leader suggests five ways Baptists can impact Hispanics

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Leader suggests five ways Baptists can

impact Hispanics

By Marv Knox

Editor

WACO—Since Hispanics “represent the future of Texas,” Baptists must reach them spiritually and help them physically if they intend to make a difference in their state, the leader of Hispanic Texas Baptists insisted.

Alcides Guajardo

Alcides Guajardo, president of the Hispanic Baptist Convention of Texas, described the status of Hispanics in Texas and prescribed how to minister to them during the “Be-coming a Racially Reconciled Church & Community” conference sponsored by Mission Waco.

Varied views on integration of faith & learning persist

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Varied views on integration of faith & learning persist

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

WACO—Calls for the integration of faith and learning that once polarized Baylor University’s constituencies now appear to unite them. But while they rally around the “faith and learning” banner, varied groups seem to use the term in different ways and for a variety of reasons.

Bill Underwood

“Everyone I know on the Baylor campus embraces the concept of integrating faith and learning, but there are very different perspectives on what that means,” observed Bill Underwood, former interim president at Baylor and president-elect at Mercer University.