

Interfaith coalition raises concerns about plight of 44 million uninsured Americans_50304

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Interfaith coalition raises concerns about plight of 44 million uninsured Americans

Nearly two-thirds of Americans believe churches and other religious organizations should help raise awareness and concern about the 44 million people in the United States—including 8.5 million children—who lack health coverage, a broad-based group of religious leaders announced recently.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, has joined representatives of the National Council of Churches, the United Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, the Islamic Society of North America, the Salvation Army and other religious organizations on the Cover the Uninsured Week interfaith advisory board.

The religious leaders are encouraging faith organizations and

congregations to learn more about the issue of the uninsured and to call for a solution to the problem during Cover the Uninsured Week, May 10-16.

Religious supporters, opponents of abortion rights rally in Washington_50304

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Religious supporters, opponents of abortion rights rally in Washington

By Adelle Banks

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON—Standing at a worship service shortly before the official start of the March for Women's Lives, Theresa Helfrey held two signs stapled together. One declared the Presbyterian Church (USA)'s call for justice, and another supported NARAL, a prominent abortion rights organization.

Latin American Baptist union elects Texas church starter as president_50304

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Latin American Baptist union elects Texas church starter as president

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

The Union of Baptists in Latin America has elected as president a Texas Baptist church-starting strategist.

Around the State_50304

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Around the State

Maston Scholars were recognized at Hardin-Simmons University's Logsdon

School of Theology during the T.B. Maston Christian Ethics Lectures. They are **Patrick Hill** and **Joshua Allen** of the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, **Allison Backus** and **Angela Heape** of Baylor University, **Ana Laura Sura** and **Jose Luis Sura** of the Baptist University of the Americas, **Justin Hyde** of Houston Baptist University, **Jeremy Shepherd** and **Chuck Pope** of Dallas Baptist University, **Jacob West** and **Ben Johnson** of Hardin-Simmons University, **Randy Curtis** of Wayland Baptist University, and **Jared Hollier** and **Laura Garlock** of East Texas Baptist University.



Maurine Ellison and Paulette Lawrence carried the banner that led Pastor Frank Slayton, deacons, members and guests to the plot of land that will be the new home of Swenson Church in Swenson. The dedication and groundbreaking service included prayer, pledges to the Bible and the Christian and American flags, singing and a dedication sermon.

♦ Three University of Mary Hardin-Baylor voice students won awards in a recent competition held at Southern Methodist University. **Rachel Gibson**, soprano, was awarded first place and received a \$500 check. Second place and winner of \$400 was **Cody Fosdick**, baritone. Third place went to **Devon Owens**, soprano, and winner of \$300. UMHB voice students also competed in a contest held at Texas State University in San Marcos. Earning semi-finalist recognition were **Sarah Walker**, **Jacque Bush** and Gibson. Eight students were finalists including **Billy Chapman**, who won second place in graduate men; Fosdick, second place in senior men; **Vicki Boyd**, second place in senior women; Owens, third place in senior women; **Aimee Ates**, second place in junior women; **Austin Daniel**, third place in sophomore men, **Amy Eadson**, fourth place in sophomore women; and **Kelly Criswell**, sixth place in freshmen women.

♦ **Milton Higgins**, a 1959 Baylor University graduate, received an honorary doctorate of divinity and presented the commencement address at May 1 graduation ceremonies at California Baptist University. Higgins, president of California Baptist Foundation, served California and Washington churches 25 years as pastor before taking his current post.

Baptist Briefs_50304

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Baptist Briefs

SBC, BWA leaders meet. Officials of the Baptist World Alliance and the Southern Baptist Convention have agreed to meet annually, but a meeting in mid-April did not prompt any change in SBC plans to defund the global group and withdraw membership from the worldwide fellowship. BWA President Billy Kim of Korea and SBC Executive Committee President Morris Chapman co-chaired the Nashville, Tenn., gathering of 19 leaders from the United States, Canada, Bulgaria and Brazil.

Elder announces retirement. Lloyd Elder will retire as director of the Moench Center for Church Leadership at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn., effective June 1. Elder joined the Belmont School of Religion faculty in August 1991, filling the Paschall Chair for biblical studies and preaching. He helped establish the Moench Center in 1996 to teach leadership skills to ministers. Elder served as president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board from 1983 to 1991. He was executive vice president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary from 1978 to 1983, assistant to the executive director at the Baptist General Convention of Texas from 1975 to 1978, and pastor of several Texas Baptist churches.

Louisiana college affirms text policy. Louisiana College trustees have re-affirmed a controversial textbook policy and named an interim president for the school. In a called meeting, trustees passed a resolution requiring professors to receive approval from their department chairs and the school's vice president for academic affairs for all textbooks and classroom materials. The resolution stipulates faculty must make curriculum choices in harmony with the college's identity and mission statement, as well as the school's faith statement and the pronouncements of the Louisiana Baptist Convention. Trustees also elected retired pastor John Traylor as the school's interim president. Traylor, 76, was the longtime pastor of First

Baptist Church of Monroe, La., and is a former Louisiana Baptist Convention president.

Preparation for ministry requires church/school partnership_50304

April 30, 2004

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Preparation for ministry requires church/school partnership

By Marv Knox

Editor

ABILENE-Preparing men and women for ministry is a partnership, insists Tommy Brisco, dean of the Logsdon School of Theology at Hardin-Simmons University.

Cartoon_50304

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World's greatest CEO- Able to keep his corporation together while wandering aimlessly in the desert for 40 years.
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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.

First BGCT-endorsed Army chaplains complete officers'

school with honors_50304

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First BGCT-endorsed Army chaplains complete officers' school with honors

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

The first Baptist General Convention of Texas-endorsed Army chaplains recently completed officer training with honors.

Church van wrecks on mission trip_50304

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Church van wrecks on mission trip

ENID, Okla.-Three men from Highland Terrace Baptist Church in Greenville escaped serious injury when the van they were riding in flipped four times during a traffic accident April 26.

While only the three men were in the church's van at the time of the accident, about 20 members of the congregation made the trip to assist First Indian Baptist Church in Enid, Okla.

The adult team worked to repair the church's roof, paint and other renovation tasks during the day, while Pastor Riley Hamilton preached revival services Sunday evening through Wednesday.

ANOTHER VIEW: What if Baptists loved each other_50304

April 30, 2004

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ANOTHER VIEW: What if Baptists loved each other?

By Jim Furgerson

Recently I visited another state. The state Baptist paper was lying on the coffee table in the home where I stayed. I could not miss the lead story. A graph plotted the baptisms reported by Baptist churches in that state for the last 20 years. My heart hurt as I examined the numbers. The baptisms plateau, and then the graph starts a gradual decline to a 20-year low in 2003. Why?

Jim
Furgerson

The Baptists in this state have experienced a theological division that has caused several of their institutions to leave the state convention. These actions have led to several lawsuits, Baptists suing Baptists. Many Baptists have taken great pride in the fundamental stance the state convention has taken. At the same time, many have felt disenfranchised and thrown away.

**I wonder what
could happen
in Texas if we
were known as
Baptists
-people who
love each
other?
-Jim Furgerson**

Supreme Court declines appeal to military school prayer case_50304

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Supreme Court declines appeal to military school prayer case

By Robert Marus

ABP Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON (ABP)-The Supreme Court has declined to hear a challenge to a lower court's ruling that outlawed mealtime prayers at a state-run military college.

downhome_50304

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DOWN HOME: We won't forget this Mom's Day

Sometimes, timing can be a real bummer.

Like Mother's Day this year. It's next Sunday, a couple of days after the spring semester ends at Hardin-Simmons University, where our oldest daughter, Lindsay, is wrapping up her sophomore year.

"That's terrific!" you might say. "School's getting out just in time for Lindsay to move home for the summer! Joanna should be thrilled! What a great Mother's Day present!"