

DOWN HOME: Welcome Tree shines nightly_41904

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DOWN HOME: Welcome Tree shines nightly

If you drive down our street after dark, you'll recognize our house. It's the gray contemporary Cape Cod. Not distinctive enough? It's the one with the Welcome Tree out front.

My friend Rusty inspired our Welcome Tree. He has a dry sense of humor. Imagine the Sahara Desert. You sometimes have to stretch to get Rusty's humor, but it's worth the effort.

Late last year, Rusty confessed in his church newsletter that he once left his Christmas Tree up until April. He got too busy in December and didn't have time to enjoy the tree enough, and he wasn't ready to take it down by New Year's. So, he left it up until after April Fool's Day.

MARV KNOX <i>Editor</i>

Political blocs splinter on chopping block of faith_41904

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EDITORIAL:

Political blocs splinter on chopping block of faith

A daily newspaper headline posed an intriguing question this election year: "Can Kerry keep the Catholic vote?"

The article begged for a sidebar to answer an unspoken question: What is the Catholic vote? And its corollary: What is the Baptist vote?

Of course, no such voting bloc exists. Not 44 years after 80 percent of all voting Catholics ensured John Kennedy's presidential bid. In 1960, Baptist Standard Editor E.S. James called Kennedy "a clean young man with intelligence, ability and competence" who "should be commended for his affirmation that if he were president he would abide by the Constitution, regardless of the attitude of his church." Still, James opposed the Catholic candidate, and judging by responses to his editorial and other reports from that era, most Baptists voted as a bloc against Kennedy.

**A voter who's
passionate about
multiple issues may
have a hard time
finding acceptable
candidates.**

Variety of issues likely to determine how evangelicals vote_41904

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Variety of issues likely to determine how evangelicals vote

By Robert Marus

ABP Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Christian voters likely will discover the choice between the two major presidential candidates may not be as black and white as campaign ads make it out to be, some observers of the religious and political landscape note.

LifeWay Explore the Bible

Series for April 25: Persevere in sharing the good news of Christ_41904

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LifeWay Explore the Bible Series for April 25

Persevere in sharing the good news of Christ

2 Timothy 2

By David Morgan

Trinity Baptist Church, Harker Heights

**LifeWay Explore the Bible
Series for May 2: Christians are
instructed to be good**

examples_41904

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LifeWay Explore the Bible Series for May 2

Christians are instructed to be good examples

2 Timothy 3

By David Morgan

Trinity Baptist Church, Harker Heights

LifeWay Family Bible Series for April 25: The return of Christ should affect everyday life_41904

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LifeWay Family Bible Series for April 25

The return of Christ should affect everyday life

Matthew 24:42-44; 1 John 2:28-3:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

By Rodney McGlothlin

First Baptist Church, College Station

LifeWay Family Bible Series for May 2: We know him if we obey his command to love_41904

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LifeWay Family Bible Series for May 2

We know him if we obey his command to love

Proverbs 3:5-6; 1 John 2:1-11

By Rodney McGlothlin

Welfare bill with funds for charities stalls in Senate_41904

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Welfare bill with funds for charities stalls in Senate

By Robert Marus

ABP Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON (ABP)-Disputes over the minimum wage and other contentious election-year issues have stalled congressional reauthorization of a welfare reform program that includes funds for religious charities.

Churches and charities slow to

feel effects of economic recovery, analysts point out_41904

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Churches and charities slow to feel effects of economic recovery, analysts point out

By Mark O'Keefe

Religion New Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A rising stock market and recovering economy have many of the nation's 1.2 million nonprofits feeling optimistic again, but it could take months—even years—before they see big financial benefits.

Churches must face up to hard financial truth, speaker

says_41904

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Churches must face up to hard financial truth, speaker says

By Tony Cartledge

Biblical Recorder

BLACK MOUNTAIN, N.C. (ABP)—Churches, conventions and Christians face a bleak future if congregational leaders do not actively engage cultural shifts and the perils of consumerism, speakers recently told a national stewardship conference.

Baptists flood Piedras Negras with assistance_41904

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Pastor Israel Rogriguez encourages one of the families from his church, Primera Iglesia Bautista in Piedras Negras, as they struggle to clean up after the flood devastated their home.

This home is about three blocks from the Rio Escondido that flooded April 4 for the first time in at least 100 years. At right, Baptist

University of the Americas students (from left) Cheyenne Solis of Texas, Josue DeAlva of Puerto Rico, Carlos Valencia of Colombia and Paco Perez of New Mexico help clean out the contents of a flood-ruined home in Piedras Negras.

Baptists flood Piedras Negras with

assistance

By Craig Bird

Texas Baptist Communications

PIEDRAS NEGRAS, Mexico-A killer flood shattered the heart of Villa de Fuente on a recent Sunday evening. In the days that followed, Mexico and Texas Baptists worked side-by-side in the Piedras Negras neighborhood to get it beating again.

Flood victim calms children with Noah's ark story_41904

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Flood victim calms children with Noah's ark story

By Craig Bird

Texas Baptist Communications

PIEDRAS NEGRAS, Mexico-As a relentless flood poured through the bedroom windows, Ramona Juarez calmed her terrified grandson with the story of Noah's Ark.