

Love leaves no room for ‘us and them,’ Dallas pastor says

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Love leaves no room for ‘us and them,’ Dallas pastor says

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

ATLANTA—Peace and reconciliation require people to move beyond categories of “us and them” that always become “us versus them,” said George Mason, pastor of Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas.

Mason spoke at a prophetic preaching conference held as a part of the New Baptist Covenant celebration in Atlanta.

Sexual exploitation alive in America; churches can end it

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Sexual exploitation alive in America; churches can end it

By Hannah Elliott

Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA (ABP)—Many church-goers know human trafficking and sexual exploitation are global issues. But more than 200,000 children in the United States have become “sex commodities” as well, Baptist social workers say.

Ellyn Waller and Brenda Troy led a discussion about exploitive sex at the New Baptist Covenant meeting in Atlanta—a city with the nation’s second-highest rate of human trafficking, they noted.

Team-based ministry changing church culture

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Team-based ministry changing church culture

By Jennifer Harris

Word & Way

Organization makes a huge impact on the effectiveness of a church's ministries, consultants agree. The way leadership groups are organized—in committees or teams—may mean the difference between short-term obligation and long-term service.

Deserved or not, committees often have a negative connotation, said Don Simmons, owner of Creative Potential Consulting and Training.

Some churches are shifting from "committee" terminology to a "team" concept.
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"The terminology and methodology is borrowed from government and corporate cultures," Simmons said. "Committees have a reputation for long, boring meetings where little is accomplished and for structures that rarely take a person's giftedness and passion into account, but rather their availability and inability to say 'no.'"

Texas Tidbits

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Texas Tidbits

BGCT launches Spanish website. The Baptist General Convention of Texas has launched a Spanish website to provide resources for Spanish-speaking congregations. The site, www.bgct.org/espanol, pulls together the convention's Spanish resources for churches and makes new materials available to them. Many of the items have been written by Hispanic Texas Baptist leaders.

CERI staffer will shape national policies in Moldova. Jon Meyer of [Children's Emergency Relief International](http://www.ceri.org) begins a two-year stint Feb. 20 as senior consultant to the newly created Ministry of Social Protection in Moldova. He will help the government develop a national strategy and draft policies related to the care of displaced children. He also will teach social work in the government university. CERI—the international arm of Baptist Child & Family Services—began work in Moldova with summer camps for orphans in 1999. Later efforts included Christmas camps, social work and medical support for orphanages, and a drive to provide winter boots for orphans.



Buckner sponsors Global Missions Conference. Buckner International will sponsor its "Go.Be.Do." Global Missions Conference from 9 a.m. to 4

p.m. April 12 at Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas. The conference will feature international Buckner staff and experienced missionaries from eight countries. Participants can learn more about the needs of orphans in each country and discover opportunities available to transform lives through missions during specialized breakout sessions. The \$20 per person registration fee includes lunch and snacks. Maximum cost per church is \$200, and students can register for \$5. To register for the one-day conference, go to www.buckner.org/gobedoconference or call (800) 442-4800 ext. 8061.

CBF council approves budget, reports revenue shortfalls at February meeting

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CBF council approves budget, reports revenue shortfalls at February meeting

By Hannah Elliott

Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA (ABP)—Leaders of the [Cooperative Baptist Fellowship](http://www.cooperativebaptist.org) approved a \$16.5 million budget for the 2008-2009 fiscal year and heard of budget

shortfalls during the CBF Coordinating Council's February meeting in Decatur, Ga.

The council's finance committee reported that, as of the end of January 2008, CBF's revenue had reached only 89 percent of its projected 2007-2008 budget. Meanwhile, expenditures by the end of calendar year 2007 reached 91 percent of the projected budget. January expenditures are still being processed, said CBF spokesman Lance Wallace, although the term's total expenditures will probably parallel last year's figures.

Connie McNeill, right, the Fellowship's coordinator of administration, talks with Coordinating Council members Al Butler, center, and Ann Miller, left, about plans for CBF's new office space at Mercer.

BaptistWay Bible Series for February 24: The Worst and Best of Times

February 15, 2008

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BaptistWay Bible Series for February 24

The Worst and Best of Times

• Mark 14:61b-64; 15:9-24, 37-41; 16:1-8

[By Andrew Daugherty](#)

Human Rights Watch blasts U.S. on Kenya violence

February 15, 2008

Posted: 2/14/08

Human Rights Watch blasts

U.S. on Kenya violence

By Greg Trotter

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—As blood continues to be spilled on Kenyan streets in fierce protest of the disputed presidential elections in late December, the head of Human Rights Watch demanded that the U.S. government take more responsibility for that violence.

“It’s easy to see why every two-bit tyrant around the world thinks he may qualify as a democrat,” Kenneth Roth said in releasing the group’s annual report on human rights. “Kenya is the latest example of that.”



Mothers hold their children as they wait for distribution of food aid at a church in Nairobi's Kibera slum. U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged Kenyans to stop violence that has killed at least 850 people and left more than 300,000 as refugees. (REUTERS/Photo by Zohra Bensemra)

Bible Studies for Life Series for February 24: The model

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Bible Studies for Life Series for February 24

The model

- John 4:4-10, 13-18, 24-26

[By Steve Dominy](#)

Explore the Bible Series for February 24: Do you help or exploit?

February 15, 2008

Posted: 2/13/08

[Explore the Bible Series for February 24](#)

Do you help or exploit?

- Genesis 25:29-34; 27:6-8, 15-19, 34-36

[By Donald Raney](#)

First Baptist Church, Petersburg

Perhaps more than anything else (with the possible exception of sporting events) political campaigns spark numerous and often passionate water cooler and coffee shop discussions. One does not have to participate in one of these long before hearing, “they will say anything to get your vote.”

Bible Studies for Life Series for February 17: The Messenger

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Bible Studies for Life Series for February 17

The Messenger

- Luke10:1-12,16

[By Steve Dominy](#)

Baptists focus on relief after deadly storms hit Mid-South

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Baptists focus on relief after deadly storms hit Mid-South

By Hannah Elliott & Robert Marus

Associated Baptist Press

JACKSON, Tenn. (ABP)—Baptist churches and organizations are both suffering and helping in the wake of deadly tornadoes that devastated the Mid-South Feb. 5-6.

According to initial National Weather Service reports, more than 60 tornadoes struck Tennessee, Arkansas, Kentucky and Alabama. The storms killed at least 56, making the event the deadliest tornado outbreak in the United States in more than 20 years.



Union
University
President
David S.
Dockery
surveys
damage
to the
Jackson,
Tenn.,
campus
after a
Feb. 5
tornado.
(Morris
Abernathy
Photo)

BaptistWay Bible Series for February 10: Discipleship in Dangerous Times

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BaptistWay Bible Series for February 10

Discipleship in Dangerous Times

- Mark 13:1-13, 32-37

[By Andrew Daugherty](#)