

# Oklahoma Baptist feels called to minister in global hot spots

January 18, 2008

Posted: 1/18/08

## Oklahoma Baptist feels called to minister in global hot spots

**By Ken Camp**

*Managing Editor*

BARTLESVILLE, Okla.—Day 27 of a planned 40-day fast, in a cabin on Michigan’s upper peninsula, Kevin Turner believes God called him to ministry—specifically in war zones, disaster areas and places where Christians are persecuted.

“I believe we’re sent into the hot spots of the world,” said Turner, president of Strategic World Impact, based in Bartlesville, Okla. “Our approach is to get in, be part of the solution, make an impact and get out safely. We’re not doing long-term development. It’s a stopgap ministry to touch the lives of people who are standing on the brink of eternity.”

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A child  
peers out  
of a hut not  
far from  
Nyala, a  
village  
affected by  
violence in  
southern  
Darfur.  
(RNS  
photo/Chris  
Herlinger)

# Hands-on missions in Africa

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<p>Andrew Bentley, a member of Green Acres Baptist Church in Tyler, examines a young resident of the Ministry of Mercy orphanage in Otutulu, Nigeria.</p>	<p>Cathy Steenhoek from Pella, Iowa, works with a boy during a Buckner International mission trip to Kenya.</p>	<p>Nancy Stretch, a nurse practitioner from Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas, examines a child in Busia, Kenya. Wilshire has an ongoing partnership in Busia through Buckner.</p>
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## **Hands-on missions in Africa**

*When needs become names and epidemics emerge as faces*

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

USTIN—When she made her first trip to Congo, situations Laura Seay was

studying in books became real to her. And soon, it grabbed her heart as the country became part of her life.

As a University of Texas doctoral student, Seay is studying the infrastructure of Congo. Each day, Seay—a member of First Baptist Church in Austin—looks for signs of hope and places where Baptists can aid people in need. Most often, she finds them in churches that have begun shouldering the load of providing social services such as medical care.



Jon Cannon, a member of First Baptist Church in Amarillo, comforts a baby after the child receives an injection at a medical clinic at the Baptist Children's Center in Nairobi, Kenya, a ministry of Buckner International.  
(Photo/Courtesy of Jeff Raines)

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# Caring for the poor: Whose job is it—church or state?

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## Caring for the poor: Whose job is it—church or state?

**By Marv Knox**

*Editor*

Care for people Jesus called “the least of these” requires response from both congregations and government, according to specialists who focus on ministry to the poor and on church/ state relations.

As participants in both church and state, Christians should minister directly to the poor and also advocate to the government on their behalf, specialists stressed.

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Danica Simmons, a registered nurse at Mission East Dallas, treats Francisco, a patient at the ministry's clinic. Launched by Shiloh Terrace Baptist Church, Mission East Dallas provides medical care for uninsured and underinsured people—particularly the working poor—in eastern Dallas County. (PHOTO/Angela Best)

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# Responding to the Luke 4 mandate

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# Responding to the Luke 4 mandate

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

For some Christians, listening to the news is like hearing a prayer list. More than 2 million people displaced in Sudan. More than 1.5 million Iraqi children left homeless. Residents of Southeast Texas and Louisiana still rebuilding two years after hurricanes Rita and Katrina.

Nearly every story is a reminder of the pain and suffering that remains in the world. And God uses many of them to call people and churches to serve around the globe.

LaKedra  
Robertson  
from  
Washington,  
D.C., shares  
Christ's love  
with a child  
in Kenya  
during a  
Shoes for  
Orphan Souls  
trip  
sponsored by  
Buckner  
International.  
(Buckner  
Photo)

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## On the Move

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## On the Move

- **Kim Bartel** to Central Church in Bellaire as associate pastor.
- **Jack Bourland** to First Church in Inez as interim pastor.
- **Alan Dawson** has resigned as children's minister at Parkside Church in Denison to accept a similar position in Tulsa, Okla.
- **Tyler Freeze** to First Church in Gunter as minister to students.

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## BUA dedicates Piper Village

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## BUA dedicates Piper Village

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Baptist University of the Américas President René Maciel marks the opening of school's Piper Village housing community with a ribbon-cutting, along with (left to right) Teo Cisneros, chairman of the BUA board of trustees; Babs Baugh of San Antonio; Paul Piper Jr. & Shirley Piper of Wilson, Wyo.; Josué Grijalva, former president of the school; and Katy Piper of San Antonio. The 60,000 square-foot, \$6.2 million apartment community initially will house more than 180 students and their families. The housing community effectively triples the amount of on-campus housing the university has to offer students.

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# Rob Bell: Christians shouldn't fear controversy over doctrine

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## Rob Bell: Christians shouldn't fear controversy over doctrine

**By Drew Nichter**

*Kentucky Western Recorder*

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (ABP)—Precise definitions and formulations of doctrines aren't necessary prerequisites to evangelism or Christian unity, said author [Rob Bell](#), pastor of Mars Hill Bible Church in Grand Rapids, Mich., who has become an increasingly controversial figure among evangelical Christians.

Bell rose to prominence rapidly after his Mars Hill congregation, founded in 1999, grew to more than 10,000 members in only a few years. He also has a popular video series and has written two best-selling books, *Velvet Elvis* and *Sex God*.

Rob Bell
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# Survey: Unchurched Americans say church is full of hypocrites

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## Survey: Unchurched Americans say church is full of hypocrites

**By Adelle M. Banks**

*Religion News Service*

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Almost three-quarters of Americans who haven't darkened the door of a church in the last six months think it is "full of hypocrites," and even more of them consider Christianity to be more about organized religion than about loving God and people, a new survey revealed.

Almost half the people surveyed—44 percent—agreed with the statement: "Christians get on my nerves."

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# Former Klansman reflects on how God's grace redeemed a life of hate

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## Former Klansman reflects on how God's grace redeemed a life of hate

**By Roy Hoffman**

*Religion News Service*

SPRINGFIELD, Va. (RNS)—Softspoken Tommy Tarrants leans back in his office chair, surrounded by books on religion and philosophy, and looks down at a newspaper headline from Nov. 28, 1968. It reads: "Tarrants Found Guilty, Sentenced to 30 Years." The 60-year old sees a mugshot of himself at age 21 next to the story.

"A self-styled guerrilla waging a holy crusade' against a 'Communist-Jewish conspiracy' was convicted Wednesday night of the attempted bombing of the home of a Jewish businessman," the article said.

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Former white  
supremacist  
and KKK  
member  
Tommy  
Tarrants now  
leads the C.S.  
Lewis Institute  
outside  
Washington,  
D. C.,  
mentoring  
young  
scholars who  
want to delve  
deeper into  
the Christian  
faith. (RNS  
photos/John  
David Mercer  
& Louise  
Krafft/*The  
Press-Register*  
of Mobile,  
Ala.)

**See related  
article:**

[Redeemed  
Klansman  
reunites with  
long-ago  
victim](#)

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# Texas Tidbits

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## Texas Tidbits

**Ruane named Standard development director.** Tom Ruane, who served 36 years with the Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board staff, has been named director of development for the Baptist Standard. He will work alongside Leroy Fenton. Ruane served as a campus minister and Bible teacher at Tarleton State University, Howard Payne University and the University of Texas at Arlington. He worked in the student ministry division at the Baptist Building from 1979 to 2000. Since then, he has been associate coordinator of institutional ministries and director of church relations consultants. He has been interim pastor of 26 churches and the pastor of two cowboy churches, in Ennis and in Kaufman County, where he continues to serve.

**Weslaco church returns funds to BGCT.** First Baptist Church in Weslaco returned \$26,550 in Baptist General Convention of Texas church-starting funds that were used in a questionable manner. The funds were allocated to First Baptist Church to start a congregation that would originate as a third worship service at First Baptist Church. Most of the membership of First Baptist Church reportedly never understood it was starting another congregation, and former Pastor Jonathan Becker claimed

the BGCT funds as a salary supplement for leading the new church. Last fall, Becker returned the funds to First Baptist Church in Weslaco, and the church agreed to return the funds to the BGCT. The BGCT has agreed not to seek any additional funds from the congregation. The total returned matches the amount BGCT records show went to First Baptist Church in Weslaco for the church-start in question. Additional funds were used to support First Baptist Church's work in starting two other churches that continue operation. BGCT funds appear to have been used according to the guidelines in those instances, administrators report.

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## **TOGETHER: Texas Baptists Engage evangelism**

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### **TOGETHER: Texas Baptists 'Engage' evangelism**

"Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved" (Romans 10:1).

The Apostle Paul loved people. He yearned for them to know God as he had come to know him. It is much too easy to get preoccupied with good things and neglect the main thing, the matters that have eternal consequences.

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Executive  
Director  
BGCT  
Executive  
Board

The Engage evangelism conference stirred my heart for those who need to know Jesus and his power to change and save their lives. There is eternal value in listening to evangelists preach the gospel and share their stories. We all need times of reminding that people are all around us whom we are not seeing, and they are hungry for a relationship with God. A Christian loves to share with people that they do matter to God, and Jesus is the proof.

We heard challenging preaching and authentic testimonies. I am grateful that in my last month as your executive director, I had the privilege of being a part of the rebirth of the evangelism conference. I call on all Texas Baptists to pray for Jon Randles, our new evangelism director, and his wife, Kelly, as they offer themselves to God and to our churches for renewing in our hearts a passion for souls.

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## **Satanists arrested on suspicion of arson in Ala. church burnings**

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# Satanists arrested on suspicion of arson in Ala. church burnings

**By Grace Thornton**

*Alabama Baptist*

PHENIX CITY, Ala. (ABP)—Two professed Satanists have been charged with a recent series of arsons at Baptist and Methodist churches in rural eastern Alabama.

The men—both age 21—allegedly set fires at Woodland Baptist Church in Phenix City, Greater Peace and Goodwill African Methodist Episcopal Church in Crawford and Greater Bethelpore Baptist Church in Smiths Station.