

Huckabee, Obama early victories spotlight religion in 2008 campaign

January 7, 2008

Posted: 1/07/08

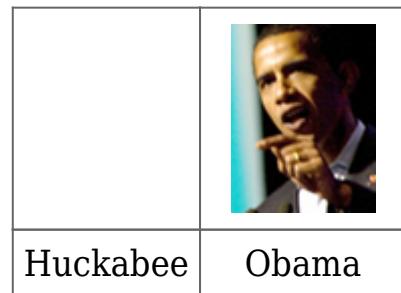
Huckabee, Obama early victories spotlight religion in 2008 campaign

By **Robert Marus**

Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Come-from-behind wins by overtly Christian presidential candidates in the Iowa caucuses put even more of the spotlight on faith issues in the 2008 election cycle, according to two experts on religion and politics.

Baptist minister Mike Huckabee played David to Mitt Romney's Goliath on the Republican side, with the former Arkansas governor walloping the former Massachusetts governor's better-funded and -staffed campaign.



Kenya violence affects Wayland students

January 7, 2008

Posted: 1/04/08

Kenya violence affects Wayland students

By Jonathan Petty

Wayland Baptist University

LIMURU, Kenya—Students attending the Wayland Baptist University campus near Nairobi have had family members killed in the violence that has erupted following a disputed election. Administrators are monitoring the situation to determine whether to postpone the start of a new semester.

Wayland's campus, sponsored in conjunction with the Kenya Baptist Theological College, is about 24 kilometers from Nairobi where some of the worst violence has occurred.

Christians killed, churches burned in India

January 7, 2008

Posted: 1/04/08

Christians killed, churches burned in India

WASHINGTON, D.C. (BWA)—Ten Christians were killed, and about 90 churches and 600 homes torched by Hindu militants in eastern India around Christmas, a Baptist official there reported to the Baptist World Alliance.

“Fifty to 70 Hindu radicals pulled out Pastor Junas Digal from a parked bus, paraded him on the road, all the way beating him with sticks and hands, and finally shaved his head to claim him a Hindu,” said Swarupananda Patra, general secretary of the All Orissa Baptist Churches Federation.

In Bamunigham, in the Kandhamal district of Orissa, two Christians were shot and injured, shops operated by Christians destroyed, 20 churches damaged, and three churches razed on Christmas Eve, Patra reported.

On Christmas, Christians were terrorized, Christmas worship services disrupted and churches forced to close, while Christians hid in “forests to evade attacks from these Hindus,” Patra continued.

Around the State

January 7, 2008

Posted: 1/04/08

Around the State

- **Don Lane**, founder of CityChurch Ministries in Amarillo, was named Man of the Year for 2007 by the *Amarillo Globe-News*.
- **Brady-Coleman-Runnels Baptist Area** is now Lake Ivie Baptist Association. Barry Taylor, who had been pastor of First Church in Winters, has been elected ministry director.

More than 13,000 Christmas cards were distributed in the wings of the Gib Lewis Correctional Unit in Woodville. Each inmate also received a calendar and date book. Baptist churches participating in the effort included First Church in Woodville, Dogwood Hills Church in Woodville, First Church in Warren, Hillister Church in Hillister and First Church in Colmesneil, as well as New Bethel Baptist Association and churches of other denominations.

- **The LifeWay Christian Resources store** in Lubbock is relocating. Beginning Jan. 15, its 6,000-square-foot facility will be at the interchange of Loop 289 and Marsha Sharp Freeway at the Canyon West Shopping Center. The grand opening celebration will be held Jan. 26-Feb. 2.
- **The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor** granted degrees to 183 students during winter commencement ceremonies, including 170 undergraduate degrees and 13 master's degrees. Stephen Alston of Temple, Kayla Carr of Brenham and Audra Musser of Hewitt won awards for the highest grade-point average.

High-tech audio Bibles bring Scriptures to life, users say

January 7, 2008

Posted: 1/04/08

High-tech audio Bibles bring Scriptures to life, users say

By Kat Glass

Religion News Service

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (RNS) —Often when Mike Sheppard listens to the stories of the Crucifixion or Mary's discovery of the empty tomb, he gets so distracted he almost forgets he's behind the wheel.

"There are points in the New Testament where you'll be brought to tears while you're driving down the road," said Sheppard, 56, a computer software technician in Winston-Salem, N.C.



Baptist Briefs

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Posted: 1/04/08

Baptist Briefs

Kentucky editor accepts post at Ouachita. Trennis Henderson, editor of the Kentucky Baptist *Western Recorder* newspaper, has accepted a position as vice president for communications at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark. Henderson, who has edited the *Recorder* since 1999, has served more than 25 years in Baptist journalism. He previously was editor of the *Arkansas Baptist News* and managing editor of Missouri's *Word & Way*. Henderson, a 1983 graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, also graduated from the College of the Ozarks in Point Lookout, Mo. Henderson and his wife, Pam, are members of Crestwood (Ky.) Baptist Church, where he is a deacon and she directs the church's weekday preschool ministry. Their two daughters are students at Taylor University in Upland, Ind.



Novelist Grisham joins New Baptist Covenant lineup. Best-selling

author John Grisham, whose recent novels have revealed his Christian faith, will deliver a rare public speech at the New Baptist Covenant meeting in late January. The 53-year-old Grisham, a lifelong Baptist, has taught Sunday school to young couples and 4-year-olds and regularly goes with fellow church members on mission-service trips. Grisham, a member of University Baptist Church in Charlottesville, Va., joins a lineup of Baptists who will address the three-day interracial meeting in Atlanta, including former presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, former Vice President Al Gore, and Republican senators Lindsey Graham (S.C.) and Charles Grassley (Iowa). "The Celebration of a New Baptist Covenant," organized by Carter, will seek to unite an estimated 20 million Baptists Jan. 30-Feb. 1 around an agenda of Christ-centered social ministry. Forty Baptist organizations in the United States and Canada are participating, including the four main black Baptist conventions and most of the other Baptist denominations except the Southern Baptist Convention.

Cartoon

January 7, 2008

Posted: 1/04/08

Volunteer teachers needed in China

January 7, 2008

Posted: 1/04/08

Volunteer teachers needed in China

Volunteers for China has 10 service opportunities scheduled in 2008. Most involve teaching conversational English in high schools, colleges or universities.

Job assignments vary in length from one month to one year. A stipend, housing and some airfare assistance is provided in some cases. A valid U.S. passport is required for all assignments.

For more information, call (865) 983-9852, e-mail cen29529@centurytel.net or visit volunteersforchina.org.

Study finds limits to Willow Creekâs success model

January 7, 2008

Posted: 1/04/08

Study finds limits to Willow Creek's success model

By **Adelle M. Banks**

Religion News Service

CHICAGO (RNS)—Willow Creek Community Church, the suburban Chicago megachurch that has become a model for some of the nation's largest churches, started more than a quarter-century ago by asking the question: Why don't people go to church?

Now, church leaders are looking for new ways to keep them there after new research revealed that worshippers' spiritual growth did not keep pace with their involvement in church activities.

- [Time to revamp discipleship methods?](#)
- [Raising the bar for membership](#)
 - Study finds limits to Willow Creek's success model

Raising the bar for membership

January 7, 2008

Posted: 1/04/08

Raising the bar for membership

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

DALLAS—In a growing number of Baptist churches, new arrivals learn an important lesson early: Membership has its privileges, but it also has its responsibilities.

“We want to create a culture of discipleship here,” said John Wilson, minister of Christian education at Friendship-West Baptist Church, an African-American megachurch in southwest Dallas.

New
requirements
create culture of
discipleship,
some churches
insist.

Time to revamp discipleship methods?

January 7, 2008

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Time to revamp discipleship methods?

By **John Hall**

Texas Baptist Communications

More than two decades after he helped many Baptist churches breathe new life into discipleship training, Roy Edgemon believes it's time take a new look at how churches make disciples.

In the early 1980s, the Southern Baptist Convention's Sunday School Board asked Edgemon to revamp its approach to discipleship as attendance to Sunday night church training was on what seemed an irreversible decline.

Some experts say, 'Absolutely, yes'

- Time to revamp discipleship methods?
 - [Raising the bar for membership](#)
 - [Study finds limits to Willow Creek's success model](#)

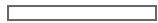
Faith Digest

January 7, 2008

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Faith Digest

Virginia Tech professor named 'most inspiring.' A Holocaust survivor who helped save students' lives before dying during a shooting spree at Virginia Tech last April was named by Beliefnet.com as its most inspiring person of 2007. Liviu Librescu, 76, was one of 32 killed at the school in Blacksburg, Va., but is credited with preventing more deaths by barricading the door of his classroom and telling students to jump out of windows to avoid the gunman. Librescu is the eighth person to be so honored by Beliefnet. The previous year, residents of the Amish community of Nickel Mines, Pa., were recognized for their forgiving reaction to the murder of five schoolgirls.



Egg-producing monks crack under PETA pressure. A Trappist abbey in South Carolina has announced it will end its egg production business after accusations of animal cruelty by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. PETA accused the monks of mistreating chickens on their egg farm and sent an investigator, posing as a retreat participant at the abbey, who found evidence of "shocking cruelty" to the hens. Earlier, abbey officials said the monks had followed guidelines of the United Egg Producers to ensure the hens were treated well, and an audit found the

abbey to be in compliance with the guidelines. Stan Gumula, abbot of Mepkin Abbey, said the monks will phase out egg production over the next 18 months and seek a new industry that will aid them in meeting their expenses. The monks follow a tradition of agricultural work as a basic component of monastic life.