

Baptist Briefs

November 2, 2007

Posted: 11/02/07

Baptist Briefs

Land named to new term on commission. Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, has been appointed to a fourth term on the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky reappointed Land to a two-year term on the nine-person panel. The commission, a nonpartisan panel appointed by the president and members of Congress, researches the status of religious liberty in other countries and provides reports and recommendations to the White House and legislators. The president selects three members of the commission, while congressional leaders name the other six. The State Department's ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom serves as a nonvoting member of the panel.

NAMB finalizes FamilyNet sale. Charles Stanley, founder and president of In Touch Ministries, and Geoff Hammond, president of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, signed documents Oct. 25 finalizing the sale of the mission board's FamilyNet television network to In Touch. Negotiations between the two ministries began several months ago and were announced in a letter of intent from In Touch to NAMB in August. Under the agreement, NAMB will continue to have 30 minutes of programming on both the television and a satellite radio channel each week. Also, a NAMB representative will hold a chair on FamilyNet's board of directors.

Veteran seminary professors recognized. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary trustees honored John and Robina Drakeford, George and Linda Kelm, and James Leo and Myrta Garrett with the L.R. Scarborough Award, named for the seminary's second president. Drakeford, who taught counseling and psychology and founded the seminary's Baptist Marriage and Family Counseling Center in 1960, was recognized posthumously. George and Linda Kelm were leaders in developing and organizing the seminary's archaeology program, the Charles D. Tandy Archaeological Museum and the Charles D. Tandy Center for Archaeological Research. James Leo Garrett Jr., longtime professor of systematic theology, became a distinguished professor at Southwestern in 1991 and has authored, co-authored, edited and co-edited 134 published works, including the authorship of his two-volume Systematic Theology: Biblical, Historical and Evangelical.

The Ten Commandments â€” 1956 vs. 2007

November 2, 2007

Posted: 11/02/07

The Ten Commandments -1956 vs. 2007

Consider the differences between (A) the 1956 movie by Cecil B. DeMille and (B) a new animated version of *The Ten Commandments*.

Moses

A. Charlton Heston

B. Voice of Christian Slater

Voice of God

A. No on-screen credit (Heston may have supplied the voice of God)

B. Elliott Gould

Pharaoh Rameses

A. Yul Brynner

B. Voice of Alfred Molina

Running time

A. 220 minutes

B. 88 minutes

Faithfulness to Bible

A. It's still show business.

Showman Cecil B. DeMille added a romantic back-story of a love triangle among Rameses, Moses and Princess Nefertiri, but in many parts stuck close to older English translations of biblical texts. The film does not show all the plagues and does not include Moses' return to Mount Sinai for second set of *Ten Commandments*.

B. More Bible, less romance. The new version uses more modern language and leaves out the soap opera subplot. Lower costs of animation allowed the filmmakers to show all the plagues and scenes such as God supplying water and food to the complaining Israelites.

Campiest scene

A. Nefertiri's flirtatious approach to Moses: "Oh Moses, Moses, you stubborn, splendid adorable fool."

See Related Article:

[Kinder, gentler Moses pictured
in new Ten Commandments
movie](#)

B. Moses and Aaron near the end of their lives guffawing about the havoc caused by the plague of flies let loose on Egypt.

Overall vibe

A. Serious, often foreboding. Heston's portentous performance, with a grave voice and serious demeanor in almost every scene, brings to mind the dark, realistic depictions of the Baroque style of much 17th-century religious art. The voice of God is ethereal, sounding to modern ears almost like one of the ghosts visiting Ebenezer Scrooge in Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*.

B. Much lighter. Slater and Gould give the modern version a more personal, laid-back Southern California approach. The film presents God more as a loving, caring deity than a judgmental ruler.

—By David Briggs,
Religion News Service

2nd Opinion: Knowing how the story ends

November 2, 2007

Posted: 11/02/07

2nd Opinion: Knowing how the story ends

By Toby Druin

I am reading *An Army at Dawn*, Rick Atkinson's Pulitzer Prize-winning book about the war in North Africa in 1942-43. Atkinson was a writer and editor for the Washington Post for 20 years, and his account of the war is rich in detail.

I am about a third of the way through the book, but two things already have impressed me. The first is that the United States must remain the No. 1 super power in the world. We must maintain an army superior to that of any other nation— one with enough manpower to fight on two or more fronts with equipment second to none and the ability to deliver them immediately.

America's isolationist bent prior to World War II encouraged Japanese imperialism and Hitler's ambitions. Never should any nation or ruler doubt

that the United States is willing and ready to defend itself and our allies from such arrogance.

DOWN HOME: To logo, or not to logo

November 2, 2007

Posted: 11/02/07

DOWN HOME: To logo, or not to logo

Just the other day, I realized I hold coffee and hamburgers to a double standard.

Beth and Linda, good friends who work here at the *Baptist Standard*, carried bags of hamburgers into our lunchroom just as I finished leftover carryout Chinese—garlic chicken and brown rice, I think it was.

Even though I had just finished lunch, Beth and Linda made me hungry all over again. My mouth watered, and I think I heard my stomach growl, something like, “I will gladly pay you Tuesday for a hamburger today.”

For a moment there, I broke Commandment 10 1/2: “Thou shalt not covet thy coworkers’ hamburgers.”

EDITORIAL: Look past gender toward priorities

November 2, 2007

Posted: 11/02/07

EDITORIAL: Look past gender toward priorities

The 2008 Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting came off much more peacefully than prognosticators predicted. To pick a word from this space in last week's paper, messengers in Amarillo "behaved." More than that, they represented the best of Baptist ideals. Even when they disagreed, they did so agreeably, and the atmosphere in the assembly hall and hallways was warm and harmonious.

Many Texas Baptists contributed to this positive atmosphere, but none moreso than the president and presidential candidates. President Steve Vernon embodied a genial, caring and helpful Christian spirit. And presidential contenders Joy Fenner and David Lowrie elevated cordiality to new levels. They all set standards of grace.



Our guest speakers, Baptist World Alliance President David Coffey and pastor/author Rick Warren, helped us look beyond ourselves to greater issues. Coffey reminded the BGCT of its place in world Baptist affairs, and Warren helped us see how our present and momentary challenges are insignificant compared to a lost and hurting world.

The 2008 annual meeting will be remembered as the time when the BGCT made history by electing its first female president. Some people predict that decision will cost the convention \$2 million to \$5 million. Their thinking goes like this: Churches are fed up with spoon-fed “diversity” that produced the first Hispanic, African-American and woman presidents in the past four years. They’re particularly galled that a woman was elected president, citing this as the last straw of “liberalism,” the weight that broke their backs of participation.

Faith Digest

November 2, 2007

Posted: 11/02/07

Faith Digest

Evangelicals advocate for Dalits. The National Association of Evangelicals has called on the U.S. government to take action to reduce persecution of the Dalits, the “untouchable” residents of South Asia. Board members of the evangelical association acknowledged their previous inattention to the Dalits’ plight and urged both the U.S. and Indian governments to do more to help them. About 250 million Dalits live in India, where they are about one-quarter of the population. The statement calls on the U.S. government to acknowledge discrimination faced by the Dalits, issue a State Department report and end agreements that worsen conditions for the Dalits.

Unitarians try to raise profile. Proud of their spiritual skepticism and “big-tent” religious diversity, Unitarian Universalists are not known as heavy-duty evangelizers. But with just 250,000 members nationwide and growth relatively stagnant at 1 percent a year, the Unitarian Universalist Association is trying to raise its national profile with an unorthodox ad campaign. The \$425,000 ad campaign, which will run through the end of the year, has two parts. Traditional print ads in *Time* magazine carry the message: “Is God keeping you from going to church?” The more unusual “advertorials” appear in an online archive of *Time* religion stories under the tagline: “Find us, and ye shall seek.” The online archive features stories that focus on three areas—religion and science; religion in American democracy; and religion, sexuality and morality. Readers will be able to click on links to a webpage with essays written by Unitarian Universalist ministers about these topics.

Falwell's church continues fast-paced growth

November 2, 2007

Posted: 11/02/07

Falwell's church continues fast-paced growth

By Adelle M. Banks

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Thomas Road Baptist Church, the Virginia megachurch founded by the late Jerry Falwell, had the largest numeric growth recorded in a new list of the nation's fastest-growing churches.

Outreach magazine reported the church in Lynchburg, Va., saw an increase in overall weekly attendance of 4,750 within the last year.

Howard Payne honors alumni

and supporters

November 2, 2007

Posted: 11/02/07

				
Robert Carter	J. Mac Rust	Arlen White	Eloise Trigg	Russell Fudge

Howard Payne honors alumni and supporters

BROWNWOOD—Howard Payne University recognized alumni and friends of the university with special honors during the recent homecoming alumni awards.

Robert Carter, a 1973 graduate and vice chairman of the National Financial Partners in Austin, received the distinguished alumnus award.

J. Mac Rust of Gordan, a 1995 graduate who owns his own legal practice in Stephenville, received an award as outstanding young graduate.

Arlen White of San Angelo, a 1975 graduate, received the medal of service. A medal of service also was awarded to Citizens National Bank of Brownwood.

Israel claims artifacts found date to first Jewish temple

November 2, 2007

Posted: 11/02/07

Israel claims artifacts found date to first Jewish temple

By Michele Chabin

Religion News Service

JERUSALEM (RNS)—Israeli archaeologists who have been inspecting maintenance work done by Muslims on the Temple Mount have discovered what they believe are artifacts dating back to the time of the first Jewish temple.

Archaeologists from the Israel Antiquities Authority said workers from the Wakf Islamic Trust had uncovered “an apparently sealed archaeological level dated to the first temple period” near the Dome of the Rock, the third-holiest site in Islam.

Texas Baptist Forum

November 2, 2007

Posted: 11/02/07

Texas Baptist Forum

Synergy of the Spirit

As Baptists, we have long believed and relied on the fact that the Lord speaks through the votes of his people.

- [Jump to online-only letters below](#)

Letters are welcomed. Send them to
marvknox@baptiststandard.com;
250 words maximum.



"My son should have been buried with dignity, not with a bunch of clowns outside."

Albert Snyder

Father of Lance Cpl. Matthew Snyder, who sued Wesboro Baptist Church of Topeka, Kan., after the church protested his son's 2006 funeral. The church pickets soldiers' funerals, claiming God is killing troops as punishment for homosexuality in America. (AP/RNS)

"Faced with a world lacerated by conflicts, where violence is still justified in the name of God, it is important to reassert that religions must never become vehicles of hate. On the contrary, religions can and should offer precious resources for constructing a pacific humanity."

Pope Benedict XVI

Speaking at a peace conference
(RNS)

"He never made me feel that my faith and my intellect were at war with one another. He always made me believe that God gave you a brain, and he expects you to use it."

Condoleezza Rice

U.S. secretary of state, discussing her faith and her father, a late Presbyterian minister (*Larry King Live*/RNS)

In Amarillo during the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting, I believe God spoke to us in two profound ways. The Lord affirmed Joy Fenner and the significant role of women in ministry. He knows if we are going to claim our future, women must continue to play a vital role in helping us to wrap our arms around Texas and the world.

I also believe the Lord called on us to lay aside political maneuverings and to pull together as one people on one mission to reach Texas and the world for the sake of his kingdom.

Memphis church gives new meaning to ‘I Surrender All’

November 2, 2007

Posted: 11/02/07

Memphis church gives new meaning to ‘I Surrender All’

By Lucky Severson

Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (RNS)—Nineteen-year-old Edacious recently came to New Salem Missionary Baptist Church, to surrender—and not just to Jesus.

There was a warrant for her arrest on marijuana charges, and she had come to church to turn herself in. Hundreds of others with outstanding warrants also showed up.

Frank Ray,
pastor of
New Salem
Missionary
Baptist
church in
Memphis,
recently
allowed
court
officials to
use his
church as a
place where
fugitives
could turn
themselves
in to law
enforcement.
Ray said
many
fugitives feel
the church is
safer than
the sheriff's
office.

Kinder, gentler Moses pictured in new Ten Commandments movie

November 2, 2007

Posted: 11/02/07



Kinder, gentler Moses pictured in new Ten Commandments movie

By David Briggs

Religion News Service

HOLLYWOOD (RNS)—The image of Charlton Heston as Moses has been carved into the minds of generations.

Few who have seen the Cecil B. DeMille blockbuster can forget Heston's majestic, commanding presence as he comes down from Mount Sinai and thunders to a wayward people, "Those who will not live by the law shall die by the law."