

BOOKS: Faith in the Halls of Power

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Faith in the Halls of Power: How Evangelicals Joined the American Elite By Michael Lindsay (Oxford University Press)

A common-but-wrong assumption—the evangelical population has burgeoned in the United States since the 1970s—piqued Michael Lindsay’s curiosity and prompted this insightful new book.

“Most people assume that the number of evangelicals had grown dramatically since Jimmy Carter ran for president,” writes Lindsay, a former consultant at the Gallup Institute. He checked the statistics and found that’s not true. The percentage of U.S. adults who claim to be “born again” inched up only six points in 30 years, from 35 percent in 1976 to 41 percent last year.

So, why does it seem like the number of evangelicals has increased rapidly during the past three decades? Lindsay, a sociology professor at Rice University, spent three years criss-crossing the continent 28 times seeking an answer. He interviewed 360 prominent evangelical leaders—not only pastors and heads of denominational and parachurch groups, but also laypeople in the secular marketplace and two former presidents.



What are you reading that other Texas Baptists would find helpful? Send suggestions and reviews to books@baptiststandard.com.

Baptist Briefs

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Baptist Briefs

Brister to retire at OBU. Oklahoma Baptist University trustees accepted the retirement of President Mark Brister during a mid-October special meeting on the university's campus in Shawnee. Brister, who will retire effective Nov. 10 at the conclusion of OBU's annual homecoming, has led the Christian liberal arts institution since Sept. 1, 1998.

Mark
Brister

His nine-year tenure as OBU's 14th president is the third-longest in the university's 97-year history. During the trustee meeting, John Parrish, executive vice president emeritus, was elected interim president, effective Nov. 11. Parrish retired from the university's administration in November

2002 after more than 38 years at OBU. He was executive vice president and chief financial officer from 1995 until his retirement.

CBF falls short of budget. The Coopera-tive Baptist Fellowship reached only 86 percent of the amount budgeted for its recently completed fiscal year and ended the year with a shortfall, the CBF Coordinating Council learned at its mid-October meeting. CBF leaders reported the Fellowship received \$19.1 million in total revenue, including \$14.8 million in undesignated receipts (a category including the CBF Global Missions Offering), for the 2006-07 fiscal year. Expenses for the year totaled more than \$21.6 million. The \$8.2 million in undesignated contributions for 2006-07 was about \$700,000 less than the previous year, continuing a three-year downturn, according to financial data. The Fellowship's financial report indicated the organization finished the fiscal year 2006-2007 with a shortfall of \$649,974 in unrestricted funds and \$2.5 million total.



Buckner's Lufkin program celebrates 10 years of ministry

to single parents

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By Jenny Pope

Buckner International

LUFKIN—[Buckner Family Place](#), a self-sufficiency program for single parents, celebrated its 10th anniversary Oct. 23 with a dedication ceremony of a newly constructed community room named after local philanthropist and advocate Murphy George.

George, who has chaired the Family Place advisory committee since its inception 10 years ago, has been instrumental in leading the cause to support single parents seeking higher education and breaking the cycle of abuse and dependency, Executive Director Judy Morgan said.

Judy Morgan, executive director of Buckner Family Place, presents philanthropist Murphy George with a plaque in recognition of his service at the program's 10th anniversary celebration.
(Photo/Scott Collins/Buckner)

Buckner opens Child Development Center in Romania

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Buckner opens Child Development Center in Romania

By Jenny Pope

Buckner International

TARNEVENI, Romania—At least 60 [Roma](#)—also known as “gypsy”—children will be given a head start in life through the opening of the Buckner Child Development Center in Tarneveni, Romania, a struggling community of 30,000 people with an estimated 85 percent unemployment rate.

Randy Daniels, Buckner’s director of global initiatives, recently joined Phil Brinkmeyer, director of Eastern European ministry, and the mayor of Tarneveni for the dedication ceremony of the new center. Twenty children are enrolled, with enrollment expected to grow to 60 by the end of the year.

Buckner's
new
facility in
Romania
will help
Roma
children
like
these.

Howard Payne students join Cancer Walk-a-thon

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Howard Payne students join Cancer Walk-a-thon

Members of the Delta
Chi Rho sorority were
among more than 120

Howard Payne

University students,
faculty and staff who
participated in the
second annual HPU

Breast Cancer

Awareness Walk-a-thon

recently. University

Nurse Sandy Smith
coordinated the event,
which raised more than
\$2,600 to benefit the
Alliance for Women &
Children, which serves
a 23-county area in
west central Texas.

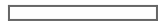
Funds help provide
education, detection
services and treatment.

(Photo/Howard Payne
University)

Cartoon

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CBF council affirms UN anti-poverty goals

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CBF council affirms UN anti-poverty goals

By Greg Warner

Associated Baptist Press

DECATUR, Ga. (ABP)—The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's governing board endorsed the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals, joining many governmental and religious bodies in the global fight against extreme poverty, hunger and disease.

Colleen Burroughs, executive vice president of Passport Camps in

Birmingham, Ala., made a motion at the June general assembly urging CBF to adopt the Millennium Development Goals as a framework for addressing urgent global issues. Her motion asked the council to study the issue. The council's endorsement, approved without opposition, will be presented to the general assembly for approval in June.

New collaboration shows ‘reconstruction’ of Baptist family, CBF leader maintains

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**New collaboration shows
‘reconstruction’
of Baptist family, CBF leader
maintains**

By Greg Warner

Associated Baptist Press

DECATUR, Ga. (ABP)—The Baptist family is undergoing “something of a reconstruction” these days, said Daniel Vestal, executive coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

After decades of infighting within and isolation between various Baptist groups, an unprecedented opportunity has emerged for Baptists to work together and learn from each other, said Vestal, a leader among moderate Baptists nationwide.

CBF Coordinating Council members participate in a brainstorming activity as part of a process to discern priorities for the Fellowship's work. (CBF/Lance Wallace photo)

â"I love to see people come

together to worship

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'I love to see people come together to worship'

By Leann Callaway

Special to the Baptist Standard

GRAPEVINE—When [Chris Clayton](#) leads worship services at student events, he wants young people to do more than enjoy the experience. He wants them to learn about the meaning of worship and embrace worship as a lifestyle.

"My prayer is that people will be reminded that we serve and worship a holy God who is more than we can ever fathom," Clayton said. "Sometimes I feel that we often tip our hat to God and go about our week without ever encountering him and recognizing him for the holy and righteous God that he is."

Chris Clayton

2nd Opinion: A lifelong friend & the Messiah

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2nd Opinion: A lifelong friend & the Messiah

By James Leo Garrett Jr.

He and I became friends in third grade in a public school more than 70 years ago. He was from a Jewish family of the Reform faith. I was from a Southern Baptist family. As a youth, I tried to live as a Christian before my friend but made no overt effort to lead my friend to Christ. Through elementary school, junior high and senior high, our friendship continued. In adulthood, despite living in separate locations, that friendship endured.

My friend turned from the career of his distinguished lawyer father to farming and ranching, becoming a major statewide leader in that field. He was not devoted to Reform Judaism and married a Gentile. He became more accurately a secular man with a high sense of integrity and honesty but believed that death brings the end of existence.

During my friend's later years, as Parkinson's disease began to inhibit his mobility, I visited him more frequently. I gave him selected Messianic passages from the Old Testament, but with little effect, for he was not familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures. But when I gave him Lee Strobel's *The Case for Easter*, he eagerly read it.

A Christian nurse was employed to assist in my friend's home. She later married a student in Baylor University's Truett Seminary. This devoted couple ministered to my friend and his wife, both physically and spiritually. They prayed for and with my friend and shared the gospel of grace and the promise of eternal life. A lady who has a Christian ministry to Jewish people prayed daily for my friend. The pastor of my friend's farm manager came regularly to pray and to give testimony.

God-sized vision drives Corpus Christi church to plant churches

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God-sized vision drives Corpus Christi church to plant churches

By George Henson

Staff Writer

CORPUS CHRISTI—Pastor Bil Cornelius and members of [Bay Area Fellowship](#) have a dream—commit \$ 1 million a year to plant 10 churches a year for 10 years.

“If I heard that from most people, I would think it was a nice plan, but with Bil Cornelius involved, it’s going to happen,” said Ed Jump, director of missions for Corpus Christi Baptist Association.



[Pastor Bil
Cornelius,](#)

and his
wife,
Jessica,
started
Bay Area
Fellowship
in the
living
room of
their
apartment
with five
people.
Ten years
later, the
church
attracts
4,600
people
each
weekend
for
worship,
and the
church has
a dream of
planting
10
churches a
year for 10
years.

Campaign for debt relief brings unlikely allies together

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Campaign for debt relief brings unlikely allies together

By Mary Orndorff

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—An Alabama congressman is promoting another round of international debt relief because previous loan forgiveness has improved health care, education and security in developing countries.

[Rep. Spencer Bachus](#) is the lead Republican sponsor on the latest attempt to cancel more longstanding international debt, this time for up to 67 countries where even interest payments can be crushing. His motivation is a mix of religious conviction and concern for human rights and national security, and it dates to 2000 when the first of two debt relief measures was approved.