



# REPORT

from the Capital

## Federal agency settles suit over controversial abstinence program

The federal government will stop funding a teen abstinence program that bills itself as an “evangelistic ministry” and gives teenagers silver rings inscribed with a Bible passage.

The American Civil Liberties Union, which in May sued the Department of Health and Human Services to cease grants to the Silver Ring Thing program, announced the out-of-court settlement Feb. 23.

“We are pleased that the government has agreed to stop using taxpayer dollars to fund the Silver Ring Thing’s religious activities,” said Julie Sternberg, an ACLU attorney, in a statement. “The ACLU supports the right of Silver Ring Thing to offer religious programming, but it may not do so using government funds.”

Sternberg and her colleagues had contended in court filings that the program violates the Constitution’s ban on government establishment of religion.

According to court papers, the program received more than \$1 million in federal funding in the past three years. Also known as the John Guest Evangelistic Team, the group’s newsletter said the program’s mission is to “call our world to Christ,” and that one way to do that is “to saturate the United States with a generation of young people who have taken a vow of sexual abstinence until marriage and put on the silver ring. This mission can only be achieved by offering a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. ...”

According to the ACLU’s announcement, Health and Human Services officials agreed to decline further grants to the group unless they prove they are not spending government dollars on religious activities and agree to ongoing monitoring to ensure compliance.

In August, the agency suspended its grant to the program pending an internal investigation. In September, Silver Ring Thing agreed to terminate the grant.

Denny Pattyn, the president of the Silver Ring Thing, told Associated Baptist Press Feb. 28 he is “pleased, ecstatic” with the settlement and suggested the program will continue to receive federal support.

“We did not lose one penny. We’re fully able to get a grant in the future,” he said. “We never wanted to become dependent on the federal government. ... We’ve worked with the federal government to look at some ways to more clearly show the public the separation between the federal dollars and the private dollars.”



The Department of Health and Human Services has ceased to provide grants to the Silver Ring Thing program that gives teenagers silver rings inscribed with a Bible passage.

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# Restrictions on religious travel to Cuba questioned

More than 100 members of Congress have signed a letter to Treasury Secretary John Snow questioning changes in his department's rules that have halted the ability of some religious organizations to travel to Cuba.

"We understand the complicated political reality that exists between the United States and Cuban governments," reads the March 3 letter spearheaded by Reps. James P. McGovern, D-Mass., Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., and Barbara Lee, D-Calif.

"However, we believe it is inappropriate and unacceptable for politics and government to serve as a hurdle and now as a barrier to faith-based connections between individuals. If anything, these connections foster greater religious freedom in Cuba and contribute to a severely-lacking free-flowing exchange of ideas between the two countries."

The concerns addressed in the three-page letter with 105 signatories were also scheduled to be the subject of a Capitol Hill meeting March 15 among politicians, administration officials and religious leaders. Affected groups include the National

Council of Churches, the American Baptist Churches USA and the Alliance of Baptists, which no longer have licenses, and organizations such as the Presbyterian Church (USA) whose Cuban travel has new restrictions. Some of these groups have traveled to Cuba for more than a decade to meet with partner churches and attend conferences in the communist island nation.

The letter's signatories and religious leaders say they are perplexed by actions of the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control, which has given individual congregations less restrictive licenses than the ones national religious organizations have had.

"The issue of individual congregations still being able to get general licenses is particularly dismaying because, for many denominations, the individual church is not a separate legal entity, and it's viewed as the local level of the national church," said Martin Shupack, associate director for public policy in the Washington office of Church World Service, which now has a more restricted license.

"That seems to be making decisions ... on religious matters that's beyond the competence of the government."

The growing reaction to regulation changes comes after the policy was modified in September 2004, and

some religious organizations were issued warnings about it in March 2005. Since then, some mainstream religious organizations have found that their requests to the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) for license renewal were denied.

"OFAC previously issued religious organizations broad licenses that allowed them to select who they wanted to travel and placed no restriction on the number of travelers," said Treasury spokeswoman Molly Millerwise.

"However, OFAC became aware that a number of large organizations were abusing their religious travel licenses by soliciting participation beyond their own organizations for trips to Cuba, yielding less control of the travel groups and their activities in Cuba."

She added that some congregations are permitted to have a broader license, "where leaders of the groups are more likely to know the individuals personally and are able to more closely monitor the specific program of religious activities in Cuba."

Millerwise declined to comment on individual licenses.

The Rev. Stan Hastey, executive director of the Washington-based Alliance of Baptists, said he received a warning letter last year and sent documentation about some 300 travelers who went on more than 20 trips to Cuba over an 18-month period. He learned in June that his organization's license was suspended because one group's itinerary "did not demonstrate a program of full-time religious activities."

Hastey said that trip, which he took, included an overnight stay at a beach resort that has ties to a religious group.

"The purpose of the overnight there was to visit a church, not to go to the beach," he said.

He now cannot travel to Cuba unless his own Washington congregation applies for a license, which it has not yet done.

Some religious leaders say their contact with Cubans has been reduced from regular trips to e-mail correspondence.

"We no longer have personal contact with our global partners in Cuba, and we can no longer participate in missions trips between the two denominations and our partners in Cuba," said the Rev. Elizabeth Carrasquillo, program associate for the Latin America and Caribbean office of Global Ministries.



Photo courtesy of Alliance of Baptists

Representatives of First Baptist Church, Greenville, S.C., meet with members of their new partner church in Cuba. This ministry of FBC Greenville is affected by the suspension of the Alliance of Baptists' Cuba travel license.

# REFLECTIONS



J. Brent Walker  
Executive Director

## Religious liberty: Yesterday, today and tomorrow

The fight for religious liberty always has a past, present and future component. All three dimensions are important, and all three must be held in tension.

We acknowledge our heritage and are informed by the principles and practices laid down by our forbears. We work hard every day, here and now, to challenge forces that would diminish religious liberty and crumble the wall of separation so essential to ensuring it. We always cast an eye to the future—10 or 20 years down the road—to make sure we preserve religious liberty for our children and grandchildren, just as our parents and grandparents have done for us.

The Baptist Joint Committee is committed to being a past, present and future defender and extender of religious freedom. Let me highlight several projects and activities planned for the upcoming year that tie these three dimensions together.

**1** The Baptist Joint Committee celebrates its 70th anniversary this year. Joseph M. Dawson, the BJC's first executive director, opened a full-time Washington office in 1946. But we trace our roots back to 1936 when the Southern Baptist Convention, meeting in St. Louis, Mo., established a Committee on Public Relations to provide a presence for public affairs in Washington, D.C. We mark the beginning of this year-long celebration by hosting the **annual meeting of the Baptist History & Heritage Society, June 1-3, at the First Baptist Church of the City of Washington, D.C.** This gathering will provide a time for Baptists to come together and celebrate our heritage of freedom. The theme will focus on "The Contributions of Baptist Public Figures in America." I have the privilege of delivering the keynote address titled, "BJC=JMD<sup>2</sup>: The Contributions of Joseph M. Dawson and James M. Dunn to the Baptist Joint Committee." I hope you will visit our nation's capital and join us for this meeting.

**2** We cannot linger in the past; we must be busy defending religious liberty in the present. No one bridges the past and the present better than Buddy Shurden. He possesses an encyclopedic knowledge of Baptist history, including the fight

for religious liberty; he embodies a passion for making sure that liberty is available for all today.

As regular readers of this publication know, Buddy and Kay Shurden have established, through a generous gift, The Walter B. and Kay W. Shurden Lectures on Religious Liberty and Separation of Church and State. **The inaugural Shurden lectures will be delivered at Mercer University April 4-5** by my friend and colleague, Rabbi David Saperstein, director and counsel of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism. The theme of his lectures will be "Separation of Church and State: Past, Present and Around the World." These lectures promise to be fascinating and informative.

Moreover, the **Religious Liberty Council of the Baptist Joint Committee will hold its annual luncheon at the CBF General Assembly in Atlanta on June 23 at noon.** Fittingly, Buddy Shurden will be our keynote speaker there to inspire contemporary activists who advocate for religious liberty through the Baptist Joint Committee. Sign up ASAP and be there!

**3** As a significant step to ensure religious liberty in the future, the Baptist Joint Committee has recently launched a new project to reach out more purposefully to young people—the next generation of Baptist freedom fighters. **We are sponsoring an essay contest for high school students.** The theme of the contest is "Why the separation of church and state is necessary to ensure religious liberty for all." The essays, between 700 and 1,000 words, are due June 1. The first prize is \$1,000 and a trip to Washington, D.C. Won't you encourage a student in your church or school to enter this contest? We expect that this will continue as an ongoing project to educate and energize the next generation.

For more details on each of these opportunities, visit the Baptist Joint Committee Web site, [www.BJConline.org](http://www.BJConline.org).

Religious liberty: it demands the best efforts of all of us—yesterday, today and tomorrow.

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*The Baptist Joint Committee is committed to being a past, present and future defender and extender of religious freedom.*

# Brooks Hays: A Baptist Treasure

## A testimonial by his "spiritual son"

By Warren I. Cikins

As one who had the great privilege of being associated with the Honorable Brooks Hays of Arkansas, congressman from 1943-59 and Southern Baptist Convention president from 1957-59, I am eager that the memory of this great man's contributions to American religious life and national public life not be forgotten. He often said that there was no limit to the good one could do in this world if one did not care who got the credit. I am afraid that people have too often taken him at his word and not given him credit for many of his great achievements. Some—through ignorance, prejudice or just plain jealousy—have attempted to play down or even negate the significance of his achievements. Their judgment must not stand. I feel a deep moral obligation to try to the best of my ability to make sure that the record of past events, especially ones that I personally witnessed, is chronicled in an honest and forthright manner.

The philosopher John Dewey once said that history is man's recollection of what he would like to think happened in the past. That makes it all the more important that we challenge revisionist historians whose writings are designed to fit their pre-determined perspectives on the events they have chosen to write about. In setting the record straight, I hope to emulate Brooks Hays, who often quoted Paul as saying "one should speak the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15), however difficult that may be in certain circumstances.

When I first met Hays as a 25-year-old Jewish Harvard graduate from Boston, he had hired me for six months to be his legislative assistant to research many important national matters. It was immediately obvious that he was a profoundly religious Southern Baptist who, while deeply grounded in his faith, recognized the need to keep church and state very much separated. That did not mean that he believed one in public life should not be concerned about the welfare of all citizens of whatever walk of life or status in life they occupied. This commitment was demonstrated in

a book he wrote in 1958 while he was president of the Southern Baptist Convention, published by Broadman Press, titled *This World: A Christian's Workshop*. In this book he demonstrates how an elected official can apply his deep religious convictions in helping solve national problems without violations of the separation of church and state.

I came to observe in Brooks Hays a personality and a style of living that made all those around him take notice of his presence and his innate humanity and modesty. His wife, Marion, said that "Brooks loves

everybody; he even loves some of my relatives that I can't stand." It was obvious that all his colleagues in the Congress—Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives alike—had the greatest respect and affection for him. It was because of this respect for him that the Congress voted to support his recommendation to create a prayer room in the U.S. Capitol for members of Congress of all faiths to use to seek spiritual guidance. He was the essence of kindness and gentility, of civility and moderation. Here again he often quoted Paul who called on all of us to "let thy moderation be known to all persons" (Philippians 4:5).

The extent of Brooks Hays' depth of knowledge and understanding of the chapter

and verse of the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, was awesome indeed (as I could tell from my earlier rabbinical training on the Old Testament). Consistent with his general demeanor, he reflected this scholarship in such a low-key way that all persons, of whatever class or educational status, felt quite comfortable in listening to the many sermons he delivered.

The Lord granted him outstanding oratorical skills that he used to remarkable effect, mixing theology with gentle humor that had significant relevance. He used these talents to co-author a book in 1963 titled *The Baptist Way of Life*, which he inscribed to me as "my spiritual son on all non-Baptist matters." He recognized that he had no monopoly on righteousness and that others who disagreed with him might have



Photo courtesy of Brooks Bell

Brooks Hays

more than a little validity to their viewpoints. As he saw it, it was the combined perspectives of all religious persons that would lead us to divine truths. As both a political leader and a religious leader, he felt an obligation to lead his brethren to help find those truths. Nonetheless, he often cited Edmund Burke, a British philosopher, who said that a leader must exercise his conscience and his judgment, but he must not get so far ahead of the views of those he is attempting to lead that he breaks the bond that ties him to them. I treasure a theological discussion I had with him when we could not agree, and I said I would ask the Messiah when He comes which of us is right. He agreed to that procedure but requested that I ask Him first, "Haven't you been here before?"

Brooks Hays once quoted one of the greatest Baptists, Roger Williams (1604-83), who founded the First Baptist Church in America in 1638, and commented on one of his trips back to England (as paraphrased by Hays), "On this boat returning to England, there are men and women of diverse views; we have Protestants and Catholics and Jewish adherents and a small number of Moslems, and the composite should give us assurance, since each has captured an important truth and I feel safer with the cross-section of religious devotion."

The city of Little Rock became a center of racial strife in the mid-1950s, and Congressman Hays felt he must try to find middle ground so that blacks and whites could live in peace and harmony. Attempting to bring the two sides together in a manner that both could be comfortable with turned out to be a formidable task. No other public official in Arkansas was willing to be a peacemaker between Gov. Orval E. Faubus and President Dwight D. Eisenhower, and people asked Hays why he was willing to undertake such a dangerous task. Hays answered simply, "I can do no other." When Gov. Faubus decided to fan the flames of racial hatred, he distanced himself from Hays and later engineered Hays' defeat in the next election. President Eisenhower admired Hays, even though Hays had supported Adlai Stevenson, and offered him any job in his administration he wanted. When Hays said he wanted to stay in his beloved South, Eisenhower named him to the board of the Tennessee Valley Authority. Later when John Kennedy was elected president, he brought Hays to the White House, and said

to him, "If I write a sequel to 'Profiles in Courage,' you will be Chapter One." At this time Bill Moyers, who had first met Hays when he was ordained a Baptist minister and accepted Hays' advice to work for Lyndon Johnson as a "ministry of public service," said of Hays, "Brooks' courageous stand during the 1958 school desegregation crisis cost him his seat as congressman from Little Rock, but it won for him a place in legions of hearts."

After Hays' political career had ended he spent his remaining years lecturing at several universities and preaching at many churches, with no diminution of his spiritual fervor. His proudest achievement was the establishment of the Ecumenical Institute at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C. President Ralph Scales asked him to undertake this venture, and

he threw himself into it with great energy and dedication. Building bridges between different faiths was a mission he was destined to do. Back in 1963 he visited the remarkable Pope John XXIII, who greeted him as a brother in Christ, the first Catholic-Baptist exchange in many years. Until he died in 1981, he organized many ecumenical conferences not only at Wake Forest but also in many places throughout the country. As I say in my memoirs titled *In Search of Middle Ground*, published in 2005, "Brooks Hays became referred to as an 'ecumaniac,' dedicated to a course of religious outreach consistent with his profound Baptist roots." I call on the many people of all faiths whose lives were touched by

Brooks Hays to join with me in ensuring that his memory is given proper reverence, even though he himself never sought such recognition.

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### In the words of Brooks Hays

"I am for the wall [separating church and state]. I put it like this: that wall should be impregnable. ... [But] to be impregnable it does not have to be impenetrable. Just as the Chinese Wall had openings, or any wall has openings, there must be a commerce in ideas between the two. The important thing is that the sources of power be on opposite sides of that wall; that the ecclesiastical authority not undertake to exert political authority ... institutionally, and that, contrary-wise, the politicians not exert ecclesiastical authority."

From *Oral Memoirs of Lawrence Brooks Hays* (467)

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During his 50-year career in Washington, Warren I. Cikins has served three members of Congress, two presidents and two Supreme Court justices and was a senior staff member of the Brookings Institution. He recently published *In Search of Middle Ground: Memoirs of a Washington Insider* (Devora Pub., Jerusalem/N.Y. 2005).



**Melissa Rogers**  
Visiting Professor of  
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## IRS gives churches helpful warning about politicking

Consider yourself warned. That's a key message the Internal Revenue Service sent to churches and charities with the materials it recently released on impermissible electioneering. While the IRS has merely slapped the wrists of most non-complying organizations in the past, this has put churches and charities on notice that it will react more vigorously to violations in future election cycles.

Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code provides an exemption from tax for organizations with charitable, religious or educational purposes. The code also flatly prohibits these organizations from directly or indirectly participating or intervening in any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office.

In short, this tax benefit is intended to flow to charitable, religious or education work, not partisan political activity.

Nevertheless, the IRS report saw "increasing political intervention in the 2004 (election) cycle" by 501(c)(3) organizations. In response, the IRS is stepping up its educational and enforcement efforts.

Materials released Feb. 24 include new information about IRS investigative procedures and additional guidelines regarding what these organizations can and cannot do during election season. The IRS describes these materials as "the ambitious beginning of additional guidance in this area." One of the overarching points is the IRS will not tolerate bias for or against candidates by 501(c)(3) organizations, even when it has a coat of whitewash on it.

For example, the IRS indicates that it's serious about its prohibition against implicit candidate endorsements. The IRS has found that churches often incorrectly believe the campaign intervention ban is limited to explicit candidate endorsements. For this and other reasons, the IRS has provided some specific guidance, including some "key" factors it considers when determining whether communications cross the line from permissible issue advocacy into impermissible candidate endorsement.

Of these factors, the IRS notes that "(a) communication is particularly at risk of political campaign intervention when it makes reference to candidates or voting in a specific upcoming election."

This suggests ministers who wish to preach

about public issues may avoid IRS scrutiny by ensuring that they do not mention candidates in these discussions or otherwise connect the discussions with elections. That strikes a fair balance between a congregation's important interest in addressing the issues of the day and the duties accompanying this tax-exempt status.

The IRS also emphasizes that voter registration drives must be unbiased both in theory and in fact, and it encourages 501(c)(3) organizations to monitor their Web sites to ensure they aren't favoring certain candidates through the use of links.

Further, the guidance underscores the rule prohibiting churches and charities from selectively giving their directories or anything else to campaigns. "Allowing a candidate to use an organization's assets or facilities will also violate the prohibition if other candidates are not given an equivalent opportunity," the IRS says.

In this same vein, it seems significant that the service chose to release these materials in Ohio. Several Ohio churches and other religious organizations recently have been accused of intervening in the 2006 gubernatorial race in favor of Republican candidate Ken Blackwell by repeatedly featuring Blackwell at their events, among other things.

The IRS report concludes by recommending increased use of tax-exempt status revocation in appropriate future cases, believing an adequate foundation for such action is being laid.

Given the current climate, the IRS is right to increase its educational and enforcement efforts. Moreover, Congress made the right call when it instituted the electioneering ban. It's a sensible quid pro quo for this tax-exempt status, and it has the salutary effect of helping to ensure that churches and charities aren't converted into campaign precincts.

Religious organizations and individuals should do the right thing, too, both for legal and non-legal reasons. People of faith should resist every attempt to drag houses of worship into partisan politics, whether those attempts come from outside or inside the congregation. Contrary to recent suggestions by the North Carolina Republican National Committee, which has asked individuals to forward their church directories, churches aren't part of any political "base." They are houses of prayer for all peoples. Heaven help us if we forget that.

*People of faith should resist every attempt to drag houses of worship into partisan politics.*

## BJC announces essay contest for high school students

To engage high school students in church-state issues and to generate interest from a wide range of Baptists, the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty has launched the 2006 Religious Liberty Essay Contest.



Open to all Baptist high school students in the classes of 2006 and 2007, the contest offers a grand prize of \$1,000 and a trip to Washington, D.C. Second prize is \$500, and third prize is \$100.

Winners will be announced in the summer of 2006 and will be featured in this publication. The grand prize winner will also be recognized at the BJC

board meeting in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 2.

The theme of the contest is "Why the separation of church and state is necessary to ensure religious liberty for all."

Essays should be between 700-1,000 words. They will be judged on the depth of their content and the skill with which they are written. Students should demonstrate a sound knowledge of the subject matter and support their assertions.

For more information or to download a registration form and a promotional flier, visit [www.BJConline.org/contest/](http://www.BJConline.org/contest/).

## Bush adds faith-based center for coordination after disasters

President Bush has called for a center on faith-based and community initiatives to be opened within the Department of Homeland Security to help government and religious groups better coordinate after hurricanes and other disasters.

Bush's March 7 executive order says the action was taken to "better meet America's social and community needs."

A report issued in February by a homeland security staff person found that while faith-based and other nongovernmental organizations provided "essential support" to hurricane victims, they "were not adequately integrated into the response effort." The 217-page report, titled "The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned," recommended that the Department of Homeland Security create an office to better connect nongovernmental organizations with federal, state and local responders during emergencies.

The president had ordered the review within weeks after the hurricane devastated the Gulf Coast region. His executive order calls for the office to be created within 45 days.

Jim Towey, director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, said the new office will improve relations between the public and

religious participants in disaster relief.

"They've been treated like candy strippers when they're really foot soldiers," he said of the faith-based groups.

He anticipates that the office will mostly be staffed by individuals in the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which is within the Department of Homeland Security.

The new office will be the 11th agency center Bush has created to emphasize faith-based and community organizations. Following through on a campaign theme, Bush initiated his focus on religious charities shortly after his 2001 inauguration and called for sweeping congressional action.

The legislation has stalled, but Bush has been able to carry out part of his agenda through executive orders.

—RNS

## BJC and Wake Forest Divinity School formally announce Moyers scholar program

At a chapel service March 14, the Baptist Joint Committee and the Wake Forest University Divinity School formally announced the Moyers Scholar award.

The award will provide Wake Forest Divinity School students the opportunity to work on Capitol Hill for a semester with the Baptist Joint Committee.

The Moyers Fellowships were established by a gift from James and Marilyn Dunn in 2005 in honor of their



Bill J. Leonard, dean of the Wake Forest University Divinity School; J. Brent Walker, executive director of Baptist Joint Committee; James M. Dunn, president of the BJC endowment and resident professor of Christianity and public policy at the divinity school; and Bill Moyers in Wait Chapel at Wake Forest University on March 14.

friends, Bill and Judith Moyers. Bill Moyers most recently served as anchor of *NOW with Bill Moyers* on public television. He has served as a founding organizer of the Peace Corps and as press secretary for President Lyndon Johnson.

Bill and Judith Moyers

were present for the announcement on the Wake Forest University campus, where Bill delivered a chapel address titled, "A Time for Heresy," in which he said that America's deepest ideals are in peril. He called on the listeners to be "heretics" in Jesus' name and join the fight to preserve the common good.

## BJC celebrates 70th anniversary

In celebration of the Baptist Joint Committee's 70th Anniversary and its campaign to establish a Center for Religious Liberty on Capitol Hill, Dr. Walter B. Shurden will be the keynote speaker at the annual Religious Liberty Council luncheon, Friday, June 23 in Atlanta.

The Religious Liberty Council is the individual membership organization of the Baptist Joint Committee.

Shurden, who once called the BJC "one of the most important organizations in this republic," served for 18 years as Chair of The Roberts Department of Christianity at Mercer University. A nationally noted church historian, Shurden is also the executive director of The Center for Baptist Studies at Mercer University. The author or editor of 15 books, he served for 15 years as chair of The Roberts Department of Christianity at Mercer.

In 2005, Buddy Shurden and his wife, Kay, who represents the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship on the BJC board, made a gift to the BJC to establish an annual lectureship on the issues of religious liberty and the separation of church and state. The 2006 lec-

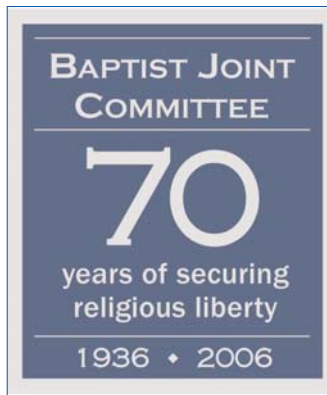
tures will be held at Mercer University, April 4-5.

The RLC Luncheon, which will be held in conjunction with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's General Assembly, is from noon to 1:45 p.m. at the Omni Hotel at CNN Center. Please check the April and May issues of *Report from the Capital* and the Web site ([www.BJConline.org](http://www.BJConline.org)) for more information and to make a reservation.

To help celebrate its 70th anniversary, the BJC is raising \$5 million to purchase and renovate property for the Center for Religious Liberty, which will be a state-of-the-

art education and training center in Washington, D.C.

Programs of the Center and the BJC will help to broaden the constituency among Baptists and others who share a commitment to our mission, provide an opportunity to develop new creative partnerships and appeals to youth, promote scholarly research, conduct on-site as well as teleconferencing discussions and seminars, and reach out to diverse groups across the country.



### Our Challenge—Their Future

**Securing religious liberty for our children and grandchildren**

#### Baptist Joint Committee Supporting Bodies

- Alliance of Baptists
- American Baptist Churches USA
- Baptist General Association of Virginia
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- Baptist State Convention of North Carolina
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- National Missionary Baptist Convention
- North American Baptist Conference
- Progressive National Baptist Convention Inc.
- Religious Liberty Council
- Seventh Day Baptist General Conference

## REPORT from the Capital

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