

# News Service Briefs

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## **CHAMPION OF PERSECUTED CHURCH DIES**

Steven Snyder, founder and president of International Christian Concern, died Aug. 27 due to complications from an infection. He was 54. His death came as a shock to friends and family. He was admitted to the hospital Aug. 26 and died the following evening. He is survived by his wife and four children. Funeral services were held Aug. 31. Founded in 1995, ICC is an international human rights organization based in Washington, D.C., that assists Christians who face persecution and discrimination for practicing their faith. Jim Schnabel has been appointed acting president.

## **ABSTINENCE MESSAGE INFLUENCING TEENS**

Citing abstinence education as the pivotal factor, conservative groups are praising a federal report that found high school teens who abstain from sex outnumber the sexually active ones. The data was released in June in the 2001 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System survey, which polled 13,601 teens, The Washington Times reported. In 1990, the survey found that 54.3 percent of teens in grades 9-12 had had sexual intercourse. In contrast, 54.4 percent of high schoolers by 2001 said they had not had sex. Focus on the Family's Peter Brandt attributes the findings to Title V, a \$50 million-a-year federal program for abstinence-only education programs developed as part of the welfare law, though it is up for debate this year.

## **PRAYER EFFORT TARGETS WOMEN, GIRLS OF 10/40 WINDOW**

In its sixth annual prayer effort, Window International Network (WIN) is focusing its prayer calendar on the women and girls of the 10/40 Window, an invisible rectangle that extends from 10 degrees to 40 degrees north of the equator, spanning from western Africa to eastern Asia. Women and children suffer most in this region that is populated by 4 billion people, says WIN President Beverly Pegues. Girls, who are often viewed as having little value in traditional cultures, frequently face abuse, abandonment, enslavement, torture and murder. The prayer calendar, available online at [www.windowinternational.org](#), begins in October.

## **POLL FINDS LOW TRUST IN RELIGION**

Americans' confidence in religious institutions is at a 30-year low. According to an annual Gallup Poll, just 45 percent expressed trust in organized religion. In comparison, the televangelist scandals in 1989 pushed down American confidence in religion to 52 percent, The Washington Times reported. But while the Protestant confidence rate of 59 percent is about the same as a year ago, Catholic trust plummeted to 42 percent, which is largely blamed on the sex-abuse scandal. Between 1973 and the mid-1980s, religion ranked highest in confidence ratings. This year's poll, which interviewed 1,020 adults, found religion lagged behind the police (59 percent), the president (58 percent), the U.S. Supreme Court (50 percent) and banks (47 percent).

## **Renowned Surgeon Faces Health Battle**

Christian pediatric neurosurgeon Ben Carson underwent surgery for prostate cancer at The Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore on Aug. 7. Dr. Patrick Walsh, who performed the surgery, said he did not think the cancer had spread or that Carson will have to undergo chemotherapy or

radiation treatments, The Washington Post reported. In his first book, *Gifted Hands*, Carson told how he overcame an angry childhood in the Detroit ghetto to become a doctor who performed up to 400 delicate operations a year. A film of his life is in the works.

### **African Missionary Appointed to U.S.**

The Assemblies of God (AG) has appointed its first African missionary to the United States. Samuel Asiedu, who oversaw the AG's growth in Nigeria during the 1990s, is coordinating Africa Mission USA from his base at Family Worship Center in Irving, Texas. During Asiedu's leading of Decade of Harvest from 1990 to 2000, the AG in Nigeria welcomed more than a million new members and added 4,044 churches. With some 75,000 Africans immigrating to the United States each year, Asiedu will help start churches and ministries in African communities here.

### **Ukrainian Missionary Dies In Plane Crash**

Ukrainian missionary Pavel Radchuk, whose ministry reached thousands in his homeland, the United States and Russia, died Aug. 8 in a plane crash near Delta Junction, Alaska. Radchuk leaves behind seven children and his wife Svetlana, who is pregnant with their eighth child. Radchuk was visiting Piotr Morozov, 51, who was apparently giving plane rides in his two-seat ultralight plane. After Radchuk boarded, witnesses saw a wing collapse and the plane drop to the ground from 150 feet.

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