

News Service Briefs

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BISHOPS SAY CARLTON PEARSON 'HERETICAL'

Leaders of the World Bishops Council (WBC)—which represents more than 30 million Christians worldwide—found Bishop Carlton Pearson's teaching on universal reconciliation, or the "gospel of inclusion," "heretical" after a meeting with the Tulsa, Okla., pastor in October. Pearson has come under fire for preaching a doctrine that states no confession in Jesus as Savior is needed to go to heaven. "As it stands it is a heresy," WBC President Timothy Paul Baymon said. "The gospel of inclusion provides no preeminent role of Jesus the Christ, and contradicts the way of salvation for mankind in the Scriptures." Pearson, 48, said he has no plans to modify his teaching.

CHRISTIAN TRUCKER HELPED CAPTURE SERIAL SNIPERS

The Christian truck driver credited with spotting the Washington, snipers' vehicle and reporting it to police attributes their capture to the power of prayer. On Oct. 24, Ron Lantz, 61, a 35-year veteran trucker from Ludlow, Ky., alerted authorities after noticing the car of the suspects at a Maryland rest stop, the Associated Press reported. Lantz had recently joined a group of about 50 truckers during an impromptu prayer session over the sniper case at a site just 25 miles from the rest stop, The Cincinnati Enquirer reported. "You don't think the Lord works in mysterious ways?" asked Lantz, who used his rig to help form a blockade of the rest-

stop exit. He said he would share the \$500,000 reward with victims' families if he were offered it.

'GOD'S LAWS' JUDGE LOSES COMMANDMENTS CASE U.S.

District Judge Myron Thompson ruled Nov. 18 that Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore's Ten Commandments monument in the rotunda of the state's judicial building in Montgomery violates the Constitution's ban on government promotion of religion, the Associated Press reported. Moore vowed to appeal the decision. Thompson gave Moore 30 days to remove the 5,300-pound granite monument. Thompson said previous court rulings have allowed displays on government property if they have a secular purpose and do not foster "excessive government entanglement with religion," but the commandments monument failed this test.

CHURCH SCAM 'EXPLOITED FAITH'

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) accused Wildwood, Ga., resident Abraham Kennard of borrowing nearly \$3 million from at least 1,000 small, mostly black congregations on a false promise that the money would be invested in a chain of Christian-themed vacation resorts, the Associated Press reported. A federal lawsuit filed by the SEC in November charged Kennard and his firm, Network International Investment Corp., with promising pastors nationwide a return of \$500,000 for every \$3,000 they invested. Instead, the suit alleges, at least \$2 million of that money wound up in the bank account of one of the company's officers, and no resorts were ever built.

Pat Robertson Responds To 'Anti-Islam' Criticism

Christian Broadcasting Network founder Pat Robertson defended himself from White House criticism of remarks denouncing Islam. In mid-November both President Bush and Secretary of

State Colin Powell spoke out against anti-Islamic views. Though neither man named Robertson, their comments followed Robertson's remarks on The 700 Club that what Muslims wanted to do to the Jews was "worse than the Nazis." Robertson said of the White House jab: "A minor disagreement among friends does not end a friendship."

Jacobs Given a Bankruptcy Trustee

John Jacobs and the Power Team have been appointed a Chapter 11 bankruptcy trustee who will "take over all the operations of the [ministry] and determine how to maximize value for the creditors," said Jane Limprecht, a spokeswoman for the Executive Office for the United States Trustees. Jacobs said he welcomes the extra accountability. The Power Team filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in August.

Pentecostal Chaplain Sues U.S. Navy

A Pentecostal chaplain is one of four evangelicals who recently sued the U.S. Navy, alleging discrimination. A former Army chaplain, Rev. James Linzey claims when he applied to become a Naval chaplain in 2000, a recruiter told him if he were a "baby baptizer"—a liturgical Protestant—he would be "more qualified" and wouldn't have a problem gaining admission. Neither the U.S. Justice Department nor the Navy will comment on pending litigation.