

# News Service Briefs

The following reports were released during the last month by Charisma News Service. Go to our Web site at [to subscribe to the free weekday service](#) or to access full-length versions of each day's stories. The site also includes a search engine so you can access archived news.

## **GROUP ISSUES 'REBUKE' ON ANTI-MUSLIM REMARKS**

Pledging to heal rifts with Muslims that threaten missionary work overseas, the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) condemned remarks by some high-profile Christian leaders that disparaged Islam. In a meeting convened May 7 with the Institute on Religion and Democracy, a Washington, conservative Christian group, the NAE said the derisive comments endangered Christians working in the Muslim world, strained already tense interfaith relations and fed the perception that the war on terrorism is a Christian crusade against Islam, the Associated Press reported. NAE president Ted Haggard suggested holding a meeting with Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, Franklin Graham and former Southern Baptist Convention President Jerry Vines, who all criticized Islam or Muhammad last year.

## **BAPTIZING GAYS GETS CHURCH EXPELLED>**

McGill Baptist Church in Concord, N.C., was expelled from the Cabarrus Baptist Association for baptizing two gay men in April, The Charlotte Observer reported. Pastor Steve Ayers said many in the congregation knew the couple was gay when the baptism took place and that it was held because it's not up to him or the church to decide who deserves salvation. But Randy Wadford, missions director for the association, said baptism is only for those who agree to repent of their sins. In a letter to the church, the group said: "To allow individuals

into the membership of a local church without evidence or testimony of true repentance is to condone the old lifestyle.”

### **PARENTS UNINVOLVED IN KIDS’ SPIRITUAL TRAINING**

According to a May 6 study released by the Barna Research Group, 85 percent of parents with children under 13 believe they have the primary responsibility for teaching their children about religious beliefs and spiritual issues. But related research revealed that a majority of parents do not spend any time during a typical week discussing spiritual matters or studying religious materials with their children. The survey of 1,010 adults found that although about two out of three parents of children under 12 attend religious services at least once a month and generally take their children with them, most are willing to let their church provide all of their youngsters’ spiritual training.

### **‘CHRISTIAN’ AIDS BOOKLET PULLED**

Florida health officials have pulled a Christian-themed AIDS brochure because the American Civil Liberties Union complained that the state-funded materials contained biblical messages. The 16-page booklet titled A Christian Response to AIDS included pictures of Jesus, quotes from the Scriptures and referred people to Bible passages, the Associated Press reported. The pamphlet had been in circulation for about a decade, and was used in several states. It was yanked from circulation in April after the state health department’s lawyers reviewed the material. Meanwhile, the House of Representatives passed a bill May 1 that promotes abstinence in fighting AIDS worldwide and protects religious groups from being forced to distribute condoms.

### **Singer Jaci Velasquez Defends Film Role**

Jaci Velasquez defended her involvement in a movie that upset some fans for its racy content. "To put your minds at rest, no I haven't left my personal faith in God, and I don't ever intend to," she said in a message at her Web site. Velasquez posted the comment after eyebrows were raised over her Hollywood debut in *Chasing Papi*. Released April 18, the film features the singer as one of three women—in one scene wearing skimpy underwear—involved with the same man. The movie is rated PG "for mild sensuality and language" and opened to lukewarm reviews.

### **Groups Decry Hiring of 'Radical Feminist'**

Pro-family Christian groups urged supporters to refuse to back the Young Women's Christian Association after the group hired well-known feminist Patricia Ireland as its leader. They say the former president of the National Organization for Women is not a role model of whom most parents would approve. American Family Association chairman Don Wildmon said Ireland would "incorporate her left-wing values into the mission."

### **Bryn Jones Dies**

Bryn Jones, 63, a well-respected charismatic leader with an apostolic ministry based in England, died of unknown reasons May 1 during a ministry trip to the San Diego area. Jones founded Coventry-based Covenant Ministries International (CMI), which has several U.S. congregations and works with churches in Africa. Jones was editor of *Restoration* magazine, a prophetic publication published by CMI. Born in Aberdare, Wales, Jones is survived by his wife, Edna, and four grown children.

---

If you have a news tip for Charisma News Service, e-mail us at  
charisma@.