

Missions, studies part of student life

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. - As a longtime youth pastor, Steve Shoop watched high-schoolers find their calling while participating in short mission trips.

But Shoop, who has worked since 1998 as a full-time missionary in Panama, said he had nothing to offer when the students would say that they wanted to return and do something for the people where they had been.

"It was watching students cry as I sent them home," he said.

The search for a program that would fill this need - allowing students to pursue a call to mission while earning an education - was realized this week when seven students began classes through a new two-year missions program at Evangel University.

Called UltimateAIM, participants work with a missionary and study language at a local university. They also complete Evangel courses online and must spend one week attending classes and speaking about their mission work at the Springfield school.

The program is a joint effort of the Assemblies of God's Ambassadors In Mission program for youth, Evangel University and Shoop.

Shoop, 46, gushed about a conference call Monday that included the students and their teachers at Evangel.

"It's happening," Shoop said from Guadalajara, Mexico, where he is helping the students get situated. "It's no longer just a dream."

Shoop pitched his idea elsewhere before Evangel's Linda Wellborn expressed interest.

"Young people are concerned about world need," said Wellborn, director of graduate and professional studies at Evangel, who developed an online degree program for UltimateAIM. "This is a way to combine that humanitarian concern and an education."

The first class includes six students who are in Guadalajara. A seventh student, Chelsea Belgard of North Dakota, will soon leave for China, where she plans to study Chinese, teach English and begin her life as a missionary.

Her interest was sparked by a short mission trip to China she went on with her parents two years ago.

"My parents say it's OK as long as it's under Evangel," said the 16-year-old, who finished high school a year early.

Four more students are expected this summer, and nearly 20 students already have begun the application process for next fall. The number of possible destinations also is expected to expand.

Shoop said missionaries from Ecuador, Hong Kong, Hungary, South Africa and Sudan have expressed interest.

The program is funded in part by a \$2 million Lilly Endowment grant to the university aimed at combining faith and vocation.

"We have to have something to take to the people we are reaching," said Linda Wellborn. "That's the future of missions."

On the Net:
Evangel University:
www.evangel.edu/

Take the time to relax and recharge

By Ann G. Harris
THE TRIANGLE TRIBUNE

Do you find yourself stopping in the middle of a sentence only to forget what you were going to say? Perhaps at a moment's notice you forgot the name of a special friend or acquaintance, but you are sure that it is a familiar face? Or have you ever misplaced your glasses, or a set of keys, only to find them in a very strange place - like the refrigerator or in a box?

If you have, it means that your mind is in overdrive and it is time to rest. These situations are just a few of the unnecessary rituals that we put our bodies through simply because we do not take the time to rest, reflect and allow the world to be about its business. We are involved in too many issues instead of carrying out one thing at a time.

At any age, we can become overwhelmed, overworked and overly stressed, causing

us to temporarily forget important nuggets of information. It is as if the body is saying "no more" and "slow down."

The Bible shares a hint of Jesus' everyday life - one we should emulate. Jesus had many responsibilities, but He had a soft spoken demeanor. While preaching or teaching, He never yelled, and He never forgot what He was doing. He spent time praying and reflecting, working and being the very best He could be. Jesus helped others in their plights without overly stressing and fretting. It was unnecessary to exert abnormal amounts of activity to get people to understand, and it was unnecessary to work to a point of mental exhaustion to accomplish a task. Today, and in our time, it is still unnecessary to overdo, but somehow it seems almost impossible to slow the pace of life.

When we are overwhelmed,

it causes the body to respond in high gear and fight to keep the metabolism running smoothly. Think about it, our bodies take a lot of abuse by the junk foods we consume; the excessive noises, the lack of exercise; the unpleasant environment, e.g., smoke and other fumes. Even the types of things we drink cannot enhance proper and continuous good health. Tell-tale signs become evident; we can physically see the abuse our body is receiving, e.g. circles under our eyes, faded complexions, dehydrated skin, weight issues, crankiness, and, of course, forgetfulness.

As Christians, forgetfulness should not be a part of our curriculum of life. The scriptures remind us that we are to find a balance and reflect on the goodness of God. If we pinpoint time to do this on a daily basis, life's issues will not take charge of us. A pertinent scripture reveals this fact,

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your understanding" (Proverbs 3:5).

Trust God to take care of you, slow down, meditate on the Word and allow the blood to flow freely to your brain. Take care of yourself and see how your whole countenance will evolve into a rested, calm and pleasant individual, one that remembers to do certain things at certain times.

That still small voice inside of you will direct you, if you are calm enough to hear it. It is a beautiful mystery of life to be directed by a still small voice - a rested pampered consciousness. Another comforting thought says, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:6). A rested, tranquil, spirit-led and focused individual can reap the benefits of a wholesome-fulfilled life.

Man sentenced to church for threats and racial slurs

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CINCINNATI - A judge sentenced a suburban Cincinnati man to attend services for six weeks at a predominantly black church for threatening to punch a black cab driver and using racial slurs.

Brett Haines, 36, of Anderson Township, picked church over spending 30 days in the Hamilton County jail. Judge William Mallory Jr. offered Haines the choice Friday after Haines was convicted of disorderly conduct.

Haines was arrested in November for threatening cab driver David Wilson and Wilson's wife and telling them he hated black people. Prosecutors said Haines was drunk.

"It seems readily apparent to me that you don't like black people," Mallory told Haines.

"That's OK with me. But you have to understand that you are at the whim and authority of a black judge."

The church services could expand Haines' cultural awareness, Mallory said. He told Haines he must go to six consecutive Sunday services and get the minister to sign a church program to prove he attended.

The judge said he was concerned about maintaining a separation of church and state, so he asked Haines whether the option would offend him.

Haines said he would like to try it, although he does not usually attend church.

Wilson, the cab driver, said he would have preferred the jail sentence.

"Church don't change everybody," he said.

Minister says couples should make reproduction their job

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alumnus of Mohler's seminary and father of two who teaches social ethics at the Methodists' Iliff School of Theology in Denver.

He protested that whether Mohler realizes it or not, his "full-quiver" theology is "white-supremacy code language advocating for the increase of white babies." Presumably, his fury stemmed from the fact that Mohler's Southern Baptist Convention is predominantly white. But Mohler urged childbearing upon all right-thinking Christians, not just whites or Southern Baptists.

De La Torre also thought Mohler's viewpoint would forbid birth control, since if children are a blessing then "the best that humans can do is have as many children as possible." However, Mohler didn't oppose contraception, nor did he define the number of chil-

dren a Bible-based couple should have.

Mohler also said he wasn't talking about couples who desire children but are unable to have them, only those who are capable of bearing children but "reject this intrusion in their lifestyle." The Bible "points to barrenness as a great curse," he noted, alongside its depictions of children as divine gifts.

The Mohler-De La Torre feud reflected two competing approaches toward the Bible.

Thinkers like Mohler want to apply biblical principles and precedents as fully as possible in the 21st century.

But De La Torre believes it's "the height of biblical naivete to impose modern concepts upon ancient texts." He contends that in the Old Testament, children were a "blessing" primarily in economic terms because in ancient agricultural societies, "extra

hands to work the field" were valuable and offspring provided financial security in old age.

Mohler's crusade was occasioned by things like a Salon.com article, "To Breed or Not to Breed." He objected that "animals breed" but "human beings procreate and raise children to the glory of God."

Other provocations were debates about child-free apartment buildings and tax policies, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution's coverage of couples who prefer to spend money on gadgets rather than on children, and the formation of No Kidding!, a childlessness organization.

To Mohler, it's "sick" that one member of No Kidding! said she transfers motherly feelings to her dog.

On the Net:
Mohler site:
www.albertmohler.com

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