

CHURCHES

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past few years:

■ Temple Baptist, a Redford Township church that wanted to build a \$25 million complex on property it owned along Ridge Road, in Plymouth Township. The planning commission rejected the project in 1994 because it didn't fit into the township's master plan. The church sued, and is now building a smaller, 2,500-seat church.

Charles Washburn was among the Ridge Road residents who fought the Temple Baptist project. "We were accused of being anti-church," Washburn said. "We're just anti-huge church."

"They could build a church of reasonable size and nobody would care," Washburn said. "But this is 56 acres of prime development property."

■ Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church in Plymouth, which planned to build a school and community center at the site of its existing church until neighbors sued. In 1991, under community pressure, the planning commission overturned an earlier decision to approve the construction, and the expansion plan died.

■ Ward Presbyterian, of Livonia, planned a huge complex at Haggerty and Six Mile Road. Five weddings could be held at the same time in the sprawling complex. The 3,500-car parking lot was twice the size of a Meijer lot. Neighbors sued in the late 1980s, and stopped construction.

"It's not like we're putting up a neighborhood church on the corner," said Barry McKenna, church administrator at Ward Presbyterian. "At peak hours, there will be an impact on the highways. The question is, what would you have us do there that would have less of an impact?"

Residents had fewer complaints when the project was revised to

include an upscale shopping center on part of the church's 139 acres.

The Rev. Brad Powell, pastor of Temple Baptist, compares the move from neighborhood chapels to mega-churches to the transformation of the corner market to Meijer.

The size of his church allows it to have ministries targeted for groups as specific as the deaf, the handicapped, grief recovery and anorexia/bulimia.

"We believe the mega-church is more able to minister to the unique groups of our day," Powell said. "We have resources of talent and money that small churches can't."

People may want to attend a mega-church with banquet facilities and a school, but they no longer want to live next to it, said Robert Marans, professor and chairman of the urban and regional planning department of the University of Michigan.

"Increasingly, churches have been getting into social services and after-school activities for youth," Marans said. "Churches generate a lot of traffic. And when there's nothing going on, you have a big sea of parking."

"Boomers are more protective of their way of life," said Gini Britton, a Northville Township trustee involved in the Ward project. "People look at these mega-churches as big business. They come in and swallow up prime land, and they generate more congestion than a Meijer's. People worry about the negative impact on their property values."

Marans points to Irvine, Calif., as one possible solution. There, city planners developed a stretch of land specifically for churches, creating a kind of multidimensional strip mall.

"The Norman Rockwell portrait (of a neighborhood church) might have been fine in a small New England town," Marans said. "But it doesn't work in suburbia."

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ROBERT MARANS
Professor



Clarence Tabb Jr. / The Detroit News
Carol Levitte, 49, of Plymouth stands in front of Our Lady of Good Counsel church, whose expansion she opposed because of the parking and traffic problems created by some churches.



Jerome Delay / Associated Press
Palestinian policemen in Gaza City try to hold back a crush of voters at a polling station Saturday.

ARAFAT

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head of a team of election observers.

Arafat had his kaffiyeh head-dress knocked askew as he made his way through the crowd at a packed polling station in Gaza City.

"This is the first legislative election for Palestinians, and this is a foundation for a Palestinian state," Arafat said as he voted at the Anas Ibn Malik high school.

Leaders of the militant Islamic group Hamas, which boycotted the elections, had said they would claim victory if turnout was below 50 percent. Under Arafat's leadership, most Palestinian towns and cities in the West Bank and Gaza gained autonomy over the past two years, ending more than a quarter-century of Israeli occupation.

Red, white, black and green Palestinian flags fluttered in central squares in the West Bank and Gaza. There was a holiday mood at polling places, where each voter dropped two ballots — red for president and white for the council — into cardboard boxes.

"The era of Israel is gone — the era of occupation is gone," exulted Hanineh Kehwani, a 60-year-old blind woman casting her vote in Abu Dis, a village outside Jerusalem. "We are starting a new era of democracy."

The final borders and status of the Palestinian entity — as well as such explosive issues as the future of Jerusalem and the rights of Palestinian refugees — are supposed to be decided in talks with Israel starting in May.

Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres said the high turnout showed that the vast majority of Palestinians supported the peace agree-

ments with Israel.

Several thousand Israelis opposed to the Israel-PLO peace process held a prayer vigil and rally Saturday in Jerusalem.

In Hebron, the only West Bank city where Israeli troops remain, a Jewish settler was stabbed. Israel responded by closing down central Hebron, forcing voters to get escorts from among international observers.

Despite the boycott by Hamas and other Palestinian opposition groups, many of their followers were seen lined up at polling stations. At several polling places in Gaza, Hamas supporters handed out lists of pro-Hamas candidates.

In the West Bank town of Jenin, polling stations were deserted Saturday morning as thousands attended the funerals of three Hamas members who were shot and killed by Israeli soldiers Friday night after they fired on an army roadblock. But election officials said voting picked up later in the day.

There were numerous accusations of irregularities — both against the Palestinians and the Israelis — throughout the day. Voters, especially in Jerusalem, complained of confusion about where they were supposed to vote, and rumors spread that Israeli police were confiscating the identification cards of Palestinian voters.

Palestinian monitors accused Arafat's security forces of harassment and said some election officials interfered in the voting.

Candidates campaigned inside polling stations, people called on loudspeakers to vote for certain candidates, and in some stations election officials filled out ballot slips for voters," said Hazem Quteneh, a spokesman for the Palestinian Domestic Monitoring Committee.

Voting hours were extended in



Ahmed Jaddalah / Associated Press
PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat casts his ballot for the legislative council that he will lead as a result of Saturday's vote.

Jerusalem because of what the Palestinian election commission called a "massive disturbance of the electoral process" by thousands of Israeli police who surrounded polling places in the city.

After Carter complained to Israeli authorities, the police force was reduced and police stopped videotaping voters. Carter also helped secure the release of four Palestinian election observers who had been arrested.

Jerusalem Police Chief Arifeh Amit said his officers were trying to prevent violence, not disrupt the voting.

At a glance

ELECTION: For a president, and an 88-member Palestinian Council that will serve as legislature. Council's powers and sessions undecided; it will provide at least 80 percent of president's Cabinet.

VOTERS: One million Palestinians, of a population of 2.4 million, were registered to vote in West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem; 52,000 of them in Jerusalem or outlying villages.

CANDIDATES: PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, 65, faced Samiha Khalil, 72, a social activist, for the presidency. For council, 672 people, including 28 women, ran. Candidates linked with Arafat's Fatah faction dominated the roster.

OBSERVERS: Most of the \$35 million cost, paid for mainly by the European Union, involved \$20 million to provide 300 EU ballot observers and 350 from 16 other countries or international groups. Former President Jimmy Carter brought his own team of 40 observers. There were 2,900 Palestinian observers.

BOSTON

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individuals, families and corporations time to get their financial house in order, and I'm no different."

Boston, on a national tour promoting his book, conceded he does not disclose his financial difficulties to readers of his new book. He also said all his debts will be paid by the end of this year.

"Does it diminish my credibility? I don't think so," Boston said.

Income taxes, bills unpaid

Documents obtained from the Internal Revenue Service, the Michigan Department of Commerce, Oakland County and Wayne County courts show:

■ Boston, co-owner of Corporate Detroit magazine, did not pay federal income taxes from 1983 to 1993, resulting in five tax liens spanning 11 years. Total taxes, penalties and interest owed: \$77,933.

In the chapter titled "Smart Tax Moves," Boston urges readers to "stop ignoring the problem" with the IRS and implores them to "never ignore a notice from the IRS."

Among his list of "common mistakes taxpayers make by ignoring the IRS": Failing to file or pay taxes for several years.

Boston, who said he received a \$120,000 advance to write his book, said he pays the IRS \$250 each month "to let them know we're OK." So far, the liability has been reduced "a couple thousand," he said, and should be satisfied this year.

■ One of Boston's companies, Polaris Communications Inc., did not pay

bills to Federal Express Inc., United Parcel Service Inc. (UPS) and the Palace of Auburn Hills Inc. totaling \$12,780 until, in some cases, lawyers for the creditors took steps to seize the funds from Boston's accounts.

In a filing seeking \$987, lawyers for UPS said Polaris Communications "was established and manipulated by Kelvin Boston for the sole purpose of evading responsibilities to creditors."

"The thing I'm most proud of is that they've all been paid off," he said. "I'm proud that I've never declared bankruptcy."

Boston, in the chapter titled "Entrepreneurship: The Ultimate Smart Money Move," tells readers that "Lack of capital remains the number one cause of most small business failure."

■ On three occasions, Boston's landlord — 1300 East Lafayette Cooperative — won judgments against him for failing to pay his rent. In a fourth case relating to office space leased there, the building manager began proceedings against Polaris Communications for unpaid lease payments.

The eviction was averted when an aide to Boston successfully asked Wayne County's 36th District Court to stop the ouster for failure to pay \$678.50. Three weeks later, Polaris moved its offices from 1300 East Lafayette. All four debts eventually were paid.

■ In the early 1990s, Boston and a business partner operating as Polaris Inc. borrowed \$25,000 from William Jordan of Bloomfield Hills for a downtown hotel development that never materialized. Court papers say Jordan was to be repaid in full if the project was not com-

pleted.

When Jordan was not repaid, he sued in February 1992. Nearly a year later the parties agreed that Boston and his partner would repay Jordan \$15,000 without interest. The agreement called for a lump-sum payment of \$3,750 followed by monthly installments of \$937.50.

As of February 1995, court filings show, Jordan had received \$1,500, prompting his lawyers to renew their original suit against Boston. Jordan could not be reached and his lawyer did not return phone calls. Boston

"The thing I'm most proud of is that they've all been paid off. I'm proud that I've never declared bankruptcy."

KELVIN E. BOSTON
author

said the debt "will be settled this year."

■ The incorporation of two companies either owned or co-owned by Boston — including Corporate Detroit Inc., publisher of Corporate Detroit Magazine — was rescinded in 1994 by the state Commerce Department because checks written to pay the filing fees were returned for insufficient funds.

Three weeks after the Commerce Department declared Corporate Detroit Inc. inactive, the company made a second attempt and was successfully incorporated.

"I don't believe that particular check was my check," Boston said, referring to the returned Corporate Detroit incorporation check. "It was

the attorneys on that one."

■ Before coming to Metro Detroit nearly eight years ago, Boston worked in Toledo as a financial adviser for IDS Financial Services Inc., now American Express Financial Advisors.

Documents at the Michigan Commerce Department say clients of American Express made a claim against Boston and the firm with the National Association of Securities Dealers alleging "misrepresentation, suitability, omission of facts and breach of fiduciary duty" for investment in limited partnerships.

The clients, Charles D. and Tamara L. Colvin, "alleged that the partnership investments, totaling \$235,000, were unsuitable," the information says. "American Express Financial Advisors bought back the Colvins' partnerships for \$225,000 ... in light of the costs of litigation."

Boston said he had no knowledge of the claim or the settlement.

A Minneapolis-based spokeswoman for American Express, Lynn Clossway, said:

"It certainly does say there was some untoward activity going on. We don't pay back clients unless we think they deserved it."

Boston now is a director of the Calvert New Africa Mutual Fund, established last April by the Maryland-based Calvert Group and Sloan Financial Services of Durham, N.C. The \$8.3 million fund invests in companies based or operating in Africa.

From Delaware to Detroit

A native of Wilmington, Del., Boston, 41, earned a bachelor's degree in English literature from Lincoln University in Oxford, Pa. After college, he helped found a

housing counseling service in Wilmington.

Boston later moved to Toledo and became a financial adviser with IDS Financial Services — a job he said he left around 1983. He came to Detroit eight years ago to begin his television show and other media projects.

A dapper man who favors bow ties and bright colors, Boston is described by creditors and business associates as someone who makes a great first impression.

Former associates at Corporate

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LYNN CLOSSWAY
American Express

Detroit magazine say Boston advised would-be entrepreneurs to spend scarce dollars on clothes and entertainment to impress others and build business connections. His mantra: Money is the least important ingredient to becoming successful.

A self-described "media entrepreneur," Boston blames his troubled finances on start-up costs associated with the television show. Yet in his book, Boston tells readers that his investment in Corporate Detroit — \$24,800 according to court papers — would be worth "more than \$1 million ... if I decided to sell my interest today."

"This additional wealth was generated in less time than it took me

"People are afraid," said Utan Mosef, a 35-year-old shopkeeper in east Jerusalem. "They are afraid the police will take their ID cards. People see all the police and won't go in."

At a checkpoint between Jerusalem and the West Bank town of Bethlehem, Israeli tax inspectors stopped cars taking Jerusalem voters to West Bank polling stations and checked drivers' documents. Some drivers were given fines.

Police said the inspectors had taken up their posts without permission and were ordered to leave.

Partnership breakup

Court documents filed in Oakland Circuit Court in November and December detail the split between Boston and his partner at Corporate Detroit, Dr. Margaret Betts, a member of the Detroit School Board.

Betts and Boston bought the magazine with a \$250,000 loan from Michigan National Bank secured by Betts' Detroit home. Court documents say Boston put nearly \$25,000 into the business magazine's operations, while Betts contributed "an excess of \$300,000."

In November, Betts changed the locks to Corporate Detroit offices at New Center One, documents show. She charged that Boston falsified invoices for payment, claimed Corporate Detroit assets for his separate company, Boston Media Inc., and improperly signed her name to checks, including a \$1,000 check made out to Boston.

In an interview, Boston acknowledged signing Betts' name to the check. In court filings, Boston charged Betts with being "willfully unfair" by changing the locks "on more than one occasion." He said Betts moved to her home "certain (Corporate Detroit) financial information including ... computers, books and records."

Betts, declining to discuss the dispute, said Corporate Detroit's "finances are more stable than they've ever been. That's not the issue."