

Briefly noted

News in the [May 6, 2008](#) issue

Texas authorities took swift action in April to find homes and resources for the more than 400 children removed from the Yearning for Zion Ranch located outside Eldorado. The ranch is the headquarters of the Fundamentalist Latter Day Saints movement, which allows its members to practice polygamy. The FLDS was once headed by Warren Jeffs, who in September 2007 was found guilty on two counts of being an accomplice to rape and is serving a ten-year sentence. The raid on the compound was triggered after a 16-year-old girl phoned authorities to say that she was being abused and that girls as young as 14 were being forced into marriages with much older men. In court documents released April 7, representatives for the religious group called the raid unconstitutional and an “irreparable” desecration.

A large Swedish donation has bolstered a campaign in Jerusalem to alleviate a shortage of affordable housing for Christian Palestinians, even though that group now numbers 10,000 or fewer. To help stem the departure of Christians, the Lutheran World Federation and partners including the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America began the LWF Mount of Olives Housing Project—a plan to build 84 low-rent apartments and a community center on LWF property on the Mount of Olives. A recent gift of \$4.6 million from the (Lutheran) Church of Sweden “takes us more than halfway in our fund-raising,” said Mark M. Brown, an ELCA pastor who is the LWF regional representative in Jerusalem.