

GREAT MOVEMENTS  
OF GOD BEGIN WITH  
*Prayer*  
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VOLUNTEERS SPREAD  
WARMTH, GOSPEL IN N.Y.

# BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

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## 2014 YEAR IN REVIEW

**T**his edition of the *Biblical Recorder* briefly surveys numerous highlights of the 2014 year. The stories in this edition were chosen by the *BR* staff to emphasize some of the most newsworthy items that affected tens of thousands across North Carolina, America and the globe.

For instance, the killing of 18-year-old Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo., and the outbreak of Ebola grabbed much attention and catalyzed a variety of responses from Southern Baptists.

In November at the annual meeting in Greensboro, more than 1,800 Baptists from across North Carolina gathered to accomplish

“Greater Things” in their churches and ministries. During the meeting, Timmy Blair, Cameron McGill and Joel Stephens were elected as officers of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

The “In Memoriam” section points to some noteworthy Baptists who passed away during the year.

A few prominent N.C. Baptists also deceased this year including Joe Babb, Robert Stewart and Gene Watterson.

In national Southern Baptist life, former International Mission Board president, Tom Elliff, was succeeded Aug. 27 by author and pastor, David Platt, as president of the Southern

Baptist Convention’s mission agency. In June, the *Sebelius v. Hobby Lobby* court case decided whether the U.S. government could compel individuals and business owners to pay for contraception and abortion-inducing drugs. This was a narrow decision in favor of Hobby Lobby and other religious-based companies.

These stories and many more are “need to know” news items affecting individual Christians and Southern Baptist churches. They help inform churches so they can interact with the cultural issues of the day ultimately for the advancement of Christ’s Kingdom.

See pages 6-10 for a look back at 2014’s most memorable moments. **BR**



# Will the *Recorder* be here in five years?

I need to say something very important to pastors, staff and church leaders in North Carolina. We have about four years to decide if we want a news and information source with a biblical worldview in our state. For 181 years the *Biblical Recorder* has been an essential ingredient in Baptist life. The paper has provided news and information on many levels:

- reporting on the ministries and outreach of N.C. churches and associations,
- covering mission work in our state and around the world,
- informing N.C. Baptists about their agencies including the Baptist Children's Homes, N.C. Baptist Men, Fruitland and campus ministry,
- publishing the great work of Southern Baptist agencies like our seminaries, Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, North American Mission Board, the International Mission Board (IMB) and the Executive Committee,
- providing weekly Sunday School lesson summaries,
- reporting on pastoral and staff changes,
- and telling the stories of Baptists across the state.

We are still doing all of these things and more! We reflect the values of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Yet, for many reasons paid subscriptions continue to decline.

Everywhere I go, people tell me they love the *Biblical Recorder*. They compliment our positive emphasis and encouraging content. But all of the gracious, supportive words are not translating into subscriptions.

Cultural and technological changes have caused a large reduction in the number of people who read newspapers. We have stayed on top of these changes, posting much of our content online and using social media.

Our website, *BRnow.org*, is hailed as one of the best Baptist news web sites in the world, and it continues to grow. In 2014 the count of our "unique visitors" increased 480%. That is a phenomenal statistic!

But websites do not bring in enough advertising revenue to pay the bills. Those who browse the Internet are reluctant to pay for access to news sites. Therefore, *BRnow.org* continues to be free to all users.



K. ALLAN BLUME  
Editor

All Baptist state papers are struggling to survive. We receive a significant portion of our support from the Cooperative Program (CP). So the downward trend in CP giving is hurting everyone. The *Recorder* has seen a loss of \$94,000 in CP revenue in the past three years. That is a huge sum for us!

The mainstay of the subscription base for most state papers is the "group subscription plan." There was a time when almost every Baptist church had a group plan for members and leaders.

It was considered an essential ingredient for successful mission engagement. The state paper holds all CP-funded ministries accountable to the local church, and regularly informs Baptists on the impact of CP dollars around the world. People who read the *Biblical Recorder* are better informed.

Our group subscription plans are in decline for several reasons. First, many senior subscribers are in declining health, and many are dying. So churches are dropping subscriptions for these long-time supporters, while adding very few, if any, new readers to their list.

Second, many churches who have faithfully maintained their group plan are struggling to meet their budget. An easy place to cut the budget is to remove the *Biblical Recorder*.

We know ministry is tough these days, and we certainly do not want to see churches cut their missions budget

or decrease support for their personnel. But we believe it is ultimately harmful to the mission of the church to disconnect Baptists from vital information sources.

When I began serving as your editor, a senior leader at IMB said to me, "We need the state papers to survive. The papers are a major part of promoting the Lottie Moon offering and keeping Baptists informed all year long on the work of our missionaries." He said it is not possible for IMB to get mission information to people in the pews without the *Biblical Recorder* and the state newspapers.

I genuinely believe one of the factors in the decline in CP giving and other missions giving is due to the lack of information reaching the people in our pews. The *Recorder* staff can help you resolve that problem. We exist to give your congregation news and information that will encourage their walk with God, strengthen the church's missions giving and support the biblical preaching of the pastor.

Third, few pastors are starting a group subscription plan for their congregation. During the conservative resurgence most conservative pastors did not want their congregation to receive a newspaper that was not supportive of the SBC. For several decades many churches cancelled *Biblical Recorder* subscriptions.

Every week pastors are telling me how much they love the tone and content of the *Recorder*.

They often follow their generous comments with a statement like, "So, you must be seeing a great increase in subscriptions." Wrong.

Baptists listen to their pastors. We need pastors to take the initiative to tell their people about the ministry of the *Recorder*. Most pastors already have a full plate. It's hard to squeeze one more

announcement in the service. But the people in your church family need to know that the *Recorder* is here to serve them.

Let me share few practical steps to keep your church members and attendees informed:

- Talk about the *Recorder*. Tell your church who we are and what we do. We've provided some helpful tools on our website at *BRnow.org/PromoteBR*.
- Invite the editor to speak in your association, local pastors' conference or church. This has been the most effective way to increase awareness and strengthen our work. It personalizes our ministry.

**Baptists listen to their pastors. We need pastors to take the initiative to tell their people about the ministry of the Recorder.**

- An easy way to get your congregation connected is to encourage everyone to subscribe to the *BRweekly*. It's FREE. This e-newsletter comes to your email inbox every Wednesday morn-

ing. *BRweekly* is also a great tool for rapid communication of urgent news.

- Hold a *Biblical Recorder* Day in the church. Contact our office, and we will be glad to help arrange this special day.

- Give a special gift to the *Biblical Recorder* in 2015. We need to raise about \$100,000 each year to keep pace with the needs of N.C. Baptists.

- Support our advertisers. Advertising revenue is about one-third of our annual income. For more information, visit *BRnow.org/advertise*.

- Last, but certainly not least, I pray you will give strong support to CP. This tried and proven lifeline of ministry cannot be overestimated!

Do you want the *Biblical Recorder* to be here in five years? If so, let's do something together to keep this important news source alive and available.

Please email us at *editor@BRnow.org* or call (919) 847-2127 if we can answer any questions and help you keep your church informed. **BR**

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# Great movements of God begin with prayer

**T**here is no great movement of God that has ever occurred that does not begin with the extraordinary prayer of God's people. The time is now for us to come together before God in clear agreement, visible union, and in extraordinary prayer for the next Great Awakening and for the world to be reached for Christ.

For the sake of our nation and the spiritually lost around the world, it is time to humble ourselves before God. For this, I plead with all Southern Baptist pastors, missionaries, laypersons, denominational leaders, churches, denominational entities, conventions, colleges and universities; from student to adult, regardless of age, vocation or status.

As we come to God in humility and repentance, entering into this special season of extraordinary prayer, we plead with God for spiritual revival personally, revival in the church, and the next Great Awakening in the United States. As Martyn Lloyd-Jones writes:

"And in movements of the Spirit the first thing that happens and which eventually leads to a great revival is that one man or a group of men suddenly begin to feel this burden and they feel the burden so much that they are led to do something about it."

I am pleading with each of you to join in this spiritual movement to pray for the next Great Awakening so the Great Commission will escalate to its rightful priority and accelerate to its completion in our generation.

## A look back

Jonathan Edwards was a man who believed in the absolute sovereignty of God. He was the catalyst for the first Great Awakening and was even impactful in the second Great Awakening. Even with Edwards's deep abiding belief in God's sovereignty, he called upon God's people to act, because he believed God would listen to the promptings of His people.

In fact, Malcolm McDow and Alvin L. Reid record

the words that Edwards wrote to pastors directly:

"Be much in prayer and fasting, both in secret and with one another. It seems to me, it would become the circumstances of the present day, if ministers in a neighborhood would often meet together, and spend days in fasting and fervent prayer among themselves. ... So it is God's will that the prayers of His saints shall be great and the principal means of carrying on the designs of Christ's Kingdom in the world. When God has something to accomplish for His church, it is with His will that there should precede it the extraordinary prayer of His people."



**RONNIE FLOYD**  
Guest Column

Therefore, as we look back, we must fully embrace the deep belief that God responds to the prayers of His people, especially when these prayers are cried out to Him in desperation and done in an extraordinary way. Evidence is becoming clearer nationally that God is calling His people into a season of special focus and commitment to extraordinary prayer.

It has been over one hundred years since the last great move of God occurred in our nation. It was in 1857 and 1858 that a movement of prayer led to one million people becoming Christ-followers from a population of only thirty million in our nation. This movement of prayer was begun in New York City by a layperson named Jeremiah Lanphier. After failing to minister effectively to the immigrants in his church's neighborhood, he was moved to pray.

At noon on Sept. 23, 1857, in the Dutch Reformed Church on Fulton Street in New York City, Lanphier knelt alone. Before 1 p.m. six men joined him. Within a month, 100 men joined him daily. Soon, thousands of men began to pray each day at noon around New York City.

This resulted in one million Americans coming to Christ within a two-year span, as well as another one million converted to Christ in Great Britain and Ireland. The church was revived. Christians were never the

same. The fires of evangelism were burning brightly. The advance of the gospel to the nations of the world was profound. Men like David Livingstone and J. Hudson Taylor, and eventually the Student Volunteer Movement, saw twenty thousand young people surrender their lives to missions. Additionally, these great movements of God impacted renowned men of history like Charles Spurgeon, D.L. Moody and William Booth.

These were not perfect times. Simultaneously, tension over slavery was growing and financial panic was occurring. In this time of uncertainty, God's people became desperate and began to cry out to Him. The Sovereign God of Heaven determined to pour out His Spirit in a supernatural way, resulting in one of the greatest movements of God in the history of our nation.

While it has been over one hundred years since the last great movement of God upon our nation, we cannot ignore the moments when the Lord has still moved upon our nation powerfully. For example, in the early 1970s, the Jesus Movement touched a generation, including many of our leaders today. Through this work of God, thousands came to Christ, followed by many of them being called into ministry. The greatest year of reaching and baptizing teenagers in our Southern Baptist history occurred in 1972, all due to the influence of the Jesus Movement. While not a "great" awakening, many joyfully remember the work of God in those days.

Sadly, we now have a generation or more of people who have never experienced anything close to a movement of God with this level of impact. It is past time for this to change. God is ready, are we?

## Our present status

Unquestionably, we find ourselves experiencing days unlike any we have seen in our history. The moral slide in our nation has degraded into a revolution that seems to be out of control. While marriage is being redefined by our culture and the family is under an unprecedented attack, social problems are rising everywhere due to

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## Submissions for Tar Heel Voices

Please send no more than 300 words, along with contact information, to [editor@BRnow.org](mailto:editor@BRnow.org) or *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512-1185. Only one letter from the same writer will be published in a 90-day period. Have questions? Call (919) 847-2127.

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# A spiritual resolution for the new year

**T**he start of a new year causes many of us to stop and think about the plans we have and the goals we want to accomplish in the new year. As you think through the personal improvements you want to make next year, have you also considered developing a plan to grow spiritually in 2015? Better yet, have you thought about how you can invest spiritually in the life of another person in the coming year?

No matter if you resolve to read the whole Bible or even a single book repeatedly throughout the new year, faithfully meditating on God's Word on a consistent basis is essential to our growth as believers.

As you grow spiritually, consider sharing what God is teaching you with someone else in your life. You can do this by asking a friend, a family mem-

ber, a neighbor or a co-worker to read the Bible with you and discuss it together. It's been said that discipleship happens through our relationships – sharing your experiences and inviting people into your life is a great way to develop or deepen a relationship with someone.

It also allows them to see how your faith impacts your life on a daily basis. This is what the heart of disciple-making is all about. Disciple-making involves teaching others the biblical truths that God has taught you, so they can, in turn, teach them to someone else.

We probably don't have to look very far to find someone we can disciple.

For many of us, we can start in our own homes. That might mean beginning a time of devotions together as a family. Or, it might mean beginning

to talk about the truths of scripture with your children or grandchildren so their hearts will one day be open to trusting Christ as their Savior because of your godly influence. What a wonderful privilege it is to be used of God to help others come to faith and grow in their walk with Christ.

So, as we think through all of the things we want to accomplish in 2015, let us be sure to prayerfully consider all of the things that God might want to accomplish and the people He might want to reach through us in the year ahead.

As we ponder and pray over those things, let us all resolve to allow God, by His grace and through the power of the Holy Spirit, to use us to impact lostness by making disciples of Jesus Christ in 2015. Have a happy and blessed new year!

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen." 2 Peter 3:18 **BR**



**MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.**  
BSC executive  
director-treasurer



# One Story event about hearing, connecting, sharing

By MICHAEL MCEWEN | BR Content Editor

**T**he One Story Disciple-Making Conference “is the annual conference where we gather pastors to talk about impacting lostness through disciple-making. Disciple-making includes evangelism, and evangelism is the essence of disciple-making. We’re winning people to Christ, developing them and sending them out on mission with Christ to make more disciples,” said Brian Upshaw, team leader for disciple-making at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

This year’s conference (Feb. 23) was created to prepare believers to connect with unbelievers in a modern context. Upshaw said the people that churches are trying to reach are far away from any kind of Christian background or Christian narrative in their lives.

“So, it’s important for us to listen and observe and hear from the culture. Just as a missionary does in a foreign context, ... they are taught to understand and exegete their culture.

“We have to know who we’re trying to reach with the gospel. We have to love them for who they are; listen to their stories and hear why they’re broken or hear why they don’t like the church; and hear why they’re open to Jesus but not Baptists. We don’t have to like what they say, but we have to listen,” Upshaw emphasized.

Speakers will address three main themes at the conference: Hear, Connect and Share.

Ed Stetzer, executive director of LifeWay Research, will speak on the theme of “Hear.” Upshaw believes Stetzer will help pastors think like a missionary in their own



contexts, while also being both affirmed and encouraged to make disciples. Stetzer is a contributing editor for *Christianity Today*, a columnist for *Outreach Magazine* and executive editor of both *The Gospel Project* and *Facts & Trends Magazine*.

Afshin Ziafa is a converted Muslim. Speaking on the theme of “Connect,” Upshaw said Ziafat “has a powerful testimony of understanding, because he came out of one culture and connected to another culture.”

Ziafat, lead pastor of Providence Church in Frisco, Texas, is the founder of Afshin Ziafat Ministries. He helped launch Vertical Bible Study at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, where he also partners with Elam Ministries and travels into the Middle East regularly to train Iranian pastors.

Radically saved from a life of drug addiction in 2002, Robby Gallaty helped cre-

ate Replicate Ministries in 2008 to educate, equip and empower Christians. He is currently the senior pastor of Brainerd Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tenn.

Teaching on the third theme, “Share,” Gallaty will present the redemptive story of God, how He pursues a people for Himself and most importantly, how He invites believers to share the one, true story with the culture around them.

“An exciting addition not on the brochure is Jon Erwin, a movie-director and producer who did ‘October Baby’ and

‘Mom’s Night Out,’” said Upshaw.

Erwin is currently working on a documentary called “The Jesus Revolution,” which is about the Jesus Movement of 1960s and 70s. Upshaw said, “Erwin’s goal for the movie is to use this documentary to share the gospel with Millennials who are of the same wiring of being spiritually curious but not really institutional.”

Erwin will discuss the reason behind “The Jesus Revolution” at the conference, while illustrating the importance of stories and how to communicate the gospel to today’s modern context.

Lori McDaniel, the Global Mission Catalyst at the International Mission Board, will be offering a track for women during the conference. Upshaw said he’s really excited about this session. “We have over a dozen different speakers. This is the first year in recent years that we have done a specific focus for women – such as pastor’s wives or women leaders in ministry,” he said.

The One Story conference will be held Feb. 23 at Center Grove Baptist Church in Clemmons, N.C.

The conference is offered at no charge. Lunch will be available at \$7 for those who preregister. For more information about the event or equipping sessions, visit [ncbaptist.org/disciplenc](http://ncbaptist.org/disciplenc). **BR**

## TAR HEEL VOICES

### Leaders should not meet with pope

**R**ecently Russell Moore, president of the Ethics and Religious Liberties Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, and Rick Warren, senior pastor of Saddleback Church and author of *The Purpose Driven Church* and *The Purpose Driven Life*, met with the pope.

Neither Moore nor Warren should have met with the pope in my opinion. Warren even called for Christians to unite with Catholics. Moore and Warren should repent of this.

Other than to evangelize them, there are at least three reasons why Southern Baptists and other Christians should not meet with or join forces with Catholics.

First, in its approach to God, Roman Catholicism practices bowing down before images and relics, encourages praying to the saints and promotes Mary worship. All of these constitute idolatry, which scripture condemns.

Second, in its approach to the Bible, Ro-

man Catholicism elevates church tradition, church councils and the pope to a higher authority than the Word of God.

Third, in its approach to salvation, Roman Catholicism does not believe that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. Roman Catholicism adds sacramental works to through faith, by grace and in Christ. Scripture makes it clear that justification is by faith apart from works of the Law, and that we are saved by grace through faith and not of works.

Other concerns include forbidding priests to marry, the belief in purgatory and Rome’s history of persecution of Bible believing Christians.

Second Corinthians 6:14 says, “*Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?*”

**Tim McKittrick**  
Stony Point, N.C.

## A new year to fulfill your ministry

**T**here is nothing quite like something new. People love the feel of a new sweater before wear and tear has occurred. The smell of a brand new car is one that many love for months after a car has been driven off a car lot. New is fresh and clean.

Every year on Jan. 1 many anticipate a new year – a year filled with opportunities, goals, memories and milestones. A clean slate of 365 days is ahead. We set resolutions for the New Year such as losing weight, eating healthier, being a nicer person or a host of other things. But, do we ever set out in a new year to make the year count for eternity? Do we make goals to build relationships in order to make disciples? Do we seek to get to know our neighbors, co-workers, or even members of our families so we might make disciples?

As you begin this 2015, I encourage you to set goals that include impacting eternity by making disciples or learning how to make disciples. Who can you build relationships with in order to

begin gospel conversations and disciple them in the things of God? We live in a lost and dying world, and there are men and women looking for security and hope that can only be found in Jesus Christ.



ASHLEY ALLEN

In 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 the apostle Paul writes that in Christ all things are made new, including our lives as believers. Christ has given us the ministry of reconciliation – the ministry of sharing the gospel with others so that there might be harmony through Christ between God and man. This is a ministry given to all believers, not just those on a church staff or called to ministry. If you name the name of Christ, this is your ministry.

How will you fulfill your ministry in 2015?

*(EDITOR’S NOTE – Ashley Allen is consultant for Embrace Women’s Ministry for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. For more information you can reach her at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5559. Read her blog at [www.worthyofthecalling.com](http://www.worthyofthecalling.com).)*





In Long Island City, Queens, Angie Turnmire, left, helps a woman find a coat. Turnmire is a member of Mount Zion Baptist Church in Hudson. She was one of more than 100 North Carolina volunteers who went in December to New York to help with Coats for the City, a partnership between Metropolitan New York Baptist Association and the Baptist State Convention of N.C. (BSC photo by Mike Creswell)

## Volunteers spread warmth, gospel in New York

By MIKE CRESWELL | BSC Communications

**M**ore than 4,000 New Yorkers will be warmer this winter because they'll be wearing coats provided by North Carolina Baptists through the annual Coats for the City project.

Hundreds of N.C. churches collected coats throughout 2014, which were gathered in 12 associational offices and trucked to Ebenezer Mission Church in Bayside, Queens, on Dec. 11, for pickup by 14 New York area Baptist churches that day.

A team of volunteers from Fusion Church in Spring Lake, N.C., led by Pastor Barry Lawrence and his wife, Lynette,

helped sort the voluminous piles of coats packed in black plastic bags. Lawrence coordinated Coats for the City across North Carolina this year.

The New York churches handed out the coats on Dec. 13, with help from more than 100 N.C. Baptist volunteers. Many who received a coat were clearly not dressed warmly enough for the day, when temperatures hovered in the 30s, chilled even more by a steady breeze.

N.C. volunteers joined with N.Y. Baptists to hand out the coats along with hot coffee, hot chocolate, hot tea, Bibles, tracts and Jesus videos.

Most of the 14 New York churches are new church plants still meeting in rented facilities. Planters/pastors say distribut-

ing coats is a great way to both meet physical needs and build relationships.

Coats for the City is a partnership between the Metropolitan New York Baptist Association (MNYBA) and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), along with a number of N.C. Baptist associations. It started three years ago as a local church project in Queens, one of New York City's five boroughs.

### Jackson Heights

In the richly multicultural neighborhood of Jackson Heights, Queens, church planter Boto Joseph, local church members and volunteers set up tables loaded with coats and welcomed long lines of local residents – one line for men and one for women and children. “It’s Christmas, and we’re celebrating the birth of Christ by giving out free coats,” he said over a loudspeaker.

“This looks great,” said a well-bundled Robert Steele, executive pastor of Green Street Baptist Church in High

Point, who brought five volunteers to N.Y. “We’re giving coats to Hindus and Muslims, people literally from all over the world. We’re giving them coats and hot tea and more importantly, they’re being shown the love of Christ in a demonstrable way. So it’s exciting to see the smiles on faces of the people. They may not know the words we’re saying, but they see we’re doing something to help them.”

Last year’s coats distribution won praise from local Hindu and Muslim shopkeepers, who were impressed that Christians would work so hard to help local residents in need.

Green Street is one of five Triad-area churches setting up a partnership to expand New York outreach. This was the first coats project for Green Street, but First Baptist Church in Summerfield, one of the partners, sent teams to serve in previous years.

Wilma Morgan, a First Baptist member, helped manage the line of women

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# Seminary graduate compiles Bible reading plan

By **ANDREW J.W. SMITH** | SBTS Communications

**A**s the new year approaches, many Christians are thinking about their next attempt at reading through the Bible. The Bible reading plans to choose from are numerous, but some people find certain plans difficult to continue once they reach the dense texts of Leviticus and Numbers.

Chris Dendy, a December D.Min. graduate in applied theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTC), has a suggestion to help believers stick with their Bible reading commitments.

As part of the ministry project required for his degree, Dendy designed a reading plan to go alongside James M. Hamilton Jr.'s book, *God's Glory in Salvation Through Judgment*. Hamilton, professor of biblical theology, also serves as Dendy's adviser.

"The goal of the plan is to graciously push believers to grow in their understanding of the scriptures and to give them a plan that will stretch them," Dendy said.

When Hamilton released the work on biblical theology in 2010, he wrote that he hoped his book would be a "guided tour" for believers toward reading the Bible better, even urging readers to read the two books together.

"This book is best read with an open Bible," he wrote. "So I encourage you to read this book alongside the Bible, and if you have time for only one and not the other, read the Bible."

In a Dec. 3 post to his blog, "For His Renown," Hamilton unveiled the "God's Glory in Salvation Through Judgment Bible Reading Plan."

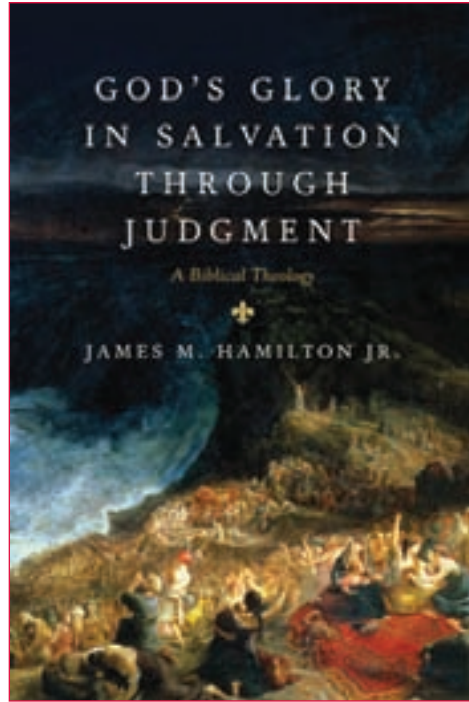
Daily readings are composed of several pages from Hamilton's book which correspond with the two to three chapters from the listed biblical text, allowing readers to work through both books during a calendar year.

Hamilton says he hopes the plan will help readers identify a central theme to biblical revelation that will orient their daily reading and make their exposure to the Bible more fruitful.

A major theme in Hamilton's book, a "thematic center" can help each believer appreciate the artistry and complexity of Scripture's storyline while grasping the primary message of the whole counsel of God, he said.

"The thematic center shows us that every single biblical author agreed on God's own ultimate purpose: to maximize our experience of what is best for us – his glory," he said.

Dendy, who also serves as minister of



discipleship and college ministry at Rich Pond Baptist Church in Bowling Green, Kentucky, said it is the first reading plan he knows of that is paired with a substantial and accessible theology book, and he hopes the plan will stretch people in the local church to understand the Bible better.

"The scriptures are where God reveals himself, not in God's Glory in Salvation Through Judgment," Dendy said.

"The readings in [Hamilton's book] serve as a tour to God's revelation of himself."

Dendy suggests believers starting the plan also cultivate a healthy outlook on the role of solitude and community in their spiritual lives. Personal Bible reading helps the believer focus on the details of the text, while discussing the text in community "sharpens our thoughts and fuels our affections," he said.

With many Christians eager to piece together individual parts of the Bible through biblical theology and typology, Hamilton said the best way to observe intertextual connections across the canon is simply to read the Bible tirelessly.

"Know the Bible thoroughly, so that when you step back to take a broad angle look at it, the details are stored there in your memory bank to be retrieved and examined," he said. "Read the Bible a lot. Study it. Memorize it. Meditate on it. Rinse and repeat."

Hamilton recommends that readers do the plan first thing in the morning, before doing anything else.

The plan is rendered in both a digital format and a print format. The printable version can be folded into a booklet and includes a page for notes. Lindsey Jacobs, an artist from Dendy's church, designed both formats. **BR**

## 14 MOST READ ONLINE STORIES OF 2014



We compiled the data for our web traffic on *BRnow.org* and learned that in 2014 over 4.1 million unique visitors depended on us to provide news and information with a biblical worldview. The top 14 stories viewed by our readers are listed in order below.

1. **'Blood moon' lunar eclipses not a sign, Baptist professors say**  
posted April 16 by David Roach, Baptist Press

2. **Moldova, Dublin FBC partnership yields teenage visitor**  
posted Aug. 26 by K. Allan Blume, *BR* Editor

3. **Mark Driscoll removed from Acts 29 network**  
posted Aug. 11 by Religion News Service and Baptist Press

4. **Fire survivors thankful for Baptist relief**  
posted Sept. 2 by Tobin Perry, North American Mission Board/Baptist Press

5. **C.J. Mahaney & Joshua Harris leave Gospel Coalition**  
posted May 19 by Sarah Pulliam Bailey, Religion News Service

6. **'Radical' pastor David Platt elected IMB president**  
posted Aug. 27 by Erich Bridges, International Mission Board

7. **N. Iraq: Grave danger as winter approaches**  
posted Sept. 24 by Mark Kelly, Baptist Press/Baptist Global Response

8. **Fifty-six men chose liberty**  
posted June 30 by K. Allan Blume, *BR* Editor

9. **N.C. students serve among T people in Southeast Asia**  
posted Sept. 9 by Paige Turner, International Mission Board

10. **Pro-gay book, publisher face more criticism**  
posted May 2 by David Roach, Baptist Press

11. **Boko Haram's Islamic motives 'ignored'**  
posted July 9 by David Roach, Baptist Press

12. **Ergun Caner family grieves tragic death of son**  
posted July 30 by Art Toalston, Baptist Press

13. **Islam expert: ISIS conflict 'annihilating Middle East Christians'**  
posted July 3 by S. Craig Sanders, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary News

14. **Jehovah's Witness prediction spurs evangelism**  
posted April 16 by David Roach, Baptist Press



# 2014 YEAR IN REVIEW

## PERSONALITIES



### 1. DANIEL AKIN HONORED FOR 10 YEARS

During the spring Board of Visitors and Board of Trustees meetings, 10 years of Daniel Akin's vision and leadership was celebrated. Under his supervision, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) has grown from 2,400 to more than 3,100 students. This is the fifth year of record enrollment. In 2014, the seminary exceeded the \$50 million comprehensive campaign goal with \$50,221,165 in gifts, faith commitments and planned gifts. SEBTS also announced in December 2013 its accreditation from the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA). The school is the only Southern Baptist seminary to receive ECFA accreditation.

### 2. JERRY MCGEE, JERRY WALLACE AND J.D. GRANT RETIRE

Jerry E. McGee, Wingate University's 13th president, announced Apr. 22 his plans to retire in May 2015. McGee is N.C.'s longest-serving university president. At the time of his retirement, he will have served at Wingate for 23 years.

Campbell University president Jerry M. Wallace, who has led Campbell to unprecedented growth and transformed the university into a destination

for leading health education and other key programs over the past 11 years, announced Apr. 23 that he will step down as president on June 30, 2015. After a one-year sabbatical, he will transition to the honorary role and title of university chancellor.

James Dillard (J.D.) Grant was honored in a celebration of his retirement from Fruitland Baptist Bible College on May 27. Grant's association with the school began in 1970 when he came to the campus as a student. He retires after serving as a professor, vice-president of academic affairs and most recently as vice-president of development.

### 3. RONNIE FLOYD ELECTED SBC PRESIDENT

In a year when the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) focused on "Restoration & Revival Through Prayer," Arkansas pastor Ronnie Floyd was elected as the SBC president. Floyd, pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas for 27 years, topped fellow nominees Maryland pastor Dennis Manpoong Kim and Kentucky pastor Jared Moore to win the SBC post June 10 in Baltimore with 51.62 percent of the votes.

### 4. W.A. CRISWELL CHAIR AT SEBTS

The W.A. Criswell Chair of Expository Preaching was installed at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's spring convocation in January. The convocation featured a video recording of Criswell's sermon "Whether We Live or Die?" He delivered the message at the Southern

Baptist Convention pastors' conference in Dallas, Texas, June 10, 1985.

Jim Shaddix, professor of preaching and a teaching pastor at The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Ala., was installed in the new chair.

### 5. BILLY GRAHAM'S 'HEAVEN' FILM

On Nov. 7, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association debuted "Heaven" on Graham's 96th birthday. It is a film that includes a never-before-seen message from Graham. It captures an aging, yet still passionate evangelist who worked with a camera crew at his home in Montreat. In 2013 on his 95th birthday, "The Cross," a 30-minute My Hope America short film, was released with a gospel message from Graham.

### 6. CHAD BAREFOOT RE-ELECTED TO SENATE

Chad Barefoot was elected into the N.C. Senate as its youngest member in 2012. He ran unopposed in the 2014 Republican primary and defeated Sarah Crawford in the general election in November. He represents Wake and Franklin counties in the 18th Senate District. He graduated from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary with a master of arts in Christian ethics. He also earned a bachelor of science degree with a concentration in public management from Appalachian State University in Boone, N.C.

### 7. SEBTS HONORS SAM AND RACHEL JAMES

Former International Mission Board (IMB) missionaries Sam and Rachel James were awarded the Southeastern Presidential Award Nov. 6. The Presidential Award is the highest honor given from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS). Sam James is a three-time graduate of SEBTS. He and his wife served with IMB for over 50 years prior to their retirement earlier this year. He is the author of *Servant on the Edge of History: Risking All for the Gospel in War-Ravaged Vietnam*.

### 8. TOM ELLIFF RETIRES

Former International Mission Board (IMB) president Tom Elliff asked the mission agency's trustees to search for his successor in late February. He was 67 when he accepted the post in 2011. Former pastor of The Church at Brook Hills and author of *Radical*, David Platt, was elected president of the IMB Aug. 27.

### 9. MARK DRISCOLL STEPS DOWN

Mark Driscoll, the megachurch pastor of Mars Hill Church accused of plagiarism, bullying and an unhealthy ego, resigned from his Seattle church Oct. 14. Driscoll announced his plan to step aside for at least six weeks in August while his church investigated the charges against him. (See page 8.)



## PERSONALITIES

## CULTURAL ISSUES

### 9. MARK DRISCOLL STEPS DOWN (CONT.)

Driscoll's resignation came shortly after the church concluded its investigation. Driscoll found a niche within a largely secular Northwest culture. Though he has been controversial for statements on women and sexuality, several tipping points likely led up to Driscoll's resignation. As part of the transition plan, all of the 15 Mars Hill's properties will either be sold or the loans on the individual properties will be assumed by the new independent congregations. Each of Mars Hill's campuses will decide whether to become an independent self-governed church, merge with an existing church or disband in early 2015.

### 10. SEBTS HONORS GEORGE HARVEY

During the Board of Visitors and Board of Trustees (BOT) meetings in October at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS), George Harvey was honored for 25 years of service to the seminary. Harvey, who is general counsel and director of planned giving, joined SEBTS in June 1989. After a unanimous vote of the trustees, Todd Linn, chairman of the BOT, and Akin presented a resolution to Harvey. The resolution honored and celebrated a man who left a highly respected career in law to come to a failing seminary, and trusting the Lord and His purpose for the institution..

### 11. WINTER OLYMPICS

Despite concerns about terrorist threats, approximately 400 Southern Baptist volunteers traveled to Sochi, Russia to provide a gospel presence during the 2014 Winter Olympics. Along with several church groups from different states, the International Mission Board was heavily involved with a program they developed called "Engage Sochi" – an evangelistic ministry before, during and after the Olympics. Volunteers used traditional Olympic ministry methods such as trading "evangelism pins" to engage people throughout the city and in Olympic venues. The goal was not to see how many pins they could distribute, but to spend time talking with people, forming relationships and proclaiming the gospel.

### 12. HOUSING ALLOWANCE

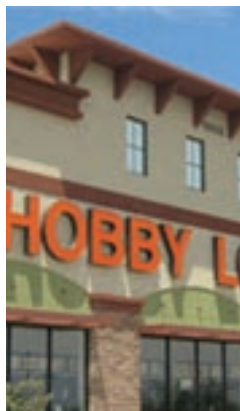
The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago ruled Nov. 13 that an atheist organization lacked the legal right to challenge the portion of a 1954 law that permits clergy to exclude for federal income tax purposes a portion of their gross income as a housing allowance. A three-judge panel did not rule on the allowance's constitutionality but unanimously rejected a Wisconsin federal judge's invalidation of the provision from November 2013. The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and International Mission Board signed a friend-of-the-court brief filed by the Becket Fund in support of the allowance. GuideStone joined in a brief with other denominational benefit boards as part of the Church Alliance.



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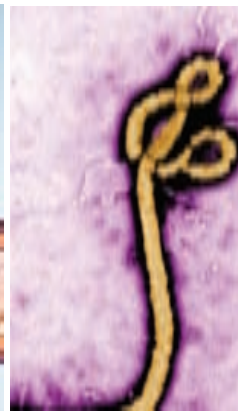
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## CULTURAL ISSUES

### 13. HAMNYE DEBATE

Bill Nye, former host of "Bill Nye, The Science Guy," and Ken Ham, president of Answers in Genesis, debated Feb. 4 at the Creation Museum in Kentucky. Hundreds of thousands of people watched the debate online which sought to answer the question: "Is creation a viable model of origins?" The attendance demonstrated a vibrant interest in the origins of the universe.

### 14. PATTERSON ALLOWS MUSLIM AT SWBTS

Paige Patterson, a notable Southern Baptist figure and leader of the Conservative Resurgence within the Southern Baptist Convention, faced heavy criticism from some Baptists who accused him of violating the standards of Southwestern Baptist Theological

Seminary (SWBTS) in Fort Worth, Texas. In September, SWBTS trustees affirmed Patterson after investigating his decision to admit Ghassan Nagagreh into the school's Ph.D. program. They said, "Any violations of the seminary bylaws were done in a good-faith enthusiasm to pursue the seminary's purpose, as set forth in its articles of incorporation."

### 15. HOBBY LOBBY WINS COURT CASE

In a narrow 5-4 landmark decision written by Justice Samuel Alito, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in favor of Hobby Lobby, Conestoga Wood Specialties and other religious-based companies. At stake in *Sebelius v. Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc.* was whether the United States government can compel individuals and the businesses they own to pay for contraception and abortion-inducing drugs.

### 16. IMMIGRATION BORDER CRISIS

The surge of unaccompanied, illegal children from Central and South America prompted many churches and faith-based groups to join the government in working to care for the children. More than 50,000 children were apprehended by the U.S. Border Patrol between October 2013 and May 2014. Ronnie Floyd, president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), and Russell Moore, the SBC's lead ethicist, joined others in tours July 22 of two centers established to address the crisis. Floyd and Moore have called not only for a compassionate response to the plight of the unaccompanied children in this country but for repair of what is generally acknowledged is a broken immigration system.

### 17. EBOLA

By December 2014 the Ebola death toll had risen above 7,000 from more than 18,400 cases identified in three African countries. Many Southern Baptists responded by joining the battle against the disease. These volunteers are represented by organizations such as the International Mission Board, Samaritan's Purse and Baptist Global Response among others. Kent Brantly, a medical doctor with Samaritan's Purse who contracted Ebola while running a treatment center in Liberia, was one of several medical workers featured on a *TIME* Magazine cover as part of the magazine's recognition of 'Ebola Fighters' as the 2014 Person of the Year.



## CULTURAL ISSUES

### 18. HOUSTON EQUAL RIGHTS ORDINANCE

The word “subpoenas” grabbed national attention after it became known that five Houston ministers were subpoenaed for sermons and other private correspondence regarding their opposition to the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance. On Oct. 29, Houston mayor Annise Parker announced the subpoenas were withdrawn. Baptists leaders and foes of the ordinance were concerned the law would violate religious freedoms. In response, some pastors organized “I Stand Sunday” to support the five pastors subpoenaed.

### 19. FERGUSON, MISSOURI

The shooting of 18-year-old Michael Brown by police officer Darren Wilson on Aug. 9 garnered national attention after the teenager’s death incited both peaceful protests as well as several nights of upheaval in this St. Louis-area town. After a grand jury decided not to indict the police officer, many Southern Baptists responded with a renewed effort toward racial reconciliation.

### 20. ERLC NATIONAL CONFERENCE

On Oct. 27, the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission convened a national conference in Nashville, Tenn. with the goal of bolstering marriage within the church as well as protect marriage outside it. The event – “The Gospel, Homosexuality and the Future of Marriage” – considered how Christians can minister in a post-marriage culture.



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### 21. FRONT STREET TRAGEDY: ONE YEAR LATER

On Oct. 2, 2013 six members of Front Street Baptist Church in Statesville were killed in a three-vehicle accident outside Knoxville, Tenn. Two others were killed and another 12 were injured. “A Mighty Fortress is Our God” became the theme for the anniversary service Oct. 6 at Western Avenue Baptist Church in Statesville. The songs were intentionally chosen to speak of God’s faithfulness and His sustaining power in the midst of tragedy. It was a time dedicated to remember, to heal and to worship.

### 22. SAME-SEX MARRIAGE IN N.C.

In May 2012, North Carolinians voted on the constitutional amendment defining marriage as between one man and one woman; it passed 61-39 percent. Of North Carolina’s 100 counties, the amendment passed in 93. On Oct. 6, 2014, United States Supreme Court justices denied review of decisions by three federal appeals courts’ overturning state laws that prohibited same-sex marriage. This denial meant that any state’s lower-court’s rulings are lawfully binding. A few days after the Supreme Court’s denial, U.S. District Court Judge Max Cogburn in Asheville, overturned the N.C. constitutional amendment passed in 2012. Cogburn’s refusal meant the state’s lower-court’s rulings are thereby lawful. By mid-October, Wake County issued approximately 90 licenses to same-sex couples.

## IN MEMORIAM

### Truett Cathy

S. Truett Cathy, 93, founder of the Chick-fil-A restaurant chain famous for closing on Sundays, died Sept. 8. In 1967, Cathy charted new ground, opening his first Chick-fil-A venue in a mall, followed in 1986 by the first free-standing Chick-fil-A. His son, Dan Cathy, became president of Chick-fil-A in 2001, and chairman and chief executive officer in 2013 while Truett Cathy continued in the role of chairman emeritus until his death. Cathy was a devout Southern Baptist who taught Sunday school to 13-year-old boys for more than 50 years and a member of First Baptist Church, Jonesboro, Ga.

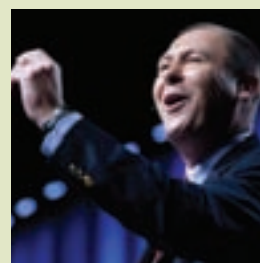


### Freddie Gage

Freddie Gage, 81, a Southern Baptist evangelist for more than 60 years whose fervency for souls extended to the Southern Baptist Convention’s Conservative Resurgence, died Sept. 12 in a Houston hospital after an extended illness. Gage, a teen gang leader who came to Christ after hearing the gospel in 1951, was among the initial inductees to the Evangelists Hall of Faith in 2008.

### Braxton Caner

Braxton Caner, 15-year-old son of Ergun and Jill Caner, took his own life on July 29. Ergun Caner is president of Brewton-Parker College, a Baptist-affiliated college in Mount Vernon, Ga. Members of his football team, Southern Baptist leaders and friends of the family, joined the Caners and other family members for an emotional 2-hour memorial service for the teen Aug. 2 at New River Fellowship in Hudson Oaks, Texas.



### David Landrith

David Landrith, who led Long Hollow Baptist Church to be the first Tennessee church to baptize 1,000 people in a year, died of cancer Nov. 18. Landrith, 51, battled a rare form of cancer, colorectal melanoma, diagnosed in March 2013. He had been pastor of the Hendersonville church in the Nashville area since 1997.

### T.W. Hunt

Thomas W. (“T.W.”) Hunt, widely recognized in Christian circles as an authority on prayer, died Dec. 11 at the age of 85. Hunt was the author of such books as *The Mind of Christ* and *Disciple’s Prayer Life* and a former professor of music and missions at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Prominent N.C. Baptists who died in 2014 include **Joe R. Babb**, 84, who served on the *Biblical Recorder* Board of Directors and was the chairman of that board in 2006. He passed away April 25. **Robert C. Stewart**, 77, died Jan. 20 after a battle with cancer. In 1978, he became the state Sunday School director at the Baptist State Convention (BSC), and was later named church programs director and senior consultant for the convention until his retirement in 2003. **Gene Lee Watterson**, 84, was pastor of First Baptist Church in Shelby, N.C. for 26 years. He was president of the Council of Christian Higher Education and served as first vice president and president of the BSC.



## SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

### 23. NAMB CHAPLAINS

Chaplaincy is one of six areas of focus for the North American Mission Board's (NAMB) evangelism group. Chaplains are able to minister in hard places around the world. In 2014 NAMB focused on providing support and appreciation for chaplains, educating churches on chaplain ministry, and developing a strategy to help pastors and leaders incorporate chaplains into ministry plans. They also developed a long-term strategy for church planting at nearly every U.S. military base in the world.

### 24. MENTAL HEALTH COUNCIL NAMED

Executive Committee president Frank S. Page named a 23-member volunteer advisory body of local church leaders and professionals in the mental health field to advise him on possible ways to better communicate with churches about mental health ministry needs, while also resourcing them. Four from North Carolina were named to the group: Daniel Akin, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary; Doug Carver, a member of First Baptist Church in Matthews and executive director for chaplaincy at the North American Mission Board; Brad Hambrick, pastor of counseling at The Summit Church in Durham; and Sam Williams, professor of counseling at Southeastern Seminary.

### 25. 'THIRD WAY' CHURCH

The Executive Committee (EC) of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) withdrew fellowship from New Heart Community Church in La Mirada, Calif., when pastor Danny Cortez advocated a "third way" perspective on homosexuality and same-sex marriage. The EC's action marked the first time the committee has withdrawn fellowship from a church on behalf of the convention. The SBC, the California Southern Baptist Convention and the Los Angeles Southern Baptist Association each disagreed with the claim that unity requires granting church membership to persons who affirm homosexual behavior.

### 26. DAVID PLATT ELECTED IMB PRESIDENT

The election of David Platt on Aug. 27 as president of the Southern Baptist Convention's International Mission Board (IMB) brought praise and calls for prayer from Southern Baptists. He succeeds Tom Elliff who served as IMB president since March 2011. Platt, 36, is the youngest leader in the history of the 169-year-old Southern Baptist mission organization. Platt's passion for people lost without Christ – and his calling to reach them – inspired members of IMB's trustee search committee.

### 27. SBC PASTOR CARE LINE

Southern Baptist pastors now have a place to turn thanks to a new partnership between the North American Mission Board (NAMB) and Focus on the Family. On Oct. 1 they launched a care line, (844) PASTOR1, for Southern Baptist pastors, staff, chaplains and missionaries. NAMB partnered with Focus on the Family in part because the ministry has more than two decades of experience hosting a pastor crisis care line. The phone line is available weekdays between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. EST.



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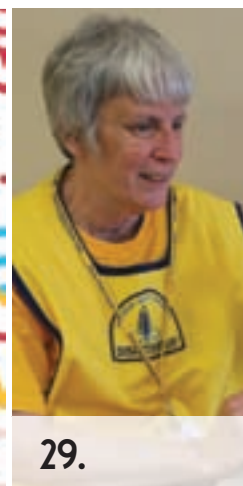
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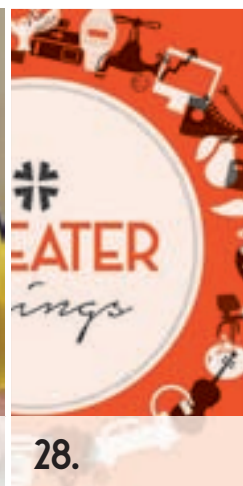
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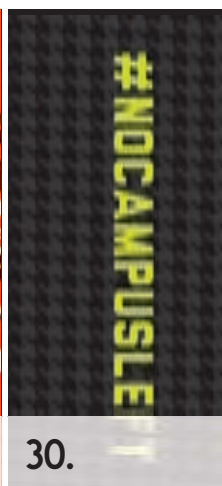
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## BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION OF NC

### 28. N.C. BAPTISTS SEEK 'GREATER THINGS' AT ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Baptist State Convention (BSC) was held this year on Nov. 10-11 in Greensboro. Over 1,800 attendees heard reports and took decisive action to elect officials and vote on bylaws, budgets and resolutions. Three officers were elected during the annual meeting: Timmy Blair, president; Cameron McGill, first vice president; and Joel Stephens, second vice president. Together N.C. Baptists prayed John 14:12 asking God to do "Greater Things." In mid-October, the BSC Board of Directors approved a reduced Cooperative Program (CP) budget for 2015. This CP budget of \$29 million is \$1 million less than 2014, and it was approved by church messengers during the meeting. The budget increases the percentage going to the Southern Baptist Convention to 37 percent, up from 36.5 percent in 2014.

### 29. NCBM CONTINUES TO CLEAN-UP AFTER APRIL TORNADOES

The April 25 tornado outbreak left great damage to the North Carolina towns of Elizabeth City and Washington. More than 35 volunteers from Baptists on Mission (formerly known as North Carolina Baptist Men) began work on April 27 in both cities to help homeowners clean up from the storm. At the annual meeting in November, John Gore reported that volunteers are finishing the work in those cities.

### 30. N.C. BAPTIST COLLEGIATE MINISTRY RESTRUCTURED

North Carolina is home to more than 200 colleges and universities where 39,800 faculty are educating more than 591,000 students from every state and most countries around the world. In 2014, N.C. Baptists intensified efforts to utilize this prime opportunity to evangelize the world from their home state. Baptist Campus Ministries was restructured in 2013 to provide consultants who encourage local churches to take ownership of the college ministry opportunities on the campuses near their churches by forming collegiate partnerships. Also, the convention received a proposal to purchase the Battle House on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Baptists also own properties on the campuses of Western Carolina University, Appalachian State University, N.C. State and UNC Asheville. The Asheville property is currently for sale.

### 31. HAPPINESS RETREATS CELEBRATE 40 YEARS

Five Happiness Retreats were held in 2014 in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the event. More than 700 people with special needs attended the three-day retreats at Caraway Conference Center near Asheboro and Truett Camp in Hayesville. Since the first Happiness retreat at Caraway in 1974, the objective has been to provide a fun camp experience while making disciples among special needs adults in North Carolina.



# Gospel

Continued from page 5

waiting for coats. She led the church's collection, labeling and packing of hundreds of coats bound for New York.

Turbaned Asian men took cups of hot chai, or spiced tea, from volunteers, while some volunteers stopped at times to pray with people waiting for coats. Volunteers helped mothers look through the coats to find the right fit for their children.

"Look," said one Asian man holding up a coat, "it's brand new. Still has the label on it."

## Long Island City

Long Island City is a section of Queens across the East River from Manhattan, where new high-rise apartments and other developments have rejuvenated a former docks area. New-City Church, a two-year-old church plant, meets in one of those high-rises.

But a few blocks away are two of the nation's largest public housing areas that are home for some of the area's poorest people. That was where New-City set up their coats distribution, partnering with Hour Children, an organization ministering to women released from prison.

New-City worker Christy Dyer said they gave out 400 coats in 90 minutes.

"One of our core values is to be an expression of grace to our community," said Patrick Thompson, New-City pastor/planter. "The ability to come into a high-need area and provide a resource like a warm coat and a cup of coffee helps us be that grace to this neighborhood."

Thompson said his church members contributed 75 coats for the day, "but there's no way we could collect more than 400 coats to hand out. To have this kind of resource and to have the volunteers come alongside, we couldn't do



At Nueva Vida Baptist Church in Woodside, Queens, Veronica Valencia, left, and Rachel, a member of the volunteer team from Fusion Church, Spring Lake, talk to a woman about a coat for her daughter. Nueva Vida gave away 300 coats, including coats for 25 children, on Dec. 13. Valencia is wife of Nueva Vida Pastor Walter Valencia. (BSC photos by Mike Creswell)

this without help from North Carolina Baptists."

Dale Fisher, director of missions for Caldwell Baptist Association, made up of 74 churches in and around Lenoir, joined other volunteers in helping people find coats. Other Tar Heel volunteers included Nathaniel Poole, Anna Lee, David Lee and Abby Lee of Bat Cave Baptist Church in Bat Cave; and Angie Turnmire and Pearl Setzer of Mount Zion Baptist Church in Hudson.

## Nueva Vida, Woodside, Queens

Nueva Vida Baptist Church is a Hispanic church meeting in a storefront building in Woodside, Queens. Members turned the entire church into a coats distribution center and handed out more than 300 coats in two hours. At least 25 children received a coat.

Mostly Hispanic and Asian people came seeking a coat. Pastor Walter Valencia prayed with some, including a man who suffered from seizures because of epilepsy. It was the first time the man had ever been inside a church. Walter's wife, Veronica, talked to people and helped them find coats, joined by volunteers from Fusion Church.

"I am very thankful to God for North Carolina Baptists and all the coats that have come our way," she said. "We are sharing the Word of God and food along with the coats. God bless you guys for that."

## Gambian Outreach, the Bronx

Brian Stephens, leader of Gambian Outreach, set up tables in Crotona Park in the Bronx, another of New York's boroughs, and handed out hundreds of coats.

One church planter working with Muslims and Hindus said they gave out almost 300 coats in an hour and could have used three times that number. He said church members prayed with numerous people, and they plan to follow up with home visits to several Muslim families they met.

As church planters picked up their allotment of coats Dec. 11, Barry Lawrence encouraged them to tell the Fusion volunteers about their ministries. Then they prayed for them.

Nathan Creitz, pastor of City Life Church in Ridgewood, Queens, said his church had only launched in September 2013, ahead of the coats distribution in December. Was it effective to distribute the coats?

"Absolutely," Creitz said. "It was a big event. We gave out 500 coats," adding that some had visited the church because of the coats; 15 months after launch, City Life Church now has about 30 members.

"The coats drive is a big help for us in building good will in the community," said Joshua Collins, who works with Bengali immigrants in Jamaica, Queens and the Bronx.

Collins explained that some immigrants arrive from hot climates where 50 degrees may be the coolest weather they ever see. "A New York winter is a lot different for them, and the coats are helpful," he said.

Pastor Todd Brandt said, "We did the coats distribution last year and had a great time with it." They also gave out coffee and donuts and had yard sales. He said 80,000 people live within a mile of his Christian Bible Church in Yonkers, and half-a-million people within five miles.

"These are people in desperate need of the gospel," Brandt said, adding that he is really excited about what God is doing with the church.

Some 150 Coats for the City volunteers and local Baptists gathered the evening of Dec. 12, for a training session on coats distribution. Brad Wall, leader of South Asian Outreach in Queens and Brooklyn, reminded the volunteers they were there not just to talk about Jesus, but also to be Him as they loved on the people in need. "Guess what! It's OK to smile in New York," he told them.

Wall and Boto Joseph started the coats project.

Chuck Register expressed appreciation to all who worked on the project and said he hopes Coats for the City can be expanded to more New York churches in 2015. He was on hand Dec. 11 when the coats arrived at Ebenezer Mission Church and spent the evening moving bags of coats with other volunteers. Register, an executive leader with the BSC, directs church planting and missions partnerships.

"This was a huge project that involved hundreds of churches and many Baptists in North Carolina and New York," said Kelli Creswell, MNYBA's church planting administrator who coordinated the coats project in N.Y. "But suddenly all of it seems a small investment when you see a man wearing a light jacket just radiate joy when he pulls on a heavy, warm coat in the cold."

"And when you see a non-believer willing to have a Christian pray for him or hear for the first time the amazing news that God loves him, again, the effort seems small for such a wonderful result. If you gave a coat or sent volunteers or had anything at all to do with Coats for the City, I assure you it was a very good investment in God's Kingdom," said Creswell, a former BSC employee.

She encouraged North Carolina Baptists to begin making plans for next year's project. Stores will soon put winter coats on sale, Creswell said. "Plan now to buy coats for Coats for the City 2015." **BR**



Metro New York Baptist Association staffer Dawn Ford, left, prays with a woman who came to get a coat in Jackson Heights, Queens, New York. Ford is a native of Long Island, N.Y., and lived in North Carolina for seven years. She was a member of First Baptist Church in Summerfield while in N.C., one of the churches who volunteered with the coat distribution ministry.



# Keith Getty: ‘Teach theology through story’

By RUTHANNE IRVIN | SBTS

**M**usic ministers are responsible to teach their congregations theology through song, according to songwriter Keith Getty at the Doxology and Theology conference, Nov. 13-15, hosted on campus of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Songs portraying the incredible beauty about God are what the church needs, Getty said. The conference featured well-known musicians and music ministers, including Getty, Matt Papa, Bob Kauflin, Matt Carter, Harold Best, Matt Boswell and many others. Various bands led worship throughout the event, including the seminary’s Norton Hall Band, Indelible Grace and others.

Getty led both a brief talk and a breakout session during the conference. He discussed songwriting and ways music ministers can use the Christmas season to teach theologically rich hymns. A problem in the church today, Getty said, is that people think hymns, in their original length, are too dense for congregations to sing. If churches think that about music, he said, what does that teach the people about renewing their minds through study?



Songwriter Keith Getty speaks during the Doxology and Theology conference at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Nov. 13-15. (SBTS photo)

“Teach songs worth learning,” he said, telling attendees that one way he writes is to teach theology through story, which becomes a bridge for his music and ministry. For songwriters, he encouraged them to “aim to write hymns you can carry with you through life.”

Hymns that endure time are not only rich with theology but a melody that transcends time. “If we’re going to be critical about our theology we have to

five things to remember about Christmas music: churches need to sing the gospel through the songs they choose, immerse themselves and build the traditions of the church, target congregational singing, promote art and reach beyond the walls of the church.

Best, emeritus professor of music and dean emeritus of the Wheaton College Conservatory of Music, led a session about the labor of a musician. He told

be critical about our art, too,” he said, noting the importance of writing good music and lyrics.

In his breakout session, Getty discussed ways music ministers can take advantage of the Christmas season in their local congregation. He discussed

attendees the “true labor of a church musician means first of all returning to the basics. There’s a difference between labor and what labor produces. It varies from person to person, talent to talent, parish to parish,” he said.

Best, author of *Music Through the Eyes of Faith*, encouraged music ministers to ask themselves if they are laboring in worship or management.

“Examine your labor,” he said. “It’ll always be daunting, but you will find rest, Christ’s rest, if and when you submit your labor to him for instruction, for reproof and correction, so that each of you will be, by his actual promise, thoroughly furnished into every good labor.”

Popular musician Matt Papa led a breakout session about aesthetics and music. “Good art always balances mystery and clarity,” he said. He defined real art and ministry as incarnation, or taking the mysterious and making it accessible. Papa offered 10 criteria for judging a work of art. These criteria included wonder, clarity, complexity, truthfulness, authenticity, excellence, story, suitability, helpfulness and worship. He encouraged artists and ministers to ask themselves how well they feed their congregations, noting, like Getty, the importance of doctrinally sound songs for churches. **BR**

## Prayer advocate T.W. Hunt dies at age 85

By ALEX SIBLEY | Baptist Press

**T**homas W. (“T.W.”) Hunt, widely recognized in Christian circles as an authority on prayer, died Dec. 11 at the age of 85.

Hunt was the author of such books as *The Mind of Christ* and *Disciple’s Prayer Life* and a former professor of music and missions at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Hunt’s granddaughter, Katherine Fruge, a doctor of philosophy student at Southwestern, characterized his passing as “successfully finishing his race,” noting that he died peacefully with family by his side “cheering him on to victory.”

“T.W. Hunt met Jesus yesterday,” Southwestern President Paige Patterson said in a Dec. 12 statement. “It was a meeting of a faithful servant and his Lord, to be sure. But in a sense, it was just a reunion of old friends, because few men ever walked with God like Enoch and T.W. Hunt.

“As a faculty member, as a pastor and as a friend, Dr. Hunt was the champion of prayer and devotional walk with the Master. His family, his friends, his church and his seminary will miss him profoundly. Now, my friend, enjoy all that God has now richly provided for you,” Patterson said.

Born in 1929, Hunt grew up in a Christian home and accepted Christ at age 10, although it would be many years before he fully surrendered to God’s plan for his

life. Until then, Hunt earned bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees in musicology and piano and taught music classes at the University of North Texas and, later, at Oklahoma College for Women.

The trajectory of Hunt’s life changed, however, when he received a special gift in 1959 – a copy of the Martin Luther translation of the Bible – from a student who knew that he spoke German, which Hunt learned while serving overseas in the Army and as a missionary.

The day he received the Bible was one of the most memorable of his life. “It just seemed to be kind of ... me,” he recalled in a Baptist Press article many years later. “Luther had linguistic skill and spiritual insight. [I made] the decision to commit all my life to Christ in 1959, reading that German Bible.”

Four years later, Hunt followed God’s call to teach in Southwestern’s school of church music. Within a few years, he had trans-

formed the way music was used for missions. Specifically, he developed the Music in Missions class that is still in the school’s catalogue today.

The new course, for which Hunt wrote the textbook, offered students techniques for using music to communicate the message of the gospel by focusing on the indigenous music of the particular mission field. This concept would later prove to have played an integral role in revolutionizing music evangelism.

In 1987, LifeWay Christian Resources (then-Baptist Sunday School Board), which had previously published

Hunt’s *Disciple’s Prayer Life* and, soon after, *The Doctrine of Prayer*, asked Hunt to move to Nashville to serve as the board’s first prayer consultant. Although the decision was difficult due to Hunt’s fondness for teaching, after much prayer and Bible study, it became clear he had finished what God wanted him to do at Southwestern and it was time to move on. So, confident in God’s will, Hunt accepted the position.

From that position, Hunt became recognized as an earnest prayer warrior and often was asked to speak on prayer at conferences and state conventions, sparking several thousand churches to begin or undergird their prayer ministries. He retired from LifeWay in 1994.

After leaving LifeWay, Hunt remained an active author and speaker over the next two decades. In 1994, LifeWay published what would be Hunt’s most popular work, *The Mind of Christ*, a Bible study co-authored with Claude V. King on Philippians 2:5-11.

Throughout more than five decades of ministry, Hunt always asked people not to focus on him. Instead, as he once said to Baptist Press, “I’d rather they know about God.” Mark Estep, pastor of Spring Baptist Church in Spring, Texas, where Hunt was a longtime member, said Hunt was the most godly person he ever met.

“He truly walked with the Lord and demonstrated that walk each and every day,” Estep said.

Hunt was preceded in death by his wife Laverne in 2009. He is survived by his daughter Melana Hunt Monroe, 10 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Alex Sibley is a writer for Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.) **BR**



T.W. HUNT



# Commencement speakers share words of wisdom

By EMILY BLAKE | BR Editorial Aide

Every May and December universities across the state celebrate the success of their graduates and invite commencement speakers to deliver some final words of wisdom. Students sit in cap and gown in the midst of their peers. There is usually an air of hope in the room as people nervously shift in their seats, or look out to find proud family members in the audience. After years of effort students gather to receive their diplomas, and listen to one final speech on behalf of their school.

“The primary purpose of the commencement speech is to inspire students,” said Jeff Atkinson, director of marketing and communications at Wingate University. “This is the last time that a class of students will be together, and it is our final opportunity to collectively offer words of wisdom to the class. “We take this opportunity seriously and want this moment to be very meaningful to our graduates and their families.”

None of the North Carolina Baptist affiliated schools – the College at Southeastern and Fruitland Baptist Bible College, along with Campbell, Chowan, Gardner-

Webb, Mars Hill and Wingate universities – have a requirement that the speaker must be Baptist.

For many graduation offers not only a rite of passage into a new beginning, but a farewell from an institution that may have changed lives.

This year, from the spring semester alone 1,986 students graduated with bachelors, associates and certificates from universities and colleges with North Carolina Baptist ties.

N.C. Baptist affiliated schools take a variety of strategies when choosing a commencement speaker, but most would agree that choosing a speaker who reflects the school's values is one of the top priorities.

“We try to have individuals [speakers] who appreciate higher education, value faith and are interested in service,” Atkinson said, “someone who cares deeply about students and our mission.

“We want to invite someone who will invoke our students to live out the faith, knowledge and service mission of our university in their lives beyond Wingate.”

Chowan University often alternates between guest and student speakers. They invited Sen. Richard Burr to speak at their 2013 commencement and in 2014 some of

the best and brightest students were chosen to highlight the vast range of majors and talents at the university.

At Gardner-Webb University students are recommended every semester by the faculty, department chairs and deans. From the recommendations three or four are chosen from varying areas and levels of study to write speeches reflecting their educational journey and experience.

Britt J. Davis, vice president of institutional advancement and assistant to the president at Campbell University said, “We are generally looking for someone who we believe has the character and qualities of someone who represents Campbell as a Baptist university and community. Speakers in the past have included military leaders, government officials, church leaders, Campbell officials, benefactors and alumni.”

The commencement speaker is meant to inspire the graduates “to go out and change the world for Christ,” said Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary’s president, Daniel Akin. The school also keeps in mind the lost people who attend services in support of friends and family, and makes a point to communicate the gospel clearly on their behalf. **BR**

## OPPORTUNITY CORNER

### 2015 Baptists on Mission rallies

In February 2015, North Carolina Baptists on Mission will host a series of mission rallies across the state.

These rallies will highlight the variety of opportunities N.C. Baptists have to be involved in missions across our state, in our nation and around the world.

● **Feb. 9 – Region 2** at New Bern First Baptist Church

**Region 6** at North Albemarle Baptist Church

● **Feb. 10 – Region 3** at Grove Park Baptist Church, Clinton

**Region 4** at Bethesda Baptist Church, Clayton

● **Feb. 16 – Region 8** at Penelope Baptist Church, Hickory

**Region 10** at Franklin First Baptist Church

● **Feb. 17 – Region 1** at Cashie Baptist Church, Windsor

**Region 9** at Fruitland Baptist Bible College, Hendersonville

● **Feb. 19 – Region 5** at Southside Baptist Church, Greensboro

**Region 7** at Hudson First Baptist Church

A meal is provided, but reservations are necessary.

The cutoff date for reservations is one week prior to the event. Visit <http://www.baptistsonmission.org/Events/Regional-Rallies/Missions-Rallies>.

To register by phone or email contact Mary Alice Landis at [mlandis@ncbaptist.org](mailto:mlandis@ncbaptist.org) or (800) 395-5102, ext. 5596, and provide your name, church you are with, phone or email, number of people you are registering and the rally location.

## GRADUATES

### College at Southeastern

Master of arts in intercultural studies – Kelley Smith, Pine Level

### Southeastern Seminary

Master of arts, Christian studies – Charles Matthew Agee, Gastonia; Christopher Broome, Raleigh; Robert Lee Dean III, Wendell; David Brian Nettles, Gastonia; Jeffrey William Parsons, Albemarle; Wendy Lee Romine, Swansboro; Todd Gunter Sorrell, Fuquay-Varina; and James F. Ward III, Raleigh

Master of arts, ethics, theology and culture – Benjamin A. Francis, Durham; and Matthew Brooks Oakley, Plumtree

Master of arts, Old Testament – Christopher Shawn Bryant Wake Forest

Master of arts in biblical counseling – Samuel Lewis Knight, Elkin; Jeffrey Scott Shaeffer, Cary; and Lauren Elizabeth Turner, Durham

Master of arts in ministry leadership – Michael Demetrius Hines Sr. Cary; Carey Lee Keiger, Charlotte; Michael Joseph

Klapp, Fayetteville; Michael W. Reeve, Greensboro; and Mark Stroupe, Raleigh

Master of divinity with advanced biblical studies – Christopher Shawn Bryant, Wake Forest; and Michael Carlton Dickerson, Wake Forest

Master of divinity with advanced standing – Jacob Burnette, Winston-Salem; Seraph Jade Sharpe, Leasburg; and Todd Alan Unzicker, Durham

Master of divinity with Christian ministry – Skylar Anderson, Wake Forest; Thomas Martin Beam, Forest City; Troy Blalock, Timberlake; Namjong Jerry Cho, Wake Forest; Christopher Curtiss Clark, Wilmington; Joshua W. Grant, Wilmington; Zachary Honeycutt, Wake Forest; Timothy D. Horton, Cary; Eric L. Hovis, Raleigh; Eric W. Lockhart, Wake Forest; Thomas Luke Lunceford, Boone; Kyle William Mercer, Durham; Jason Lee Miller, Canton; Katie Kasey Moats, Henderson; Matthew Murray Poole, Raleigh; Russell Alan Post, Huntersville; Joseph E. Query, Monroe; Hilary Beth Ratchford, Charlotte; Thomas

Houston Ratchford, Charlotte; and Aaron Parrish Swain, Burgaw

Master of divinity with missiology – Nghiem Thai Tran, Winston Salem

Master of divinity with pastoral ministry – Tyler Keith Shepherd, Lexington; and Daniel Blake Stevens, Wake Forest

Master of theology – Jeffrey Boe Ellis, Raleigh; and James T. Hughes III, Durham

Doctor of ministry – Bobby Joe Gettys Jr., Ellenboro; Willis Lee Herman, Creedmoor; and Erick Lyn Ingram, Goldsboro

Doctor of education – Andrew Todd Burggraff, Raleigh; Thomas Dean, Garner; and Justin Allen Smith, Morganton

Doctor of philosophy – Gregory D. Mathias, Wake Forest

### Southern Seminary

Master of Divinity – Joel E. Lind, High Point

Doctor of Philosophy – Michael A. Cobb, Asheville

## AROUND THE STATE

### Obituary

**MALCOLM O. TOLBERT** died Nov. 27, 2014, at the Butterfly Hospice Center in Baton Rouge, La.

He had a long and varied career within Baptist religious circles, beginning as a pastor at the age of 18, a missionary in Brazil, a seminary professor, and author of many books on the interpretation of scripture for modern life.

Born in 1924, he was a native of Baton Rouge. He enrolled at Louisiana College (LC) in Pineville, La., to begin a career in the ministry.

The advent of the war caused him to forego his ministerial deferment and enlist in the Army Air Corps, where he was trained as a bombardier before being honorably discharged.

He returned to his studies at LC and continued his ministerial training at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS).

In 1952 he responded to a call to missionary service in Brazil.

He left the mission field in 1960 to continue his graduate studies at NOBTS, where he received his Th.D. in 1964. He became a faculty member at NOBTS and taught basic courses in Greek, New Testament and Theology.

In 1977 he responded to a call to the pastorate at the First Baptist Church of Gainesville, Ga., where he served as senior pastor until 1979, when he returned to his first love, teaching budding ministerial students at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest. He retired from SEBTS in 1989. He wrote six books on theology for ministers and lay people.

He is survived by his four children, Sharon Bergeron of Houma, La., Ellen Bandsma of Fort Collins, Colo., Laren Tolbert of Smyrna, Ga., and Anita Mas-sengill of New York, N.Y.; 10 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

### Staff changes

**JIM PENNINGTON** is the new pastor at Temple Baptist, New Bern. He once served on the staff of Carmel Baptist Church, Charlotte, and has served as senior pastor at churches in Florida, Georgia and North Carolina.

Gardner-Webb University recently announced the hiring of two new senior staff members. **PATRICK WAGNER** of Green Bay, Wis., has been named the new vice president for university advancement, and **WOODY FISH**, most recently the associate vice president for development and alumni relations, is now the vice president for external affairs and special assistant to the president. Fish begins his new duties immediately, and will be assisted in the transition phase by Scoot Dixon, who currently serves as special assistant to the president and will retire at the end of the year.



January 11

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

January 18

## The Shelter of God's Protection

Psalm 91:1-4, 9-11, 14-16

I still can remember the tragic events of Tuesday, September 11, 2001 – how a coordinated group of terrorists brought tragedy to our doorstep. I watched the scenes unfold before my eyes on television. I was at Montrose Christian School in Rockville, Md., the elementary principal and responsible for a number of young lives. I stood in horror as the second plane flew directly into the second tower. It felt as if I was watching a movie when they collapsed. For the first time in my life in the United States of America, I felt vulnerable, unprotected from the world around me.

With no inscription to allow us to associate Psalm 91, I believe God has given it to us to hold onto in times of troubles. When we seek and need a protective hand, He reminds us that He is there. Verse 1 reminds us that if we live under His protection, we are dwelling with *El Shaddai* – the most-powerful One. As we spend time in God's Word, we find that there are a number of names attributed to Him – it is not that there are many different gods; it is to show us the many facets

of Yahweh. Each name covers a different feature of our marvelous God.

*El Shaddai* is one of the best-known compound names of God in the scriptures. It literally means the "All-Sufficient God." It is used 48 times in the Old Testament, the first time being in Genesis 17:1 – God had appeared to Abraham and was ready to fulfill His promise of making him the father of a mighty nation. His name was given to reassure Abraham that God was all he needed. Job uses this name frequently in the book of Job. It also carries the connotation of omnipotence. He has all-sufficient power.

God has shown Himself faithful in the past. Because of this, we can trust Him for today and the future. He holds all power in His hands and being. This is a blessed thought when we consider our standing with Him. When a person accepts Christ as his Savior, God's all-sufficient power is able to protect them from ever being separated from Him. He is enough, Jesus is enough.



THOMAS MARSHALL  
Spring Hill Baptist  
Church, Wagram

Exodus 23:1-3; 6-9

Injustice. *Dictionary.com* defines the word as "violation of the rights of others; unjust or unfair action or treatment." We are in the midst of the continuing struggles over the cries of injustice surrounding us today. The debates are ongoing about immigration, abortion, civil rights and personal rights. These are being approached as if injustice is something new. However, if you study the issue, you find that injustice has been around for a very long time. Why? Because it is an outpouring of man's sinful nature.

Consider the book of Genesis where we find injustice as far back as Cain and Abel. We see the conflict between Sarah and Hagar carries images of injustice. What about the life of Joseph? Did he suffer injustice? Repeatedly we can find images of injustice in the scriptures. In Proverbs 6:16-19, the writer lists six things that God detests. These six things all can be related

to some form of injustice. How does God view injustice? How does He want those of us who claim a relationship with Him to deal with this issue?

Many in our world today are treated unfairly or unjustly. Billy Graham has said, "Racism and injustice and violence sweep our world, bringing a tragic harvest of heartache and death."

In addition, we are familiar with the oft-quoted adage from Edmund Burke: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

This Sunday's lesson hits both Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, and the remembrance of Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. King, a great advocate for Civil Rights once said, "In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends." Inaction speaks louder than any spoken words.

Our lesson this day shows us that God wants us to take action, to stand for those who cannot stand for themselves.

Seek God and discover how He wants you to be involved in ministering to those facing injustice in this world – and thus ministering to Him.

January 11

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

January 18

## God Inspires the Work

Focal Passages: Nehemiah 2:1-8, 17-18

I have recently been reading a book entitled *Margins*. It is written by a Christian medical doctor calling on people to recognize that we live our lives in such a wide-open manner that we don't even have room for all we are trying to do, much less unexpected things that arise. Even more troubling, in the midst of our compulsively busy lives, we often fail even to recognize opportunities God brings along our path where He desires for us to serve Him in some way that will bring Him glory.

This does not mean that we should shuffle the busyness of our lives to substitute some of our busyness with "doing work for God." Rather, the need of our lives is to learn to walk in daily fellowship with God, being led by His Spirit rather than the spirit of the "urgent," so we can hear God when He speaks, follow as He leads and serve in the strength and wisdom which He provides whenever He calls.

We see the above pattern in Nehemiah. Nehemiah was not looking for something to do for God. He was seeking to walk faithfully with the God he knew

to be a faithful, covenant-keeping God (1:5) – while in Babylonian exile. We see that the pattern of Nehemiah's life was communion with God through prayer (1:4,6,11; 2:4; 4:4,9). He sought God's face and followed when and where God led. Nehemiah knew from his time with God the desire to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem (2:12). His intent at that point was to survey the situation (2:12-15), trusting God for the wisdom and strength to accomplish what God had led Him to do. Nehemiah knew God always provides when He is leading and His people are surrendered to His will.

God's call to His people is always first to Himself, not to a task. God called us to repentance and faith in order to reconcile us to Himself. When we walk with Him in daily fellowship and prayer, led and empowered by His Spirit, He will lead us to serve Him in ways that glorify Him. The question is, "Are we so busy with our plans and agendas – or perhaps even our work for Him – that we fail to hear from Him?"



RANDY MANN  
Lead Pastor, Central  
Baptist Church,  
Henderson

Focal Passages: Genesis 9:1-7; Psalm 8:4-8; Proverbs 24:10-12; Philippians 2:12-16a

The Sanctity of Human Life issue often arises in abortion discussions. This past October/November demonstrated the importance of understanding this issue across the lifespan. Brittany Maynard, a 29-year-old California woman, chose to move to Oregon where she could legally end her own life. She had been diagnosed with a stage four glioblastoma, an inoperable and incurable brain tumor. And from her perspective, she thought: "My quality of life, as I knew it, would be gone." The question is: "Who gets to define life's quality and value?"

God Himself has determined human life's value as He uniquely created mankind – distinct from all the rest of creation – in His image. Human life's value, then, is found here. It is to this very fact that God points Noah when God both tells Noah to go and fulfill the

## Protect Human Life

creation mandate to multiply the earth with more image-bearers, as well as to value all human life (Genesis 9). The Psalmist likewise recognized the unique value of human life, rooted in the creation purpose of God.

Contrary to our contemporary culture's perspective, the value of human life is not based on functionalism (what I am able to do) or Epicureanism (where the presence of pleasure and the absence of pain are the greatest goods).

In the Disney movie, "Pirates of the Caribbean," Captain Jack Sparrow was guided by a special compass that pointed not toward true north, but toward "the thing you want most in this world." If man is guided by "what he wants most," then when pain and suffering come, we want relief at any cost. When man is guided by the compass of God's Word, it will always point us toward truth. It is God's Word that tells us that life's value is determined by our being created in God's image, not simply the absence of suffering. This is the truth we must proclaim to a world tossed upon the sea of confusion, pain and suffering. Humanity's only hope for finding the port of rest is ultimately in God.



## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

### Denomination

Montgomery Baptist Association of Troy, NC, prayerfully seeks an **Associational Missionary** of vision and passion to lead our churches to reach their full kingdom potential. We are looking for someone who will communicate effectively with our pastors and churches. Church planting experience is helpful but not necessary as our county is over 50% unchurched. Please submit resumes to Reese English, 742 Aquadale Rd., Albemarle, NC 28001, or send email to [reeseenglish@ymail.com](mailto:reeseenglish@ymail.com).

The *Biblical Recorder* is seeking a **Content Editor**. The job includes writing and coordinating the flow of content for the print edition of the *Biblical Recorder*, the *BRnow.org* website and the *BRweekly* e-newsletter. Journalism and communications experience are essential. Applicants must be actively affiliated with a Southern Baptist church and familiar with the broad scope of Baptist ministries. Essential skill sets include mature administrative leadership, positive teamwork qualities, healthy relational habits and social media engagement experience. Please send resumes to [editor@brnow.org](mailto:editor@brnow.org).

### Pastor

Peachtree Memorial Baptist Church, Murphy, NC, is prayerfully seeking a **Senior Pastor**. Average attendance of 210 in worship service and 135 in Sunday School. Seminary graduate and pastoral experience preferred. Please send resume to Pastor Search Committee, Peachtree Memorial Baptist Church, 1650 Highway 141, Murphy, NC 28906. Resumes will be accepted until February 1, 2015.

First Baptist Church of Gaffney, SC, is seeking **God's servant** to lead an active and alive fellowship. The church has both traditional and contemporary worship services. Send resumes to Pastor Search Committee, 200 N. Limestone Street, Gaffney, SC 29340.

**Senior Pastor.** Second Baptist Church of Washington, NC ([www.sbcwashington.org](http://www.sbcwashington.org)), is seeking a full-time pastor for our conservative, evangelical, Southern Baptist church. We are looking for a candidate that has strong preaching, communication, and leadership skills. Candidates must believe that the Bible is the inerrant word of God. Degree from an accredited seminary is preferred. Email cover letter and resume to [secondbaptist2@embarqmail.com](mailto:secondbaptist2@embarqmail.com) or mail to Second Baptist Church Pastor Search Committee, Attn: Mike White, 2516 W. 5th. St., Washington, NC 27889.

Glorieta Baptist Church in Concord, NC, is prayerfully seeking a **Pastor**. We are a Southern Baptist church with an average attendance in worship of 100 and 80 in Sunday School. We are looking for a Pastor who is biblically grounded, mission minded, with visionary leadership and strong communication skills. Seminary degree with three to five years of pastoral experience preferred. Please send resume with cover letter and references to Pastor Search Committee, Glorieta Baptist Church, 4912 Hwy. 73 East, Concord, NC 28025. Resumes will be accepted until January 31, 2015.

### Church Staff

Mt. Ruhama Baptist Church located in Maiden, NC, seeking candidate for a full-time position with benefits as the **Associate Pastor** to lead youth/college age and support family life ministries. Responsibilities to include plan, coordinate and implement meaningful opportunities for Christian development. If interested email resume to [www.mtruhamachurch.org](http://www.mtruhamachurch.org) or mail to 3273 Mt. Ruhama Church Road, Maiden, NC 28650.

Mountain View Baptist Church of Hamptonville, NC, is seeking a **part-time Director of Children's Ministries** (for grades 1-6). Responsibilities include coordinating a Wednesday evening discipleship program, quarterly children events and summer day camp. This position also serves as staff liaison to our Preschool Ministry. Please send resume to [mvc@yadtel.net](mailto:mvc@yadtel.net).

**Part-time Worship Leader** needed for blended worship services for a progressive and growing church in Western North Carolina. A Bachelor of Music Degree or the equivalent in experience is required. This position is approximately 20 hrs. per week which includes practices and worship services. Salary is commensurate with experience and qualifications. Inquiries can be made electronically to [tomseals@att.net](mailto:tomseals@att.net) or to: Newfound Baptist Church, Attn. Music Search Committee, PO Box 6, Leicester, NC 28748.

### Miscellaneous

**NCBAM needs teams of 2-4 servant volunteers to "adopt" an aging adult** and provide friendly visits 1-2 hours a week. All counties needed; training provided. Call North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry: 877-506-2226.

**Like new 25 foot inflatable movie screen, Sound System, HD projector, etc.** All you will need is a DVD; Well over \$10,000 invested; \$5,500.00 OBO; 336-620-3872; [darrylgiles@ratiochristi.org](mailto:darrylgiles@ratiochristi.org).

### Placing a classified ad in the *Biblical Recorder*

Choose one of three avenues:

- Send e-mail to: [alison@BRnow.org](mailto:alison@BRnow.org).
- Submit the information via the *Recorder's* website at [BRnow.org](http://BRnow.org).
- Send a Fax to (919) 469-1674.

For more information, call the office at (919) 459-5691.

Cost for Baptist churches/organizations is \$1.20 per word, number and stand-alone initial (\$1.42 for commercial and non-Baptist entities) with a minimum charge of \$35. Classifieds also are carried online.

# HEARTS ON FIRE

## CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

## FEBRUARY 13-14, 2015

LIGHTSEY AUDITORIUM

AT CHARLESTON SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

With the **NEWSBOYS:**  
"WE BELIEVE" Tour!

...and with **ROGER WILLIAMS & THE AMUQ**  
Speakers **DARREN WHITEHEAD & SETH BUCKLEY**

**\$40**

Per person. Cost includes event registration only

T-shirt order & Registration  
Deadline: January 23

Register online at [www.heartsonfireministries.org](http://www.heartsonfireministries.org)

Hearts On Fire Ministries | PO Box 4336, Sevierville, TN 37864-4336  
865.776.2629 | [jsteale@heartsonfireministries.org](mailto:jsteale@heartsonfireministries.org)

The purpose of Hearts On Fire is to share the Gospel with middle school, high school and college age young people and fan the flame within their hearts, challenging them to a dynamic walk and commitment in Christ.





# Floyd

Continued from page 3

this new cultural reality. Simultaneously, there are so many national and global crises rising up that we cannot keep up with their supposed threats. As well, the world is becoming more dangerous by the second.

While this present status is undeniable, much of the church in America sleeps. Spiritual lukewarmness is plaguing the church, resulting in the infrequency of church attendance, declining churches, lagging evangelism, sagging giving and generational disconnectedness. Complacency and conflict categorize the church more than contrition and compassion. Among the people of God, announcements and promotions within the church gain a higher priority in planning and follow through than prayer.

While these realities are rising to a seeming point of no return, it is in this hour that we must wake up from our slothfulness and sleep. Romans 13:11 says, “Besides this, knowing the time, it is already the hour for you to wake up from sleep, for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.”

We are at a decisive point in time. Therefore, this is an undeniable moment and season, fixed by a sovereign God as a moment of destiny. God is at work and we cannot miss this season of decision and opportunity by being unresponsive and asleep.

## A call to extraordinary prayer and urgent action

The church must rise up in extraordinary prayer and urgent action. We must take desperate steps forward spiritually for these desperate times in which we live. With urgency in this hour, knowing the Lord could return at any time, it is incumbent on us to rise up together now as His church.

Therefore, I am pleading with our Southern Baptist family to come together in clear agreement, visible union and extraordinary prayer for the next Great Awakening and for the world to be reached for Christ.

Recently, I read a sermon by Dr. Billy Graham that he preached on Oct. 14, 1993, at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. In the sermon, “Can Revival Come?” Graham called for revival and awakening. In one sentence, he cast a vision that represents my overwhelming passion personally and for all Southern Baptists. He said, “An awakening can bring about evangelization of the world in our generation.”

These words so resonate with my pleading with Southern Baptists and beyond. Surely we can embrace with clear agreement that spiritual revival person-

ally, spiritual revival in the church and spiritual awakening in the nation are all needed so we can accelerate our pace in reaching the world for Christ. Certainly we can deny ourselves, defer our own preferences and visibly unite together in extraordinary prayer for the next Great Awakening and for the world to be reached for Christ.

With conviction in this desperate hour, I want to call us to consider some unprecedented actions in our modern history that will move us into a season of extraordinary prayer as a convention of churches.

● **Action #1: Sunrise/Sunset** – Challenge your church to pause at either sunset on Saturday evening or sunrise on Sunday morning, to pray for three minutes for the anointing of God to come on their pastor as he preaches God’s Word and the anointing of God’s power to come upon the worship services of their church. Prayerfully, these 180 seconds of focused prayer will soon begin a true 180-degree change in our churches. While God creates the change within our churches spiritually, He will also lead us to strategic change in our churches in order to rise up like never before to do whatever it takes to reach people with the gospel of Jesus Christ regionally, nationally, and internationally.

● **Action #2: Month of Preaching** – Between the months of January and May 2015, move into a one-month emphasis in your church to teach and preach God’s Word on the subjects of repentance, extraordinary prayer, revival, awakening, and reaching the world for Christ. Extend passionate calls to your people about each of these topics individually and collectively. During this same time period, we would ask those who lead staff teams and chapels of our Baptist entities, conventions, seminaries, and colleges to consider this same emphasis. For a collection of sermons on these subjects, provided by several Southern Baptist pastors, go to [www.pray4awakening.com/southernbaptists](http://www.pray4awakening.com/southernbaptists).

● **Action #3: Sunday Morning Prayer** – On one Sunday in this same period of time between January and May 2015, dedicate an entire worship service or services to extraordinary prayer for spiritual revival, the next Great Awakening, and for the world to be reached for Christ. For a closer look at how to do this, perhaps my article, “Leading Your Church in a Sunday Morning Prayer Meeting” at [www.ronniefloyd.com](http://www.ronniefloyd.com), will be of assistance. You can find more prayer-focused services led by pastors from across the country at [pray4awakening.com](http://pray4awakening.com). Perhaps these will encourage you to lead forward

in this initiative.

● **Action #4: One Day of Prayer and Fasting in May** – In the month of May, we call upon every Southern Baptist to spend a day in prayer and fasting for spiritual revival personally, revival in the church, spiritual awakening in America, for the completion of the Great Commission in our generation, and for our upcoming annual meeting in Columbus, Ohio, June 16-17, 2015. For a closer look at fasting and how you can lead your church in a corporate fast, go to [pray4awakening.com](http://pray4awakening.com).

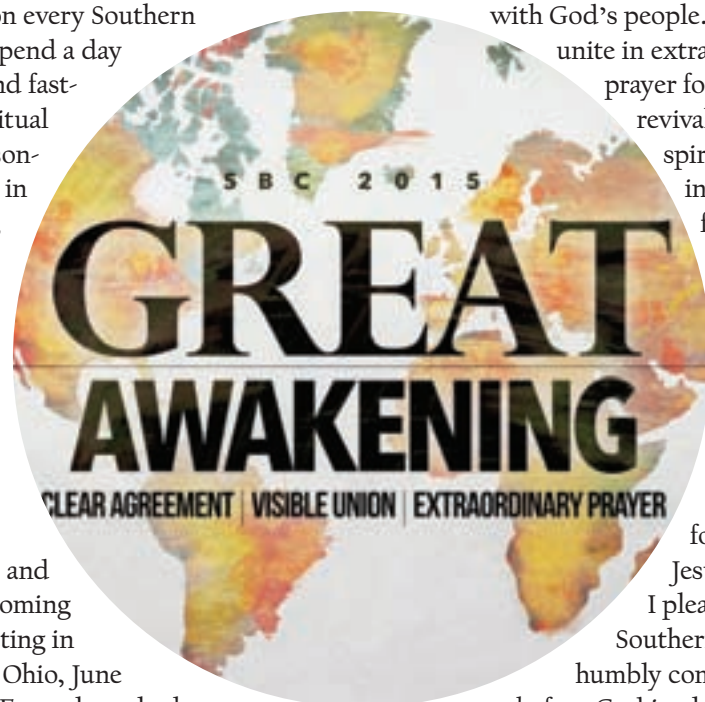
● **Action #5: Call to Columbus** – Join us in Columbus, Ohio, on Tuesday evening, June 16, 2015, as we commit the entire evening session of the annual

meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention to come together in clear agreement and visible union at one place at one time

with God’s people. We will unite in extraordinary prayer for spiritual revival personally, spiritual revival in the church, for the next Great Spiritual Awakening, and for the world to be reached for Christ.

Therefore, in Jesus’s name, I plead with Southern Baptists to humbly come together before God in clear agreement, visible union, and extraordinary prayer for the next Great Awakening and for the world to be reached for Christ.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Ronnie Floyd is president of the Southern Baptist Convention and senior pastor of Cross Church in Northwest Arkansas.) BR



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