

### Investing in Kingdom work

While it may be hard to think about, the beginning of the year is the perfect time to seek guidance on making wills and providing for your family. **Page 2**

### BSC nominations

Know someone with leadership skills? Nominate them to serve on one of the many boards through the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. **Page 4**

# BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

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## 2011 – a year of transition, ministry

By **DIANNA L. CAGLE** | BR Assistant Managing Editor

### AN ANALYSIS

**W**hile many stories stood out in 2011, there were a few main themes that jumped to the forefront when looking back at the events that shaped North Carolina Baptists this past year – leadership changes, focused vision, disaster relief and missions.

### Leadership changes

2011 was a year many key Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) entities made leadership changes. Tom Elliff began his post at the IMB leading his staff and missionary personnel in Richmond and beyond to challenge Baptists to “embrace” 3,800 unengaged, unreached people groups.

While Kevin Ezell at the North American Mission Board and Frank Page at the SBC’s Executive Committee had been chosen in 2010, 2011 was a year’s worth of leadership at their new posts.

Each continued to challenge Baptists on local, state, national and global levels to step up church planting and fulfill the Great Commission. Ezell worked to cut costs at NAMB and focus more on its church planting efforts.

Al Gilbert, former pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, was part of the changing landscape at NAMB. Gilbert became the executive director of Love



Old Town Baptist Church in Winston-Salem works with a Southeast Asian village. Readers followed Old Town’s progress throughout 2011 with embracing an unengaged, unreached people group. (Contributed photo)

Loud, the ministry evangelism arm of NAMB.

In his inaugural address in February, Page said he believes God is calling Southern Baptists to be a blessing

to the nations: “I don’t believe God is going to be happy until every man, woman, boy and girl on the face of

**Continued on page 6**



Sanctity of Human Life Sunday is Jan. 22. If you have stories you’d like to share that are related to this issue, please send emails to [editor@BRnow.org](mailto:editor@BRnow.org) or call (919) 847-2127. (stock.xchng photo by Emily Cahal)

## Crisis pregnancy care helps mothers choose life for babies

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) – A tiny hand seemed to wave at everyone in the room on a small TV screen inside a watermelon-slice-shaped window. Then a face of the same black-and-white image became visible.

A heartbeat, meanwhile, thudded rhythmically on a bedside monitor, signaling a life that had begun six weeks earlier.

Well over 1 million pregnancies end in abortion each year in the United States. With the help of Diane Montgomery and her colleagues at the Fort Worth Pregnancy Center, some lives – that would have been aborted – will have a chance to grow up and make their own choices.

“[These mothers] don’t know what to do,” Montgomery said. “They need someone to listen to them. They need someone to care about them because everyone else is just saying, ‘Do what you’ve got to do for your own self. It’s your body.’ And nobody is really listening to the emotional troubles they are having. Because we care for them and listen to them, it opens a door for not only the potential of lives to be chosen, but for her life to be changed, for the Lord to influence her life and spiritually to be changed as well.”

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday is Jan. 22. Send N.C. Baptist story ideas relating to this topic to [editor@BRnow.org](mailto:editor@BRnow.org).

# N.C. Baptist Foundation helps Baptists invest in Kingdom work

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

**M**aking a will is not a priority for most Baptists, said Clay Warf, executive director of the North Carolina Baptist Foundation (NCBF).

When it comes to wills, many people often think they don't have a lot of material resources that would impact others, or they struggle with procrastination. Most N.C. Baptists miss one of the greatest opportunities of a lifetime, Warf said.

"What if Baptists simply put a tithe of our resources in our wills?" Warf asked.

"Tithing is a beautiful system. It is the best way to support your church and Kingdom work while you are living. Tithing your estate will multiply your ministry until Jesus comes."

Founded in 1920, NCBF is the oldest Baptist foundation. The organization helps N.C. Baptists invest their resources in a variety of the ministries they are most interested.

Warf tells about a study conducted in recent years that focused on six counties in the state.

The study examined the wills that were probated in a one-month period. The average size of the wills in the study was \$44,200.

Warf pointed out that six-tenths of one percent of those wills directed money to charity. Six-one-thousands of one percent of that money went to Christian causes.

An additional study was done on Baptists in six counties.

The question was asked, "How many senior (over 60) N.C. Baptists were in this number?"

Researchers learned that 149,000 of those seniors were on Baptist Sunday School rolls.

Adding up the figures, given the average size of those wills, Warf said, "If Baptists in those counties tithed their estate, \$660 million would be available to



Clay Warf, left, executive director of the North Carolina Baptist Foundation, Betty Greene of Boone and David Webb, NCBF western area manager pose for a photo at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina annual meeting in November. Greene was the winner of an anniversary watch. Warf indicated the Foundation was available to help N.C. Baptists plan for their financial future for themselves and their families. (Contributed photo)

Christian ministry. If those same dollars were placed in an endowment, the endowment would make \$46.2 million dollars available annually – this is not simply a one-time gift, but an annual return of \$46.2 million for years to come. Imagine the ministries that kind of money could fund."

January, which is "Make your will month," is a great time for an individual to evaluate estate goals, Warf said.

Not only can people make out a will, but they can also talk to experts about estate planning.

Making a will is just one step in the process of exercising wise stewardship of material resources, Warf added.

"We should consider our estate plan our greatest act of Christian stewardship," he said.

"Christians may be committed to tithing our income, but most of our assets (90 percent) are non-cash," he said.

"You need to be a good steward of that, too.

"My will should reflect two primary things – the Lord I serve, and the family I love."

NCBF has Trust and Endowment Managers who are ready to sit down with an individual and discuss their estate and develop an estate plan that fits each person's needs.

"In an estate plan there is no such thing as 'one size fits all,'" Warf said.

## A free service

People often spend hundreds of dollars for professional advice and planning that the Foundation staff will provide at no charge, said John Butler, executive leader for business services for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, a partner with NCBF.

"We believe that when churches open the door for the Foundation to educate its members about the importance of properly structuring their estate plans, not only will the individuals and churches benefit, but the Kingdom benefits



## Mission Statement

The North Carolina Baptist Foundation is an agency of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina committed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to serving North Carolina Baptists and others in generating an increased awareness of Christian estate stewardship principles as a means of financially undergirding churches, institutions, and mission endeavors on a permanent basis.

And further, the Baptist Foundation staff and board of directors are committed to being scrupulously moral, legal, efficient, and accurate in carrying out the intent of each donor and trustor whose funds are placed under management of the Foundation as a means of sustaining a tangible and perpetual involvement in presenting the gospel, meeting human needs, and strengthening all bodies of Christian fellowship where Christ is the Head.

as well," Butler said. "It's a matter of stewardship – and we believe God has given us the N.C. Baptist Foundation as a fantastic tool to become the best stewards of God's blessings that we can possibly become."

Together, these resources can fund a lot of Kingdom work, Warf said.

"We can impact ministry and missions for years after we are gone," he said.

For more information about the NCBF, go to [ncbaptistfoundation.org](http://ncbaptistfoundation.org) or call (800) 521-7334.

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# CP puts 'missionary' in Locust Grove, pastor says

By MIKE CRESWELL | BSC Communications

**W**hat puts the "missionary" into Locust Grove Missionary Baptist Church?

Pastor Ben Whitmire says it's their Cooperative Program giving.

The 600-member congregation will give five percent of their undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program (CP) in 2012, but members have committed to increase their support by one percent a year until they reach a full 10 percent.

"We believe that our mission dollars can't be spent any better than through the Cooperative Program. We believe the Cooperative Program supports the greatest missionary-sending organization in the world," Whitmire said.

Locust Grove has a Weaverville ad-

dress. The building sits alongside a winding rural road just off U.S. 23/I-26 north of Asheville, in the hills that roll up toward the Tennessee border.

Why the increased CP support by Locust Grove members?

That came about because Whitmire has served two years as a board member of Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute in Hendersonville and just completed his first year.

It was an eye-opening experience for him.

"I absolutely learned a lot more about what Baptists accomplish together. I knew they were doing a lot of great things, but now I see more in focus what they're doing.

"If more North Carolina Baptists knew the great things we're doing in missions and ministry through the different missions organizations we're a part of, I think they would very much support the Cooperative Program," Whitmire said. His work with Fruitland showed him that Baptists partnering together can create, sustain and grow an impressive educational ministry. Fruitland is a ministry which to date has trained the pastors of more than 800 North Carolina Baptist churches.

In recent years Fruitland has begun offering instruction in Spanish at its main campus and opened three satellite centers teaching in Spanish in Statesville, Winston-Salem and Wilmington.

"We definitely love Fruitland and we love the partnership that Fruitland has with the Baptist State Convention.

We know that without those Cooperative Pro-

gram dollars Fruitland wouldn't exist," he said. Through CP giving, Locust Grove supports a wide range of other ministries across North Carolina, including:

- starting 125 new churches in 2010;
- the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina;
- a youth program that reached more than 7,000 young people this year; evangelism and church growth ministry, prayer ministry, women's ministry, partnership missions and many kinds of pastor and church staff support;

Plus, Cooperative Program funds the North American Mission Board (NAMB), International Mission Board (IMB) and six seminaries. NAMB supports evangelism and church planting across the U.S. and Canada with some 5,000 missionaries. IMB has about the same number of missionaries seeking to reach unreached people groups. Six Southern Baptist seminaries, including Southeastern in Wake Forest, equip more than 13,000 for church leadership and mission service.



Ben Whitmire leads Locust Grove Missionary Baptist Church. (BSC photo by Mike Creswell)

## Holy Land Tour

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## December 2011 Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary graduates

**Master of Arts in Intercultural Studies** – Lori V. Battle of Nashville and Franklin Stoddart Meade of Charlotte

**Master of Arts** – Christopher Ryan Nash of Monroe and Samuel Devon Varnam of Varnamtown

**Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling** – Amanda M. Penrose of Morrisville and Cassandra Bryant Stone of Raleigh

**Master of Arts in Christian Education** – Joshua Paul Hill of Mocksville

**Master of Arts in Christian Education and Biblical Counseling** – Heebum Lee of Wake Forest

**Master of Arts in Christian School Administration** – Michael Bradshaw Long of Raleigh and Madai Soca of Wake Forest

**Master of Church Music** – Eric Loyd Spence of Louisburg

**Master of Divinity with Biblical Counseling** – Jeff A. Lane of Glen Alpine

**Master of Divinity with Christian Ministry** – John Daniel Atkins of Henderson, Bryan Blackwell of Kelly, Matthew Scott Brogli of Raleigh, Eric Paul Burmahl of Durham, Ryan Adam Epley of Char-

lotte, Jeremy D. Hyatt of Asheboro, Eric Paul Kincaid of Lenoir, Ryan L. Phillips of Winston-Salem, Michael Wayne Rice of Lincolnton, Carson Joseph Rogers of Wake Forest, Andrew Doyle Rorex of Denton, Kevin Ryan Schaub of Durham, and Claude Wesley Thomas of Sanford

**Master of Divinity with International Church Planting** – William Gray Smith Jr. of Mocksville and Jonas Randall Williams of Wake Forest

**Master of Divinity with North American Church Planting** – Jeffrey Lee Salisbury of Raleigh

**Master of Divinity with Pastoral Ministry** – Michael Johnson of Benson and Johnny Mize Wooten Jr. of Rocky Mount

**Master of Divinity with Worship Leadership** – Amy Leigh Grasty of Elizabeth City and Danny Wayne Poyner Jr. of Garner

**Master of Theology** – Frank Jonathan Catanzaro of Wake Forest, Dougald Woodrow McLaurin III of Fayetteville, and Ryan M. Showalter of Winston-Salem

**Doctor of Ministry** – Donald Keith Hudson of Kenly

**Doctor of Education** – Simeon Lee Childs of Raleigh, Edward Gary Venable of East Bend, and Carl Waden of High Point

**Doctor of Philosophy** – Seth Alexander Bible of Wake Forest, Kevin W. Rodgers of Oriental, and Melton B. Winstead of Marshville



# Akin invites graduates to be thankful for gift of Christ

By MICHAEL McEWEN | SEBTS Communications

WAKE FOREST – On Dec. 16, 132 students graduated from Southeastern – 25 graduates from the College at Southeastern, 82 students in the seminary, 11 from the master of theology program, and 14 in the program of doctoral studies (see list on page 3).

Speaking before the graduates and their families, Daniel Akin, president, communicated that God has given the

greatest gift and that gift is his Son. “Paul has given us a wonderful verse in this passage, reminding us that our God is the greatest gift-giver of all,” said Akin in reference to 2 Corinthians 9:15.

Addressing the chapel attendees, Akin said, “I pray this morning that this verse would be life-changing for everyone here.”

Connecting Paul’s letter to the season of giving, Akin said, “We as Christians give because God first gave. The principle

is simple. God did not give just any gift, but Christ himself.”

“In our giving, we give thanks to God, and not just any god; not the god of Pantheism, the god of Deism, or the gods of Polytheism. There is only one God,” said Akin, “and that is the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the God who so loved the world that gave his only begotten Son. This is the loving God, the giving God, the holy God, the forgiving God, the merciful God, and the sover-

eign God. This Father is a good and great Father.”

Akin believes Pauls’ word ‘indescribable’ likely references God’s salvation, his mercy and Christ himself. He challenged the graduates to never forget the gift of Christ, and to be a people who are always offering the salvific gift wherever God leads them. “This is a gift you get to keep as well as give it away,” Akin said. “In fact, the more you give it away, the more precious it becomes.”

## Jan. 31 deadline for nominations

North Carolina Baptists still have time to submit recommendations for people to serve on the Baptist State Convention’s (BSC) Board of Directors, the boards of the Convention’s agencies, institutions and committees.

The Convention’s Committee on Nominations seeks diversity among the recommendations that will represent churches of various sizes, various professional and educational backgrounds, ethnic and racial diversity, geographical areas, different age groups, lay persons and ministers.

Input from North Carolina Baptists regarding nominations of individuals to serve is essential for the ongoing missions, ministries and evangelistic endeavors of the BSC.

BSC bylaws require the Committee on Nominations to recommend to the Convention nominees from both small and large churches (over/under 400 members), limit churches to no more than six individuals from a single church serving on all Convention boards and committees, and limit BSC Board of Director membership to one member from any church.

An individual may only serve on a single committee or a single board at one time, whereas in the past individuals could serve in more than one place at one time. Therefore, it is essential for North Carolina Baptists to recommend more individuals to serve on the Board of Directors and Convention committees.

Nominations are due Jan. 31. To make a nomination, visit [recommend.ncaptist.org](http://recommend.ncaptist.org) or use the form at left. Recommendations received after the Jan. 31 deadline will be considered the following year.

For questions related to the recommendation process, contact Cynthia King at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5501, or [cking@ncbaptist.org](mailto:cking@ncbaptist.org).

When making a recommendation keep in mind these vacancies:

- Baptist Children’s Homes of N.C. – nine trustees
- N.C. Baptist Hospital – two trustees
- *Biblical Recorder* – four directors
- NC Baptist Foundation – five directors
- BSCNC Board of Directors (Board of Directors vacancies are based on information from annual church profiles) – all 10 regions
- Committee on Convention Meetings – six vacancies
- Committee on Resolutions and Memorials – three vacancies
- Historical Committee – four vacancies

### RECOMMENDATION TO THE BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION’S 2012 COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS

Thank you for taking the time to prepare this recommendation. Your input and investment of time in the recommendation of NC Baptists for places of service and leadership is essential for the ongoing missions, ministries and evangelistic endeavors of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Recommendations may be sent to Committee on Nominations, PO Box 1107, Cary, NC 27512–1107 or completed online at [recommend.ncbaptist.org](http://recommend.ncbaptist.org) or faxed to (919) 460-7507. **Deadline: January 31, 2012.** *(Please Print, form may be photocopied.)*

Believing that the following person is committed to Jesus Christ, is a person of integrity, is active in the church and has proven leadership ability,  
I recommend \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Rev.) First Preferred Middle Initial Last*

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Business Phone (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone (     ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Approximate age \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

Check the *ONE* (Board of Directors, Agency, Institution, Convention Committee) *you believe this person can best serve:*

_____ BSCNC Board of Directors	_____ NC Baptist Foundation	_____ Biblical Recorder
_____ NC Baptist Hospital	_____ Baptist Children’s Homes of NC	_____ Committee on Convention Meetings
_____ Committee on Resolutions and Memorials		_____ Historical Committee

☐ Please check if the person you are recommending can be considered for additional areas of service

Nominee’s church \_\_\_\_\_ Church’s City \_\_\_\_\_  
Church membership total \_\_\_\_\_

Region in which church is located \_\_\_\_\_ Association \_\_\_\_\_  
List past and present positions held in the local church: \_\_\_\_\_  
Give statement as to the past and present support of this person to this church and to North Carolina Baptists: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Denominational service (to be completed for a pastor or a layperson). List associational and/or Convention boards, committees, etc. served on and offices held: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is the individual a layperson? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, list occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Is the individual an ordained minister? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, list previous churches/ministries: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Brief Resume: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please attach a separate sheet for additional information you feel would be helpful to this Committee.  
Please understand that this recommendation DOES NOT assure that the person you are recommending will be nominated by the Committee on Nominations and/or elected by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina; however, your recommendation will be given serious consideration.

Name of person making Recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home number: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell number: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Church: \_\_\_\_\_ Association: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Ministry targets teeth, soul with medical, dental unit

By MICHAEL RAY SMITH | Special to N.C. Baptist Men

**D**onald Sutton, 34, made his way through Coats United Methodist Church's parking lot, nursing a bad tooth.

As he entered the social hall of the church, Sutton looked over his shoulder at the two medical dental units idling along one side of the lot, a mobile clinic that would serve up to 50 people before the team called it a day.

The units could pass for RVs except for the colorful lettering on the side proclaiming the vehicles as Medical Dental Ministry. In 2012 the ministry will host free clinics in Rutherfordton, Greenville and Dublin and many other places.

For Sutton, this trip was his first time at the clinic. Sutton didn't know what to expect, but his wife urged him to take advantage of the ministry of the North Carolina Baptist Men.

By early afternoon, volunteer dentist James S. McKenzie examined Sutton. Sutton learned he needed a cavity filled and that he suffered from gum disease. Still, he rejoiced.

He thanked the team, beaming his brilliant smile. He kept saying, "It's a blessing."

"It's a blessing for those who can't see a dentist on a regular basis."

McKenzie, one of the volunteer dentists, lowered his face mask and with a smile almost as wide as Sutton's, said "Glad we could help."

That's the spirit behind a ministry that began 22 years ago when the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina initiated its first medical dental unit, a 1989 Bluebird bus fitted to provide free medical and dental care.

North Carolina Baptist Men operates its medical dental ministry with three units, making it the largest in the nation.

"No one had thought about that need," recalls Richard Brunson, the executive director of N.C. Baptist Men in Cary.

"But God opened that door and we are able to help about 4,500 people each year."

Baptist Men is best known for the yellow T-shirts that more than 12,000 trained volunteers wear as they assist in disaster relief. The medical dental units are a vital part of Baptist relief work.

In late 2011 the ministry unveiled a \$400,000 state-of-the-art Lifeline Mobile unit stuffed with another \$50,000 of medical/dental equipment to provide no-cost care for the poor of North Carolina.

Gifts from dentists and others, along with grants, paid for the 40-foot, diesel-powered unit.

While the engines of the unit chugged, Joanne Honeycutt, unit coordinator, adjusted her blue cloth face mask to hold the hand of Cara Cotchen, 25, who had to have a tooth removed.

Tears rolled gently down Cotchen's face as Honeycutt encouraged her.

Earlier Cotchen, who attends both Clyde's Chapel in Wendell, and Providence Baptist Church in Raleigh, worked as a volunteer to help others find dental care at the unit.

She made the hour drive and received the no-cost care in Coats, too.

A member of the medical dental ministry for nearly eight years, Honeycutt helps the patients with medical care along with spiritual hope. As Honeycutt talked to Cotchen, "The Jesus Film" played nearby on a flat-screen TV.

"Not only do we provide dental care, we want to provide the gospel as well," said volunteer Bailey Stevens, who hopes to someday be a dentist, as she assisted another patient.

"The film is part of our ministry."

Continued on page 7

## East Coast Men's Bible Conference

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**YMT**  
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with his phone number call 7 days a week:

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# 2011 a year of transition, ministry

Continued from page 1

this earth hears the Good News of Jesus Christ.”

The *Biblical Recorder* also named a pastor as its editor/president. K. Allan Blume, former pastor of Mount Vernon Baptist Church in Boone, began as editor in May. Blume has traveled the state encouraging Baptists to support the state's paper by subscribing and sharing news items.

## Focused vision

Refocusing N.C. Baptists on the vision of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) was another key theme in 2011. This took on different forms. In 2010, the Convention decided to host vision fulfillment forums across the state in 2011. The Convention sought input from N.C. Baptists on the vision of the Convention reflected in BSC Executive Director-Treasurer Milton A. Hollifield Jr.'s *Seven Pillars for Ministry*.

Hollifield announced some changes to the Seven Pillars at the annual meeting in November.

He highlighted that while technology, which was formerly one of the pillars, was still important to North Carolina Baptists, the need to focus on unen-

gaged, unreached peoples was more in line with the original intent of the pillars. Hollifield challenged N.C. Baptists to adopt 250 unengaged, unreached people groups, an emphasis that replaced technology in the newest *Seven Pillars for Ministry*.

## Disaster response, missions

N.C. Baptists responded to numerous disasters near and far. An earthquake in Japan called on the nation's only Baptist search and rescue team through North Carolina Baptist Men. Volunteers worked fires in the state as well as responded to other disasters that caused loss of life and major damage to several areas in the state. Hurricane Irene wreaked havoc in North Carolina along with several other states along the Eastern seaboard. Along with disasters, 2011 brought a focus on partnerships with other states and countries.

The BSC's Office of Great Commission Partnerships continued to highlight efforts in Canada and New York as well as Moldova. Volunteers continue to help in Haiti after an earthquake two years ago deeply damaged the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

N.C. Baptists sent mission teams through their churches, associations and

the Convention to their neighbors and to the ends of the earth.

## Other news

- Caraway Conference Center, although still early in its capital campaign, received a gift to allow the construction of a minister's retreat cabin.

- Readers learned about the process of adopting an unengaged, unreached people group by following Old Town Baptist Church in Winston-Salem in a series of Convention stories.

- A Woman's Right to Know bill was passed, vetoed and reinstated. A lawsuit has stalled some of the progress made in the bill regarding informing women about a fetus via an ultrasound.

- The 2011 "American Idol" winner Scotty McCreery is a N.C. Baptist youth – a member at First Baptist Church in Garner.

- Two of the actors in the movie "Courageous" are N.C. Baptists. Rusty Martin Jr. and his dad, Rusty Martin Sr., both had roles in the film, produced by Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, Ga. The father and son are members of Turner Memorial Baptist Church in Garner.

- N.C. Baptists supported resolutions on marriage and protested expanding gambling efforts.

## What next?

A story that will likely make big news in 2012 is whether or not the Southern Baptist Convention decides to change its name.

SBC President Bryant Wright named a volunteer task force to assess the idea. A "decision" was made in December 2011 but nothing official was released.

A report will be given during a February 2012 meeting in Nashville, Tenn.

North Carolina voters will decide on a marriage amendment in May.

A decision regarding gambling expansion will most likely be made early this year as well.

What stood out to you in 2011? And what do you see as stories to watch in 2012?

Give us your feedback at [editor@BRnow.org](mailto:editor@BRnow.org). Call (919) 847-2127.

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"...tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples." - Psalm 96:4

## ♥ God's Heart ♥

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# Ministry targets teeth, soul with medical, dental unit

Continued from page 5

Volunteer David Braswell of Nashville, N.C., drove the bus to Coats from Cary while his wife, Rachel, met patients as the unit hostess.

Other volunteers helped with the screening, food service, child care and the other logistics needed to provide a day of medical and dental care.

Sporting a dark Campbell University baseball cap, Rick Wilkerson, pastor of Coats United Methodist Church, walked around the social hall greeting patients.

"We love to take care of folks in our community," Wilkerson said. "We love the Baptists. It's a very good relationship."

Typically churches such as Coats United Methodist pay the expenses for the unit to come to the venue including the mileage and help with the appointments and screening.

Two years ago, about 150 patients took advantage of the old unit when it came, Wilkerson said.

This day both the old 2001 unit and the new unit hummed together in a full-scale medical and dental care marathon. The cost for a day of care usually runs an organization about \$100 to \$400, Honeycutt said.

By year's end the 1989 unit will be housed at Truett Baptist Association near Murphy.

The new unit will be the workhorse and worthy of the challenge.

Honeycutt is proud of the equipment and praised Lifeline Mobile of Columbus, Ohio, for the way it fashioned the equipment.

The unit also features a digital x-ray system connected to a personal computer, comfortable chairs and more.

"I really like the trash can," laughed Stevens as she showed off the dental work area.

"It seems kind of crazy but in the other unit, we had to have a little trash can and we'd have to kick it around. This one is built-in."

As Sutton received treatment and he laughed about his face feeling numb, Pastor Wilkerson reported that five patients requested some spiritual help. Stevens also said she met a woman recovering from breast cancer.

"She was so thankful for what we could do for her," Stevens said.

"It was a blessing to me. A lot of time I get blessed as much as they do."

For more information contact Joanne Honeycutt of North Carolina Baptist Men at (800) 395-5102.



Volunteer dentist James S. McKenzie of Fuquay-Varina works with volunteer Bailey Stevens on patient Donald Sutton at a recent clinic in Coats, about 30 miles south of Raleigh. North Carolina Baptist Men operates the nation's largest mobile medical dental ministry. (Photo by Michael Ray Smith)

## WORSHIP LEADER TRAINING RETREATS

### WORSHIP LEADER BOOT CAMP BY THE SEA

January 27-28, 2012 - NC Baptist Assembly at Fort Caswell

The "original" boot camp event is geared for churches with multiple instrumentalists, such as a praise band or instrumental ensemble. A praise band will lead times of worship and demonstrate various concepts that are taught during the event.

### WORSHIP LEADER BOOT CAMP IN THE MOUNTAINS

February 10-11, 2012 - Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center

This event will have a strong focus on how to lead worship in churches with limited musical resources, utilizing technology and other tools to improve the church's worship when musician resources are lacking. There will be times of worship modeling these concepts.

For more information and registration  
[www.WorshipLeaderBootCamps.org](http://www.WorshipLeaderBootCamps.org)



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# Population influx reshapes U.S. cities, including in N.C.

NEW YORK (BP) – Immigrants flowing into urban America live mostly in the inner cities of huge metro areas, form tight ethnic enclaves and stick together, right?

Wrong, wrong and wrong.

Yesterday, cities were in the nations. Today, the nations are in the cities, urban ministry pioneer Ray Bakke has observed. But to reach those nations, or peoples, for Christ, we need to understand who they are, where they are and how they are moving and changing.

“The epicenter of the urban wave in North America is ethnic minorities,” Troy Bush told pastors, lay church leaders and others during a session of “ethnécITY: Reaching the Unreached in the Urban Center,” held Oct. 20-22 at Park Slope Community Church in Brooklyn, N.Y. “How are we going to tap into this, not only to reach them with the gospel, but to mobilize them so that they will be the ones reaching people groups? ... We must recognize what God is doing in our cities and seize the day.”

Bush, a former International Mission Board missionary to Moscow, leads the Dehoney Center for Urban Ministry Training at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. He also directs The Rebuild Initiative, a national urban leadership and church-planting network based in Atlanta, one of the most ethnically diverse communities in America. While working with the North American Mission Board, he directed church planting in Baltimore, another city undergoing major ethnic change.

Using new data about urban immigrants in America from the Brookings Institution, Bush examined some key changes in the decade between 2000 and 2010. The number of foreign-born people in the United States reached 40 million in 2010, a 28 percent increase since 2000 – and about 13 percent of the nation’s total population. More than a third of new immigrants during the decade came from Asia, while the fastest-growing group came from Africa.

Immigrants living in the 100 largest U.S. metropolitan areas increased 27 percent during the period. The five

cities with the largest foreign-born populations: New York, Los Angeles, Miami, Chicago and Houston. But the top five’s share of the total immigrant population dipped from 43 percent to 38 percent during the decade.

The fastest growth came in smaller and mid-sized cities.



**ERICH BRIDGES**  
*Guest column*

The Brookings study reports: “A swath of metro areas from Scranton (Pa.) stretching southwest to Indianapolis and Little Rock and sweeping east to encompass most of the Southeast and lower mid-Atlantic – including states and localities that have been flashpoints in the immigration debate – saw growth rates on the order of three times that of the 100-largest-metro-areas rate. These include Charlotte, Raleigh, Nashville and Indianapolis, all of which passed the 100,000 mark for total foreign-born population by 2010.”

“These aren’t your Chicagos, L.A.’s, New Yorks, your normal gateway cities for immigrants,” Bush said. “These are medium-size cities.... Many [immigrants and refugees] coming from places like Somalia are only passing through LaGuardia or JFK [airports in New York] as they go straight to Louisville, straight to Kansas City, straight to Memphis. They’re bypassing these large cities right from the start.”

Similarly, the state with the fastest-growing immigrant population isn’t California or New York, but North Carolina. Number two: Georgia – followed by Arkansas, Nevada and Tennessee.

“So when we think strategically about where we’re going to engage unreached people groups, it’s OK to think about coming to Atlanta,” Bush said. “It really is. Why? Because they’re coming there! The largest Hindu temple in the entire U.S. is in Atlanta, in Gwinnett County.”

Another key trend: New immigrants are increasingly settling in the suburbs of metro areas rather than traditional inner-city ethnic enclaves as they seek better neighborhoods, jobs and schools. By 2010, slightly more than half of all immigrants could be found in suburbs.

“The younger generations that are moving in today, almost regardless of where they are coming from, are skipping completely over the center city. They’re actually starting in the suburbs,” Bush said. “They’re not going into ethnic enclaves that once made up the cores of those cities.”

Perhaps even more significant is the increase of second-generation immigrants in the cities and the nation at large. More than half of the children in Los Angeles, Miami and San Francisco are second-generation – i.e., U.S.-born but with at least one foreign-born parent. They now account for more than 11 percent of the national population.

“This is a wave that we’ve really, really got to get on the radar,” Bush urged. “But here’s the thing to watch: Second-generation immigrant children represent 25 percent of all of the children under 18 in the United States. It is an enormous wave that is beginning to crash down on us.”

Second-gens often leave their parents’ homes,

neighborhoods and ethnic communities. They move around (a trait that also typifies many new immigrants). They change. Their worldviews change. They create new patterns and cultures. In some cases, they actually form new people groups. “New American ethnic groups are forming more quickly than ever before [and they are]

the children and grandchildren of today’s immigrants,” write Alejandro Portes and Ruben G. Rumbaut, authors

**The state with the fastest-growing immigrant population is ... North Carolina including Charlotte, Raleigh, Nashville, Tenn., and Indianapolis, all of which passed the 100,000 mark for total foreign-born population by 2010.**

**Continued to page 9**

## A new year requires continued focus on vision in ‘7 Pillars’

**F**or many people the New Year brings opportunity for resolutions. In the beginning of 2012, some of you may have made a New Year’s resolution to live a healthier lifestyle, or to be a better steward of the financial resources God has entrusted to you.

Instead of focusing on New Year’s resolutions for our Convention, I am praying for a new resolve. I believe God has already given us our mission, and that is to assist churches in accomplishing their divinely appointed mission. We can, by God’s grace, become the strongest force in the history of this Convention for reaching people with the gospel.

Now, we must be more resolved than ever before to accomplish this mission. We must be fully resolved to do whatever necessary to see people come to faith in Christ and mature as Christ-followers.

I resolved five years ago to develop a

list of core values to assist our Convention in keeping focused on our mission; the result was what has come to be known as the *7 Pillars for Ministry*.

These core values, or pillars, are biblical concepts of a Christ-centered vision for our Convention that sharpen our focus as we labor together for Jesus Christ.

Many of you heard me share the 7 Pillars during my address during our annual meeting in November. After a time of reflection and evaluation, I have updated the pillars. These revisions bring more clarity to the meaning and purpose of the pillars and the focus of our Convention.

I made these revisions based on recommendations from the Vision Fulfill-

ment Committee. In 2010, our Board of Directors approved a motion directing the formation of a Vision Fulfillment

Committee.

The Committee sought input from North Carolina Baptists about the fulfillment of our vision through the funding and implementation of the 7 Pillars. The input of North Carolina Baptists through the Vision Fulfillment forums, as well as input from the Committee, helped shape these revisions to the pillars.

The most significant change has been made to Pillar 6, “Escalating Technology.” This Pillar has been significantly revised and is now titled, “Embrace Unreached and Unengaged People Groups.” Although I continue to see value in using technol-

ogy in missions and ministry, I wanted to magnify our emphasis on missions, and therefore I revised this pillar.

In addition to pillar revisions, the Vision Fulfillment Committee encouraged our Convention to consider how we can be more effective in several areas of our work.

I have already formed three cross-functional teams from among Convention staff to address some of these areas. These teams are exploring communication issues, the tension between balancing church planting and strengthening existing churches, and strategic development.

I will be updating you on the work of these teams later in the year. I encourage you to read the updated 7 Pillars document at [ncbaptist.org](http://ncbaptist.org).

So ... whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31



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

# Amazing Grace in a Dark World

Scotland is one of my favorite places. Pam and I were prayerwalking the streets of Stirling, Scotland, several years ago with some of our IMB missionaries. We were in awe over the many displays of witchcraft, occult, and new age “spirituality” in the storefronts.

Everywhere we looked false religion was promoted. Churches were few, and those we saw stood more as monuments to the past than houses of worship for today.

Strolling down one street of this historically Christian country, we were praying for the people of Scotland when we happened upon a souvenir shop displaying a poster of the song, *Amazing Grace*. What a contrast to the displays of artificial religion!

I thought about Paul on the streets of Athens (see Acts 17:22-23). While he walked this city he observed idols and monuments to many different gods, but one altar read, “To the Unknown God.”

The Greeks of this city had erected a representation of any god who is “out there” whom they might have overlooked.

Paul was observing an altar to an unknown god. I was looking at the words to a song about the KNOWN God, who was unknown to the present generation.



**K. ALLAN BLUME**  
Editor

*Amazing Grace* was written out of the personal crisis of John Newton. His miserable life as a slave trader was spared by the grace of God at a time when he should have died in a storm at sea. He knew first hand how God’s judgement was withheld by His mighty act of grace.

It has become one of the most recognized songs in the world and a clear favorite among Christians. But on the streets of

Scotland it was little more than a sentimental, unofficial national anthem, telling a story the people of that city were not hearing. They had eyes that did not see and ears that did not hear. To be fair, we saw some pockets of great activity where

God is working among the Scots. But just as in America, the streets of the cities do not reflect the proclamation of the gospel. The religion of relative secularism is the only acceptable lifestyle on the streets.

The challenge of living in a secular nation opens the door of opportunity for us to proclaim God’s amazing grace to people who are walking in darkness. A new year brings both challenges and opportunities, forcing us to reflect on our personal direction as well as the direction of our country.

Christians are saved by the grace of God and uniquely called to be His chosen people of light. Peter summarized it clearly. “But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9, NKJ). As His chosen people, we must live as trophies of His grace and light in the darkness of a fallen world. When compared with the world, we should stand out as unique.

2012 will be a very important year for Christians to display our uniqueness. North Carolinians will vote on the definition of marriage in May.

The United States will elect a president in November. Other major decisions will be made throughout the year. Some of those decisions will be on a personal level. Some will be church decisions. Others will impact our nation and world.

How many of those decisions will be made after spending time in prayer? How many will be made based on truth from God’s Word?

How many will be made by listening to the deceitful claims of secularism or prevailing political views? Will our decisions be made and our votes cast from the perspective of the will of God?

I pray that 2012 will be a great year for the advance of the gospel and for the glory of God around the earth. It is my prayer that God’s people will be faithful to stand on the eternal truth of God’s Word. May the light of truth shine through us into a very dark world.

**“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people ...”**  
— 1 Peter 2:9a

## Population influx reshapes U.S. cities

Continued from page 8

of *Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation*.

Bottom line: There’s no simple formula for reaching the “nations in the cities.” But any number of creative ministries can meet specific needs. Bush cited 11 different church-planting models that work effectively in different contexts. There surely are more.

“No one church can get its arms completely around any metro, especially a larger metro,” Bush said. “So what I encourage churches to do is begin in their own neighborhoods, geographically and relationally. Because in many cases, through their work and their play, they’re encountering many of the different ethnic groups that are coming into their communities. The census is certainly a good starting point, but relief agencies and especially immigration agencies are actively looking for church partners who will come alongside as they’re bringing in peoples – many of whom are coming from closed countries and unreached people groups.”

What ultimately works, regardless of location or context, is Jesus Christ’s model of disciple-making.

“There are no two cities that are exactly the same, but when it comes down to it, the heart of everything we need to do comes back to proclaiming the gospel, displaying the gospel and making disciples that congregate into reproducing, multiplying churches. That core is central whether we’re in Moscow or we’re in Mumbai,” Bush said. “We need to model how to live as believers with immigrants. We need to share meals. We need to share life together. Our homes need to be places where we invite them not to come for a meal but to come for a month. They see how you cling to Christ when there’s nothing else to cling to. It’s not just something you talk about ... it’s who you are as a disciple.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE – *Erich Bridges is a global correspondent for the International Mission Board. ethnécITY, co-sponsored by IMB and the North American Mission Board, reflects the reality that national borders no longer define the task of missions in a globalized world. Another ethnécITY conference is*

*set for May 3-5 in Vancouver. To find out more or register, visit [ethnecity.com](http://ethnecity.com). Visit “WorldView Conversation,” the blog related to this column, at <http://worldviewconversation.blogspot.com>.)*

### CLARIFICATION

We received a question regarding the article “Armenia experiencing revival, hopeful about future” in the Dec. 10 issue.

*What do you mean when you say Armenia is 94 percent Christian and only 2 percent evangelical?* – Carl Redding, pastor, Maxton First Baptist in Maxton

In Armenia, research shows that 94 percent of the population is affiliated with the Armenian Apostolic Church and profess to be Christians. Only about two percent of the Armenian population, however, claims to be “born again” or profess to put their trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. – BR staff

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January 15

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

January 22

## Caring in an Expendable Culture

**Focal Passage: Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18**

**A**bby Johnson is a convincing advocate for the unborn. Why? In her compelling book *Unplanned*, Abby chronicles her journey into and out of Planned Parenthood. She became involved with this agency because she was deeply concerned about the health of women. Prenatal care, birth control, and other reproductive services were important to her, and she believed abortions were justified as long as they were rare, early-term, and safe. She vehemently opposed late-term abortions, and would not let her clinic perform them. But Abby knew the business she had invested into was full of contradictions, just like her own personal life. In her younger adulthood Abby had been promiscuous; twice she chose to end her pregnancies through abortion. This haunted her, but God had given her a wonderful pro-life husband named Doug, and together they would have a beautiful baby daughter named Grace. Abby was living in two worlds, and what eventually caused her to decide for life was her personal involvement in an ultrasound-guided abortion. That

experience devastated her. And when she started believing that Planned Parenthood was more concerned about making money off abortions than providing health and healing, she left. God removed the scales that were blinding her eyes.

The sanctity of human life is an important issue for Christians, and not just for the unborn. An equally sacred arena for Christian care and comfort is for those at the other end of life, for those about to die. The psalmist speaks to the fact that we have an all-knowing (omniscient) and ever-present God. He knows everything there is to know about us, and has personally planned our lives (v. 16). We are not an accident. We are not unworthy. We are special in God's eyes, and "all" life should be viewed as special in our eyes. The psalmist also cautions us regarding how we live. God sees all, knows all, and whether we do right or wrong, we cannot get away from Him. Abby Johnson's life was changed when she realized this truth, and God gave her "Grace."



**WAYNE PROCTOR**  
Pastor, Eure  
Baptist Church

**Focal Passage: Acts 10:9-15, 22-23, 28-29a, 34-36**

**O**ne day young John Woolman was throwing rocks at a robin's nest. Surprisingly, one of his tosses hit the mother robin, killing her. Realizing the baby robins were helpless without their mother, John became grief stricken. He vowed that he would not knowingly mistreat another being. John was a Quaker from New Jersey. Over the course of his 52 years he would be a farmer, a merchant, an author, and a preacher. He would travel the Atlantic seaboard, England, and Ireland, and he would always preach the message of equality and freedom of all peoples, including native Americans and black slaves. Of note to North Carolinians, in 1746 he traveled with Isaac Andrews 1,500 miles in three months, going as far south as North Carolina. As one might imagine, preaching against slavery was controversial. Even among Christians, few truly

believed all men and women were equal. In fact, it wasn't until after John's death that the Quaker's (Society of Friends) petitioned Congress for the abolition of slavery. John sought to model his life after Jesus. He would only wear undyed clothing because slave labor was used in the process of dying clothes.

In today's text we have the example of Simon Peter, who also was struggling with the issue of racial inequality. He had been raised to believe that circumcised Jews were superior, even in God's eyes, to uncircumcised Gentiles. Although he had watched Jesus heal and save Samaritans and Gentiles, and had listened to many parables and sermons delivered by Jesus on the subjects of compassion, equality and love, Peter had never quite reconciled the issue in his own mind and spirit. Enter Cornelius. He was a Roman leader, a God-fearing man who had a proven track-record of generosity to Jews (v. 22). An angel told him to send for Peter. God would bring them together, and God would reveal that He has no favorites, that all who fear Him and live righteously as followers of Jesus Christ are His children (v. 34-36).

January 15

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

January 22

## Be Resolute About Life's Value

**Focal Passage: Deuteronomy 5:17; 19:7-13; 24:6-7; Matthew 5:17-20**

**T**his week's lesson focuses on the value of human life, in honor of Sanctity of Human Life Day. There is no doubt we need such an ongoing emphasis. Just this morning the local news reported two stories about men being tried for murder. One was an appeal of a murder case where the man allegedly killed his wife, while the other involved the senseless kidnapping and killing of a promising young college student whose life was taken – all for a small amount of money. These stories appear almost daily, indicating a clear disregard for the value of human life. But these stories are only a small part of a bigger picture.

According to the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC), over 50 million abortions have been performed in the United States since 1973. While the number of annual abortions has slightly decreased over the past decade, the number still stands at about 1.2 million per year. "Abortion rights" continues to be a hotly debated topic with every passing election. Less visible issues such as euthanasia, elder abuse and human trafficking

also serve to illustrate both the depth and breadth of the sanctity of life issue.

The focal passages today remind us the root of the sanctity of life issue is not sociological, but theological. God's command not to murder was not simply to help people get along more peaceably. David Jones, a professor at Southeastern Seminary, points out that God's negative command "Do not murder" reflects a larger, positive theme – value and protect human life. Why should Christians be committed to this? Because every human life is created by God, in God's image, and is therefore valuable. God demonstrated His commitment to protecting human life both through forbidding murder (the intentional taking of human life) and through providing cities of refuge for the innocent. Christians today must show we value and protect human life. As Solomon admonishes, we must "rescue those who are being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter" (Proverbs 24:11).



**RANDY MANN**  
Minister of education  
and evangelism, Wake  
Cross Roads Baptist  
Church, Raleigh

**Focal Passage: Deuteronomy 4:5-10, 15-19, 39-40**

**T**his week's lesson calls us to "be exclusive" – to live with exclusive devotion to God. God's instructions to Israel, calling for their exclusive devotion, flowed directly from His exclusive worthiness of their devotion and worship as the One, True and Living God. God could demand such exclusivity from them (and us) because He alone was worthy of it.

Like everything else God gives His people, the laws of Sinai (Exodus-Numbers) and Moab (Deuteronomy) were given for Israel's good. The laws restrained Israel's sin but could not change their hearts. In fact, Israel's sin under the laws would lead to exile (4:26-28; 28:58-68; 29:22-28). After this exile, God's saving hand would change hearts to love Him truly and completely (4:29-31; 30:1-10) through a future return from the exile of sin, at the end of the days. It is a fulfillment of His promise to Abraham, which

## Be Exclusive

Jesus Christ fulfills as the only answer to sin. Until that time, however, these laws will teach Israel to love God by being wise so that they may reveal God to the nations (4:6-8; 29:22-28).

Ultimately, God's people would not live exclusively for Him or according to His statutes. Instead of walking by faith in the God who created them and made them His own, they would make gods for themselves, a practice God had strictly forbidden (v. 15-31).

We, like the Israelites, fail to live exclusively for God. And, the law stands before us (as it stood before them) as a teacher, instructing us about our sinfulness and need for a savior (Galatians 3). That is why we need Jesus. He fulfilled God's law, forgives our sin, and empowers us by God's Spirit to live obedient lives that will reflect His glory.

Are you – enabled by the Holy Spirit – living a life of exclusive devotion to God? Or, have you made your job, your health, your finances your god? Living a lifestyle of exclusive devotion to God is not only for our good, but also for His glory. Are you living exclusively for God so that, through you, others are drawn to know Him?

# Baptist Children's Homes receives special Christmas

By SHAWN HENDRICKS | BR Managing Editor

For David Burke, the message was loud and clear one October Sunday while sitting in the pews at Galatia Baptist Church in Seaboard. During a presentation by the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina (BCH), Burke would later say, he heard God telling him he needed to "make something happen."

That Sunday Jeff Joyner, BCH director of development in eastern North Carolina, shared about the ministry's annual offering and how the church can touch the lives of children dealing with personal struggles, and developmentally disabled individuals. The whole time, Burke was feeling convicted to help in a "big" way.

"I told Jeff I apologize for not listening to you, but the good Lord was talking to me, and he wouldn't hush long enough for me to hear what [Joyner] was saying," said Burke, a member of Galatia Baptist for 25 years.

That afternoon Burke met with Joyner and his pastor David Foster and invited the Baptist Children's Homes – a ministry that has homes in 18 N.C. cities – for a Christmas celebration on Dec. 18.

Following that Sunday, Burke helped lead a toy drive, organize a meal and service that would minister to those involved with the Children's Homes – and others who attended. He spread the word through radio ads and help from the congregation and community.

"I hope we can make a difference in just one of their lives," Burke said. "These kids have lived through some tough stuff."

"God was saying we need to do more for these kids than take up an offering," added Foster. "David loves to cook. He said we want to have a Christmas party for the [the Baptist Children's Homes] kids, and it just started from there. It grew – gift ideas, Christmas dinner turkey, ham, potatoes ... all kinds of desserts. [The community] really got behind it."

Church members selected names off of a Christmas



Each child, youth and adult from the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina received a Christmas present Dec. 18 during a special party hosted by Galatia Baptist Church in Seaboard. They also packed up more gifts to take back to their sites for others. (BR photo by Shawn Hendricks)

tree, held wrapping parties, and a variety of local businesses chipped in on gifts and funding for the event. One local hotel donated rooms for two groups from Zionsville that traveled from across the state.

"I think we had half a tractor-trailer of toys," Burke said. "People donated money. That's what it is all about."

More than a dozen of the homes sent groups to the event.

"I didn't know what type of response we'd get from the homes," Foster said. "The response was overwhelming."

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### Pastor

First Baptist Church of Bessemer City, NC ([FirstBaptistBC.org](http://FirstBaptistBC.org)), is seeking a **pastor**; must have a minimum of six years Southern Baptist experience and at least a seminary degree. Please submit a letter of interest and resume to Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 397, Bessemer City, NC 28016.

Watkins Chapel Baptist Church of Middlesex, NC, is currently seeking a full-time **Senior Pastor**. Send resume to: WCBC Pastor Search Committee, 5897 NC Highway 231, Middlesex, NC 27557-8471.

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First Baptist Church, Andrews, seeks **Minister of Students**. Must be dedicated to the Lord and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ through activities and functions. A bachelor's degree from 4 year college is required, seminary degree preferred but not mandatory. Duties: to administer and develop all facets of student and children ministries, focusing on Bible study and discipleship. Send resumes to: Andrews First Baptist Church, PO Box 427, Andrews, NC 28901, or email: [fbcal@frontier.com](mailto:fbcal@frontier.com).

**Minister of Children:** First Baptist Church, Mt Holly, NC ([www.fbcmountholly.org](http://www.fbcmountholly.org)), just west of Charlotte, is seeking a part-time minister of children to lead our ministry to children from birth to 5th grade and their families. We are a dually aligned CBF-SBC affiliated church and are egalitarian on issues of women in ministry. The candidate should preferably be a seminary or divinity school student or graduate and have experience in children's ministry. Resumes may be sent to FBC-Mt Holly, 300 S. Main St., Mt Holly, NC 28120 or e-mailed to [Kendell@fbcmountholly.org](mailto:Kendell@fbcmountholly.org).

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# Baptist Children's Homes receives special Christmas

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On the day of the celebration, the church had special parking marked off in a field across the street to accommodate the many visitors.

Children involved with the ministry shared their stories and songs during the service. All of them then gathered in the fellowship hall for a Christmas meal before receiving gifts.

Before the end of the day everyone involved in the ministry walked away with a gift – some carried out boxes of presents for those who were unable to attend – and a Bible. The church looked like an explosion of wrapping paper and boxes.

The congregation also presented a gift offering of \$1,400 to the ministry to help cover travel expenses.

"I never dreamed it would be what it is today," Joyner said. "I don't think we've ever seen anything quite like this at Baptist Children's Homes ... a church respond in this way for Christmas."

"I think it speaks largely to the churches here in the northeast because this is such a depressed area of the state," he said. "The average household income is below poverty level up here in most cases."

Joyner mentioned the churches in the area had also helped with a \$675,000 capital campaign for Britton Ministries home in Ahoskie. The home opened in May. "Had it not been for the churches up here we probably would never have built that home," he said.

One counselor added her appreciation to the church and how they've ministered to Baptist Children's Homes.

"It's really overwhelming," said Andrea Johnson, a house parent with her husband, Frederick, for the Kennedy Home in Kinston.

"We have a lot of girls that are new ... who will not be going home for the holidays," she said. "This is Christmas for them, real Christmas to receive gifts and see Christ's likeness from people they don't even know."

"The actions today showed love in an unbelievable way," Johnson added. "They took their time and their money, their love and ... this is what the love of Christ is about."

## A changed life

"When I was little I lived with my grandma and my mom, and then my mom got taken away from me because she was doing drugs," said a 15-year old girl staying at the Kennedy home.

She paused for a moment with Johnson by her side during the service, rubbing her back and encouraging her.

"I always looked around and wondered where my mom was," she said.

"Then my grandmother got sick, and we got taken away from her, too."

The girl eventually would be placed in the Kennedy home.

"I'm so happy to be there right now," she said. "Kennedy Home has really been there for me. I've changed a lot. Last month I accepted Christ into my life."

Brenda Gray, BCH executive vice president of development and communications, thanked the church for how they reached out to children like those who shared their stories.

"Galatia, today you have wrapped your arms around my children," she said. "You have placed your hands on them and you have blessed them."

"The Baptists across North Carolina are our lifeline," she later said. "It is

such a witness to our children to come to a church like this. It creates miracles in the lives of our children."

For more information visit [bchfamily.org](http://bchfamily.org).



The thought of smiling children receiving a special Christmas spurred one church to host a Christmas party for several locations of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina. Visit Photo Gallery at [BRnow.org](http://BRnow.org). (BR photo by Shawn Hendricks)

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