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Sanctity of Life

SUSTAINING THE COURAGE TO CARE

By **SETH BROWN** | BR Content Editor

When Tonya Baker Nelson's Sunday School class decided to do a community project, something inside compelled her to take a bold step. Building another handicap ramp just wasn't enough. Before she had time to hesitate, an idea was born: "We could open a pregnancy center."

That was more than a decade ago, and she's been marching forward ever since. Today, Nelson serves as the CEO of Your Choice Pregnancy Clinic in Raleigh, N.C., and Hand of Hope Pregnancy Resource Center in nearby Fuquay-Varina, which offer pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection testing, informational ultra-

sounds, abortion education and life skills training for men and women.

The organization has deep roots in the Christian faith, which Nelson credits as the sustaining core of their work. Crisis pregnancy ministry is emotionally taxing. That, coupled with an uphill legal battle, has tested her mettle over the past year, but she's as ambitious as ever.

"I will run to face [Goliath] because I know God is not on my side, I'm on God's side," Nelson said.

Nelson didn't hesitate to admit her fears, however, especially as she reflects on the early days. She had no experience operating a not-for-profit organization.

"I am in so far over my head," Nelson thought.

But right from the beginning, she said,

"the Lord starting putting the right people in the right place at the right time."

Ending late-term bureaucracy

Hand of Hope outgrew two properties in Fuquay-Varina within a few years of their 2005 launch, eventually settling in a midcentury colonial-style residence near the center of town.

Nelson opened a second location on the southwest side of Raleigh in 2012, called Your Choice Pregnancy Clinic, which became the focus of a controversial legal battle after purchasing property in late 2015 next to A Preferred Women's Health Center, a clinic which specializes in abortion procedures.

Initial plans to move into the new facility developed normally.

Your Choice filed a rezoning application in early 2016 that made its way unhindered through standard procedure, including reviews in neighborhood meetings, the Citizen's Advisory Council and the Raleigh Planning Commission.

The planning commission approved the request by a 10-0 vote, clearly stating that reclassifying the one-acre property from residential to mixed-use office space fell within established guidelines. Nearly all of the nearby properties on the street had already been rezoned in similar fashion.

The city council must review rezoning requests, so the application came up for consideration in a meeting June 21. The abortion provider next to the property

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Defund Planned Parenthood now

Jan. 22 is Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. The day gives pause for all Americans to reflect on more than 50 million lives lost and countless others damaged by the national license to conveniently destroy human life at will.

From the more positive perspective, followers of Jesus Christ use the day to honor the gift of life because it is the unique creation of God. We cannot be weak in the issue of life. Loyalty to scripture does not allow for neutrality on the subject. Our convictions must be expressed. Our voices must be heard.

Since the Supreme Court's grievous *Roe v. Wade* decision on Jan. 22, 1973, two presidents of the United States who were members of a Southern Baptist church did not stand on pro-life principles.

Some Baptists in the Congress joined them. I find that embarrassing and unconscionable.

The shortage of biblical preaching on the value of life in the past five decades is perhaps more troubling than the positions of political leaders. Too many preachers have been more concerned about offending church members and less interested in following the call to bold, prophetic proclamation of truth.

It is commendable that in the 33 years since the court's *Roe v. Wade* decision, preaching on the sanctity of life has increased in evangelical pulpits. And I believe most of that preaching is growing in the balance of truth, grace and compassionate action.

The impact of truth has now reached the halls of Congress. House Speaker Paul Ryan announced Jan. 5 that defunding the Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) will be included as part of a bill to repeal ObamaCare.

According to a report in *The Hill*,

"Ryan said cutting off federal funds to the organization will be included in a 'reconciliation' bill that also repeals the core of ObamaCare. The reconciliation process prevents Democrats from launching a filibuster against the measure, meaning Republicans won't need 60 votes to win on defunding."



K. ALLAN BLUME
Editor

"Planned Parenthood legislation will be in our reconciliation bill," Ryan said, without providing any more details, *The Hill* reported.

It's about time! Planned Parenthood is a private organization that should never have been funded by taxpayers. Although they deny it, the facts show they

are a major abortion provider and money-making machine. They must be defunded now.

Bill O'Reilly, whose evening show on the Fox News network boasts the highest cable ratings in prime time, said on a recent program, "People who don't believe in abortion, who believe it is the taking of a human life, are then forced to participate in abortion, because that money goes to Planned Parenthood, which performs, or makes possible, about 350,000 each year. So it's more of a 'look, abortion is legal in the USA, but I don't want to pay for it, and I shouldn't be forced to pay for it.' That's the beef."

Well, that's part of the problem, Mr. O'Reilly. The greatest issue is that it's simply wrong! It violates every standard of human decency, dignity and civility. It is immoral.

O'Reilly offered a simple solution. He suggested that private donations could fund PPFA saying, "if all the true believers ... who believe in abortion want Planned Parenthood around, certainly those donations will make it possible."

I agree! Let the entertainment and media elites who believe in PPFA spend

less of their energies forcing the rest of us to pay for it and more of their resources to pay for it themselves.

Many states have already removed Planned Parenthood from their budgets. It's time for our debt-ridden federal government to defund PPFA.

The *Biblical Recorder* reported in 2012 that in the previous year, eight states passed legislation that diverted a combined \$61.7 million in family-planning funds from PPFA to state or county agencies for health screenings and other services that don't include abortion. Soon after that, the Obama administration bypassed the law in Tennessee to directly fund Planned Parenthood Greater Memphis.

In 2012 North Carolina, Arizona, Iowa, Ohio, Oklahoma and New Hampshire defunded PPFA according to the Susan B. Anthony List (SBA), which has assisted all the states in the move to defund the abortion seller.

A story on the popular pro-life Live Action News website said, "Defunding Planned Parenthood is about taking money from a scandal ridden organization which does not deserve to be a monopolizer of funds for legitimate health services, especially when those health services have decreased over the years, and there are Federally Qualified Health Centers outnumbering Planned Parenthood locations 20 to 1 which provide more comprehensive care and are more deserving of federal funds."

The Daily Signal website posted a story on Jan. 4 titled, "6 Alarming Findings in House Panel's Planned Parenthood Probe." The report exposes the raw immoral code of conduct that is common in the abortion industry. It is very disturbing.

The first finding reads, "Several Planned Parenthood affiliates made a profit from the transfer of aborted body parts and other fetal tissue, in violation of federal law prohibiting that."

The second item in the report says, "It didn't 'bother' a Planned Parent-

hood executive that one vendor, Stem-Express, appeared to make a 2,800 percent profit on a baby's brain harvested from a Planned Parenthood clinic."

The sixth statement is "Planned Parenthood affiliate clinics 'routinely' violated privacy regulations imposed by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, seeking to ease the process of harvesting body parts and other fetal tissue."

More Americans are pro-life than at any time since the passage of *Roe v. Wade*. They are demanding action at the federal level on the matter.

Much helpful information on pro-life issues is posted on the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission's (ERLC) website.

I encourage every Southern Baptist to read the resourceful article by Travis Wussow and ERLC president Russell Moore titled, "6 pro-life priorities for the president and Congress in 2017."

The writers said, "We work for protections, in law, for the unborn, because we believe every person is created in the image of God and has dignity and worth. So we are encouraging our elected officials to highlight these six pro-life priorities ..."

Number four on the list reads, "Eliminate all funding for Planned Parenthood from the federal budget."

Wussow and Moore add, "... we will work with Congress to use the next available budget measure to defund Planned Parenthood.

"We were supportive of the defund effort that was vetoed by President Obama, and we will continue to work to support this effort in the coming Congress."

As you and your church family honor God's gift of life, pray for your pastor and other church leaders to stand together and strong on the sanctity of life for the glory of God.

Pray for everyone who serves us in government at every level. Let them know you are praying for them. **BR**

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Honoring God's creation of human life

At long last, the new year is here. Fittingly, many of us spend these opening months of the year thinking about new beginnings – new lifestyle changes and new goals for the year among them.

One particular new beginning, however, is on my mind along with others this time of year: the new beginning of human life.

I like to think that most Baptists believe that all life begins at conception, which is why we designate a special time each year to celebrate Sanctity of Human Life Sunday.

Every January, the Southern Baptist Convention selects a Sunday as a time to underscore the miracle and gift from God that is human life.

The CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) has put out statistics on abortion rates in America dating from 1979 through 2013, and it breaks my heart to read them. In 2013, there were 664,435 reported, legal abortions in the United States, which amounted to 200 abortions per 1,000 live births. Most of the women who had abortions were in their 20s.

Though these numbers are dire, I know that the Lord

is still working in the lives of many who are considering abortion.

I am so thankful for the many pregnancy centers throughout our state that help these expectant mothers to consider other options for their newborn infants.

Please join me this month in praying that mothers who are considering having abortions would come to the understanding that the fetus within them is much more than a mass of tissue.

It is a human being into whom God has breathed life and is developing this little person so that it can experience physical birth and begin a life of its own.

Pray that these expectant mothers will feel God's strength and know that He will be present with them during their journey of giving life to a new baby.

Pray also that they would be reminded that there are families who would be overjoyed to adopt their child into a loving home – this is another option for expectant mothers, and it is one that I truly believe mirrors the way that the Lord has saved and adopted us into His spiritual family.



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive
director-treasurer



Local churches and individuals must stand ready to spiritually support and also financially assist the unwed moms who are brave enough to give birth to their baby.

During this month, let's not forget to remember in prayer those mothers who have had abortions in the past.

Many of them come to the realization that they have ended the life of their child soon after the procedure – and that realization is understandably painful.

Our Heavenly Father has no short supply of mercy and grace for these parents – He loves them, just as He loves their children in heaven and He offers forgiveness and opportunity for a new walk with Him.

As we celebrate Sanctity of Human Life Sunday this month, I ask you to pray for an end to abortion in this nation.

“For You formed inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works” – Psalm 139:13-14. **B3**

PROFILE OF A MENTOR

I met Joe in May 1992 when I interviewed for my first job out of college, teaching middle school band in small town Georgia. He was the high school band director and a legend in the music education community. I did not know the interview on that day would change the trajectory of my life. We talked about Jesus more than music. I told Joe I was struggling with a call to ministry. He encouraged me to see whatever I did as ministry, saying he believed a man could be as effective preaching from a band podium as a pulpit.



BRIAN UPSHAW

I got the gig, and for the next four years Joe was more than a boss. He was my mentor. He was tough and tender, and saw his vocation as a vehicle for making disciples. If “iron sharpens iron” as Proverbs 27:17 says, then Joe was titanium. He honed my skills as a teacher and my character as a man.

Joe passed away the week before Christmas. His death prompted me to reflect on the impact anyone can have if we invest our lives in others. Joe was a special man, but the things he gave me are things we all possess and can share with others:

● **Time.** There is no substitute for spending time together. I spent count-

less hours with Joe every week both formally and informally.

● **Proximity.** This is related to time but goes deeper. Joe included me in family trips and meals. I watched him as a husband and a father. I saw the whole person, not just the professional.

● **Intentionality.** Mentoring is more than just relational time. Joe always drove the conversation beyond surface issues to how circumstances were molding my character. He always brought the conversation back to Jesus.

● **Expectation.** People rise to the level of expectation. Joe held me accountable in all areas of my life.

● **Scripture.** We never sat down for a formal Bible study; rather, Joe applied the truths of God's Word to our real life circumstances. He saw the Lord as an active participant in every aspect of life.

You should be mentoring someone. Like Joe, you have something to give away to others. There is a young man or woman around you who needs your influence.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Brian Upshaw is the church health and revitalization team leader at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Contact (800) 395-5102, ext. 5632, or bupshaw@ncbaptist.org.)

30 years of offering hope

What a contrast! Oklahoma Baptists have celebrated the 30th anniversary of its first Crisis Pregnancy Center (now called Hope Pregnancy Center). At the same time, abortionists are rejoicing at the opening of the first new abortion clinic in Oklahoma in 40 years.

One organization – Hope Pregnancy Center, now with five locations in the state – has spent three decades serving women facing a crisis pregnancy and saving the unborn child from certain death. Now, we have a new abortion death chamber dedicated to destroying the unborn child. One organization celebrates life, while the other celebrates death.

The Trust Women South Wind Women's Clinic opened for business in September. According to *The Oklahoman* daily newspaper, CEO Julie Burkhardt described the clinic as committed to address the lack of reproductive health care in Oklahoma.

Interesting choice of words. There is nothing reproductive about abortion – it is anti-reproductive as an unborn child is eliminated with every abortion.

While the clinic physicians will address other health issues for women, there is little doubt abortion is a central focus of their practice. Indeed, Burkhardt proclaimed the clinic expects to perform 1,500 abortions the first year, with an expected level of 3,000 abortions to be reached each year. Let that soak in a

minute. Every abortion kills an unborn child! Every abortion means money for the clinic.

Let me put that number in perspective. From 2002-2015, Oklahoma averaged 5,646 abortions per year. After a peak of 6,807 abortions in 2006, the number dropped to a record low of 4,330 in 2015.

Contrast abortion clinics with the Hope Pregnancy Centers. In 1986, God allowed me to lead a small group of pastors and churches to open the first Oklahoma Baptist Crisis Pregnancy Center in Oklahoma City; another center was opened in Tulsa. Oklahoma Baptists opened the centers to provide love and care for women faced with “unwanted” pregnancies. Rather than going to abortion clinics and shouting at the women who made their way to destroy their unborn children, Oklahoma Baptists determined to provide a loving alternative. Rather than charge for services,

we would provide counsel, love, support and extended involvement with women facing crisis pregnancies.

Over these last 30 years, the number of Hope Pregnancy Centers has increased to five. Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children operates these centers. The ministry of these centers cannot be put in mere numbers, but the numbers do provide a picture worth seeing.

From 1986-2015, these centers of Christ's love had 130,139 client visits.



ANTHONY L. JORDAN
Guest Column

Colerain church reopens, perseveres through storms

By LIZ TABLAZON | BR Staff Writer

Christmas came a few weeks early for Wakelon Baptist Church in Colerain, N.C., a church that pushed through some challenging months after reopening in 2015.

Members saw new stained glass windows installed in the sanctuary during the first week of December, months ahead of schedule. Allen White, Wakelon's pastor, said the church initially put the project on hold to focus on repairing damage done by tropical storm Julia in September and Hurricane Matthew in October.

The windows were among a list of upgrades that included a new ramp, a fellowship hall and new bathroom floors – a process of restoring the church that was closed for about eight years.

Wakelon, originally built in 1943, was once a small but thriving congregation of more than 100 members. As children grew and moved away, and older members passed away, the church found itself without a pastor and only a handful of members meeting for Sunday School every week.

White was a layman at Edgewood Baptist Church in Windsor, N.C., who answered the call to ministry in June 2015.

"I kept riding by the little church. Something kept drawing me to the church even before I entered the ministry," he said.

"I couldn't figure out what was going

on. It was kind of unusual."

The property looked maintained, White said, but he never saw people using it. He asked a retired sheriff who lived a mile away from the church about it, and the sheriff pointed him to William "Speck" Bryant.

Bryant had been a long-time member and treasurer of Wakelon and called himself the church's check writer.

Even after the church closed, he faithfully cut grass and paid light and gas bills month after month. Bryant told White he would love to have the church back up, but the floors in the bathroom were in poor condition, and there was no heat or air conditioning.

White was a bivocational carpenter. "I said, 'Well if that's the only problem, I'll go in there because that's what I do. [Bryant] was just amazed. He had no idea someone could fix it,'" he said.

White received donated materials to finish the bathroom floors, and members from Edgewood Baptist Church came to help clean on the Saturday before the first service.

He remembered Bryant propped up by a truck, watching the work.

"He had tears rolling down his cheeks," White said. "I said to him, 'I guess you never thought you'd see this church open, did you?' He said, 'No, I never thought anyone would care about it as much as I did.'"

See Church page 9



After reopening in 2015, Wakelon Baptist Church in Colerain sustained damage from a tropical storm and hurricane in 2016. With help from Baptists on Mission, also known as North Carolina Baptist Men, N.C. Baptists from a local church and students from Chowan University, the church received needed repairs in time for Christmas. (Contributed photo)

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Conference asks *Who Moved My Pulpit?*

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

When Lynn Sasser read Thom Rainer's book *Who Moved My Pulpit? Leading Change in the Church* he knew immediately that church leaders need to hear the book's message. Rainer is the president of LifeWay Christian Resources, and Sasser is the executive leader for the evangelism and discipleship group of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC).

Convinced that a statewide conference on the subjects of revitalization and change is needed, Sasser reached out to Rainer with an invitation to come to North Carolina. "We felt like [Rainer's] presence would draw a number of North Carolina Baptist church leaders to come and begin thinking about how they need to deal with change in their church," he said.

Rainer accepted the invitation, and the conference, *Leading Change in the Church*, is set for March 7 at the west campus of Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Sasser called it "a one-day event for your



entire church staff focused on leading change in the local church."

"The book is about change in the local church," said Sasser. "The reason it

intrigued us is that it's around the premise of church revitalization."

Many churches are in decline and need to take intentional steps toward revitalization, but are reluctant to make necessary changes.

"Every church that needs to be revitalized has to deal with change," Sasser said. "The church got where it is based on the way they've done things



THOM RAINER

over time. If they want to have different results, they're going to have to deal with change. That is what hooked our interest [in Rainer's book]."

With more than three decades of experience as a pastor, director of missions



and staff leader at BSC, Sasser understands church values. He said he was "very pleased" to see the book identified prayer as the beginning point for revitalization.

"That's the very first thing that has to happen in a church. That really is the key problem in churches that need to be revitalized. It's a spiritual issue more often than not. And I realize that some churches may have tried to be very faithful but just find themselves in a very, very hard place."

Beginning with prayer, the book provides a clear outline of progression through the process of revitalization, he said.

"Then there's also a very helpful piece called a 'readiness change inventory' in the book, and I hope Dr. Rainer will address that [at the conference]."

The conference is jointly sponsored by LifeWay, BSC and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS). Two keynote sessions will feature Rainer. Four breakout session tracks will offer more

than 20 training opportunities in revitalization through discipleship, age-group ministries, social media, worship, theology, multi-site options, cultural engagement and other related topics.

Breakout speakers from the three sponsoring organizations include Jamie Dew, Art Rainer, Ryan Hutchinson, Denise O'Donoghue, George Robinson, Sam Morris and John Ewart from SEBTS. LifeWay's speakers are Trevin Wax, Daniel Im and Aaron Armstrong. Breakout leaders for BSC include Brian Upshaw, Chuck Register, Kenny Lamm, Merrie Johnson, Mark Smith, Cheryl Markland and Zac Lyons. Rob Peters, Calvary's senior pastor, is also a breakout leader.

Advance registration is requested at leadingchange.church. Individual registration for the conference is \$10 and covers admission to the conference and lunch. Church staff pricing for more than five attendees is \$50 for an entire group. For more information email questions@leadingchange.church or call Kathryn Markham at (919) 459-5648. **BR**

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Whitworth elected Pennsylvania/S. Jersey exec

Baptist Press

Barry Whitworth, a longtime church planter who has served churches in three states, has been elected executive director of the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania/South Jersey by a unanimous vote of the convention's Executive Committee.

Whitworth succeeds David Waltz, who retired after 23 years of leading the two-state convention, which has rebranded itself the Baptist Resource Network of Pennsylvania/South Jersey (BRN). Whitworth will assume his new role Feb. 1.

He and Beth have two children and six grandchildren. **BR**

Filipino former quarterback talks faith, ministry

Chris Rix is the only player to start four years as quarterback for Florida State University. In his 2001-2004 college career, he played for the well-known coach Bobby Bowden. The team claimed three conference titles and played in four consecutive bowl games with Rix calling the snap. Rix kicked off his professional football career with the San Diego Rams in 2005 and also began working in sports broadcasting. He currently commands the mic as an analyst for Fox Sports Radio, regularly contributing on several shows. Rix also founded Champion Training Academy, which develops and mentors young athletes, and serves as the director of Fellowship of Christian Athlete (FCA) ministries in California.



ROMAN GABRIEL III
Sports Q & A



Chris Rix, above, started as quarterback all four years at Florida State University and has spent part of his career behind a camera at FOX Sports as a sideline reporter. He currently works with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. (Contributed photos)

Q: You are involved in covering high school and college sports for Fox, what about the stretch run for the College Football National Championship?

A: You have Ohio State, Clemson, Washington and Alabama for the championship. Now that you're in, it becomes about who's going to finish this thing. Who's going to stop believing their own press – the hype? But this is why we love college football, right? You get here. This is why they play the games – survival of the fittest. Who's going to be at the top at the end? Its always fun to watch. These next few weeks are going to be exciting!

Q: Let's get down to business. There are very few Filipino quarterbacks ever to play in the NFL. My dad was the first one. Are you proud to be one of them?

A: Yes, my mother was Filipino. She passed away from cancer, God rest her soul. I'm very proud of my Filipino heritage and big family. And it was my family that let me know about the great quarterback [your father] Roman Gabriel. Playing quarterback in the Atlantic Coast Conference for Florida State and against N.C. State, you learn a little bit more about your father. You said there weren't many Filipino quarterbacks in football history. I have always tried to represent that well.

Q: You had the pleasure of playing for one of the great coaches in

all of football, Bobby Bowden. Tell me what that experience was like.

A: He gave me the opportunity through a scholarship offer to go to Florida State. I was a good quarterback, but I know there were a lot more out there more talented than me, so I'm appreciative of the opportunity. For him to say this was the first scholarship offered to a California player, he really did recruit predominately from the South. During that process, Mark Richt, the offensive coordinator at the time, was recruiting me heavily. The combination of those two guys really led me to go there, and they had just won the national championship my senior year.

Q: Did Coach Bowden really take a holistic approach to student athletes on and off the field?

A: Hearing him start every meeting with a message of faith, salvation and then telling us about the FCA – it was just a totally different environment than I grew up in. Hearing from other Florida State great alumni like Deion Sanders, Charlie Ward, Corey Simon and Peter Boulware coming back and talking about their faith to me. That really started the faith process for me. Coach Bowden as you know has made such a

huge impact on former players. He is one of my heroes. I named my second son after him, Bobby.

Q: You and I have a couple of things in common. One of those is serving with FCA, which I did for almost four years. Aren't you are doing the same now in Southern California?

A: My wife, Anita, and I have been with FCA going on seven years. FCA made an impact on me in college at Florida State. It started that faith journey for me and got me plugged into a church, then coming back here years later to speak at some schools in Southern California, which led to the opportunity to become a FCA director here in Los Angeles.

Combining two of my largest passions,

ministry and sports, this calling from God has been a privilege. Right now we run about 95 campuses. It's a privilege to share the gospel here in Southern California.

Q: It has become so much tougher to share the gospel on college campuses. Is it so important to reach youngsters in middle and high school?

A: Absolutely. I wish that I had some foundation in junior high or high school; I wasn't introduced to a fun youth and sports ministry until college. I grew up going to church some, but I would call myself a "CEO" Christian: Christmas and Easter only. Maybe Mother's Day to honor my mom, but I really didn't grow up in the church. To have that kind of atmosphere in college was great, but if I had that earlier in my life I definitely would have made some different decisions. To be able to now connect with middle school and high school students has been invaluable. Because once you get to college, you start to get set in your ways. It's awesome to have the opportunity to plant seeds and encourage students.

Follow Chris Rix at aimforgreatness.com and on Twitter @coachrix.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Roman Gabriel III is an evangelist and motivational speaker. Visit the Faith Family Sports website: fspn.net. Hear his Sold Out Sports Talk Radio program on American Family Radio in 200 cities nationally or streaming live at afr.net. Visit his website: soldouttv.com; Facebook: Roman Gabriel III; connect on Twitter: @romangabriel3rd. Contact at (910) 431-6483 or email: soldoutrg3@gmail.com.) **BR**

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Pro-life, anti-poverty

We can't truly be pro-life if we're not anti-poverty. Follow me through the facts here. Planned Parenthood celebrated its 100-year anniversary last October.

Since 1916, founder Margaret Sanger's vision for this organization, reflected in its very name, was that every child be a wanted child. But underneath this mantra lay an ambition of systematic eugenics along with her belief that "the most merciful thing that a large family does to one of its infant members is to kill it."

Today, Planned Parenthood has performed approximately 7 million abortions of the 57 million pre-born lives ended since abortion was legalized. And that's just here in the United States.

To put that number in perspective, over 57 million is about one-sixth of the U.S. population and rivals the number of atrocities committed by Joseph Stalin. This number would be similar to the genocide of the nation country of South Africa, or South Korea, or Spain.

Further, of that 57 million, minorities are disproportionately represented. African Americans make up less than 13 percent of the total population in the United States yet comprise between 30-35 percent of abortions.

In fact, a black American woman is five times more likely to have an abortion than a white American woman.

Among professing Christians, abortion is rightly decried as a modern-day Holocaust, the killing of millions of defenseless unborn lives under the political protec-

tion of court systems and the facilitation of taxpayer funding.

Pro-life convictions are in our spiritual DNA. As far back as the second century, the early church condemned the practice of abortion, a stance that contributed to twice as many women converting to Christianity than men.

But there's another characteristic of the early church that doesn't seem to have the same urgency here in America, at least not in our conversations on important social issues.

And it happens to be inextricably linked to the prevalence of abortions in our communities: If we're going to be truly pro-life, we must also be anti-poverty.

Consider this: In 2014, 49 percent of women who had abortion procedures had incomes at the federal poverty level, i.e., a single woman with no children living on \$11,670 year or less. (An additional 26 percent of women who had abortions in 2014 had incomes between \$11,670 and \$23,340 per year.) Inability to afford a child is among the top reasons a woman has an abortion; a 2004 study found that 74 percent of women having an abortion cited financial constraints.

What organizations like Planned Parenthood leave out of their marketing strategies is how much money they make off a woman in poverty.

Put yourself in her shoes: A new mother can expect to spend about \$2,400 on diapers, formula and baby food alone. And that doesn't count the cost of things like furniture, clothes or childcare.

And it doesn't even include the medical bills for labor and delivery (which average over \$9,000). Perhaps she could apply for government assistance, like the WIC program? In that case, she must not earn more than \$2,500 a month without losing the additional income. This means she will be caught in the limbo of not earning enough to support herself and her child independently, but not earning so much that she is unqualified for financial help.

For the single woman with an unplanned pregnancy living on less than \$12,000 per year, raising a child seems impossible. For her, a five- to 10-minute procedure at a neighborhood clinic for about \$450 seems like a way out.

Perhaps this reinforces why pro-life advocacy that focuses on the mother rather than the unborn child has proven more effective. According to a study titled, "Profile of a Woman with an Unplanned Pregnancy," a woman may agree that having an abortion means killing an unborn child, and even agree that abortion is morally wrong.

However, as the study explains, "that is the price a woman in that situation is willing to pay in her desperate struggle for what she believes to be her very survival." The woman with an unplanned pregnancy believes her entire life is at stake.

Yet, in her fear and uncertainty, the woman considering an abortion will likely not hear about her increased risk of addiction, eating disorders or future infertility, along with the shame, guilt and difficulty in relationships she will likely endure. To quote the Profile study

See Pro-life page 12



KATIE MCCOY
Guest Column



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CAMP OPPORTUNITIES



At Camp Caraway campers will experience the love of Jesus, develop healthy relationships and learn about the importance of missions.

Every activity – whether a recreation, worship service or missions time – teaches and equips campers with biblical truth for daily living. Register at carawaysummerfun.org.

- **Father-Son Camp (1 night):** \$80,

April 7-8, June 16-17

- **Father-Son Camp (2 nights):** \$135, Oct 20-22

- **Boys' Camp:** \$295, June 26-30, July 10-14

- **Father-Daughter Camp:** \$80, July 3-4

- **Mother-Son Camp:** \$80, July 5-6

- **Children's Camp:** \$295, July 31-Aug 4, Aug 7-11

Camp Cale sits on the banks of the Perquimans River. It provides age-graded summer camps for youth and children, complete with adventure activities and Bible study. This year's theme is Search and Rescue. Early bird registration by April 29 is \$290 for Early Camp Week, \$290 for Kids Weeks, \$300 for Teen Weeks and \$290 for Sports Week. A non-refundable deposit is required per camper. Visit campcale.com/summer-camp.html.

- **Early Week Camp (Completed 2-12th grades):** \$300, June 4-9

- **Kids Weeks (Completed 2nd-6th grades):** \$300, June 11-16, June 18-23 and July 9-14



- **Teen Weeks (Completed 7th-12th grades):** \$325, July 16-21, July 23-28

- **Sports Camp (Completed 2nd-6th grades):** \$300, June 25-30

South Mountain Baptist Camp

South Mountain Baptist Camp's mission is to develop young disciples that will be effective in impacting culture and carrying the gospel throughout the world. Campers will participate in morning quiet time, group recreation, Bible study, chapel, church group time and various fun activities. The camp is in Connelly Springs.

A non-refundable deposit of \$55 is required for all overnight camps, \$75 for youth camp and \$25 for day camp.

Visit southmountainbaptistcamp.com/summer-camp.html.

- **Children's Camp (Completed 1-6th grades):** \$165, June 12-16, June 19-23, June 25-29, July 17-21, July 24-28 and July 31-Aug 4

- **Youth Mission Camp (Completed 6-12th grades):** \$200, July 9-14

- **Day Camp (Completed K-2nd grades):** \$50, July 11-13

- **Coed Camp (Completed 1st-12th grades):** \$165, Aug 6-10



World Missions Week



World Missions Week is being hosted by N.C. Baptists on Mission July 3-8. Anyone interested in learning about exciting opportunities for involvement in state, national and international missions is welcome.

Celebrative worship, small group time and mission moments are but a small part

of the week. Rush of Fools will be leading worship each evening. Tom Richter will be the pastor for the week. Inspirational and informative studies will be provided for all age groups starting with pre-school. For more information visit baptistsonmission.org/camps/world-missions-week.



Each week campers will have the opportunity to participate in mission projects.

Download the registration form or register online at campmundovista.com.

- **Girls Camp (grades 3-6):** June 19-23, July 10-14

- **Teen Girls (grads 7-12):** June 19-23, July 10-14

- **Girls Mini Camp (grades 2-6):** June 26-28, July 24-26

- **Mother/Daughter Mini Camp (grades 1-6):** June 26-28, June 28-30, July 17-19, July 19-21



N.C. Baptist Assembly at Fort Caswell presents Be Do Tell Youth (BDT) Weeks, a youth camp on the beach that includes worship, a hands-on missions experience, intentional discipleship for students and youth ministry training for adults. Each week also includes daily quiet times, devotions, sports, drama, improv, games and more.

The program fee is \$65 plus lodging

and meals. Please contact Caswell at (910) 278-9501 for pricing. Visit leaders.bedotell.com/index.php?id=87.

- **June 12-17** – Acton Bowen

- **June 19-24** – Tony Merida

- **June 26-July 1** – Stuart Hall

- **July 10-15** – Eddie Briery

- **July 17-22** – Trevor Atwood

- **July 24-29** – Mike Satterfield

- **July 31-Aug 5** – Wes Hamilton



Deep Impact Kids Missions Weeks and Weekends are mission and ministry experiences sponsored by Baptists on Mission that provides elementary age students and leaders/parents with the opportunity to share the love of God. The experiences are geared for children in 1st-5th grade (6th grade is included if they are in the church children's program) and leaders/parents. Students will participate in interactive biblical teaching with an emphasis on missions, age appropriate servanthood evangelism or hand on service projects, devotions and worship

services and fun activities. Weekends are \$80 per person and week-long camps are \$160. Included in the cost per person is: lodging, meals, program, materials/supplies, T-shirt and insurance. Visit baptistsonmission.org/Camps/DI-Kids.

- **Red Springs Camp Weekend:** May 19-21

- **Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute Week:** June 26-30

- **Red Springs Camp Week:** July 17-21

- **Shelby Camp Week:** July 24-28

- **Truett Camp Week:** July 21-Aug. 4

- **Shelby Camp Weekend:** Sept. 8-10



Deep Impact Missions Weeks are week-long mission experiences sponsored by Baptists on Mission for middle (must have completed 6th grade) and high school students and their leaders. Devotions and worship will help students reflect on their lives and commit themselves to serving others. Visit baptistsonmission.org/camps/deep-impact.

North Carolina dates:

- **June 19-24:** \$210, Boone

- **June 26-July 1:** \$210, Stokes/Forsyth County

- **July 2-8:** \$315+, Caswell

- **July 10-15:** \$210, Rockingham

- **July 17-22:** \$225, Shelby

- **July 24-29:** \$210 Beulaville

- **July 31-Aug. 5:** \$225, Red Springs

Outside North Carolina

- **Honduras:** \$1650, June 17-24

- **Philadelphia:** \$350, June 25-July 1

- **Nassau, Bahamas:** \$1200, July 8-15 (Must be in grades 9-12)

North Carolina Mini Weeks

- **June 11-14:** \$115, Red Springs

- **June 15-18:** \$115, Shelby

Roman Gabriel, Tony Dungy host Super Bowl rally

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

Football has been a big part of Roman Gabriel III's life. His father was a star quarterback at North Carolina State University and advanced to play for the Los Angeles Rams for eleven seasons, then five seasons for the Philadelphia Eagles. The son followed his dad with a short stint in the NFL until he was sidelined by injuries.

Gabriel remains closely connected with his football roots through an organization he founded, Sold Out Sports. Sold Out is a sports and character education program that places Gabriel in schools where he challenges students to abstain from alcohol and drugs.

His calling takes him all over his home state of North Carolina. But every year Gabriel reserves a week of his schedule to attend Super Bowl events where he spends time with big name athletes and sports media personalities. For the past five years he has served as the *Biblical Recorder's* sports correspondent at this big event.

But the 2017 Super Bowl in Houston, Texas, will be much different for Gabriel and a host of other sports figures that have worked together to launch a rally the Wednesday night before Sunday's big game on Feb. 5. The rally will be broadcast directly to churches and other faith gatherings with a clear message of the gospel.

"We're partnering with Tony Dungy's group, All Pro Dad, which is a fatherhood/parenthood engagement charitable organization out of Tampa, Florida," Gabriel told the *Biblical Recorder*. "Coach Dungy's coming alongside to help us promote it to the churches."

In a promotional video Dungy said, "Our goal at All Pro Dad is to help men love their family well."

The rally will originate from Grace Community Church in Humble, Texas. The Faith, Family & Football rally features testimonies and conversations with coaches, players and other sports personalities. Joining Dungy in the broadcast will be CBS sports personality James Brown, sports agent Leigh Steinberg, NFL alumni Dan Pastorini and Shawn Alexander, and the NFL's first female coach, Jen Welter. Additional guests from the competing teams will be added to the schedule.

"Our whole goal with the program is to lead to a gospel presentation so that churches, through their men's ministry and through their family ministries, can invite people to attend who might not ever go to church, but



Tony Dungy, seen here in this video screenshot, and Roman Gabriel, *Biblical Recorder* sports correspondent, will be hosting a live Super Bowl Rally Feb. 1 for churches to use.

would come to a Super Bowl event," Gabriel said. "At the end of the one-hour program there will be a clear altar call and gospel presentation."

Gabriel said he hopes to get approval from the NFL Commissioner to make the rally an official, annual Super Bowl event beginning next year in Minneapolis.

All Pro Dad already has an official Super Bowl event. "It's a youth mentoring camp," Gabriel explained. "So we hope to bring our event alongside Dungy's camp that reaches out to families in the community who can't afford to experience Super Bowl events otherwise."

Churches are invited to host the broadcast in their location. Although the live simulcast is on Feb. 1 at 7:30 p.m. (CST), Gabriel said, "churches that cannot fit the Wednesday event in their schedule, can download the video and host their own event on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday or any time that fits best for the church."

There's a nominal fee to the church to access the video. Gabriel said, "We want to work with churches of all sizes to help them reach their friends with the gospel."

The American Family Network and other ministries are joining the effort. You Version Bible app is providing a six-day follow-up program. "Those who make decisions for Christ at the rally or local church event will be provided access to this spiritual growth tool that will walk them through the decision they made," Gabriel said. "This gives churches a way to begin the discipling process for each new believer."

A new faith based awards program is another addition to Gabriel's project. Five awards will be given to deserving faith-based sports personalities, coaches, players and people in the sports media business. Gabriel said, "Coach Dungy will be giving out the All Pro Dad award. Spencer Tillman will present an award to a local high school athlete who has faith and family principles. There will also be a mentoring award and a first female coach award for Jen Welter's impact with women in sports. There is no other event like this at the Super Bowl."

Gabriel invites church leaders to use the rally as an outreach tool.

"Coach Dungy so represents integrity and godliness in the world of sports," said Gabriel. "He's honored as the most trusted sports broadcaster in the business. We're so pleased he is willing to bring his persona to this event."

Discounts are available for churches that sign up by Jan. 22. For more information, visit faithandfootballlive.com. BR

Church Continued from page 4

On July 12, 2015, Wakelon reopened its doors for worship, and White was ordained.

Bryant died at 75 years old in March 2016. He saw his beloved church hold four baptisms and grow to 18 members and 30 regular attendees.

Storms strike

One year after reopening, Wakelon had just raised enough funds and signed a contract with Laws Stained Glass Studios for new windows, when Tropical Storm Julia hit last September and flooded the air conditioning unit in the sanctuary.

The contract meant Wakelon could not cancel the new windows, but the company agreed to delay the installation.

"I told the congregation, 'Don't worry about it, the Lord is going to take care of us,'" White said.

Terry Stockman, director of missions for West Chowan Baptist Association, connected White with Baptists on Mission, also known as N.C. Baptist Men (NCBM), and churches within the association to help with repairs after Julia. Wakelon received a grant to replace the air conditioning units, but halfway through installing the unit, Hurricane Matthew caused more devastation, this time flooding the fellowship hall.

All the work that was completed in the bathroom also needed to be removed.

"After all the progress, it felt like the devil was trying to shut us down or flood us out," White said.

Members from the neighboring Colerain Baptist

Church and students from Chowan University came and helped tear out hardwood floors in the fellowship hall.

Stockman continued to make phone calls in search of partnerships, support and resources for the church, until White received a call from Richard Brunson, NCBM executive director, saying a check was in the mail to cover the floor replacements.

"The Lord's been good to us and been good to them," Stockman said about Wakelon.

"We want to thank the churches of the association that helped with floors and provided assistance. The response has been overwhelming."

Once Wakelon received the funds from NCBM, they were able to move up the installation of the new windows.

"It's amazing how the Lord has blessed us so much when we thought we were down ... shows you have to keep your faith in the Lord even through the storms," White said.

Church repairs are expected to be complete by the end of January, if weather permits.

"If not, we'll finish in the spring when it gets warmer," White said. "Just doing it a little bit at a time."

NCBM continues to help churches and homeowners with repairs after the devastation that Hurricane Matthew brought to North Carolina. To partner with a church or homeowner, contact (800) 395-5102, ext. 5599.

Visit baptistsonmission.org. BR



David Platt to students: 'Risk your life in faith'

By MYRIAH SNYDER | *Western Recorder*

As 2016 came to close, more than 2,000 college students and campus leaders were challenged by Southern Baptists and other Christian speakers to give their lives to the cause of missions during the Cross 2016 missions event.

The purpose of the Dec. 27-30 conference at the Indianapolis Convention Center was "to mobilize students in the cause of frontier missions for the glory of Jesus Christ," according to the event website and various speakers throughout the gathering.

"Don't retreat in fear! Risk your life in faith," David Platt, an event speaker, urged students.

"You are either a sender or a goer when it comes to the people who have not been reached with the gospel," Platt, president of the International Mission Board, told the crowd. "We either go to them, or we give our lives

to send and support those who are called by God to go to them."

Conference sponsors included the International Mission Board (IMB), The Master's Seminary, Crossway and The Gospel Coalition. Worship was led by Matt Boswell, and the conference kicked off with a concert from Trip Lee, Christian rapper and pastor at Cornerstone Church in Atlanta, Ga.

Drawing from Numbers 13 and the story of the 12 spies, Platt presented "the anatomy of retreat in fear" and the "anatomy of risk in faith."

Referring to the 10 spies who did not believe God's promises, Platt said, "They disregarded the goodness of God. They doubted the greatness of God. They disobeyed the Word of God. And they disqualified themselves from the blessings of God."

"He's powerful; what He's chosen to do throughout history is to put His people in places where they can't do things on their own, and God is faithful to provide for their needs according to His power," Platt said.

He contrasted the actions of the 10 disobedient spies with that of Joshua, Caleb and the "anatomy of risk in faith."

"They believed the goodness of God. They trusted the greatness of God. They obeyed the Word of God. And they would experience the blessings of God," he said.

"If you can trust Him to save you from your sin for all eternity, then surely you can trust Him to lead you in your life on this earth, and not just to lead you but to satisfy you every step of the way," Platt said.

He asked the crowd, "Do we realize the opportunities that lie before us?"

"Although God is still calling people to full-time missionary work," he said, "God is calling multitudes of people not to leave their jobs but to

leverage their jobs for the spread of His gospel and glory throughout the world."

"We have the good news of the God who has conquered death," he said. "Don't you want to give your life to making that news known?"

'Go, Send, or Disobey'

"The question is not if you are called, the question is where and how," J.D. Greear, pastor of The Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham, N.C.

In his message on the topic of "Go, Send, or Disobey," Greear noted, "To follow Jesus, whatever you do, do it well for the glory of God and then do it somewhere strategic for the mission of God."

Greear recognized that although many in the room would be called as full-time missionaries or in other areas of full-time ministry, not everyone under the sound of his voice would be. "The point is that all of us have a role," he said.

Drawing from Acts 7-8 and the life of Stephen, Greear shared "four convictions that shaped Stephen's life that should also shape yours."

Those four convictions are: "God intends to use me. The Holy Spirit fills me. I owe the gospel to others. And Jesus is worth it."

"There is one that is worthy of your life, and as awesome as your parents are and as exciting as your career is and as dear as your dreams might be to your heart, Jesus is worth it all!" Greear said.

"At some point, following Jesus is going to take you 180 degrees opposite of the direction you want to go. At that moment, you've got to decide who's worthy."

Among speakers for the week were Thabiti Anyabwile, pastor of Anacostia River Church, Washington, D.C., Zane Pratt, vice president for global training with the IMB and Afshin Ziafat, pastor of Providence Church in Frisco, Texas. Their messages, along with the others who spoke throughout the week, laid out many of the foundations of the faith, and focused on discipleship and the call to go out.

The Cross conference began in 2013 and continued with a simulcast in 2015. For more information or to hear sessions, visit crossforthenations.org. **BR**



Retirement not in missionary's vocabulary

By CAROLINE ANDERSON | IMB

"I'll retire when the devil retires." Gary Harthcock faithfully lived out his famous words on four continents and in multiple avenues of service.

"That quote was taped to his desk, and he told me he read it every day. He has truly lived that out," Kathryn Monroe* said. "Retirement was not in his vocabulary." Kathryn and her husband Philip* were friends of Gary.

Gary, 97, died Jan. 5 after an abdominal aortic aneurysm. He and his wife Evelyn were married 69 years before she passed away in September 2015. They served together overseas for 40 years in six countries.

Gary was born in Clarksdale, Miss., on July 7, 1919. He served as a patrol plane

commander in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Gary married Evelyn Dorothy White in 1945 and retired from active military service in 1946.

Gary used his bachelor of science degree in agriculture in a number of arenas, including starting a business building greenhouses. He eventually joined the staff at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and was later the director of Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute (now college). Gary and Evelyn began serving with the International Mission Board (IMB) when he was 56 and she was 55. They first served on the island of Antigua in the Caribbean. Although they officially retired in 1985, they continued to work alongside IMB. Gary and Evelyn moved to Liberia in 1986 with IMB's Master's Program to continue the ministry efforts of IMB workers who returned to the U.S.

for home assignments. In 1992, the couple moved to Mongolia to teach English to medical doctors. The Harthcocks' ministry service with IMB continued in Guyana where they served for six months before they relocated to Cambodia in 1996 to teach English to Buddhist monks and doctors, surgeons and medical professionals in hospitals.

In 1999, the Harthcocks, then in their late 70s, moved to Thailand and continued ministering and writing books, Bible lessons and tracts that have since been translated into seven languages and are used worldwide.

Gary was 82 and Evelyn was 81 years old when they completed their Master's Program assignments. The couple continued to serve using their own funds. In his last days in Chiang Mai, Thailand, Gary wrote daily spiritual devotionals



Gary Harthcock and his late wife Evelyn served overseas in six countries. He died Jan. 5. addressed to his "lovable worldwide family."

Gary Harthcock is survived by his sister, Margaret Varnell of Cleveland, Tenn.; his brother, Thomas B. Harthcock Sr. of Newton, Miss.; and foster daughter, Carmen Fitzsimons of Summerville, S.C..

Memorials to: imb.org/lottie-moon-christmas-offering. **BR**

Baptist missionary fighting Russia anti-evangelism law

By DIANA CHANDLER | Baptist Press

A longtime Baptist missionary convicted under Russia's anti-evangelism law has returned briefly to his Illinois home as lawyers appeal his conviction and challenge the law's constitutionality.

Donald Ossewaarde was compelled to end his ministry months ago after his arrest under the July 2016 law. He hopes other Baptists might find ways to continue to minister in Russia as his attorneys defend religious freedom in the nation more than 25 years after the fall of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

"There's different ways we could continue the ministry and that is going to depend on how the court rules," said Ossewaarde, who established his ministry in Russia in 2002. "We're hoping the court overturns all of the charges, which could mean we could go back to the same type of house church services that we were doing."

"If they rule in such a way that meeting in a private house is no longer going to be a legal option," he said, "then these other missionaries have experience with setting up registered organizations."

Ossewaarde's attorneys anticipate a court date as early as March or April, making his case the first appeal of a conviction under the Yarovaya Law (named for bill coauthor Irina Yarovaya) to reach the nation's Supreme Court in Moscow. In a separate case, his attorneys are appealing the law's constitutionality before Russia's Constitutional Court, a separate legal body, but have not yet filed that case, Ossewaarde told Baptist Press (BP) Jan. 4 from his Illinois home.

The Independent Baptist missionary expressed joy at



Ruth and Donald Ossewaarde are in the process of moving from Russia after Donald was arrested in 2016 for violating a new law that was introduced in July. He was arrested in August evangelizing outside church walls and without a government permit. (BP photo)

the opportunity to see his wife, children, grandchildren and members of his home congregation, Faith Baptist Church in Bourbonnais, Ill. "This has been a great blessing all the way around," he said. His wife Ruth returned to the U.S. for safety after Ossewaarde's August 2016 arrest.

Ossewaarde was charged Aug. 14, 2016, under the new religion law for holding religious services in his home, advertising services on bulletin boards in nearby neighborhoods and failing to give authorities written notification when he began his religious activities. He was fined 40,000 rubles, about \$600. The conviction was upheld Sept. 30 on appeal, but Ossewaarde con-

tinues to fight the conviction. Russia's crackdown on religious liberty is occurring as the world marked on Christmas the 25th anniversary of the fall of the USSR. Ossewaarde, speaking from his personal evangelistic experiences there, said an initial thirst for the gospel that emerged after USSR's collapse has subsided.

"The hunger for spiritual things has drastically changed in the last 25 years," Ossewaarde told BP. "My first visit to the former Soviet Union was in 1994 when I went to Belarus. In those days people were just thirsty for the Word of God."

"We would bring ... a truckload of Bibles into a park in the center of town and people would just mob you. Hundreds and even thousands of people would just surround us begging, 'Please, please give me a Bible. I want to know what God has to say.' And it was ... a fantastic time," he said.

"We thought that was the way it was going to continue to be. Within five or seven years, everybody who wanted a Bible had gotten one, and the curiosity factor seemed to be satisfied. And then people seemed to be more interested in more secular things of Western life." The causes of the loss of interest in the Bible are open to interpretation, Ossewaarde said.

He plans to return to Russia in the middle of January to continue efforts to sell his apartment there and make other preparations to leave permanently, while his wife remains in the U.S. for safety.

Before his current visit to Illinois, police visited his apartment around Thanksgiving while he was inside. But he refused to open the door on the advice of his

See Law page 13

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Judge blocks mandate on gender transition, abortion

By TOM STRODE | Baptist Press

A federal judge has blocked implementation of a controversial Obama administration rule that requires doctors to perform gender transition procedures or treatments, as well as abortions.

In a Dec. 31 opinion, Judge Reed O'Connor of the Northern District of Texas granted a nationwide, preliminary injunction against a Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) regulation that mandates the performance of and insurance coverage for gender transitions – even on children – and abortions, even if they violate the religious or ethical beliefs of the physicians and others involved.

The HHS rule was scheduled to go into full effect Jan. 1. Religious freedom advocates applauded the decision.

"This ruling is a common-sense decision that is a victory for all who believe that children should not be pawns of the state and that the political ideology of the day should not supplant the consciences of doctors," said Travis Wussow, the new vice president for public policy, as well as general counsel, of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

"I am thankful for Judge O'Connor's intervention and pray that our federal government would stop its needless assault on the conscience," Wussow said in written comments for Baptist Press.

Lori Windham, senior counsel for Becket Law (formerly the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty), described O'Connor's ruling as "an across-the-board victory."

"The government has no business forcing private doctors to perform procedures on children that the government itself recognizes can be harmful and exempts its own doctors from performing," Windham said in a written statement. "The ruling ensures that doctors' best medical judgment will not be replaced with political agendas and bureaucratic interference."

O'Connor, whose court is in Wichita Falls, had previously blocked enforcement of another transgender directive from the Obama administration. In August, he issued a preliminary injunction against a May guidance from the Departments of Education and Justice that instructed public school districts, as well as colleges and universities, to allow students to use the restrooms and locker rooms of their gender identity instead of their biological sex.

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Life Continued from page 1

and its supporters, fearing so-called patient harassment, obtrusive picketing and “physical violence,” voiced opposition to the pregnancy center – even objecting to the three-minute time limit on discussion. Nearby residents were largely in favor of the pregnancy center.

The council tabled the issue after discovering a typo in the meeting time indicated on the notice sent to nearby property owners, who were invited to attend the session.

When the issue was reintroduced a week later, Nelson said the tone of the room had changed. Only one resident offered testimonial, expressing favor for the pregnancy center since it was not a large operation that would generate traffic in the neighborhood.

The council then voted unanimously to deny the rezoning request, citing the city’s potential to draw higher tax revenue if the street was collectively rezoned to allow for “larger, more coordinated office development.”

In August, Hand of Hope filed a federal lawsuit against the City of Raleigh’s

Hope Continued from page 3

During these visits, each client was given a pregnancy test, factual information about the baby she was carrying and options beyond abortion. While we cannot absolutely know for sure the number of children saved through these centers, we do know of 9,807 children who were given life instead of death through this ministry. Since the inclusion of the ultrasound, the percent of clients choosing life over death for their unborn child is an amazing 96 percent.

These centers are not only vitally involved in saving the lives of the unborn, but they also are committed to sharing with the mother the Good News about abundant life through Jesus. These centers have recorded 1,929 professions of faith by clients over these last 30 years. To God be the glory!

Yes, there is a huge contrast between the Trust Women South Wind Women’s Clinic and Hope Pregnancy Centers. One receives payment to destroy unborn children while the other gives freely to help pregnant mothers choose life. Oklahoma Baptists are people of life, and the life of every unborn child is precious to us. We give and serve because unborn children are precious to God.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Anthony L. Jordan is executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma. This column first appeared in the Baptist Messenger, the convention’s newsjournal.) **BR**

decision, claiming a violation of constitutional First and Fourteenth Amendment rights, as well as a breach of federal law protecting religious land use.

The suit is ongoing; meanwhile an additional legal front appeared when the city attorney reinterpreted the pregnancy center’s designation as a civic group – which doesn’t require the property to be rezoned – rather its previous designation as a medical facility. The attorney’s pronouncement effectively overturned the council’s decision to deny Your Choice the ability to move into their facility.

Nelson said the reversal was good news, but the issue still isn’t resolved. The attorney’s decision is open to appeal, which the abortion clinic filed Dec. 26.

At this point it’s unclear when either the appeal or the lawsuit will be resolved. For now, Your Choice’s Jones Franklin Rd. facility sits unoccupied, as it has for more than a year.

The courage to be pro-life

The Biblical Recorder asked Nelson what it’s like leading an emotionally demanding ministry while also navigating tortuous legal obstacles.

“It’s intimidating, if that’s what you’re asking, but it’s the right thing to do,” she said. “I knew it was going to be a little difficult.

“I like the stress and pressure. Steam makes the engine turn,” she said, quoting her father.

The work Hand of Hope staffers undertake at the pregnancy center can be heart-rending, as they counsel men and women considering abortion. Nelson re-

Pro-life Continued from page 7

again: “The terrible miscalculation of young women is that abortion can make them ‘unpregnant,’ that it will restore them to who they were before their crisis.

“But a woman is never the same once she is pregnant, whether the child is kept, adopted, or killed.” These are the life-altering realities that a woman having an abortion may not discover until she has to live with them.

And this is how the abortion industry exploits economically vulnerable women.

This isn’t to say that all issues should have the same priority. But it does mean we cannot afford to be morally selective. We cannot work to end abortion while being ignorant of, or unmoved by, the social and economic factors that often contribute to it.

If we, as the people of God, considered the abortion-vulnerable woman as our responsibility, perhaps she wouldn’t feel like an abortion was her only option. Perhaps she wouldn’t feel quite so alone.

How to get involved

- Take an on-site tour. See Hand of Hope’s pro-life ministry up close.
- Invite Tonya Baker Nelson to speak at your church or Bible study group.
- Engage on social media. Support Hand of Hope’s ministry by sharing information and updates on Facebook (@AHandofHope), Twitter (@HandofHopePRC) and Instagram (@HandofHopePregCenters).

Hand of Hope Pregnancy Resource Center
607 North Ennis Street
Fuquay-Varina, NC 27526
(919) 577-8002; handofhope.net

Your Choice Pregnancy Clinic
1522 Jones Franklin Road
Raleigh, NC 27607
919-758-8776
yourchoicepregnancyclinic.com



TONYA NELSON

lies on her faith to keep going. She trains the staff to do the same.

“I can’t take the glory when they decide to keep the baby,” she said, “and I can’t bear the burden when they don’t. We leave the results up to God.”

Nelson’s approach, however, shouldn’t be mistaken for disinterest – just the opposite. Abortion isn’t merely a political talking point for her. It’s personal.

“I completely understood the pressures to abort your child,” she said, referring to her own unplanned pregnancy in her early 20s.

She’s also adamant that abortion is a problem inside the Christian community, not just for secular outsiders. LifeWay Research released a study in 2015 showing 43 percent of women who have had an abortion were attending a Christian church at the time.

“The church is pouring millions of dollars into the abortion industry,” Nelson said.

She didn’t claim to know why that is the case, since most evangelicals are appalled by abortion, but she suggested it has to do with the way many churches

treat abortion as an unforgivable sin, keeping guilt-ridden women in the shadows.

LifeWay’s research supports her conclusion: 49 percent of women who have had an abortion agree that pastors’ teachings on forgiveness don’t seem to apply to terminated pregnancies.

People are ashamed to come forward, so they don’t get the support they need, and they’re unable to help others in similar circumstances.

Nelson not only wants pastors to speak about abortion with more grace, but also more often.

“We’re very thankful for those pastors that do a [Sanctity of Life] focus every January,” she said, “but abortions happen February through December.”

She continued, “I believe the Lord is looking for men and women in positions of authority and influence to say [to churches], ‘You’ve been quiet long enough.’”

In the meantime, Nelson is more than willing to suggest ambitious pro-life ideas for the next Sunday School community project. **BR**

Our spiritual forefathers considered care for the poor an essential practice of our Christian faith (Galatians 2:10, see also 1 John 3:18, Proverbs 31:8-9). The apostle James even makes this an issue of discipleship, one that proves the validity of our saving faith (James 2:14-17). He asks what good it does if we see someone’s material need, tell her to live as though her need has been met, yet do nothing to contribute to her situation.

For James, this would undermine our very profession of faith. How much more would it undermine our pro-life message?

Have we who claim the name of Christ abdicated our responsibility of care

for the poor among us, especially economically vulnerable women, to state-sponsored programs? Or worse, do we become dismissive, and even perhaps a bit cynical, when our government attempts to fulfill our ministry?

If we’re going to speak up for the unborn, we have to speak up for the poor. If we’re really going to be pro-life, we must also be anti-poverty.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Katie McCoy is assistant professor of theology in women’s studies at the College at Southwestern, the undergraduate school of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. This article was originally published at biblicalwoman.com.) **BR**

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FOR THE LATEST
N.C. BAPTIST NEWS
AND INFORMATION

Law Continued from page 11

attorneys. In Russia, residents are not required to open their door for police, Ossewaarde said.

“Whether that was something they did as a form of intimidation, whether they were going to question me about my trial, I really don’t know,” he said. Later that same day, when Ossewaarde was not home, someone poured glue on his doorknobs and stuck clay in his keyhole and elsewhere on the door.

While he has no proof of the perpetrators of the vandalism, Ossewaarde suspects it was done by the police instead of common hoodlums.

“The lawyer told me that they’re playing psychological games with me to try to intimidate me, to frighten me,” Ossewaarde said of the police. “I will say that it did bother me at the time, but nothing has happened since then. I don’t feel nearly as bothered by it as I did at the time.”

Ossewaarde’s attorneys believe they have strong arguments in both his appeal and the constitutional challenge to the law, he said.

“We don’t believe that the law as it was written should have been applied to us. If the Supreme Court reaches an impartial decision, we expect the Su-

preme Court will overturn the decision,” Ossewaarde said. “We strongly believe that the law as written does violate the constitutional guarantees of religious freedom, and so ... if there’s an impartial decision in the Constitutional Court, they will overturn that part of the law that’s being used against missionaries.”

The new law defines illegal evangelism as activity by an authorized representative of an officially registered religious organization who uses media to publicly spread the organization’s doctrine to non-members to convince them to join the group, Ossewaarde said.

But he and his wife worked on the mission field with financial support from churches across the U.S. and did not represent an official religious organization, he said.

Ossewaarde was arrested with five other ministers of various faiths and denominations within a month of the law’s passage. They were levied fines varying from 5,000 to 50,000 rubles, with only one man, a Hare Krishna, acquitted.

In the five months after the law’s passage, 29 people were prosecuted on related charges, with 15 cases ending in convictions and fines, Forum 18 reported Dec. 20. **BR**

AROUND THE STATE

Obituaries

KATHY WHITE QUALLS, 67, died Jan. 4, 2017.

A Virginia native, Qualls worked in the North Carolina public school system for many years as a teacher’s assistant. She was a member of Momeyer Baptist Church, where her husband, Phil, has served as pastor for four years. He was previously pastor at Apex Baptist Church.



KATHY QUALLS

She is survived by her husband of 46 years, Orville Phillip Qualls; son, Kevin of Matthews; daughter, Dana of Cary; seven grandchildren; mother, Katherine White of Newport News, Va.; and brother, Max White Jr. of Yorktown, Va.

Memorials to: Northwest Community Church building fund, 10109 Morrisville Parkway, Apex, NC 27523 (*give.northwestlife.org*), or Christian Adoption Services, 624 Matthews-Mint Hill Rd. Suite 100, Matthews, NC 28105 (*Christianadopt.org*).

WALTER GRAHAM “DR. B” BYRUM, 61, of Winterville, died Dec. 26, 2016.

A Chowan County native, Byrum felt called to the ministry as an electrical engineering student at North Carolina State University.

He graduated from Campbell University with a bachelor of music education degree with applied major in organ and concentration in mathematics.

He received a master of divinity with church music degree from Southeastern Seminary and his doctor of ministry in the area of worship from Campbell

University Divinity School.

He was ordained in his home church, Edenton Baptist and served in positions at First Baptist, Scotland Neck, where he served a 21-year tenure as associate

pastor for music, worship and organist; Westfield Baptist, Dunn; Colerain Baptist; and the United Methodist Church in Lillington.

He was serving as associate pastor – minister of music and worship arts at The Memorial Baptist Church, Greenville, at the time of his death. Along with the graded choir program, Byrum worked with youth and adult ministries as well as the facilities manager.

He was a member of the American Guild of Organist, the Choristers Guild, and, along with his wife Teresa, were members of the N.C. Baptist Singers and Orchestra.

He previously taught elementary school music at Hobgood Academy for 11 years and played bass in the Tar River Swing Band in Rocky Mount and local groups.

He is survived by his wife of nearly 37 years, Teresa Brown Byrum; four children; W. Graham Byrum, Jr. of Zebulon, Elizabeth Byrum Taylor of Scotland Neck, and Kevin Byrum and Corey Byrum, both of Winterville; and five grandchildren.

Memorials to: The Memorial Baptist Church, 1510 Greenville Blvd SE, Greenville, NC 27858, and designated for Music Funds.

Staff changes

JEROME CASH has been called as director of missions for Anson Baptist Association, Wadesboro. Cash previously served as pastor of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Wadesboro.

Balfour Baptist Church, Asheboro, has called **GARY MASON** as pastor. Mason previously served as the interim pastor. He was also previously a chaplain at Cross Road Retirement Community, Asheboro.

DANIEL BARHAM has been called as pastor to Corinth Baptist Church, Oxford. Barham previously served at Lithia Baptist Church, Buchanan, Va., for one year. He is enrolled at Southeastern Seminary.

Southside Baptist Church, Greensboro, has called **HOWARD MCNEILL** as senior pastor. McNeill previously served as senior pastor at Maple Springs Baptist Church, Seagrove, for 12 years.

DISCIPLE-MAKING CONFERENCE

EVANGELISM + DISCIPLESHIP = DISCIPLE-MAKING

Join N.C. Baptists for the 2017 Disciple-Making Conference. If you’ve been changed by Christ, it should lead to a life that’s marked by being a disciple who makes disciples. Equipping and main sessions will focus on the pillars of disciple-making: evangelism and discipleship. A featured women’s evangelism and discipleship equipping session will be led by Tabatha Frost of Providence Baptist Church in Raleigh.

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Submissions

The *Biblical Recorder* is pleased to publish staff changes, church news and events with a statewide interest. Please send information immediately following an event or at least two months in advance. Include cost and contact information in your email or correspondence. Send to *dianna@BRnow.org* or *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512. Call (919) 847-2127.

January 22

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

January 29

Praying with Joy

Focal passage: Philippians 1:3-11

Paul set the example of praying with joy in verse 4 when he tells the church at Phillipi he is “*always praying with joy for all of you in my every prayer*” (Phil. 1:4).

This is significant because Paul was able to make this statement while imprisoned in Rome.

He provides this example to us that no matter the circumstances, we still can experience joy in prayer.

Our lesson writer provides a simple approach to pray with joy.

We can find joy in what God has done in the past, what God is doing right now and what God will do in the future.

As a parent of five young adults, I find so many things to pray about!

I find this approach to praying with joy to be very applicable as I pray for each of them.

As I reflect on the past experience of raising children, I find such joy in the ways God has provided for, developed and matured each one.

I find joy in praying for what God is doing right now as I enjoy the maturity

and spiritual fellowship with each adult. Then, I find joy in anticipation of all God will do in their lives as adults in the years to come.

There is something so key in finding joy that we see the big picture that God’s got this, in every time of life – the past, the present and the future.

Depending on your season of life, you may find that you reflect more on the joys of the past, than the joys of the future or vice versa.

Paul’s days of traveling on missionary journeys were over and he could have focused his thoughts on what he was not going to be able to do anymore, but instead, he found joy in what he believed God would do in the lives of the believers in Phillipi.

He prayed that they would be “*filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God*” (verse 11).

May that be our focus too!

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Interested in writing lessons? Email seth@brnow.org.)



SHERRA STILL
Member,
University Hills Baptist
Church, Charlotte

Focal passage: Philippians 1:12-21

Paul took the time to reassure the readers of his letter that even though he is in prison, he is okay. And not only okay, but that good things have come from the hardship. In Philippians 1:12, he asserts, “*what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel.*”

What could possibly produce more joy in a believer than coming to that realization?

As we study our lesson this week from Philippians 1:12-21, we see that Paul gives us examples of what to do and what not to do. Paul encourages the believers to share Christ with joy, no matter what their circumstances. Therefore, at the top of the do list is share Christ with joy.

He points out however that there are those who have chosen to share Christ with wrong motives.

At the top of the not to do list is to not share Christ out of envy, strife or rivalry. However, Paul is very quick to remind

all believers that even though some have wrong motives, that was not to keep the believers from sharing Christ with joy.

Today, we can recognize that a key to joy is as Paul stated, “*what has happened to me has actually resulted in the advancement of the gospel.*”

So, let’s think for a moment about those experiences in your life when you felt something “happened” to you.

We could consider one category of life experience as loss. A list of losses that happen could include miscarriage, death of a loved one, job loss, a broken relationship or property loss. Paul’s list included the loss of freedom by being imprisoned.

He said, “my imprisonment is for Christ.” Can we now place our life event in the same phrase by replacing “imprisonment” with it? For example, the loss of my grandmother happened to me and “my loss is for Christ.” Can we then consider if Christ has been honored in some way through that loss?

As Paul stated, “*but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored,*” (verse 20). Then, we demonstrate to others that we can share Christ with joy, no matter what.

January 22

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

January 29

Rebellion’s Cycle

Focal Passage: Judges 2:11-19

Trivia Question: What do Pharaoh, Korah and Jonah share in common? Answer: They all rebelled against God.

There are many cycles in life, and the cycle of obedience to disobedience to punishment to repentance leading back to obedience is one of them. It was a common cycle experienced by biblical characters and the nation of Israel. Following the death of Joshua, God “raised up” judges to govern and counsel. These men, and one woman, did not inherit judgeship. Neither were they elected by the people.

They were specifically chosen by God. Further, judges were not career politicians. They were ordinary people with varying degrees of leadership skills that God could and would use. They also seemed to serve regionally, rather than nationally.

The problem wasn’t, for the most part, the judges. The problem was the people. Whenever they disobeyed God and His appointed judge, bad things happened. It was the classic case of action and reaction, cause and effect. The rebellion is

seen in verses 12-13, where a significant number of Israelites “went after” and “bowed down” to the Baals and Ashtoreths, abandoning God. God’s reaction is evidenced in verses 14-15, where God’s “anger burned” and He “handed over” and “sold them” and “brought disaster” upon the rebels.

Rebellion and its ensuing cycle is not limited to bad people. Israel as a nation rose and fell many times, and sometimes when she fell hard enough, she would repent and experience restoration (cf. 18b). God chose judges, but God was the ultimate Judge. God never approved of rebellion’s cycle; it caused Him much angst. He would have preferred that His people always behave obediently and righteously.

Pharaoh’s rebellion led to the first “million man march,” right out of Egypt. Korah’s rebellion led to an earthquake of deadly proportions. Jonah’s rebellion led to three days in the belly of the great fish. And of the three, only Jonah was open to repentance and restoration. The cycle of rebellion is to be avoided like the plague.



WAYNE PROCTOR
Pastor, Eure
Baptist Church, Eure

Focal passages: Judges 4:4-10, 12-16

About 15 years ago I started a church preschool day care ministry. It wasn’t my idea, but I was tasked with the job of designing it, staffing it and getting it up and running.

Over time this particular ministry became quite successful, a true benefit to the community, even though I was not around to personally witness that growth.

The true success of that ministry, and any ministry, is a team of willing servants who love their job(s) and get things done.

This week’s biblical story seems to defy stereotypes. Israel was a strong patriarchal society. Usually men led and women worked quietly in the background.

But here things are different. Deborah is the sitting judge over Israel, a wife, a prophetess, and a wise counselor. Barak, a man, is the commander of the Israeli army, but reluctant to take the fight to Sisera, the Canaanite army commander.

Willing Servants

For whatever reason, Barak insisted upon Deborah going to the battlefield with him. Deborah reluctantly agreed, with a warning and prophetic word that Barak would not get the satisfaction of killing the evil Sisera.

Instead, that honor would go to a woman.

In a few days the battle erupted. God threw Sisera and his powerful army into massive confusion, and all of his warriors died except himself.

Sisera slinked away to the tent of Jael and his wife, famished and exhausted (see verses 17-22). He mistakenly thought they were his allies. As he dropped into a deep slumber, the unnamed, but willing, wife of Jael slammed a tent peg through his skull. As one of my professors once remarked, “Sisera died of a splitting headache!”

For Deborah and Barak, victory came because of a team effort. Apparently Barak was able to leave his ego behind, and Deborah was willing to do something not in her job description.

And the unnamed wife was able to keep her fears in check as she did what was necessary to defeat the evil in her home. All were willing servants.

Mandate

Continued from page 11

In granting the latest injunction, O'Connor ruled those challenging the HHS transgender/abortion mandate had demonstrated they likely would succeed because the rule redefined "sex discrimination" and failed to protect religious freedom.

As it did in its guidance to schools, the Obama administration defined "sex" in the HHS rule to include gender identity, which it describes as "an individual's internal sense of gender, which may be male, female, neither or a combination of male and female, and which may be different from an individual's sex assigned at birth."

Title IX – a federal law that bars sex discrimination in federally funded education programs and activities – "unambiguously prevented discrimination on the basis of the biological differences between males and females," O'Connor wrote, thereby ruling it did not include gender identity.

He also said the HHS regulation's "failure to include Title IX's religious exemptions renders the [mandate] contrary to law."

The HHS regulation, an implementation of the 2010 health-reform law, became partly effective July 18.

In October, a Christian association of more than 10,000 physicians and a Roman Catholic hospital system – represented by Becket Law – asked O'Connor to block enforcement of the rule.

Eight states joined the Christian Medical and Dental Associations and the Franciscan Network in the legal challenge.

In their motion, the challengers contended the HHS regulation violates the U.S. Constitution, including the First Amendment's freedom of speech clause, and federal laws, including the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

The HHS rule applies to all private doctors, health-care providers and health insurance plans that accept federal funding. It apparently would affect more than 900,000 physicians and virtually all hospitals. Foes of the regulation estimate it will cost citizens and health-care providers nearly \$1 billion.

HHS exempted the federal government's Medicare and Medicaid programs from the regulation's requirement, however, because its panel of experts said the literature "is 'inconclusive' on whether gender reassign-

ment surgery improves health outcomes for Medicare beneficiaries with gender dysphoria." Gender dysphoria refers to the discomfort a person may feel with his biological sex.

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) – the country's largest gay and transgender rights organization – criticized O'Connor's decision.

The ruling "puts thousands of people at risk of marginalization, harassment, and discrimination at a time they are most vulnerable and in need of inclusive, respectful care," HRC Legal Director Sarah Warbelow said in a written release. "While Judge O'Connor's action is unconscionable, we believe that justice will prevail as courts continue to recognize that discrimination on the basis of sex is illegal, including discrimination on the basis of gender identity."

A new website started in opposition to the HHS rule – *transgendermandate.org* – reports two studies show overwhelming numbers of children who report gender dysphoria grow out of that discomfort and live healthy lives despite not having surgery or life-long hormone treatments. One study showed this to be true in 77 to 94 percent of children and another in 73 to 88 percent of children. **BR**

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Pastor

Sandy Grove Baptist Church, Bladenboro, NC. Established in 1873 seeks **full-time pastor**. We deeply believe in reaching the lost and unchurched while offering life-changing teaching and ministries to our members. We respect the office of pastor and strongly believe in the role of laity in mission and ministry. Candidates must be ordained by a Southern Baptist church of good standing and led by the Holy Spirit in interpreting and preaching God's Holy Word. Candidates should share our values and beliefs and willing to serve in the capacity of preacher and pastor. Send resume to *sandygrovebaptch@intrstar.net* or Sandy Grove Baptist Church, c/o Pastor Search Committee, 8299 Hwy 242 South, Bladenboro, NC 28320.

First Baptist Church in King, North Carolina, is prayerfully seeking a **full-time Senior Pastor**. Must have a strong personal relationship with Jesus Christ, Bible teaching, strong administrative skills, someone who can shepherd our youth and young adult program, have good communication skills, must be self-motivated and can motivate church staff. Please send resumes to: *fbkpastorsearch@gmail.com*. Pay compatible with experience and ability.

Magnolia Baptist Church, Inc. is prayerfully seeking a **Pastor** to lead our conservative Southern Baptist congregation in God's will for worship, evangelizing and ministering to our congregation and the surrounding community. We are located near Stedman, NC, in rural Cumberland County. Please provide a current resume to the Pastor Search Committee, 1021 Magnolia Church Road, Stedman, NC 28391, prior to January 30th, 2017. For email communication please use: *awrench44@gmail.com*.

Spring Branch Church is a rural, conservative, Southern Baptist church in Dunn, NC, who is prayerfully seeking a **full-time pastor**. Please send resumes to Spring Branch Baptist Church, 2391 N. Spring Branch Road, Dunn, NC 28334.

Moon's Chapel Baptist Church in rural Siler City, NC, is a multi-generational congregation seeking a **full-time Pastor**. We are a SBC affiliated church seeking a man filled with passion to work with our congregation and community, with an evangelistic mindset to reach the lost and driven to preach God's Word. Send resume to: Pastor Search Committee, 175 Moon's Chapel Rd., Siler City, NC 27344.

Hallsville Baptist Church, Beulaville, NC, is prayerfully seeking a **Pastor** to faithfully preach and teach the Word of God and lead our congregation. We are a mission-minded Southern Baptist church located in rural Duplin County. We have traditional Sunday School and worship services with average attendance of 50-80 with expectation to grow. The Pastor will lead three services each week (Sunday morning, Sunday night and Wednesday evening). Please send resumes to: Hallsville Baptist Church, c/o Pastor search committee, 1291 Hallsville Rd., Beulaville, NC 28518.

Church Staff

Hopewell Baptist Church, Monroe, NC, seeks an **Associate Pastor of Discipleship** to oversee the discipleship ministries of a large conservative church and supervision of several staff members. Candidate should have a master's degree or higher and experience in these areas. Resumes accepted until 2-28-17; *Kim@whatasavior.com*.

Lawndale Baptist Church, Greensboro, NC, is seeking **Associate Pastor of Married Adults**. Overall responsibilities include planning, coordinating and leading married adult ministry. These duties include: development of classes to equip parents at different stages of life. Leading enrichment classes to better equip husbands and wives. Developing methods and materials which facilitate mentoring of couples. Counseling couples in marriage issues and provide a biblical approach to marriage. Enlisting and training leaders for on and off campus groups working within the community. Expected skills are solid judgment and decision-making ability. A knowledge of membership and how best to meet the needs of that membership through planned programs. And a sensitivity to problems and fluency of ideas to meet the demands of the many areas of ministry. The successful candidate will have a master of divinity and five years ministry experience. Please send resume and salary history to: *jthomas@lawndalebaptist.org* or *employment@lawndalebaptist.org*.

Mountain View Baptist Church of Hamptonville, NC, is seeking a **full-time Director of Worship Ministries**. Responsibilities include leading blended worship, directing a comprehensive church music program including choirs, vocal groups, praise band and instrumental ensembles and coordinating church media. E-mail resume to *mvbc@yadtel.net*.

Miscellaneous

Fred Lunsford's newest book, "Bloom Where You Are Planted" is now available. Milton Hollifield, Executive-Treasurer of the Baptist State Convention of NC has the following to say about it: "This book is a collection of inspirational sermons that pastors and Christian leaders will benefit from reading because it reminds us of ways that God is at work in our life and ministry. These messages are packed with Biblical truths, wonderful testimonial stories and practical illustrations you can use in Bible studies and sermons." For pricing and to order, call: 828-837-2605 or 828-837-6530.

Coffee Shop Contents For Sale. Baptist Pastor selling entire contents of Coffee Shop located in Fremont, NC. Includes La Cimbali espresso machine, tables, chairs, counters etc. \$8,250. If interested please call, 919-273-5358.

NCBAM has partnered with Building Better Balance – an evidence-based screening process that identifies fall risk. To schedule a screening or to learn more, call 877.506.2226.

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Do you have staff changes at your church or association? Or special news you would like to share (significant church or church staff anniversaries or a mission effort to reach your community)? Let the *Biblical Recorder* know by calling (919) 847-2127 or email *editor@BRnow.org*.

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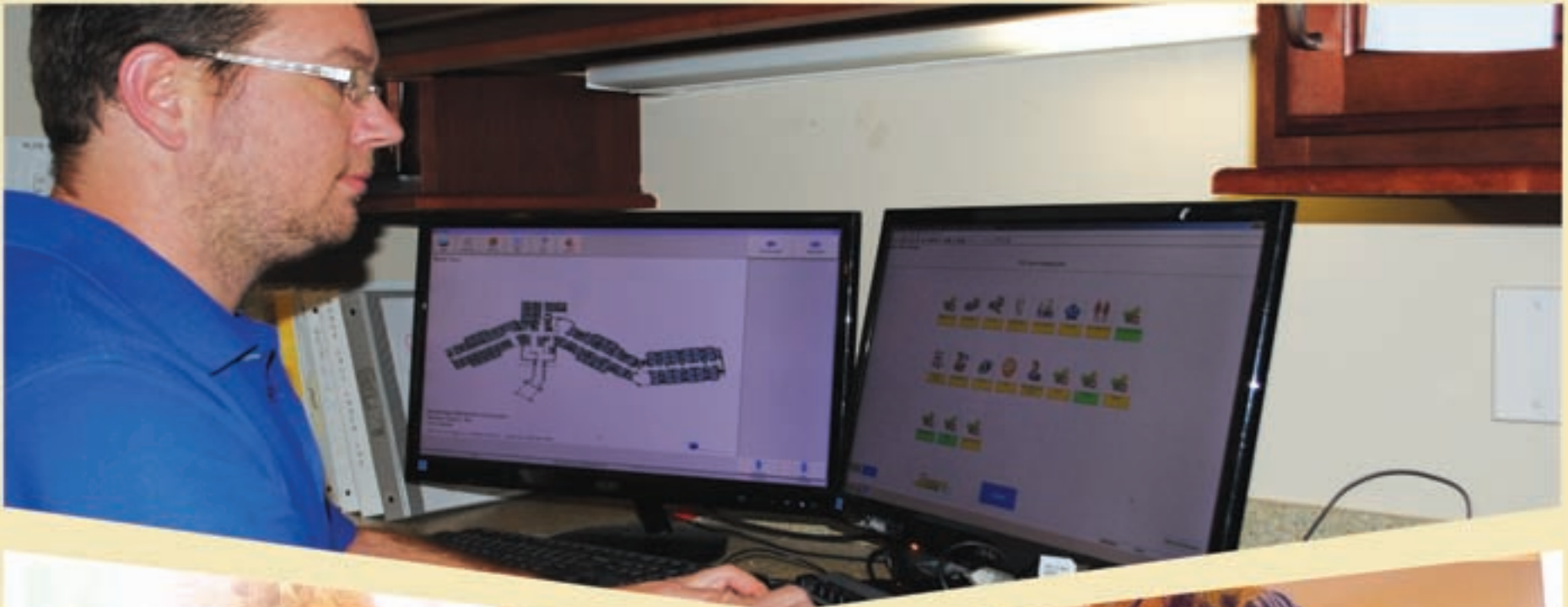
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