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SUPER BOWL XLIX, FAITH

Caner steps down
AS BREWTON-PARKER
PRESIDENT

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JANUARY 31, 2015 • News Journal of North Carolina Baptists • VOLUME 181 NO. 3 • **BRnow.org**

MAPPING N.C. PEOPLE GROUPS

By MICHAEL MCEWEN | BR Content Editor

Cooperative Program, missions gifts mixed in 2014

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) released its 2014 financial report that shows Cooperative Program (CP) gifts to BSC and Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) causes slightly down over the previous year. CP gifts for 2014 totaled \$28,829,536.74, which is \$271,208.25 or .93 percent below the amount given in 2013. Giving from N.C. Baptist churches fell short of the budget by 3.9 percent or \$1,170,463.26.

According to the SBC website, “The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists’ unified plan of giving through which cooperating Southern Baptist churches give a percentage of their undesignated receipts in support of their respective state convention and the Southern Baptist Convention missions and ministries.” The gifts provide support for international missions, North American missions, six SBC seminaries, the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and the operations of the Executive Committee.

In North Carolina, CP dollars fund ministries that are not supported at the national level. These ministries include the Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina, Fruitland Baptist Bible College, Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, church planting and revitalization, leadership training and other services to churches.

Some BSC funds are invested in shared ministries with the SBC including international partnerships and SEND partnerships. SEND North America is a focus by the North American Mission Board (NAMB) to mobilize missionaries and churches in strategic cities across North America.

Encountering diversity across the state

BR photo illustration
by Kelly Hunter

“Who do you bank with? The bank I’m with has an ATM screen that offers a choice of eight languages. ... It’s the banking industry that understands that the world is moving to North Carolina, but the question is, ‘Do North Carolina Baptists know the world is moving to North Carolina?’” said Steve Hardy, a contract worker in the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina’s (BSC) church planting and missions partnerships group.

He said, “The mapping project is an opportunity for us to find out how much the world has moved to North Carolina, where they live, and begin to accept responsibility that the Great Commission has always started in Jerusalem and Judea.”

More than 1,700 points of interest (POI) and 137 people groups exist in North Carolina. A point of interest is any kind of ethnic establishment, such as a fabric shop, a local business, a grocery store, a mosque or an apartment complex.

“We are ready ... to engage 52 of those people groups ... in some type of church planting or ministry with them,” said Zac Lyons, an ethnographic anthropologist researcher for the BSC. When the BSC began identifying the 250 high-density pockets of lostness in the state, the mapping project became the foundation for the convention’s strategy of impacting lostness through disciple-making.

By the end of 2015, the mapping project will be underway in all eight largest population centers of the state: The Asheville, Hickory, Triad, Triangle, Fayetteville, Charlotte-Metro,

Greenville, and Wilmington regions.

In the mapping process, Lyons interacts with local businesses, shops and everyday citizens to discover POI, which he then uses to generate a map. While looking for districts or clusters of ethnic people in an area, he builds relationships with them by asking simple questions about their life. Possible points of engagement evolve from the process.

The BSC wants to learn more about the non-English speaking and diverse ethnicities across the state. Even though the number of points of interest and unreached people groups (UPGs) grow daily, 638 POI and 36 UPGs were discovered in the Triangle; 279 POI and 23 UPGs in the Triad; and 592 POI and 32 UPGs in the Charlotte-Metro area.

The 2010 U.S. Census Bureau reported that 74.79 percent (7.1 million) of North Carolinians live in eight metropolitan areas of the state with 77.82 percent (1.7 million) of non-Anglo North Carolinians living in these eight areas.

Hardy noted that people groups generally want to be befriended. “[This] is what North Carolina Baptists are good at – just being friendly,” he said. “If you will take the time to let them tell you their story, eventually they’ll ask you to tell your story.”

Engaging communities with the gospel

Based on the mapping data, “we are able to sit down with a church and say, ‘Here is a people group, here is their location within the city, and we can also help you with worldview

See Mapping page 11

See Gifts page 12

State evangelism conference to focus on making disciples

For 67 years, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina has conducted some outstanding statewide evangelism conferences. Large numbers of North Carolina Baptists have assembled to hear great music and powerful evangelistic sermons presented by some of the best preachers from across the nation. The intent was to provide pastors with fresh ideas they could use in motivating their church members to get involved in sharing Christ in their communities and in the market place.

I have been told (but not confirmed) that there was a day when more people attended the North Carolina Baptist State Evangelism Conference than the convention's Annual Meeting. Through the years, much has changed and many of our friends, favorite preachers and gospel musicians who attended those conferences are now living in the presence of Christ in heaven.

This year, what was formerly called the State Evangelism Conference will be called the One Story Disciple-Making Conference. Throughout the New Testament,

we frequently find Paul engaging with unbelievers and philosophers of his day through the use of stories. Often we see Paul listening to the stories of those he came in contact with, relating his story to theirs and ultimately sharing God's story of redemption with them.



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive
director-treasurer

In this convention's new strategy, which is called "Impacting Lostness through Disciple-Making," we define disciple-making as evangelism that leads to conversion that continues with discipleship that results in disciples who make more disciples. Evangelism is the first step in making disciples, and this conference will help you reach unbelievers through your life story.

The date for this one-day conference is Monday, Feb. 23, and the location will be Center Grove Baptist Church in Clemmons, just west of Winston-Salem. The conference is being offered at no cost, but we do ask that you pre-register by Feb. 15.

The One Story Disciple-Making Conference will feature a strong lineup of speakers, plus a number of

breakout sessions designed to offer practical tips and ideas that you can use to make disciples in your everyday life. This year's schedule also includes a women's track featuring Lori McDaniel, Global Mission Catalyst with the International Mission Board.

Conference speakers Ed Stetzer, executive director of the LifeWay Research Division, Afshin Ziafat, lead pastor of Providence Church in Frisco, Texas, and Robby Gallaty, pastor of Brainerd Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tenn., will address the themes of "hear, connect and share" during their respective sessions.

Additionally, filmmaker Jon Erwin, who worked on recent faith-based films like "October Baby" and "Mom's Night Out," will speak about his current documentary project on the Jesus Movement of the 1960s and '70s.

I hope you will join us for the One Story Disciple-Making Conference to learn how your story can make a difference in a dark world. For more information about this conference or to register, visit ncbaptist.org/disciplenc.

"Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one."

— Colossians 4:6 **BR**



By SUSIE RAIN | Guest Column, IMB/Baptist Press

Who are mission-minded people? How do they see the world? While they could be found in your church, place of work or coaching Little League, what do mission-minded people do differently?

International Mission Board missionaries from around the world helped compile a list of 13 things that make up a mission-minded person:

1. They want to meet someone who does not follow Jesus Christ. Mission-minded people follow Jesus' plan in Luke 10 to go work "His harvest." They actively seek out non-believers for conversations and friendship.
2. They continually look for creative ways to share the gospel. Mission-minded people find intentional ways to share so that people understand. It is not a "canned presentation" but relative to that person/group. They do the abnormal, irrational, counter-intuitive, and take risks all in an effort to share Christ.
3. They have a different worldview. They think more about the world,

culture and languages than they do about the tiny place where they live. They understand that the gospel is not just for them but for all people. They are committed to getting it to the rest of the world.

4. They hear the voice of God and are obedient. Mission-minded people hear the voice of God and obey when He tells them to go across the street, to another town, state or country to share about His redeeming love.

5. They pray a lot! Praying is a direct link to God. They believe that God will do greater things than we can ever imagine; and they pray for it to happen.

6. They make disciples. They constantly ask themselves if what they are doing will result in disciples. If the strategy is only for people to hear, then the gospel will not spread. Mission-minded people know the importance of discipleship.

7. They meet human needs while sharing the gospel.

Mission-minded people believe it doesn't matter how many wells a person digs or how many orphans they feed if

See People page 12

Spiritual State of Our Union

Recently, President Barack Obama addressed our nation via the State of the Union. Through this, Obama and government leaders unveiled their dreams for today and hopes for tomorrow.

Questions worth asking

Who is addressing the spiritual state of our nation? Are we really trusting only in governmental powers and processes to heal our land?

I love America and believe each citizen needs to be involved in charting the future of our nation.

The church has compartmentalized its faith from influencing our nation far too long, just as most of America's leaders compartmentalize their faith from their politics. Today, our nation has become a product of this sad reality.

We need to return to the conviction that a faith worth believing is a faith worth dying for. Our faith cannot be checked at the door like a piece of luggage at an airport.

The time is now

The time is now for the church to rise up and address the spiritual state of our nation. With compassion, we need to tell it like it is. With hope, we need to share it like we believe it. With fervency, we need to pray like God alone is our hope.

The time is now for our nation to recognize that we cannot fix ourselves. The signs of our brokenness are glistening in our dark world.

The blatant destruction of the family, killing the unborn child, continuing racial tension, rebelling against authority, the ongoing reality of poverty, the rising threat of our security, clear attacks against religious liberty and of all things, the arrogance to believe the highest court in our land can rule on what the Bible says is genuine marriage, testifies just how broken we really are.

Where do we go from here?

I am just one man and one pastor of a local church. I refuse to be silent and see our nation continue to struggle. Therefore, I humbly submit four actions that will change the spiritual state of our nation.

1. We need to repent.

Repentance occurs when we have a change of mind.

This change of mind changes our behavior.

As a nation, we need to personally and collectively repent of our sins.

We need to ask God for His free gift of forgiveness for the sins we have committed, resulting in change from that point forward.

2. We need to return to God.

America is a nation that was built on a deep belief in God. It was a desire for religious liberty that served as the catalyst for the beginning of our nation. While we have gone through ups and downs in our history, God has been very merciful and gracious toward us.

See Spiritual page 11



RONNIE FLOYD
Guest Column

McEwen resigns from *Recorder*; Brown named content editor

BR staff

Michael McEwen, content editor at the *Biblical Recorder* since October 2013, has resigned. He will become the director of discipleship at a church in his hometown of Trenton, Tenn., and plans to continue his doctoral degree studies at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest.

McEwen said, "It's been a great pleasure serving N.C. Baptists while at the *Recorder*. From the multitude of stories I heard weekly, I am certain of one thing: Christ's Great Commission is being

fulfilled through the 4,000 plus Southern Baptist churches in this beautiful state. May He continue to bless you richly."

Effective Feb. 2, Seth Brown becomes the *Recorder's* content editor.

Previously, he was researcher and copy editor for Docent Research Group as well as the owner of a small graphic design business. Brown is currently studying instructional technology in a



MICHAEL MCEWEN

hybrid doctoral program at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. He received a master of arts degree from Southeastern Seminary and a bachelor of arts from William Carey University, also in Hattiesburg.

He and his wife, Lauren, natives of Mississippi, have two children and expect their third in March.

They are members of Imago Dei Church in Raleigh.

Brown said he is "eager to serve N.C. Baptists and their local churches."

Allan Blume, editor of the *Biblical Recorder*, said, "Both of these men are gifted, committed followers of Christ.



SETH BROWN

Michael has made a very positive impact on the *Recorder's* ministry. We will miss him very much.

"Seth is described by his pastor as a 'gifted scholar who walks with Jesus.'" Blume added. "I am confi-

dent his contribution to North Carolina Baptists will be obvious as he serves with us. We are excited to welcome him to the BR team." **BR**

Fabricated: 'I did not go to heaven'

By DAVID ROACH | Baptist Press

LifeWay Christian Resources' decision to stop selling a discredited book about a 6-year-old's supposed vision of heaven is being cited as a reminder that followers of Jesus should rely on the Bible rather than subjective experience for their knowledge of the afterlife.

LifeWay decided Jan. 15 that it would stop selling *The Boy Who Came Back from Heaven* by the father-son team of Kevin and Alex Malarkey after Alex, now 16, said in a statement that he fabricated the supposed vision of heaven on which the bestselling book is based.

"I did not die. I did not go to Heaven," Alex Malarkey wrote in an open letter to LifeWay and other book retailers.

"I said I went to heaven because I thought it would get me attention. When I made the claims that I did, I had never read the Bible. People have profited from lies, and continue to. They should read the Bible, which is enough. The Bible is the only source of truth. Anything written by man cannot be infallible," Malarkey wrote.

Chris Osborne, a Texas pastor who believes books like Malarkey's are unbiblical, told Baptist Press (BP), "Anytime you step away from the clear, revelatory, propositional statements of scripture into your own experience, then you open yourself to every kind of weird existential idea out there."

LifeWay spokesman Marty King said in a statement released to BP, "LifeWay was informed last week that Alex Malarkey retracted his testimony about visiting heaven as told in the book *The Boy Who Came Back from Heaven*.

"Therefore, we returned to the publisher the few copies we had in our stores. LifeWay is committed to becoming even more proactive the next few

months in evaluating the resources we carry."

In 2004, Malarkey spent two months in a coma and was paralyzed from the neck down following a car accident. When he awoke, Malarkey reported experiencing a vision of heaven that included being guided by angels and meeting Jesus. Last June, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) adopted a resolution that touted "the sufficiency of scripture regarding the afterlife" and warned Christians not to allow "the numerous books and movies purporting to explain or describe the afterlife experience" to "become their source and basis for an understanding of the afterlife."

Though the resolution did not list specific book or movie titles, it seemed to describe works like *The Boy Who Came Back from Heaven*, *90 Minutes in Heaven* by Don Piper and *Heaven Is for Real* by Todd Burpo along with its companion movie released last year by Sony Pictures.

The resolution affirmed "the sufficiency of biblical revelation over subjective experiential explanations to guide one's understanding of the truth about heaven and hell."

Osborne, who was a member of the SBC Resolutions Committee that proposed the resolution to the convention, believes the apostle Paul's statement in 2 Corinthians 12:4 that he heard things during a vision of "paradise" which "a man is not allowed to speak" precludes anyone from describing a vision of heaven not in the Bible.

Although scripture says much about where believers will live following Christ's second coming, it contains far less information about what occurs between the time a follower of Jesus dies and the Lord's second coming, Osborne, pastor of Central Baptist Church in College Station, said. Still, God has given humans all the information they need about

what happens after death, he added.

"The lack of explanation in the scripture causes people to create things that are not true," Osborne said.

Matthew Arbo, another member of the Resolutions Committee that proposed the statement on books about heaven, told BP Christians should not worry about what will happen to them during the intermediate state even though it is "kind of a mystery."

Books like Malarkey's are "kind of an interesting juxtaposition to pop culture portrayals of death – vampire series, *An American Horror Story* – that are kind of morbid and nihilistic. They're really bleak. And then you get these hits that aren't quite so reductive and so defeating. It's kind of understandable why somebody might fix onto that. There's so very little that's hopeful in pop culture today." **BR**

Dying to self

The path of a disciple requires death to self. The problem? Nobody likes to die. I do not like to die to self and neither do you. Yet Jesus requires this death if we are to follow Him (Matthew 16:24-25). This call to humility before God is both personal and corporate. It begins individually within the realm of a believer's personal walk with Christ.

The term "humble" refers to the concept of lying prostrate before God in unconditional surrender. The one who has knelt in humility is dependent on the other's response. At the heart of humility before God is death to any self-centered desires, self-worth and self-accomplishment. When we humble ourselves before God, we have decided that we can do no more, and we have nothing else to offer. We become like a soldier and an army that has decided to lay down their arms. It's risky and certainly not a pleasant part of the journey – yet it is necessary if change is to come. We have reached the end of ourselves, and He is now our only hope.

Absolute dependence in Him begins at this point. It will eventually lead us to victory and greater things – but not yet.



CHRIS SCHOFIELD

We are only at the beginning stages of being available for His Spirit to change us and our hopeless situation. We have begun our journey toward revival. We have recognized His judgment and heard His invitation to return to Him. At this very moment our fixation is on Him. It is not on self, our situation

and not even on our inability to change our circumstances. Our heart is finally fixed on Him and He alone holds our future in His hands. Are you there?

- Ask the Father to show you areas of self that need to die.

- Pray that the church in America will lay aside its pride and humble itself before God.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Chris Schofield is director of the Office of Prayer for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. For more information you can reach him at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5514, or cschofield@ncbaptist.org.)

VBS journeys off map

By AARON EARLS | Baptist Press

Kids will have the opportunity this summer to explore and discover the adventure of life during a “Journey Off the Map” that is “Unknown to Us, Known to Him” in the 2015 Vacation Bible School (VBS) from LifeWay Christian Resources.

The description of the 2015 VBS theme invites students to “set out on a journey to uncharted territory where they will encounter the unexpected waiting around every bend. On this expedition of a lifetime, kids will need to stick close to their guide in order to survive. They will discover that Jesus is the ultimate guide on a journey uncharted by them, but known by Him.”

LifeWay’s VBS specialist Jerry Wooley said Journey Off the Map will be “filled with things kids like such as adventure, discovery, cool tree houses, challenging destinations, bright colors and fun music.”

Wooley said the theme’s message is particularly relevant today. “Kids are being bombarded by loud voices telling them what they should do, where they should go, who they should be and what they should believe. The messages are confusing and misleading,” he said.

“[K]ids of all ages, meaning adults too, need to know that in the midst of these voices there is one and only one they can totally depend on,” Wooley said.

Most previous VBS materials were geared to build to an evangelistic lesson later in the week. This year, LifeWay felt it would be better to introduce the idea of a personal relationship with Christ on the first day.

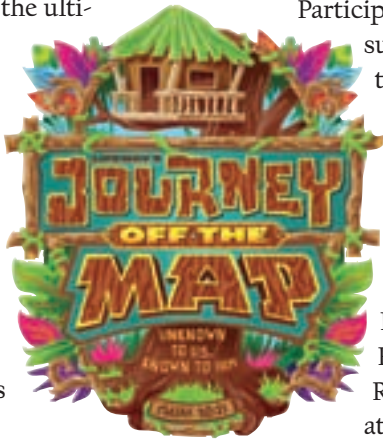
“Since Journey Off the Map is based on following Jesus as our guide, it is necessary to introduce this relationship on day one and build from there,” Wooley said.

The theme verse for the week will be Isaiah 30:21: “And whenever you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear this command behind you: ‘This is the way. Walk in it.’”

Participants will learn to trust Jesus as Savior and walk along the journey of life becoming more like Him as they traverse the adventures in The Overlook Worship Rally, Tangled Branch Tree House Bible Study, Shady Grove Crafts, Boulder Bridge Missions, Rushing Waters Music, Rappelling Ravine Recreation and Survival Springs

Snacks. Each day kids will discover more truths about Jesus as their guide: Day 1 – Know your guide; Day 2 – Follow your guide; Day 3 – Trust your guide; Day 4 – Stay on track; and Day 5 – Keep watching. Additional information about the materials or preview events can be found at LifeWay.com/VBS.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Aaron Earls is a writer for LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.) **BR**



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Equipping Day encourages, trains ministers' wives

By EMILY ROJAS | BSC Communications

When Kathy Litton was just 19, she married a minister, experiencing firsthand the struggles and joys that come with being a minister’s wife.

Now the national consultant for the North American Mission Board’s (NAMB) Ministry to Pastors’ Wives (called Flourish), Litton will be speaking at Equipping Day on Saturday, March 28, an event to encourage and train ministers’ wives, hosted by Embrace Women’s Missions and Ministries and Flourish. The event will be at Old Town Baptist Church in Winston-Salem.

Litton’s own life experiences have led her to encourage other women who find themselves in the same place as she did – in an instant position of authority because of their marriage to their minister husbands.

“As a minister’s wife, you have the capacity to influence the community – to take that role and use it for the glory of God,” Litton said. “It’s a big adjustment for a minister’s wife to understand her capacity for influence and her capacity for spiritual gifts, all while standing beside her husband in the ministry.”

Litton lives in Mobile, Ala., with her husband, Ed Litton, pastor of First Baptist Church in North Mobile. They both lost their former spouses in car accidents.

The role of a minister’s wife is so unique, said Litton, that it is common for ministers’ wives to feel isolated in this position that has them constantly in the public eye. This is one reason that events such as Equipping Day are so important.

Her hope is that Equipping Day will allow ministers’ wives to draw strength from each other and to share wisdom that



they’ve gained from their experiences.

In particular, Litton said she hopes that women will leave Equipping Day with some new ideas about how to deal with criticism in a healthy way. Criticism, she said, is what can make ministry wives feel isolated and can make them feel that they have no one to whom they can reach out. In this way, the community of other ministry wives is essential.

“We work really hard to equip them for the real context they live in,” Litton said.

To Litton, Equipping Day is not just any event. Equipping ministers’ wives for ministry life is a passion of hers. In her eyes, ensuring that these women get the ministry training that they need is the only thing that makes sense.

Litton likens not training ministers’ wives to a company

only training half of its employees. These women play a crucial role in the ministry, Litton said, and she believes that to further the advancement of the gospel, minister’s wives should be properly equipped.

Lori Frank, wife of Bruce Frank, pastor of Biltmore Baptist Church in Arden, will be the other speaker. There will be interactive sessions with other wives about ministry life. Registration is \$25 and includes a light breakfast, lunch and program materials. Register by March 20.

Visit ncbaptist.org/ministrywives15, or contact Ashley Allen at aallen@ncbaptist.org or (800) 395-5102, ext. 5559. **BR**



KATHY LITTON

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Wednesday, March 4
6:30pm, Tony Nolan, Mike Whitson, Greater Vision

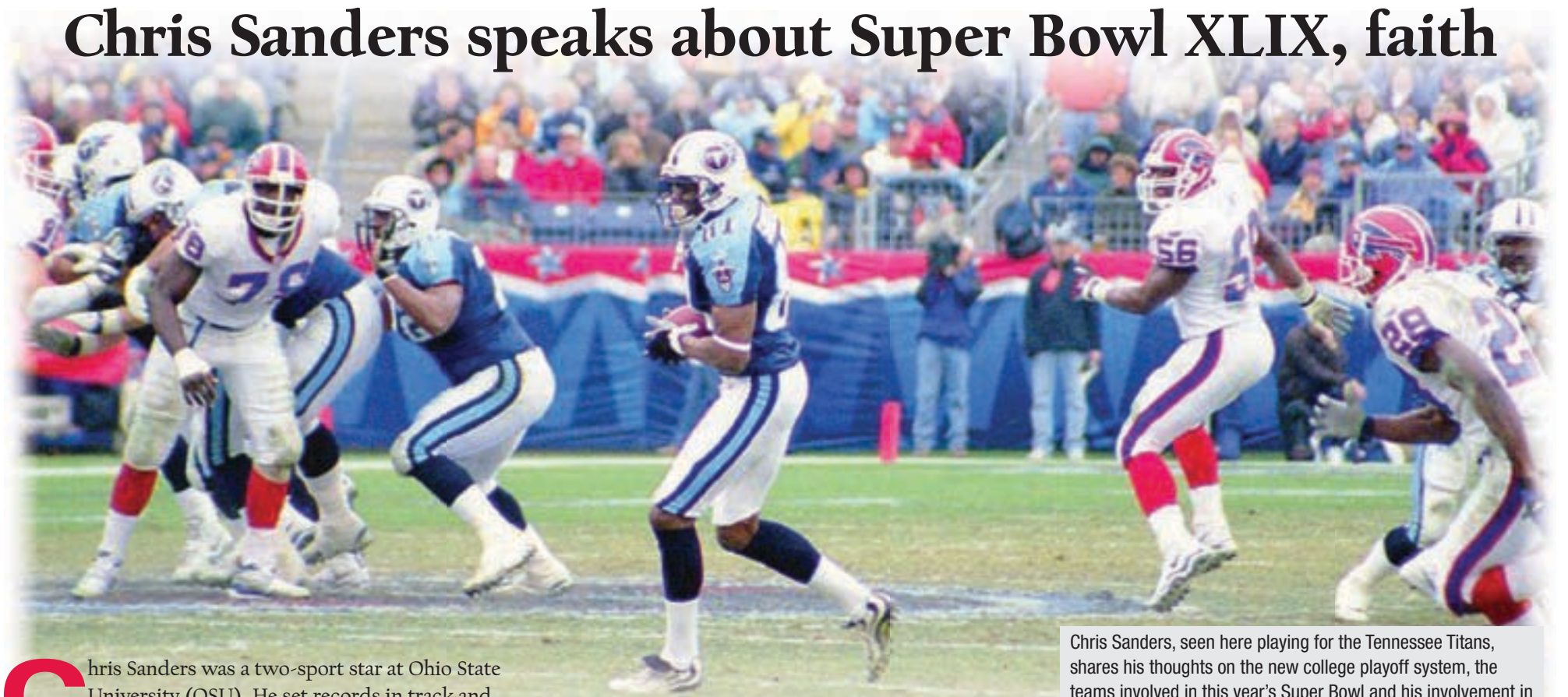
Thursday, March 5
10:00am, Gerald Harris, Bailey Smith
1:45pm, Vance Pitman, Junior Hill
6:30pm, Mat Staver, Collingsworth Family

Friday, March 6
10:00am, Mike Stone, Vance Pitman
1:45pm, Jeff LaBorg, Paul Blair
6:30pm, Mike Huckabee

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Chris Sanders speaks about Super Bowl XLIX, faith



Chris Sanders, seen here playing for the Tennessee Titans, shares his thoughts on the new college playoff system, the teams involved in this year's Super Bowl and his involvement in an historical Super Bowl in 1999. (Contributed photo)

Chris Sanders was a two-sport star at Ohio State University (OSU). He set records in track and field, including the long jump.

On the football team he was a three-year starter and had 71 career receptions for 1,120 total yards. In 1994 he was named the Ohio State Athlete of the Year across all sports.

The Houston Oilers selected Sanders in the third round of the 1995 National Football League (NFL) draft. For the next seven years he played for that organization, completing 177 career receptions for 3,285 total yards. In 1999, the franchise became the Tennessee Titans, and Sanders competed in Super Bowl XXXIV against the Kurt Warner-led St. Louis Rams. Currently he is a football coach at Montgomery Bell Academy outside Nashville, Tenn., where his team won the 2014 state title.



ROMAN GABRIEL III
Sports Q & A

Sanders played football at the very highest level, but I know him as a great friend and fellow believer, and I have served with him in evangelistic events. He has a great and generous heart toward youth. With the Super Bowl approaching and his alma mater, OSU, winning the National Championship, we discussed both football and faith.

Q: How do you feel about the new four-game playoff system in college football, and would enlarging it to an eight-game system increase the impact?

A: Picking eight teams would eliminate the what-if factor and would include all teams that are eligible to play. I actually love what's going on, and I love the excitement. I enjoyed watching the ESPN programs as the committee put out the top four teams each week. I think four teams is tougher because there are usually six or seven teams good enough to compete for the national championship. This year was a trial run, and I think the committee was 99 percent right. With eight teams there's no doubt, there are no ifs, ands or buts.

Q: I picked the Seattle Seahawks to repeat this year as Super Bowl champions. What are your thoughts about Seattle?

A: Seattle has so much tenacity. If you're around the ball, you're going to get hit. If you stand around, you're going to get hit. If you're the mascot, you're going to get hit. But it's hard to win back-to-back. Every team puts a target on your back. Everyone this year was after Seattle because these teams in the playoffs want what Seattle has: a Super Bowl championship!

Q: It's tough as a player to repeat a Super Bowl victory. It's been 15 years since it was done, but how difficult is it as a coach? What is it about Seattle's Pete Carroll?

A: He brings so much excitement to the game. There are a lot of coaches out there who don't show emotion, who have a stern look on their face all the time. In my opinion, that's not coaching. Coaching is about inspiring guys to give their best and have fun, and if the coach is having fun then the players are going to follow. You have to go in there with excitement and demand that the job gets done. This is what Pete Carroll does in Seattle, and I love it.

Q: How about my other pre-season pick, the New England Patriots?

A: The Patriots are the weirdest thing. Their coach, Bill Belichick, picks players that fit right into their system. They have different receivers every year. You have position changes on the offensive line, the same thing on defense. They just find ways to win. After the way they started, who thought they'd be 13-4. They do it every year!

Q: You played in Super Bowl XXXIV, so what does the game mean to an NFL player?

A: It's something you dream about; this is how I envisioned myself even in the third grade. But when you go through trials and tribulations, it doesn't look like it's going to happen. In 1999 we had a chance to go to the Super Bowl and you just look at yourself and say, "I can't believe it. What an opportunity!" Then you come back to reality and you go play the game.

Q: You played in one of the great Super Bowls of all time. In 1999 your Titans faced the St. Louis Rams and their quarterback, Kurt Warner. It came down to the last play of the game. Talk about the last frantic 10 minutes of that football game.

A: That last 10 minutes was a signature of how our season went. We were on the Ram's seven yard line with a chance to win Super Bowl XXXIV. We had guys who never gave up, guys who went through trials and tribulations for three or four years. Even though we were down in the last 10 minutes of that Super Bowl, we never gave up. After the game players were so tired and so exhausted, because we left everything on the field. Even though we came up a yard short on that last play, we all still consider it a victory in our life.

Q: How important of a role did your faith play in your NFL career?

A: In my first few years, I was just going through the motions of trying to be a Christian. I had everything at my feet, but every time I went home I felt empty.

In 1995 coach Les Steckel led me to the Lord and I gave my life to Christ. The grace of God filled that emptiness. I look back on my life, and yes, I played in the Super Bowl, but following Christ gave me purpose. It gave me a willingness to live life because of my relationship with Jesus.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Be sure to follow "Sold Out" as we bring you exclusive faith, family and football coverage of Super Bowl XLIX Jan. 27-Feb. 1 in Phoenix, Ariz., between the Seattle Seahawks and the New England Patriots. We will take you up close and personal with the coaches and players of faith, and provide ongoing video and pictures from the Super Bowl. Roman Gabriel's Sold Out Sports Talk Radio program on American Family Radio can be heard in 200 cities nationally or streaming live at afr.net. He is an evangelist and motivational speaker. Visit his website: soldouttv.com; Facebook: Roman Gabriel III; connect on Twitter: romangabriel3rd. Contact at (910) 431-6483 or email: soldoutrg3@gmail.com.) **B3**

Ergun Caner steps down as Brewton-Parker president

By JOE WESTBURY | *The Christian Index/Baptist Press*

Citing his ongoing brokenness following the suicide of his teenage son in July, Brewton-Parker College President Ergun Caner resigned Jan. 20 to return to Texas.

Caner's family had never moved to the South Georgia town of Mount Vernon where the college is located since he accepted the presidency on Dec. 2, 2013. Caner cited his November heart catheterization as being linked to the stress of losing his son in the midst of a grueling yet ultimately successful reaccreditation process with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

"A heart catheterization, the removal of seven pints of fluid and all the tests in the world can't resolve this one issue," he stated in referring to the loss of his son in Texas while he worked in Georgia.

'I am broken'

"Brewton-Parker College cannot become a healthy, growing and stable college under the leadership of a man who is broken. And I am admitting to you that I am broken," Caner said in a prepared statement.

"I can't get over his death, and I am not sure I want to. I do know that I cannot muster the fight needed to be the leader of our college. My family and my heart

need healing, and you deserve better."

He then stated he was resigning "so I can go back to Texas and heal with my wife and ten-year-old son, Drake. It is one thing to lead a college through a crisis, but this position demands a person's full attention and full strength. At the moment, I have neither. When Braxton died, a part of me died as well."



ERGUN CANER

Caner said he will fulfill whatever obligations are necessary through the year, "though I believe attending to the needs of my family are most important to me at the moment."

President for 13 months

He concluded by thanking the trustees for calling him as president 13 months ago and allowing him to see "the greatest victories I've ever experienced in my entire 30-year professional life."

Trustee chairman Gary Campbell then called the board into Executive Session and, 45 minutes later, released a resolution of support for the outgoing president. Caner's first year – from December 2013 to December 2014 – was consumed with pursuing the reaccreditation of the struggling college which was already on probation when he accepted the position.

- The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) team visited in April 2014 and it "did not go as we had expected," Caner said.

- On June 19 the agency suspended the Brewton-Parker's accreditation status which began a lengthy appeals process.

Donation Continued from page 2

supports. It is my conviction that when I give to the local church or to specific causes through the church where I am a member, I am confident the gift will reach the intended cause.

Less will be spent on fundraising and more dollars will reach the point of need.

I know that gifts to my local church will be used for ministries that are consistent with my belief system. Furthermore, gifts to other ministries THROUGH my church have greater accountability.

Cooperative Program (CP) gifts and contributions to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions (LMCO) will reach overseas mission fields. Last year 84.45 percent of all gifts to the International Mission Board (IMB) were spent in overseas missionary support.

A mere 15.55 percent of all funds were used in fundraising, promotion and administration of the organization's work.

IMB reports that 100 percent of all LMCO gifts are spent in international missionary support.

CP dollars through the local church and gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions will reach the intended mission fields of North America.

According to their 2013 financial report 1.8 percent of the North American Mission Board's (NAMB) 2013 income was spent on fundraising. Combined administrative and fundraising expenses totaled 15.9 percent

- On July 29, shortly before the Mount Vernon community observed Stand With Brewton-Parker College Day, Braxton Caner committed suicide in Texas.

- On Sept. 29, just 103 days after learning of the suspension, SACS notified the college it would remain fully accredited through the appeals process.

- On Dec. 9, SACS reaffirmed Brewton-Parker's accreditation status without any blemish on its record. The crisis had ended five years after it began.

Struggles, victories

In the midst of the year of struggle, the college reported more than 100 confessions of faith from students during Brewton-Parker's fall revival, balanced its budget and ended the fiscal year in the black.

Caner, 50, was elected the 16th president of the college barely two months after President Mike Simoneaux announced his retirement. Simoneaux came to the college on academic loan from sister Georgia Baptist institution Truett-McConnell College in March 2011 and was named president six months later.

Caner's younger brother, Emir, has served as president of Truett-McConnell in Cleveland, Ga., since August 2008.

Ergun Caner came to Brewton-Parker from the position of provost and academic dean at Arlington Baptist College in Texas. Previously he served as dean at Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary in Lynchburg, Va.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Joe Westbury is managing editor of The Christian Index, *newsjournal of the Georgia Baptist Convention*.) **BR**



while 84.1 percent of all NAMB receipts were invested in church planting, missionary support, evangelism, relief ministries and leadership/volunteer training.

The boards of Baptist ministries are not self-perpetuating.

They are accountable to local churches and elected by Baptists like you from local churches. We have a voice in choosing who serves on the boards of IMB, NAMB, our seminaries, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, the *Biblical Recorder* and many other Baptist governing bodies.

I am not implying that we should only support Baptist causes or that we should not support any of the causes in Marshall's report. My comments serve only as a caution and an exhortation to be wise when

you give.

As believers our priority should be a healthy investment in the ministries of the local church.

Personally, my wife and I give the Lord's tithe to the church of our membership. In addition we give to special offerings throughout the year and para-church ministries. We also give to worthy causes like cancer research and care projects.

Each of us will be counted among the wise if we examine biblical principles of stewardship and apply those truths to our personal patterns of giving. Before you respond to requests from other causes, learn more about how they will use your gift. **BR**

As believers our priority should be a healthy investment in the ministries of the local church.

Hendersonville church ministry helps people see better, share Christ

By EMILY BLAKE | BR Editorial Aide

Fruitland Baptist Church in Hendersonville has recorded more than 70 salvations since June 2014.

What is the secret to their success? They make eyeglasses by hand for only 42 cents each.

Fruitland partners with Glasses for Missions and Evangelism Explosion to meet both physical and spiritual needs. They provide free glasses and eye exams along with the gospel.

After participating in this ministry for a year, the church integrated the glasses into many different ministries across all ages and demographics of their congregation.

“Jesus has certainly blessed the ministry,” said Clint Edwards, director of Glasses for Missions at Fruitland. In 2014 they hosted a free Thanksgiving dinner where three came to Christ, a block party that yielded 11 new Christians, a trip to the North Carolina Mountain State Fair where 18 workers came to know God and five people accepted Christ at Farm City Day in Hendersonville. Along with local North Carolina events, Fruitland also introduced Glasses for Missions into Central Asia, Kenya, Bangladesh, South Korea and China.

Edwards’ most cherished experience with Glasses for Missions came from a trip to Faith Bridge Community Church in Pittsburgh, Pa.

“We had a fellowship that was open to the community and in the span of three hours 15 people came to Christ,” said Edwards. “I spoke with a man named Tony who was a rough looking guy with a huge cross hanging on a chain around his neck. After he accepted Christ I asked him if he was going to start attending church regularly. Four or five months later the pastor told me he still was.”

Each ministry event starts with a kit that allows volunteers to make eyeglasses in 12 different strengths. Fruitland offers training twice a month to teach people

how to make the glasses and share the gospel. Then at a distribution event, participants have their vision tested, and as volunteers assemble their glasses they discuss two questions: “Do you know for sure that you’ll be with God in heaven someday?” and “If God asked you, ‘Why should I let you into My heaven,’ what would you say?” The church has used this simple process to lead many people to Christ.

Fruitland’s pastor, Michael Smith, said, “It’s a really great ministry because often when you say the word ‘evangelism’ people kind of freeze. But giving them a service project like this helps to remove whatever barriers that are associated with sharing the gospel cold turkey. It’s a great model to utilize a service like eye-care or car maintenance to open the door to gospel conversations.”

Dale Rozell, founder and director of Glasses for Missions, started the ministry 12 years ago from his home in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. The idea came to him after he and his wife asked the Lord to make them more effective in their ministry.

On a short-term mission trip they met a retired optometrist who had a vision to provide glasses to needy people in developing countries. Using his skills from a career in machine maintenance, Rozell created a product to match that vision.

The glasses can be produced anywhere in the world because they require no power tools. They are very durable as well. In the first seven years, the ministry expanded into 57 countries and is now capable of distributing 30,000 pairs each year.

A member of Fruitland, Emily Lyda, completed a class with the Henderson County Homeschool Association where she taught five 12-year-olds to make the glasses and share their faith. The students memorized scripture from an Evangelism Explosion tract, and practiced witnessing with skits and role play. After eight weeks each child made three glasses.



Members of Fruitland Baptist Church in Hendersonville construct glasses to give away.

One child raised enough money to buy her own kit to share with her aunt who does ministry in Turkey.

“I believe the class was a success,” said Lyda. “The students learned why they believe what they believe, and the importance of fulfilling the Great Commission.”

The Fruitland group meets the first and third Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m. for training and welcomes visitors. The church strives to host one outreach event each month. Most groups can learn to utilize Glasses for Missions in eight hours. To order your kit visit GlassesforMissions.org. To see the work going on around the world, visit the Facebook page: Glasses for Missions International (<https://www.facebook.com/GlassesForMissions-International>).

For more information on the importance of this ministry, see the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o32TctBwioo#t=51>. **BR**



Here a woman’s vision is tested by reading the Evangelism Explosion questions in varying sizes of text. The test is meant to spark a gospel conversation.



The Henderson County Homeschool Association Glasses for Missions class includes Pierson, Elizabeth Dolan, Spencer Pierson and teacher Emily Lyda.



away during their ministry in Pittsburgh, Pa. (Contributed photos)



ers from Fruitland Baptist Church traveled to Faith Bridge Community Church in Pittsburgh for a day of ministry with Glasses for Missions.



ded assistant Maggie Brindell-Watt, Sawyer Pierson, Lottie Benson, Lilly



Spectators rallied for the release of American Pastor Saeed Abedini outside Boise State University Jan. 21, where President Obama met with Saeed's wife, Naghmeh. (BP screen capture)

'I will try,' Obama pledges to Abedinis

By DIANA CHANDLER | Baptist Press

Seeking the release of Saeed Abedini remains a "top priority," President Barack Obama told Naghmeh Abedini during a private 10-minute meeting with her and her children Jan. 21 at Boise State University. Obama pledged to seek his release with renewed energy.

"He was holding my hand the whole time. I could see that he cared in his eyes and he kept getting that across, that he cares, and he's doing what he can [to gain Saeed's release]," she said during a radio interview with American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) executive director Jordan Sekulow. "My son asked him to bring him back, bring daddy back for his birthday, which is in March, and he looked up and he looked at my son and he said, 'I will try Jacob, I will try.'" She credited God for arranging the meeting to allow her to seek her husband's release and to proclaim God's love and power.

"God had me in that room, not only to go before the king as Esther did and plead for a cause, but also to touch his heart," Naghmeh Abedini said in an interview with Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN), referencing Queen Esther of the Old Testament. "I know I was sent as God's ambassador to touch the president's heart with God's love, the love of Jesus, and those were accomplished; so I have hope for the next steps because God is in control."

"He will show me," she said of God. "He will take me through the next steps. I know there [are] great things to come and I can't wait to have Saeed home with our family."

Naghmeh Abedini has been advocating more than two years for the release of her husband Saeed Abedini from an Iranian prison, where he has been held since Sept. 26, 2012 because of his Christian faith. He was sentenced Jan. 27, 2013, to eight years in prison on charges he threatened national security by planting house churches in Iran years earlier, and had been under house arrest since July 2012. She met with Obama on the two-year anniversary of the opening day of Abedini's trial.

"I just looked at [Obama] and said the kids and I

love you and we pray for you," she said on CBN. "And as soon as I said that, the wall all came down, and he just grabbed my hand and I said, 'I don't know if it's a professional thing to say or not.' And he smiled and he said, 'Yes, I need your prayers.' It was very personal, and I just felt like sharing God's love with him."

Obama arranged a telephone interview between Naghmeh Abedini and the State Department staff after the meeting. Secretary of State John Kerry has advocated for Saeed's release during past visits to Iran.

"For me, that meant we're on the same team, let's take the next step necessary to get Saeed home," she said of Obama arranging the interview with State Department staff. "Especially when Jacob asked to have daddy for his birthday."

Naghmeh Abedini asked Christians to continue praying for her husband's release. "More than anything, I've been motivated to even pray more, and to ask the body of Christ to join me in praying more," she said on CBN. "I'm thankful for everyone who is praying, the churches that are praying that are really supporting and standing with us. We couldn't have done it without you. We're going to bring Saeed home. We continue to pray."

The meeting heightens the fight for Saeed Abedini's release, ACLJ's Sekulow said.

"It personalizes it for the president [and his staff.] But on top of that, it changes the staff's perspective – the people who are doing the day-to-day on this at the White House and the State Department," Sekulow said, "because the president has made it a priority and he's also elevated this nationally by not only doing this meeting, but doing it right after the State of the Union address."

More than 206,000 have signed a two-month-old ACLJ petition urging Obama not to make any diplomatic deals with Iran unless Saeed is released.

Naghmeh Abedini's father-in-law visited Saeed in prison on the same day she met with Obama, and reported that Saeed is still suffering.

"He still has a lot of pain of course he's in one of the worst prisons in the world," she said. "The nutrition is horrible. The conditions are horrible."

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Compiled by Diana Chandler, general assignment writer/editor for Baptist Press.) **BP**

Moore calls GOP dropping abortion vote ‘moral cowardice’

By TOM STRODE | Baptist Press

Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives were guilty of “moral cowardice” when they canceled a scheduled vote on a bill to ban late-term abortions, the Southern Baptist Convention’s lead ethicist said.

On the eve of the annual March for Life, House GOP leaders abandoned their plan to vote Jan. 22 on the Pain-capable Unborn Child Protection Act, H.R. 36. The Jan. 21 reversal by House leadership put off a vote on a bill that would ban abortions on babies 20 weeks or more after fertilization based on scientific evidence that a child in the womb experiences pain by that point in gestation.

House leaders pulled the scheduled vote after about two dozen Republicans, led by female members, expressed concerns about the legislation, according to news reports. The chamber, however, had approved the same measure in the previous congressional session.

Russell Moore did not mince words in his response to the GOP’s action.

“I am disgusted by this act of moral cowardice,” said Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC). “If the House Republicans cannot pass something as basic as restricting the abortion of five-month, pain-capable unborn children, what can they get done?”

“The Republicans in Congress should come and explain this atrocity to the hundreds of thousands of people gathering here in the nation’s capital to march for life,” he said in an ERLC news release late Jan. 21. “The congressional Republicans seem to think that pro-lifers will be satisfied with Ronald Reagan rhetoric and Nancy Pelosi results. They are quite wrong.”

Moore continued his criticism of House Republicans Jan. 22 during an event in Washington, D.C., shortly before the March for Life.

Describing the proposal as a “reasonable, moderate bill,” he told the pro-life audience, “This isn’t a radical move, and the House Republicans became scared and showed a complete lack of moral conviction and competence.”

While a pro-life renaissance is occurring at the grass-roots level, “[W]e still have politicians that are trembling and shaking over ghosts from the past instead of dealing with reality as it is,” Moore said.

In place of a vote on the pain-capable abortion ban, House leaders substituted a roll call on the No Taxpayer Funding of Abortion Act, H.R. 7, while people were gathered on the National Mall for the March for Life. The House approved the bill with a 242-179 vote.

The measure, which the House also passed last year, would institute a permanent, government-wide prohibition on federal funding of abortion by standardizing bans on such funds that now exist in various federal programs. It also would halt money for abortion coverage under the 2010 health-care law.

The House approved in June 2013 basically an identical version of the Pain-capable Unborn Child Protection Act that it failed to vote on Jan. 22. The roll call in favor of the bill nearly two years ago was 228-196.

Reps. Renee Ellmers of North Carolina and Jackie Walorski of Indiana led the Republican members who expressed concerns to House leadership about the pain-capable abortion ban, according to news reports.

Ellmers wants to drop a requirement in the rape

exception of the bill that the assault be reported to law enforcement authorities, she told reporters Jan. 22, according to the *Washington Examiner*. She also said Republicans, who control both houses of Congress, should be certain their legislation is not perceived as “harsh and judgmental” by women and young adults.

Women and young people both support the ban with the reporting requirement, however, according to a poll in November by Quinnipiac University. That survey showed 60 percent of Americans, 59 percent of women and 57 percent of adults ages 18 to 29 favor the legislation.

Ellmers voted for the ban in 2013 but said the rape reporting requirement “wasn’t evident in the base language of the bill,” the *Examiner* reported.

The pain-capable ban’s sponsor – Rep. Trent Franks of Arizona – responded gently to the actions by some of his GOP colleagues.

“I’ve maintained an open heart, because I realize that all of the people involved have sincere perspectives and have knowledge and experiences and information that I don’t have,” he said, *The Washington Post* reported. “So my heart is open – my desire here is not a political victory, it is to try to somehow be part of catalyzing an awakening in America to where we finally see the humanity of these little victims and the inhumanity of what’s happening to them.”

Other pro-life leaders joined Moore in expressing their discontent with the House’s failure to vote on the pain-capable bill. Meanwhile, they commended its quick action on the funding ban.

The National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) was “profoundly disappointed” the vote was postponed.

“Pro-life citizens across the nation are sharply disap-

pointed with those lawmakers who violated commitments to constituents. ... In some cases these actions were apparently dictated mainly by inordinate concern with political correctness and garnering favorable coverage from the mainstream news media,” NRLC President Carol Tobias said. “Some of these lawmakers may ultimately conclude that they were ill advised to sacrifice the trust of their pro-life constituents so egregiously.”

Three female heads of pro-life organizations – Marjorie Dannenfelser of the Susan B. Anthony List, Jeanne Monahan of the March for Life Education and Defense Fund, and Penny Nance of Concerned Women for America – said, “While we are disappointed that the House will not be voting on the Pain-capable Unborn Child Protection Act today, we are pleased that the House is moving forward to stop taxpayer funding of abortion.”

They support a “prompt vote” on the pain-capable ban and will work “to ensure the maximum number of votes” in the House on the legislation, the female leaders said in a written statement.

The new Republican majority in the Senate also is seeking to pass the pain-capable ban, but the White House already has signaled its opposition to the measure. Obama administration officials indicated in a Jan. 21 policy statement they would recommend the president veto it.

In the Jan. 22 vote on the taxpayer funding ban, Rep. Richard Hanna of New York was the sole Republican to oppose it. Only three Democrats – Reps. Dan Lipinski of Illinois, Henry Cuellar of Texas and Collin Peterson of Minnesota – voted for the bill.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Tom Strobe is the Washington bureau chief for Baptist Press.) **BP**

ERLC, Focus on the Family unveil 2016 Evangelicals for Life

By TOM STRODE | Baptist Press

Southern Baptists’ ethics entity and a leading pro-family organization took a public, first step Jan. 22 in mobilizing extensive evangelical Christian involvement in the annual March for Life.

The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) and Focus on the Family introduced Evangelicals for Life – a major evangelical, pro-life conference in conjunction with the 2016 March for Life – at an event by the same name that preceded this year’s march. At the morning session, the ERLC and Focus on the Family announced they will sponsor with other organizations the first-of-its-kind event next Jan. 21-22 in Washington, D.C.

The ERLC and Focus are planning in 2016 “to really initiate a massive movement of evangelicals present at the March for Life,” ERLC President Russell Moore told those gathered Jan. 22 in a Washington hotel meeting room.

The March for Life, a signature event of the pro-life movement, began in 1974, a year after the Jan. 22 *Roe v. Wade* decision legalized abortion nationwide. Held on or near Jan. 22, it brings together many tens of thousands of pro-lifers – or a few hundred thousand, depending on estimates – to rally on the National Mall

in Washington, then march up Constitution Avenue to Capitol Hill.

Leaders from the diverse groups that make up the pro-life movement typically gather for the march and surrounding events.

While many religious groups are involved, Roman Catholics dominate attendance at the march. Catholic parishes and schools from numerous states send busloads to Washington for the event, and many other Catholics travel by train and vehicle. The Catholic Church also sponsors events in Washington preceding the march.

Evangelicals are deeply involved in a variety of pro-life efforts in the United States, but they have been significantly underrepresented at the March for Life. That needs to change, Moore said.

“I don’t want to see any fewer rosary beads at the March for Life, but I want to see more evangelicals here also at the March for Life,” he told the Jan. 22 ERLC-Focus gathering that included a sizable number of evangelical, pro-life leaders. “[O]ur absence is a shame. And so we don’t need any less ‘Ave Maria,’ but we need some more ‘Amazing Grace’ in the mix as well.”

Of the 2016 conference, Moore said, “You’re going

See ERLC page 16

What's God got to do with football devotion?

By CATHY LYNN GROSSMAN | Religion News Service

Did God lift Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson's overtime pass into the end zone on Sunday, rewarding the prayerful Christian player with a championship victory and a trip to the Super Bowl?

Millions of Americans may think so.

“One in four Americans believe there will be a 12th man on the field, and that the hand of God will be seen before the final whistle blows in the Super Bowl,” said Robert Jones, CEO of Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI).

And 53 percent agree God “rewards athletes who have faith with good health and success,” according to a new PRRI/RNS Religion News Survey released Jan. 22.

Indeed, not only did majorities of all but one major religious group put faith in God's rewarding the faithful, so did 27 percent of those who claim no religion, the “nones.”

The survey of 1,012 U.S. adults, conducted by PRRI in partnership with Religion News Service, measures how people interweave team spirit and spirituality – and moral wrath, too.

Nearly one in three Americans would slap a lifetime ban on players convicted of domestic violence, even for someone on their favorite team.

Most Americans (64 percent) have a favorite team, with football leading the way as the preferred sport for 40 percent, no matter what their professed faith.

However, NFL love is not blind. It stops at the Ray Rice elevator door – the one the Baltimore Ravens player dragged his fiancée through after knocking her unconscious last February.

The survey was conducted Jan. 14-18, after months of intense media coverage of Rice and the NFL's response to domestic violence.

Rice was initially suspended by the Ravens, then by the NFL, but ultimately reinstated on appeal and is now eligible to sign with another team.

“I was surprised at how seriously Americans are taking domestic violence in sports. Nearly one in three (29 percent) would support a lifetime ban for a player convicted of domestic violence,” said Jones. “That's a heavy penalty.”

Most (59 percent) would allow such a player to return after a temporary suspension.

But few would make that easy. Nearly two in three Americans (64 percent) would oppose a professional sports team's hiring a player “who has been convicted of domestic violence but is not in current legal trouble.”

Contrast that with a hiring choice once thought to be too hot to touch: signing an openly gay or lesbian player.

University of Missouri star Michael Sam became front-page news for his openly gay status, which became public just months before the NFL draft last year. He was drafted by the St. Louis Rams and had a tryout with the Dallas Cowboys but did not make either team.

Survey respondents greeted the issue with a shrug: 73 percent say they would favor a team's drafting a gay or lesbian player.

Even so, there's an overwhelming sense that this is not an easy road for these athletes: 88 percent, including majorities of every major religious group, say gay and lesbian athletes face discrimination in professional sports.

For all the controversies, Americans are still captivated by football.

Eighteen percent of Americans – led by 45 percent of white evangelical Protestants and 30 percent of Catholics – say they are more likely to watch football any given Sunday than go to church.

But overall, men and women of all major faiths are mostly alike: About a quarter of both genders choose church, and about another quarter say they devote the day to both God and gridiron.

Who's missing from football frenzy? One in three Americans overall (32 percent), including 60 percent of “nones.”

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Cathy Lynn Grossman is a senior national correspondent for Religion News Service.) **BR**

Spiritual Continued from page 3

It is time to return to God. It is time that we stop making every issue about ourselves, posturing to insure we get our way. God's way is the only way.

There is no other. Anything less than God's way diminishes our happiness, our fulfillment and even our liberty.

3. We need the church to wake up.

Churches all over our nation need to wake up from the slumber we find ourselves in as a whole. We need pastors to return to their spiritual calling, be rekindled by the fire of God and declare the hope we have in the Lord. As a pastor goes, so goes the church.

As the church in America goes, so goes our nation. The evidence is overwhelming of just how broken we are as a nation. This is the greatest hour for the church to rise up and be the church. Never more has America needed the church to lead forward, serving and influencing our communities with compassion and hope.

4. We need spiritual awakening.

In our history, there have been seasons of spiritual awakening that have influenced the spiritual state of our nation dramatically. Lives were changed and sub-cultures became different.

Spiritual awakening is our greatest need in America today. This is why I have written a free ebook entitled *Pleading With Southern Baptists* that calls us to spiritual awakening.

There are many who have probably never even thought about this need.

Others may feel we have gone too far. But I want to assure you; God can do more in a moment than we can ever do in a lifetime.

Wherever you are in life, would you just stop for one moment and pray something like this, “God, would you please bring spiritual awakening to America? It is our greatest need.”

America's greatest need is the next great move of God. This is our hope.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Ronnie Floyd is president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of the multi-campus Cross Church in northwest Arkansas.) **BR**

Mapping Continued from page 1

understanding ... for points of engagement,” said Chuck Register, BSC's executive leader for church planting and missions.

He added, “We now have a responsibility to engage these 52 UPGs with the gospel of Christ.

“To know [UPGs] are present, to know where they are and to not engage them with the gospel ... becomes sin on our behalf.”

Some ways churches might engage their communities may begin with teaching English as a second language, helping immigrants in initial relocation, helping them secure a doctor or helping them adjust to American culture, said Register.

“There are a multitude of methodologies, but what [the convention] want[s] to do ... is suggest methodologies, not dictate methodologies to the local church. It's the local church's respon-

sibility to engage these people with the gospel, but we want to come along and assist them.”

This is very biblical, said Hardy.

“We're looking at what God is doing among us and asking ourselves the question: ‘What is our appropriate response?’ The gospel must go forth beginning right here. ... I think God is moving the world here so that North Carolina Baptists develop more of a heart for the world.”

“In my experience, as churches have reached out to people groups moving to North Carolina, God begins to break [churches'] hearts for people groups. And through that it begins to break their heart for the world,” he emphasized.

Many of the people coming to North Carolina are refugees.

Hardy said, “In Winston-Salem, there is a people group called the Karenis, and we have watched people reach out to

them. ... These are people who before they got on their first airplane to come to America were living in huts in the middle of the jungle. ... We must be willing to walk beside them, and it is a time-consuming thing, by the way. ... As we welcome people, it becomes an opportunity to build relationships, ... [which] leads to the opportunity to share the gospel.”

Register noted that all churches need boldness, courage and faith to “step forward and engage an unreached people group in their community.”

Once Lyons and churches engage with various points of interest, they load their information to *peoplegroups.info*.

This is an initiative of the North American Mission Board and the International Mission Board (IMB).

The heart of this website is the collection of accurate, relevant and strategic information that is shared with Southern

Baptists and other Great Commission partners.

This website and the BSC can help churches collaborate together as they seek local unreached people groups. The goal, said Lyons, is to build deeper relationships with a people group for the purposes of gospel proclamation, Bible studies and ultimately, church planting.

The convention plans to host one-day training seminars that will train churches how to do people group mapping in their communities.

For more information, call the office of the Great Commission Partnerships at (800) 395-5102, ext.5536.

Also, IMB is hosting a people group discovery and engagement workshop March 30-April 1 at the Baptist building in Cary. For more information or to register, visit, regonline.com/peoplegrouptraining_NC. **BR**

Gifts Continued from page 1

North Carolina has working partnerships with New York, Boston and Toronto, all of which are SEND cities. The convention has supported a three-year international partnership with the eastern European country of Moldova.

CP giving has declined significantly in recent years. Milton Hollifield, executive director-treasurer of BSC, said the trend is not unique to our state. He has participated in discussions about shifting patterns of giving with pastors, state leaders and SBC leaders across the nation.

“We are trying hard to help more pastors understand and believe that the SBC system of unified giving through CP is worthy of their support for helping state conventions and the SBC entities fulfill the Great Commission,” he said. “Although there is still much related work and prayer to be done, I am encouraged with progress that is being made.”

The BSC’s 2014 financial report also listed totals for three special mission offerings. Gifts to the North Carolina Missions Offering were \$1,877,228.99. That is a decrease of \$30,451.58 or .52%. North Carolina Baptist Men, also known as Baptists on Mission, receive the majority of their support from this offering. The offering also supports church planting in the state.

Totals for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions fell only \$10,511.29 or .18 percent below 2013. According to the BSC report N.C. Baptists gave \$5,817,429.51 to this offering.

The lone increase in special offerings came in the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. A total of \$12,630,118.17 was given in 2014. This is an additional \$102,615.27 or an increase of .82 percent over the previous year.

Hollifield said he is “thankful and encouraged” by the churches that chose to increase their CP gifts. “I am also grateful for every dollar our member churches gave in 2014 to support state, national and international missions through the Cooperative Program funding plan,” he added. “Your convention staff spent and distributed all of the CP contributions received in Cary as we were directed by messengers from N.C. Baptist churches when they adopted the annual CP missions and ministry budget.”

Looking ahead, Hollifield said, “I do believe that our 2015 CP budget of \$29 million is not only reachable, it can be exceeded! Let’s pray and work to that end as we trust in God to make this become a reality.” The BSC 2015 operating budget can be found online at ncbaptist.org/cp; click on the left column “Budget” tab. **BR**

People Continued from page 3

they are not following Christ’s mandate to take the gospel to those who have not heard. They contend that if a person is not sharing Jesus, they are wasting time and money.

8. They believe that being mission-minded is not a “task.” It’s a lifestyle. They live out missions in their everyday life. From the moment they wake up until they go to bed, they impact the world around them.

9. They are relational. They are willing to leave their own “bubble” to make relationships with those considered the “least of these.” They have an awareness of the people around them and look for ways to build a relationship that will lead to sharing Christ and discipleship.

10. They go! It doesn’t matter where God tells them to go – Timbuktu or Kalamazoo – they grow where God plants them. And, they are willing to move on when He says, “Go!”

11. They see people with a future. When they look at an unreached people group, they see potential “brothers and sisters” in Christ. They see that eternity and joy are available for everyone and are excited to share it.

12. They send! They know that we are responsible for ALL people groups hearing the gospel. They fol-

low the example from the book of Acts to “send” out other mission-minded people. They support them in any way possible.

13. They understand “the task” is not done. Mission-minded people know that once they have reached their family and friends with Christ, they are not done. There are still billions in the world that have not proclaimed Jesus’ name.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Susie Rain is a missionary writer for the International Mission Board. She lives in Southeast Asia and works with an unreached people group.) **BR**

BRnow.org

BE SURE TO
CHECK OUT
OUR WEBSITE

FOR THE LATEST
N.C. BAPTIST NEWS
AND INFORMATION



Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children President/CEO Job Announcement

Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children (OBHC) is seeking an exceptional chief executive to build on an excellent record of helping children become capable, caring Christian adults by sharing Christ’s love and providing hope and homes for children. Applicants must be able to represent OBHC as a Christian role model in private as well as professional life with membership in a Baptist church required. OBHC’s roots go back to the original founding of the Baptist Orphans’ Home in 1903. It operates as a 501 (c) (3) public charity that is chartered in the state of Oklahoma.

OBHC is a family of Christian ministries that serve children and families. Each ministry location is unique, but all share a mission to serve children and families. Ministry locations are the Baptist Children’s Homes in Oklahoma City and Owasso, Boys Ranch Town in Edmond, and the Baptist Home for Girls near Madill. Hope Pregnancy Centers are located in Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Ardmore. With an annual budget of \$10M, OBHC ministries have an array of services that range from infants to adults. More information about programs and finances can be found at www.obhc.org.

The CEO serves as the president of the corporation and is charged by the Board of Trustees to be responsible for all operations. The president implements and administers policies established by the Board of Trustees and conducts business for the corporation. The CEO reports directly to the Board of Trustees and provides direct supervision to all vice presidents, the preparation of annual budgets, the management of financial resources, the completion of an annual audit, the meeting of all legal and accreditation requirements, and the securing of financial resources plus other position requirements.

The position requires a bachelor’s degree with a master’s or Ph.D. preferred. Managerial experience should include a record of working with governing bodies, skills in fundraising and donor relations, personnel supervision, and financial resource development. Salary will be competitive and commensurate with qualifications and experience.

To apply, send a letter detailing your interest, statement of faith, qualifications, resume and/or questions to:

Phyllis Salamy, Corporate Secretary

PO Box 22038, Oklahoma City, OK 73123-0038

Email may be sent to pres2017@gmail.com with a cover letter detailing your interest, statement of faith, qualifications, resume and/or questions.

Oklahoma Baptist
Homes
for CHILDREN

SEMINARY BRIEFS

Golden Gate announces new campus

(GGBTS Communications) Following the relocation of its main campus to Southern California, Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary will retain a presence in the San Francisco Bay area by opening a new campus in Fremont, Calif., on land donated by a local congregation that is moving to a house church ministry model. The new campus will be situated just north of San Jose about 50 miles southeast of the present Mill Valley campus.

\$500,000 grant spurs Midwestern 5-yr. degree

(MBTS Communications) A \$500,000 grant will help Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and College launch a new program enabling students to earn a bachelor's degree and master of divinity degree within five years. The Kern Family Foundation is providing the grant for Midwestern's new "Accelerate" five-year bachelor and master of divinity program.

SEBTS alumni can audit courses

(SEBTS Communications) Effective for the spring 2015 semester, members of the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary Alumni Association (SAA) can audit any graduate-level course, both in class and online, free of charge. This convenient option for continuing education aims to support and encourage Southeastern's alumni as they serve in a variety of ministry contexts around the world. For more information, visit sebts.edu/alumni/help_others_go/saa.aspx.

NOBTS trustees exand distance learning efforts

(NOBTS Communications) New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS) trustees voted to expand the school's extension center system by adding new locations. President Chuck Kelley also announced a large anonymous gift for the expansion of the Caskey Center scholarship program. Now Mississippi bi-vocational and smaller membership church ministers will be able to apply for full-tuition scholarships at NOBTS.

OPPORTUNITY CORNER

Convention offers program training

The Baptist State Convention is offering computer technology trainings given by Judy Autry at the Baptist Building in Cary from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.. All classes are free.

- **2010 Word** – Feb. 5
- **2010 Excel** – Feb. 26
- **2010 PowerPoint and Movie**

Maker – Mar. 19

- **2010 Publisher** – Apr. 16

To register for the classes visit <http://www.ncbaptist.org/index.php?id=991> or email jautry@ncbaptist.org.

'The Story' helps people share gospel

"The Story" evangelism conference is being offered around the state to train people to use the narrative aspects of scripture to reveal the gospel. Each regional conference is from 9:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. and includes lunch and conference materials including The Story Guide Leader Kit: The Story Guide Primer Edition (Workbook), Leader Notes (Booklet), helpful resources such as DVD Media Disc (Presentation/Videos), The Story Bible and access code to *TheStoryTraining.com*. The conferences will be led by Rick Hughes and Marty Dupree.

The total cost is \$20 per church leader. Additional guests from your church are welcome to attend for \$10 per person and includes lunch and The Story Primer Guide.

- Feb. 10 at Temple Baptist Church, Fayetteville
- Apr. 7 at First Baptist Church, Matthews
- Apr. 23 at First Baptist Church Winterville, Greenville
- Sept. 14 at Grove Park Baptist Church, Burlington

To register visit ncbaptist.wufoo.com/forms/the-story.

Church offers apologetics conference

Galeed Baptist Church in Bladenboro will host an apologetics conference Feb. 15-18 from 6:30-9 p.m. The conference will include speakers Richard Land, president of Southern Evangelical Seminary and Frank Turek of www.CrossExamined.org. The main session will address apologetics, spiritual warfare, Islam and atheism. Breakout sessions will be available for adults and teenagers on a variety of topics. Register at www.faiithdefense.com/conferences.

More Opportunity Corner items on page 16

AROUND THE STATE

Obituaries

IRVIN WARREN ADCOCK, 84, died Dec. 23, 2014, in Oxford, N.C.

A graduate of Mars Hill College, Wake Forest College (now university) and Southeastern Seminary, Adcock served more than 60 years in ministry at nine Baptist churches including two in Virginia and in North Carolina: First Baptist Church, Grifton; New Hope Baptist Church, Wilson; Western Prong Baptist Church, Whiteville; White Oak Baptist Church, Clayton; Bethlehem Baptist Church, Gastonia; and Providence Baptist Church, Oxford. After retiring in 1995, he continued to serve at Kittrell Baptist Church for seven more years.

Pastor Adcock served nine Baptist Churches... Purdy and Sappony Churches in Virginia; First Church of Grifton; New Hope Church of Wilson; Western Prong Church of Whiteville; White Oak Church of Clayton; Bethlehem Church of Gastonia; and Providence Church of Oxford. After retiring in 1995, Adcock continued



IRVIN ADCOCK

his ministry at Kittrell Baptist Church, Kittrell, for 7 more years. He served on the board of ministers for Campbell University.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Patsy Brummitt Adcock; three children Jimmie Adcock of Charlotte, Karen Currin of Oxford, and Rennie Adcock of Winston-Salem; five grandchildren; and two great grandchildren. Memorials to Providence Baptist Church, 4603 Old N.C. 75, Oxford, NC 27565.

THOMAS "TOM" JOHNSTON DIMMOCK, 65, died Jan. 21.

A West Virginia native, Dimmock was an Eagle Scout and served his country in the U.S. Army Reserve. He graduated from N.C. State University with a degree in economics. He received his law degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He worked in defense and family law and served as an adviser to the Family Law section of the North Carolina Bar Association. He founded his own firm and provided pro bono work for family and friends.

He helped found the Kiwanis Club of Wake Forest some 30 years ago. A charter member and president, he led his fellow Kiwanians in countless projects. He served as both governor and lieutenant governor of the Carolinas District, which

covers both North and South Carolina and includes some 180 Kiwanis clubs and 6,000 members, many of which he helped start or recruit. He was then elected a trustee of Kiwanis International, where he worked for three years. In 2012, he won the Carolinas District's first-ever Lifetime Achievement Award. At the time of his death, he was serving as Carolinas District parliamentarian and as co-chair of the Project Eliminate campaign, having raised more than \$3 million to eradicate maternal and child tetanus. He and a friend helped build the crowd sound meter that once was used at Reynolds Coliseum during Wolfpack games.

Dimmock and his wife, Boyd, were part of Trinity Baptist Church, Raleigh. Over the years he served as a deacon, trustee and trustees chairman, endowment committee member, Habitat for Humanity leader, and teacher of Sunday School and Bible study. His Sunday School class, known simply as the "Tom Dimmock Class," has members going back some 40 years. He was also involved in the church choir. He was also a member of the board of directors and parliamentarian for the North Carolina Baptist State Convention



TOM DIMMOCK

and lawyer for the North Carolina Baptist Foundation, where he also served on the board. He went on church mission trips to New Orleans, New Jersey, Honduras, Cuba, Belize and Peru to assist with hurricane recovery and building projects; Kiwanis initiatives including campaigns to eliminate not only tetanus but spinal bifida and iodine deficiency; and countless service projects such as working at the thrift shop for North Raleigh Ministries or taking the night shift at the Wake Hospitality Services shelter.

In the days before he died, he led 40 teenagers to do yard work at Haven House, a shelter for homeless teenagers; helped to found a new Key Club; and biked 35 miles along the Neuse River greenway.

He is survived by his wife of 41 years, Boyd King Dimmock, of Raleigh; two daughters, Julie Anna Kaufman of Raleigh, and Laurie Nappier of Huntersville; three grandchildren; two sisters, Martha Campbell and Ellen Begley, all of Black Mountain; and one brother, Frank Dimmock of Louisville, Ky.

Memorials to the Tom Dimmock Missions Scholarship at Trinity Baptist Church.

February 8

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

February 15

Ready When Sex Destroys

Focal Passage: Ephesians 5:1-10

Statistics in 2007 claimed that 45-55 percent of married women and 50-60 percent of married men engaged in extramarital sex at one time or another during their relationship. Nothing is more devastating to a marriage than infidelity. Adultery is a great tragedy. God tells us that all sin will have consequences. When one commits adultery he or she risks all that they have built over a lifetime – marriage, family, ministry, respect and honor. The law of sowing and reaping (Galatians 6:7) teaches that we will reap what we sow. Many sow while praying for a crop failure.

Although the steps and process following infidelity can take a long time, we can be assured that healing of the marriage and recovery for both partners is possible by the work of the Holy Spirit.

Christian counselors instruct us to take the following steps toward restoring and rebuilding the shattered marriage. The first step is for both spouses to spend time each day in prayer, Bible study and seeking God to give them the ability to grow in Christ-like actions and attitudes.

There must be no further contact between the sinning spouse and the third party.

This means that the unfaithful person must make a *radical* commitment to rebuild trust. They must be open to any inquiries of their spouse.

Importantly, the unfaithful one must seek God for forgiveness in true repentance. As the unfaithful person is assured that God is “*faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*” (1 John 1:9, HCSB), they need to seek the forgiveness of the spouse. Forgiveness is a journey and will take time.

Forgiveness is required, but reconciliation of the couple is based upon true remorse and repentance.

While the Bible never advocates divorce and many couples do stay together and heal, some may not be able to work through the broken relationship. Sexual sin can be very appealing; remember that to violate this bond will lead to pain, grief and self-destruction.



THOMAS MARSHALL
Spring Hill Baptist
Church, Wagram

Ready When Homosexuality Devastates

**Focal Passages: Romans 1:18-27;
1 Corinthians 6:9-11**

When we use the term homosexuality, it refers to both an orientation and a behavior. The orientation is a condition in which a person is sexually attracted to persons of the same sex. The behavior is any sexual activity between persons of the same sex. While this is an ongoing discussion, there has not as yet been any research that supports the existence of a “gay” gene – thus giving us no conclusive evidence of a biological reason for it. We are concerned here with the issue of choice.

In the scriptures, we see that God’s intent and purpose for sexual relations was to be an expression in a covenant relationship between a man and a woman (Genesis 2:24; Hebrews 13:4). Paul says that homosexuality is “unnatural” (Romans 1:26, HCSB); in other words, it is against what God had planned for sexual relations. The acts

are called “shameless” (Romans 1:27), and the passage says that there will be a penalty for this error. It is considered a moral issue in both the Old and New Testaments because it goes against God’s plan. So, how do we address this issue so prevalent in our society today? First, we need to remember that all sin is sin. James reminds us that if we “*fail in one point, [we are] guilty of breaking it all*” (James 2:10, HCSB). We need to enter into what God experiences (even with us) of loving the person, hating the sin and remaining true to God’s standards. We must remember that there is a huge difference between loving a homosexual person and supporting homosexuality. We are called to be the heart, hands and witness of God to those who are caught up in sin.

As in any sexual (or any other) sin, one must be willing to radically submit to the Lord Jesus Christ in full obedience. One must choose to sacrifice all fleshly desires and develop a deep identity with Jesus. As we are exposed to those who profess this lifestyle, we must seek the heart of God in loving them unconditionally, and lovingly leading them into the truth of God’s Word.

February 8

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

February 15

Get an Understanding

Focal Passage: Nehemiah 8:1-8

Men are notorious for not wanting to read and follow instructions. After all, how hard can it be, right? However, if we really thought about it, we would realize the one who made the thing would be the best one to tell not only how the project goes together, but also how it is to be used.

If that is the case with something as simple as a home project, how much more should we seek understanding for our lives by going to God’s Word? God alone can tell us who He is, who we are and how we are to live His way in His world. More importantly, we need to realize that God’s Word is far more than an impersonal “life instruction manual.” It is His gracious and loving gift to His people initiated by God to reveal Himself to us. Ezra had returned to Jerusalem well before Nehemiah. His role was as priest and “teacher,” responsible for keeping the law of God before the people. In Nehemiah 8, the Israelites called Ezra for the public reading of God’s law. Their commitment to hearing the Word of God read was obvious in several ways.

First, the Word of God had a prominent place as they had erected a platform from which the Word would be read. Second, there was a commitment to having God’s Word read among all the people. Third, their desire was not simply for a brief devotional thought for the day. They sat under the reading of the law from morning until mid-day. Fourth, their desire was not only to hear the law proclaimed, but also to understand it with a view to obey.

As we consider our own lives, do we have such a commitment to the Word of God? Do we give it a prominent place in our lives? Do we keep it not only before ourselves, but before our children? Do we simply want a little “verse for the day,” or do we really desire to meditate on God’s Word? And, do we read God’s Word seeking understanding in order that we might obey it also? Solomon charged his son to “*Get wisdom. Get understanding*” (Proverbs 4:5). We will only find true wisdom and understanding in God’s Word.



RANDY MANN
Lead Pastor, Central
Baptist Church,
Henderson

Focal Passage: Nehemiah 9:32-37

I am a person who is very “directionally challenged” – a real problem for someone who likes to hunt.

On far more than one occasion, I have found myself in the middle of the woods,

wondering where I was, how I got there and how I was going to get back to my truck. In order for me to find my way back to my truck, I always had to first come to an accurate assessment of where I was.

Our spiritual lives are much the same. In order for us to return to the place we need to be spiritually, we must first come to an accurate assessment of where we are.

That does not happen by looking at ourselves, but rather by looking at God. When we have a right view of God, we will come to a right view of ourselves and of where we are spiritually.

The people of God had rebelled against God and had suffered the consequences as they ended up separated from the land of promise and living in

the land of their enemies. God, in His covenant-keeping love, mercy and grace, had returned this remnant of His people to their land.

In this process, as they heard the word of God and were reminded of God’s character and faithfulness, they once again began to see God clearly.

As that happened, they saw themselves clearly, bringing them to the point of brokenness, confession, repentance and restoration.

The people of God, with their eyes fixed upon Him, quickly saw that God had always been faithful.

If the Israelites had ended up far from Him, it was because they moved away from God, not vice versa.

He will restore His people to fellowship with Him when His people acknowledge their sin, repent and return to Him.

Today, as God’s people, our relationship with Him is secure in Christ.

When we find ourselves in broken fellowship with God because of our sin, the first step is to regain once again a clear understanding of God.

When that happens, we will see the reality of our sin and be drawn to repent and return to Him.

Gardner-Webb only N.C. college to earn 'A' in study

Gardner-Webb University Communications

An annual study on core curriculum requirements at over 1,000 colleges and universities from all over the United States has placed Gardner-Webb University at the head of the class for the fourth year in a row.

Ranked among 23 institutions with an "A" grade, Gardner-Webb is the only school in the Carolinas to earn an "A" distinction for core curriculum standards.

The 2014-2015 What Will They Learn? study, conducted by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA), ranks the core curriculum of all the major pub-

lic and private colleges and universities in all 50 states.

The ranking places GWU in the top two percent in the nation, included with schools such as Pepperdine University (Malibu, Calif.), Baylor University (Waco, Texas), Morehouse College (Atlanta, Ga.), and the United States Air Force Academy (Colorado Springs, Colo.).

The ACTA study analyzes seven core subjects and rates universities accordingly. ACTA believes that composition, U.S. government/history, economics, literature, math, science and foreign language components help students gain the knowledge and values necessary for responsible democratic citizenship.

"A"-rated schools require at least six out of the seven



core courses; "B" schools must offer four or five out of seven. Other N.C. Baptist affiliated universities – Campbell, Chowan, Mars Hill and Wingate – received a "B." Meredith College received a "B," and Wake Forest University received a "C." Both schools were founded by Baptists but are not aligned any longer. **BR**

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Pastor

Senior Pastor. Loves Creek Baptist Church of Siler City, NC, is seeking a full-time pastor for our conservative, evangelical, Southern Baptist church. We are looking for a candidate that has strong preaching, communication, and leadership skills. Candidates must believe that the Bible is the inerrant word of God. Degree from an accredited seminary is preferred. Mail cover letter and resume to Loves Creek Baptist Church, 1745 E. 11th Street, Siler City, NC 27344, Attn: Pastor Search Committee. Resumes will be accepted thru February 27, 2015.

Lillington Baptist Church, Lillington, NC, is prayerfully seeking a **Pastor** who is biblically grounded, mission minded, with visionary leadership and strong communication skills. Our current church membership is 283 members with Sunday School attendance averaging 123 and worship attendance averaging 158. Must hold an advanced seminary degree with a preferred minimum of 10 years experience as a Pastor or commensurate experience. Please send resume to Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 160, Lillington, NC 27546. Resumes will be accepted until March 31, 2015.

First Baptist Church of Mount Airy, North Carolina, a 135-year-old church with 600+ resident members is prayerfully seeking a **full-time senior pastor**. A compassionate, caring servant-leader, led by the Holy Spirit, exhibiting visionary leadership and committed to the preaching and teaching of God's Word. One who is able to lead the congregation to a deeper understanding of God's Word through worship and Bible study. Applicants should be biblically grounded and mature in their faith with previous pastoral experience and a seminary degree. Missions giving opportunities are available through both the CBF and SBC. Send resumes and references to the Pastor Search Team, First Baptist Church, 714 N. Main St., Mount Airy, NC 27030 or by email to fbcmapst@gmail.com.

Olyphic Baptist Church is seeking a **Pastor**. We are located in North Carolina approximately 13 miles from North Myrtle Beach, S.C. We are a small rural church with an average attendance of 60 with a very active choir, Brotherhood, WMU and children's ministries. We are noted for our strong missions and pastoral emphasis. We cooperate with CBF and SBC. We are looking for a Pastor who is biblically grounded and mission minded. Our previous pastors have been seminary graduates and were retired or semi-retired pastors with long tenures. Interested persons should send their resumes to Mack Heniford, 20656 Seven Creeks Hwy., Tabor City, NC 28463. Please submit your resume by February 15, 2015.

Sandy Cross Baptist Church, Hobbsville, NC, is seeking **full-time pastor**. Average attendance of 85. Seminary-trained pastor preferred; parsonage located on church grounds. Please send resumes to sandycrossbaptistchurch@gmail.com.

First Baptist Church of Mebane, NC, is seeking a **senior pastor** who will help us in fulfilling our mission to "Love God, Love People, and Share Our Faith in Jesus Christ Together." We are located in a town that is experiencing tremendous growth, and we are looking for a mission-minded leader with a passion for reaching the local community while prayerfully seeking the will of God. Candidates should be graduates of fully-accredited colleges/universities and seminaries/divinity schools. We have two Sunday morning worship services, one traditional and one contemporary. Please send resume and personal references to: Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church of Mebane, 301 S. 3rd Street, Mebane, N.C. 27302; or via email to: mebanefbcpastorsearch@gmail.com.

Church Staff

Beck's Baptist Church of Winston-Salem, NC, seeks a **full-time youth minister**. A detailed job description may be found at becksbaptist.org/ymjobdescription. Resumes may be submitted to ymscbbc@gmail.com.

Rocky Hock Baptist Church, an affiliate of BSCNC, seeking **Minister of Music and Education**, full-time position. Seminary, Divinity School or Bible College Degree with music training preferred. Experience preferred, not required. Visit our website: rockyhockbaptistchurch.org for details or contact Donna Peele, Co-Chair, Search Committee: dbpeele2014@gmail.com; cell phone (252) 506-1245.

Elkin Valley Baptist Church in Elkin, NC, is searching for an **Associate Pastor of Discipleship and Missions** to direct the discipleship focus of the church and oversee the fulfillment of the church's mission strategy. Elkin Valley is a member of the SBC and in agreement with the 2000 Baptist Faith & Message. A seminary degree is required. Detailed information on the position may be found on the church's website at www.evbfamily.org. To apply e-mail cover letter and resume to: evbcstaffvacancies@gmail.com or mail to: EVBC Search Team, 118 N. Elkin Drive, Elkin, NC 28621.

Southside Baptist Church in Lincolnton, N.C., is seeking a **Part-Time Music Director** to oversee all areas of music ministry. This includes all worship services, special services, and any church related events where music is needed. Experience in a church setting with experience in traditional and contemporary styles is preferred. Please email resumes and cover letters to southsidebaptist.info@gmail.com attention Personnel Committee or mail to Southside Baptist Church, 1726 Southside Road, Lincolnton, N.C. 28092. Resume deadline: February 28, 2015.

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

Concord Baptist, Anderson, South Carolina, is seeking a **Student Minister** (Grades 6-12). Degree required from an accredited seminary and minimum of three years church/ministry experience. Submit resumes via e-mail to jjames@concordbaptist.com or to Concord Baptist, 1012 Concord Road, Anderson, SC 29621, Attn: Dr. Don Cox. Church website: concordbaptist.com.

Beck's Baptist Church seeks a **full-time Minister of Children**. Please send resumes to Children's Minister Search Team, Beck's Baptist Church, 5505 Becks Church Rd., Winston-Salem, NC 27106, or email to becksbaptist@windstream.net.

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

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

Miscellaneous

NCBAM needs short term servant volunteers to "March the Blues Away" in four easy steps: 1 aging adult in need, 2 volunteers, a 3-month commitment, with 4 contacts per month. Call North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry: 877-506-2226.

Do you have staff changes at your church or association? Let the BR know by calling (919) 847-2127 or email editor@BRnow.org.

Placing a classified ad in the *Biblical Recorder*

Choose one of three avenues:

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

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

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

ADVERTISE in the
Biblical Recorder
(919) 459-5691

ERLC Continued from page 10

to see a gathering of evangelicals saying, ‘This is our issue too.’

“[W]e’re wanting to cultivate a new generation of born-again men and women who care about the unborn, who care about their mothers and who care about consciences that are torn apart by the culture of death,” he said.

Moore and Focus President Jim Daly are the only conference speakers named so far.

Kelly Rosati, Focus’ vice president of community outreach, told the audience of about 70 pro-lifers, “We really believe that God is doing something in the evangelical community to encourage and strengthen those of you who have been on the front lines for so long. ... We are going to turn this around, and we are never, never going to stop speaking out for unborn kids.”

Jeanne Monahan, president of the March for Life Education and Defense Fund, appeared at the evangelical event to commend participants and the plans for the 2016 conference.

“On behalf of the March for Life and personally, I just can’t thank you enough,” she said.

The ERLC and Focus supported the march later in the day. At least 10 ERLC staff members and five Focus staffers participated in the rally and march. Moore appeared on the rally stage among pro-life leaders, and he gave the benediction at the March for Life-sponsored Rose Dinner in the evening.

In a panel discussion during the Jan. 22 Evangelicals for Life event, Moore, Rosati and Samuel Rodriguez said they are encouraged by evangelical involvement on the life issue.

He especially is encouraged considering where evangelicals were in the years after *Roe v. Wade*, Moore said.

At the beginning, evangelicals thought it was “a Catholic issue” and didn’t say much except for “a few prophetic voices,” he told the gathering. Then people assumed young evangelicals would surrender the abortion issue and become



ERLC President Russell Moore prays to close the Evangelicals for Life event Jan. 22 in Washington, D.C. Joining him in prayer are (from left) Kelly Rosati of Focus on the Family, Samuel Rodriguez of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference and Phillip Bethancourt of the ERLC. (ERLC photo by Chad Bartlett)

pro-choice, he said.

“That is not true at all,” Moore said. “It is almost impossible for me to find a pro-choice, young evangelical. And it is almost impossible for me to find a young evangelical who isn’t passionately concerned about the lives of the unborn and about their mothers.”

He also is encouraged “because the life issue is connected to so many other things,” he said. “When we deal with the question of the vulnerable and the unborn, then we’re spending time concentrating on that issue of the dignity of humanity, on that issue of love for neighbor, on that issue ... of pleading for the innocent.”

That drives evangelicals to care about others, including orphans and the poor, he said.

Rodriguez, president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, said the next generation is committed to justice and sees “the pro-life commitment as part of the justice motif.”

“That pro-life platform serves as the impetus behind many of the civil rights issues that Christians are now advocating for in the 21st century,” he said.

Focus is excited at what it describes as “a renaissance in the evangelical pro-life movement,” Rosati told the audience.

Young evangelicals’ “comprehensive commitment to pro-life causes ... is going to enhance our work on behalf of the preborn,” she said. “I believe that with all my heart. And I think that’s one of the trends we’re going to see” continue in the future.

A thread runs through both the life and race issues, Rodriguez said. The “abortion industry is targeting the ethnic community like no other,” placing its clinics in Latino and African-American neighborhoods, he said. “So if you are in favor of bringing about racial reconciliation, it behooves you to address abortion.”

For pro-life evangelicals, Moore said, “the most important weapon we have in

our arsenal is the gospel of Jesus Christ. The most important pro-life chapter in the Bible is not Psalm 139 but Romans 3, that God is both just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”

He added, “God is just. He hears the cries of the unborn. And, Paul tells us in Romans 3, God is the justifier – so that in the cross we have the justice of God and the mercy of God.”

Evangelicals “need to be the sort of people who are addressing this issue in our churches, talking to the conscience,” he said. “But you don’t leave it there, because you also say, ‘If anyone is in Christ, he or she is a new creation,’ which means that woman who has had the abortion or that man who has paid for the abortion who is in Christ, God does not see that person as the one who had the abortion. God sees that person exactly as He sees Jesus Christ: ‘You are my beloved child with whom I am well pleased.’”

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Tom Strobe is the Washington bureau chief for Baptist Press.) **BP**

OPPORTUNITY CORNER

Website development training available

Website development training is offered throughout the year at no cost to churches and associations by Lai Salmonson. Classes train church members to create and update a basic church website using WordPress, Squarespace or Wix. Students will learn the basics of website terminology and design to assist in creating church websites. Classes will be held in Cary at the Baptist State Convention building. Each class can only host 12 stu-

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- **Sept. 15** – WIX
- **Oct. 6** – Wordpress

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The Feb. 23 “I Story” Disciple-Making Conference will prepare believers to connect with unbelievers in a modern context, and expanded equipping sessions will offer hands-on, practical steps that will equip Christ-followers to reach the lost in today’s world. The conference is offered at no charge at Center Grove Baptist Church in Clemmons.

Join the lunch conversation with Jon Erwin, filmmaker, and Alvin Reid, a

professor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, about engaging culture through the arts. Lunch will be available for \$7 for those who preregister. Space is limited. Other speakers include Ed Stetzer, pastor of Grace Church in Hendersonville, Tenn.; Afshin Ziafat, pastor of Providence Church in Frisco, Texas; and Robby Gallaty, pastor of Brainerd Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tenn.

For a list of breakout sessions or to get more details, visit ncbaptist.org/disciplenc.