



Trafficking issue in N.C.

Human trafficking event sheds light on problem in North Carolina and nationwide. What can be done to end modern-day slavery? **Page 11**

What can Baptists do about marriage vote?

North Carolina voters face a decision May 8 on a marriage amendment. Baptist State Convention leader Brian Davis shares how Baptists can find a place in the debate. Materials are available for church members. **Page 12. See related story, page 2.**

BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

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Marriage, budget, elections top BSC Board meeting

By **SHAWN HENDRICKS** | BR Managing Editor

The budget, election of new executive committee members and the May 8 vote on a marriage amendment were among the top issues of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) Board of Directors meeting Jan. 24-25 at Caraway Conference Center in Sophia.

Directors also heard reports of how their church's offering dollars are helping start new churches here and abroad, while helping to strengthen existing churches throughout the state.

The economy continues to take its toll on churches around the country and in the state – with unemployment hovering just under 10 percent. But Milton Hollifield, BSC's executive director-treasurer, said there is plenty to be thankful for – especially in regards to giving to the state's mission offering, Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions.

Financial update

The state's Lottie Moon offering received \$12,592,515.44 last year, which is 8.07 percent more than 2010.

The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions received \$5,622,011.99, which is a 7.18 percent increase over 2010.

"We can rejoice in that," Hollifield said.

"North Carolina churches continue to lead all state conventions in gifts to Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong."

See BSC Board page 8

Souper service

N.C. Baptists give to curb hunger

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

Boxes of macaroni and cheese are piling up at Southside Baptist Church in Lincoln.

Collecting these boxes is one way Southside is helping to fight hunger in its community. The church is taking part in Souper Bowl of Caring (souperbowl.org), an effort coinciding with Super Bowl Sunday Feb. 5. On the day the New York Giants face the New England Patriots, people across the United States will be participating in efforts to help provide supplies and money for hunger-related ministries.

"We found we get better results if we have them bring a certain thing," said Ruth Gibson, who leads her church's efforts for the Souper Bowl of Caring as well as for a local ministry to Lincoln County residents.

The purpose is to donate to a local food bank or shelter in the area.

The church will collect maca-

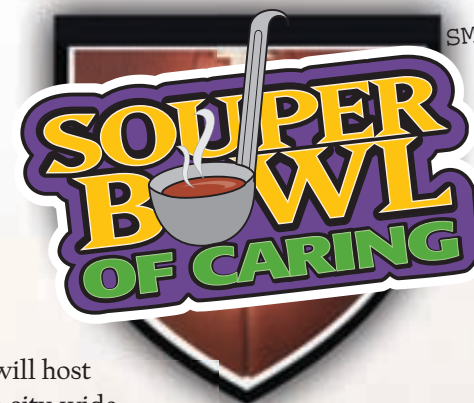
roni through Super Bowl Sunday. Gibson said her church has made this local ministry part of its budget year-round, too. The church staggers its giving. Some is set aside for the Souper Bowl of Caring. In 2011, the church gave toward a golf tournament fund raiser for the ministry and then again at Christmastime.

Last year more than 260,000 youth across the nation participated in Souper Bowl of Caring, collecting more than \$9.5 million in dollars and food for local hunger-relief charities.

This year's goal is to empower 275,000 young people to collect \$11 million for charities in their communities.

The money and items are donated directly to a local ministry. Souper Bowl of Caring does not receive gifts but instead compiles a report of what people are doing and how much has been given.

Because Charlotte has hosted a Super Bowl in the past, it is considered a Souper city. On Feb. 4 the city



will host a city-wide service blitz.

One of the ways North Carolina Baptists can support Souper Bowl of Caring and give to hunger-related ministries is to donate to the North Carolina Hunger Fund.

"This year we'll distribute about \$200,000 to ministries through the offering (in October) and designated hunger gifts," said John Butler, executive group leader in business services at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC).

See Souper service page 9



(BR photo graphic by Carly Conley/photos from creationswap.com and souperbowl.org)

2012 could be make or break year for future of gay ‘marriage’

By MICHAEL FOUST | Baptist Press

The effort to redefine marriage nationwide could take a critical turn either way this year, with as many as four more states potentially legalizing gay “marriage” or as many as six states possibly voting to protect the traditional definition of marriage.

Gay activists also could reach one of their biggest goals: a first-ever victory at the ballot box. All of the states involve legislatures or voter initiatives in what is shaping up to be the busiest year yet in the political battle over marriage’s definition – even more so than 2004. During that year, 13 of 13 states voted to amend their constitutions to define traditional marriage during a year that saw a social conservative wave. But no legislature in 2004 was threatening to pass a gay “marriage” bill, as is the case this year.

“Ultimately the people will decide on marriage [in Washington],” said Joseph Backholm, executive director of the conservative Family Policy Institute of Washington, the state currently in the spotlight. “And in 31 out of 31 states, they’ve voted not to redefine marriage, and we don’t expect that Washington will be any different.”

Democratic-controlled legislatures in Washington, Maryland and New Jersey are set to consider gay “marriage” bills, while Maine citizens are set to vote on a gay “marriage” referendum in November. If those four states redefine marriage, it would provide gay activists with a milestone: same-sex “marriage” would be legal in 10 states.

But conservatives – who warn that religious liberty will take a hit if those bills pass – also could win in each of those states. Washington and Maryland allow citizens to place recently enacted laws directly on the ballot, and New Jersey’s governor has threatened to veto that state’s bill while also urging it to be placed before voters. Elsewhere, North Carolina and Minnesota citizens will



consider constitutional amendments defining marriage as between a man and a woman. In New Hampshire, the Republican-controlled legislature is poised to vote on a bill that would reverse that state’s gay “marriage” law. When including Maine, voters in at least six states could have their say on marriage.

All total, the action in the states could make gay “marriage” a major presidential campaign topic.

“[It is] already shaping up to be a ‘make or break’ year for marriage in America,” Brian Brown, president of the National Organization for Marriage.

For the moment, all eyes are on Washington state, where Democratic Gov. Christine Gregoire announced in early January her support for a gay “marriage” bill and where the state House and Senate apparently have the votes to pass it.

Washington is the latest example of gay activists using civil unions or domestic partnerships as a stepping stone to pushing for gay “marriage.”

That happened in several other states, including Connecticut, New Hampshire and Vermont. Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper, a Democrat, used his January State of the State address to call for the legislature to pass civil unions.

Traditionalists warn the legalization of gay “marriage” would have a widespread negative impact on society, affecting the tax-exempt status of religious organizations, the religious liberty of private businesses and curriculum in schools.

Following is a 2012 state-by-state

overview of the marriage political battle:

● **North Carolina:** Voters in the Tar Heel State will get a chance May 8 to define marriage as between a man and a woman. All four states that border North Carolina already have constitutional marriage amendments.

The amendment states that “marriage between one man and one woman is the only domestic legal union that shall be valid or recognized in this State.” The amendment also would prohibit New Jersey-style civil unions that grant all the legal benefits of marriage, without the name. Visit VoteForMarriageNC.com.

● **Maryland:** One year after seeing a gay “marriage” bill die in the House of Delegates, Democratic Gov. Martin O’Malley has made a bill one of his priorities. A bill passed the Senate in 2011 but did not receive a vote in the House. Democrats control both chambers. Even if the bill is signed into law this year, Maryland citizens could collect signatures and place the issue on the ballot.

● **New Jersey:** Leaders in the Democratic-controlled legislature have made

a gay “marriage” bill one of their top priorities, even though Republican Gov. Chris Christie has vowed a veto.

● **Maine:** Three years after Maine voters rejected a gay “marriage” law, 53-47 percent, gay activists in the state are set to place the issue back on the ballot. They’ve collected enough signatures to put a referendum on the ballot and are hopeful they can make the state the first where voters embrace gay “marriage.”

● **New Hampshire:** The Republican-controlled House and Senate have veto-proof margins, and they’ll need them in order to get a bill overturning the state’s gay “marriage” law past Democratic Gov. John Lynch. Lynch signed that bill in 2009 when Democrats were in charge, but Republicans took back control during the 2010 election. The compromise bill would reverse the law but allow existing “marriages” to remain intact while putting civil unions back in place. Lynch is certain to veto it.

● **Minnesota:** Voters in November will consider a constitutional amendment that says “only a union of one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in Minnesota.” A majority of states – 29 – already have similar amendments. Visit MinnesotaForMarriage.com.



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CHURCH NEWS



Fairview Baptist Church, Dobson

The congregation of Fairview Baptist Church, Dobson, is marking its centennial year with several special events. On Jan. 8, a centennial quilt was dedicated by members during the morning worship service. The quilt contains 35 handcrafted squares depicting Christian symbols, Bible stories and historic images of the church. An embroidered banner listing the church's pastors and the years of their ministries was also presented during the service. Both items are on permanent display in the church's education wing. On Jan. 19, a centennial celebration was held on the night of the church's 100th anniversary. The highlight of the evening was the presentation of a centennial history book edited by the church's pastor, Andy Atkins. A reception was held in the church fellowship hall following the celebration. More events are planned throughout the year.

West Chowan Baptist Association

JoAnn Mizelle celebrated 25 years as administrative assistant Dec. 14. She was honored with a reception. John Pond, director of missions, presented Mizelle with a plaque. During her 25 years she has seen more than 250 pastors lead the 60 churches of the association. She has kept a list since 1986. She has served under five directors of missions. Mizelle also was the association's clerk for 10 years and treasurer for five years. "When I was interviewed for this position I knew this was where the Lord was calling me, and yes, it was a calling, not a job," Mizelle said.



Thrift Baptist Church, Charlotte

The Tuesday Morning Bible Study completed its study of the Bible on the last Tuesday of 2011 (Dec. 27). The group, which began in September 1974, was originally led by Johnnie Laye, a Thrift staff member. In 1991 when Laye was called to another church, Geneva Bennett became the leader. Excluding the summer months, the group met every Tuesday for 37 years until they completed the task of studying the entire Bible.



Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute

Students from Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute work in Camp Creek, a community in Greenville, Tenn., that was devastated by a tornado in April 2011. Since November Fruitland has sent four teams. Above, Kelly Robbins drills into the wood while working with fellow students Richard Bare and Jason Carroll. Mud Creek Baptist Church, Hendersonville, is helping with the school's efforts.



Rosemary Baptist Church, Roanoke Rapids

The Lucille Thomas Sunday School class raised \$400 in November-December to provide a freshwater well in Bolivia. The money was donated through Samaritan's Purse. The class also packed 50 boxes for Operation Christmas Child; this was in addition to the boxes packed by other members of the church.

AROUND THE STATE

Obituaries

SARA FRANCES KANOY PARKER died on Jan. 22 at Brookridge Retirement Community.

A graduate of Southern Seminary, formerly the Woman's Missionary Union Training School, Parker was the wife of the late Andrew Leroy Parker who pastored Friendly Avenue Baptist Church (formerly Asheboro Street Baptist Church), Greensboro, for 33 years. He also led a church in South Carolina.

She was moderator of the Piedmont Baptist Association, vice president and president of the Woman's Missionary

Union of North Carolina (WMU-NC), on the executive board and nominating committee of WMU-NC for 17 years, a director of the Home Mission Board (now North American Mission Board), a trustee of Wingate College (now university), second vice president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, and chairperson of the Camp Mundo Vista committee.

Parker received an honorary doctorate of humanities from Campbell University, was honored by a named room in the Centennial Building at Camp Mundo Vista, as well as a building at the camp named the Parker-Wyrick Lodge.

She is survived by her daughter Sandra Parker Adams of Winston-Salem; son William Andrew Parker of Asheville; sister Libby Parker of Eustis, Fla.; four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Memorials: The Leroy and Sara Parker Endowment Fund at the North Carolina Baptist Foundation, 201 Convention Drive, Cary, NC 27511-4257; Friendly Avenue Baptist Church, 4800 West Friendly Avenue, Greensboro, NC 27410; Hospice and Palliative Care, 101 Hospice Lane, Winston-Salem, NC 27106; or to a charity of the donor's choice.

Staff changes

Friendship Baptist Church, Jefferson, has called **RUSSELL HART** as pastor. Hart was the interim pastor for Friendship, and he is a former pastor of River-view Baptist Church, Creston.

LARRY PRIVOTT has been called as pastor to Riverside Baptist Church, Elizabeth City. Privott was ordained Jan. 15, and this is his first pastor position.

Turn to page 5 for Opportunity Corner items and submission information.

Conference challenges believers to make prayer priority

By **BUDDY OVERMAN** | BSC Communications

North Carolina Baptists from across the state wanted to learn how they could be empowered by seeking God through prayer, praise and His Word – and ultimately impact the world for Jesus Christ.

They did just that at the Empowered North Carolina Pastor/Staff Prayer Retreat. Though most would agree Christians believe in prayer and the power of prayer, not all of them are prayer warriors, contended some speakers.

The conference was held Jan. 10-11 at Ridgecrest Conference Center. Those in attendance heard how many people pray only when they are in need or when it's convenient.

Learning how to change prayer habits within the church was the focus of the conference.

James Walker, pastor of First Baptist Church in Alpharetta, Ga., spoke about the need to change the “culture of prayer” in many churches. He said prayer meetings that focus more on the needs of parishioners than on the mission of the church is a hindrance to empowerment.

Walker, who was the pastor of Biltmore Baptist Church in Arden, told pastors the prayer culture in their churches must change if they sense a lack of Kingdom-focused prayer. Pastors can do so by teaching on prayer, modeling prayer, and organizing the church to pray specifically for the mission of the church in the community and around the world.

John Franklin, president of John Franklin Ministries, reminded the audi-



James Walker, pastor of First Baptist Church in Alpharetta, Ga., and Richard Owen Roberts, president of International Awakening Ministries, take part in a panel discussion at the Empowered North Carolina Pastor/Staff Prayer Retreat. (BSC photo)

ence as he spoke on individual prayer that two motivations drive people to pray: desperation and need, and encountering Jesus. The second motivation, he said, is what should be the driving force behind prayer.

Franklin explained that God wants His people to pray out of a relationship rather than an activity. When Christians approach prayer as a means to encounter God, their walk with God is strengthened and God becomes a believer's joy and source of power to impact people around them. Franklin warned that if the prayer culture does not change, God will make the church “really desperate in the coming days.”

Empowered through praise

In the “rut and routine” of life, Franklin said Christians sometimes find it easy

to forego daily prayer time in favor of meeting worldly demands. It's a common problem many struggle to overcome.

One remedy to reclaim daily prayer time is to begin each day with personal praise and worship directed toward God. Franklin told the audience to focus on the great things God has done in their lives when they struggle to spend time in prayer. Scripture routinely commands believers to declare the works of the Lord. Franklin added that Christians become empowered when they “remember

the works of God.”

Franklin challenged believers to count the blessings God has provided in their lives and to remember how God delivered them through various trials and circumstances. He said when Christians reflect on the greatness of God in this way, they will be more likely to live empowered by a total dependence upon the Lord.

While praise is a mighty weapon when believers encounter spiritual warfare, Richard Owen Roberts, president of International Awakening Ministries, told the audience that believers often credit Satan with too much power.

Roberts said spiritual attacks can be defeated with one word of praise directed toward God. “One hundred billion words spoken of Satan cannot defeat one acclamation of God,” he said.

Empowered through God's Word

As important as prayer is to a Christian's life, hearing the truths of God's Word and putting those truths into practice is just as important.

This requires effort from pastors and laypersons. Those who preach have a responsibility to present the whole counsel of God's Word. Those who listen cannot pick and choose which parts to obey. When both sides do their part, the church becomes a powerful agent of lives changed by the gospel.

When asked if there is a “famine of hearing the Word,” Roberts responded with a tough critique of modern preaching. He said many sermons are aimed at the head, and not at the heart, of listeners.

The church must purge itself of “all the nonsense” it calls preaching and return to the New Testament model of preaching, Roberts said. It's a model that includes a mix of sound doctrine and exposition of the Word through the power of the Holy Spirit.

When the Word of God is used properly it will make incredible differences in individual lives, in the life of the church, and in society, Roberts said. True preaching should be an experience with God where believers “meet the Lord in His Word.”

That type of Spirit-filled preaching will empower the church to fulfill its mandate to reach the nations with the gospel.

For more information about prayer and prayer resources, visit the Office of Prayer page at ncbaptist.org. **BR**

Battleford cowboy church is ‘point of light’ in darkness

By **MELISSA LILLEY** | BSC Communications

You'll hear lots of country music, and the floors won't have any fancy carpet or tile – usually just dirt or concrete.

The flavor of the cowboy church in Battleford – located in the Canadian province of Saskatchewan – is a little different than most, said Jeff Smith, a North Carolina pastor and cowboy missionary for the Cowboy Church Network of North America. And since cowboys are usually out on the trails on Sundays, cowboy churches meet on weeknights.

“Cowboy churches that reach people are those that are flexible,” Smith said. “We do what works. If it doesn't work, we change plans and do something better.”

“We want people to come as they are,” he added.

Earlier this month, Smith preached

during the official launch of Battleford. Two people prayed to receive Christ at that service.

One woman accepted Christ at an earlier service before the cowboy church officially launched. The church is the first of its kind in the province – and only the third in the country.

“We are more outward thinking than inward thinking,” Smith said. “We're reaching lost people. We are thinking about what it will take to reach that lost person.”

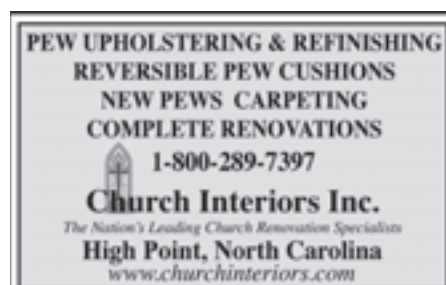
Smith is helping lead the way for

North Carolina Baptists to plant 10 cowboy churches in Canada.

Church planting is the focus of the partnership that began last year between the Baptist State Convention of North

Carolina (BSC) and the Canadian National Baptist Convention. North Carolina Baptists are committed to helping plant 40 churches in Southern Ontario,

See Cowboy church page 9



How's your Lottie Moon Offering?

The *Biblical Recorder* is asking churches to share their final results of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. We are looking for churches to share ideas about how they promoted the offering as well as how much over or under the goal they were. Please notify the BR staff at editor@BRnow.org or call (919) 847-2127. Send items by Feb. 8 for possible inclusion in the Feb. 18 issue.



OPPORTUNITY CORNER

Disaster relief training offered

Join the North Carolina Baptist Men in efforts to help those who have been affected by disasters. Whether you need recertification or are looking for basic training, the N.C. Baptist Men have training events available from March through June.

Registration is required, and costs vary from \$25 to \$40.

- **March 2-3:** Lenoir County (all disciplines)
- **March 16-17:** Wake County (basic and crosstraining)
- **April 20-21:** Union County (basic and crosstraining)
- **May 18-19:** McDowell County (basic and crosstraining)
- **June 1-2:** Cherokee County (basic and crosstraining)

To register, visit baptistsonmission.org. Contact Mary Mountz for more information at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5606, or mmountz@ncbaptist.org.

Multicultural young leaders summit

Pastors, nominate the young leaders in your church to attend the Multicultural Young Leaders Summit on March 16-17 at Caraway Conference Center in Sophia. This training event for young

leaders, leaders of youth or otherwise, is a two-year commitment to become godly, multicultural minded leaders for the next generation. The cost is \$50, and the deadline to register is March 9.

Visit ncbaptist.org or contact Ken Tan at ktan@ncbaptist.org or (800) 395-5102, ext. 5641.

Looking at your church in 3D

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's Congregational Services Group wants to help lead North Carolina Baptist churches in creating a disciple-making culture in which lives are changed by the power of God.

Encourage church leaders to attend a 3D equipping event to learn about the three Ds: discover, develop, deliver. Upcoming events are March 20 at First Baptist Church, Rocky Mount, and April 19 at Hopewell Baptist Church, Monroe.

Registration is online at ncbaptist.org. Contact Brian Upshaw for more information: bupshaw@ncbaptist.org or (800) 395-5102, ext. 5632.

Key leaders to discuss marriage amendment

On Sunday, Feb. 26 at 7 p.m., an event called "An Evening of Salt and Light: A Christian Citizenship Conference" will be held at Bear Creek Baptist Church in

Ledger. The focus of this conference is to provide people with biblical insight and responses to the North Carolina marriage amendment vote set for May 8. Mark Creech, executive director of the Christian Action League of North Carolina, and Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, will be the keynote speakers. Contact Garland Honeycutt at (828) 467-7605.

WMU-NC looking for volunteers for blitz week at Camp Mundo Vista

Camp Mundo Vista in Asheboro is looking for volunteers March 26-31 for a few days or the week. Work teams will be painting, roofing, cleaning, grounds work, and doing other tasks.

The cost is \$25 per day for housing and meals. Contact Margaret Harding to register at mharding@wmunc.org or (866) 210-8602, ext. 209. Visit wmunc.org for a registration form.

N.C. youth hope to have Deep Impact

Deep Impact Missions Weeks are pre-packaged week-long mission experiences sponsored by N.C. Baptist Men that

provide middle and high school students with the opportunity to share God's love.

Students will participate in numerous service opportunities such as sports evangelism, prayerwalking, construction and Vacation Bible School camps. North Carolina weeks for Deep Impact are offered June through August.

- **June 11-16:** Greensboro (\$180)
- **June 18-23:** Hendersonville (\$180)
- **June 18-23:** Avery County (\$180)
- **June 23-30:** Tegucigalpa, Honduras (\$1,400 – high school and college students)

- **June 25-30:** Shelby (\$180)
- **July 1-4:** Shelby (\$90)
- **July 9-14:** Rockingham (\$180)
- **July 16-21:** Elizabethtown (\$180)
- **July 23-28:** Red Springs (\$180)
- **July 30-Aug 4:** Red Springs (\$180)
- **July 30-Aug 4:** Charlotte (\$180)
- **Aug 5-11:** Fort Caswell (\$297)

View the schedule and locations at baptistsonmission.org/Camps/Deep-Impact. The price includes meals, lodging, insurance and a T-shirt. Check the site for more information.

Contact Tom Beam at tbeam@ncbaptist.org or (800) 395-5102, ext. 5626.

Submissions

The *Biblical Recorder* is pleased to publish staff changes, church news and events with a statewide interest. Please send information at least two months in advance of any item you want to submit for opportunity corner and as soon as it happens when it relates to events or mission trips with your church or association to dianna@BRnow.org or *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512. Have questions? Call (919) 847-2127.

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First Baptist Church Indian Trail

Contact Phil Stone at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5643,

or pstone@ncbaptist.org. Register: fbcit.org.

Featured speakers: Allan Taylor, minister of education at FBC Woodstock, Ga.; Steve Parr, vice president of Sunday School and evangelism at the Baptist Convention of Georgia; Josh Hunt, national Sunday School consultant and author

Sponsored by First Baptist Indian Trail and the Sunday School ministries of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina

Culture Reach conference urges gospel conversations

By MELISSA LILLEY | BSC Communications

North Carolina Baptists are invited to attend the annual statewide evangelism conference Feb. 27 at Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem for a day of learning how to understand culture and how to engage in gospel-centered conversations.

“Culture Reach” is the conference theme, and participants will be challenged to become more aware of how culture is changing and how it impacts evangelism.

While the gospel never changes, the challenge comes in understanding how to communicate the gospel to the present culture, said Marty Dupree, evangelism and church growth team leader for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC).

“For example, people aren’t necessarily interested in church. Now, for many people, it’s not even on their radar,” Dupree said. But many of them are still curious about spiritual things, he added.

One of the best approaches to evangelism in today’s culture, Dupree said, is to engage people in a conversation.

“Evangelism is an act of compassion and not aggression,” he said. “It’s caring about a soul.”

This year’s conference is organized into three themes: youth and culture, the gospel in culture, and popular culture and media for evangelism.

In one of the sessions, Alex Kendrick will speak about media, culture and evangelism. Kendrick starred in “Courageous,” the latest film from Sherwood Pictures.

Rusty Martin Sr. and Rusty Martin Jr., North Carolina actors who also appeared



Rusty Martin Sr., right, signs his autograph on a “Courageous” DVD Jan. 17 at a LifeWay store in Cary. Martin along with his son Rusty Martin Jr., second from right, and Donald Howze, third from right, were at the store on the day the movie was released to talk with fans. The three are from North Carolina. The Martins are members of Turner Memorial Baptist Church in Garner. Howze lives in Raleigh. (BR photo by Dianna L. Cagle)

in “Courageous,” will share their testimony.

Alvin Reid is associate dean for proclamation studies and evangelism professor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest. He will speak during the event about youth and culture. Reid hopes to help North Carolina Baptists understand how to apply the gospel to a “diverse, digital and changing social media culture.”

Although today’s youth live in a world driven by technology, their desire to connect and to be part of something significant is perhaps greater than any other generation.

“We tend to build student ministry on events and attraction,” Reid said. “This is a generation hungry for truth. They want something real, something that lasts.”

“There is a hunger for certainty and community.”

Youth also need godly mentors who speak truth into their lives.

“Too often we’ve given advice to teenagers instead of the Good News,” he said. “Any advice has to flow out of the gospel.”

Merrie Johnson, BSC senior consultant for student evangelism and ministry, will also share about youth and culture.

Alex McFarland, a popular speaker

and author on apologetics, will speak on the basics of apologetics and how to apply apologetics for Kingdom impact.

“Apologetics can impact your walk and witness personally, but can also jumpstart the outreach and discipleship of every local church,” McFarland said.

McFarland’s interest in apologetics developed soon after he prayed to receive Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Savior at the age of 21.

At the time he was a student at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro. As he shared his faith, his friends on campus began asking lots of questions about the Christian faith.

“I began to see that God could use apologetics to give believers a renewed understanding and appreciation of the faith,” McFarland said. “I began to see apologetics and Christian worldview content as a two-fold tool for evangelism and revival.”

McFarland’s passion is to see revival in the church.

“I believe this revival will come about as we pray and seek the Lord,” he said, “but also as we return to His Word and prepare ourselves to present, explain and defend the faith before a new generation.”

Speaking during the afternoon session

are Don Wilton, senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Spartanburg, S.C., and Chuck Register, BSC executive leader for church planting and missions development. Register

will speak about the Find it Here emphasis on missions mobilization. You can learn more at finditherenc.org.

The conference is free and registration is not required. For a complete schedule, visit ncbaptist.org/culturereach. **BR**

Historical committee announces writing competition

The Historical Committee of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) has announced its annual writing competition that seeks to recognize and reward excellent historical publications.

North Carolina Baptists may submit entries in the following categories: Church History; Association History (includes agencies and institutions); Biography, Autobiography, Memoirs, and Personal Reflection.

In order to be eligible for the 2012 competition, entries must have been published in 2011 or 2012.

To submit entries, mail two copies to: Baptist State Convention of North Carolina Historical Committee, P.O. Box 1107, Cary, NC 27512-1107. The deadline for

submissions is June 30. Winners will be recognized at the BSC’s Annual Meeting in Greensboro in November.

For more information contact Norma Jean Johnson at (800) 395-5102 ext. 5618 or njohnson@ncbaptist.org.

The Historical Committee seeks to encourage churches, associations, institutions and agencies affiliated with the BSC to preserve their historical documents, artifacts, correspondence and records.

All competition entries become the property of the Historical Committee and will be added to the North Carolina Baptist Historical Collection at Wake Forest University. For more information about the collection, visit <http://zsr.wfu.edu/collections/special/baptist/>. **BR**



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N.C. Baptists increase mission offering gifts

SBC reports CP contributions down 7%

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

North Carolina Baptists seem to have a tender heart when it comes to missions. In 2011, giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, Annie Armstrong Easter Offering and the North Carolina Missions Offering (NCMO) exceeded amounts contributed in 2010.

“Even in a down economy, I see God calling people out to minister,” said John Butler, executive group leader in business services at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC). “As people get their hands involved in ministry when their financial means come back they tend to want to invest their funds as well as their time and energy.”

In a financial report released by the BSC, 2011 giving between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31 shows an 8.07 percent increase for international missions (from \$11,652,395 in 2010 to \$12,592,515 in 2011)*, a 7.18 percent increase for North American missions (from \$5,245,512 in 2010 to \$5,622,012 in 2011), and a 2.49 percent increase for the NCMO (from \$1,871,204 in 2010 to \$1,917,740 in 2011).

Overall the BSC’s 2011 Cooperative Program (CP) budget was \$29,814,749, a decrease of 8.78 percent (from 32,685,480 in 2010). CP dollars with no restrictions or designations were down 1.16 percent from \$28,232,359 (2010) to \$27,905,656 (2011).

The amount specifically excluding the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) dropped 17.45 percent (from \$562,406 in 2010 to \$464,282 in 2011).

Butler said he sees some “systemic changes taking place in how people support missions.”

Directed giving and designated gifts are the “en vogue” thing to do, he said.

“It doesn’t bode well for the Cooperative Program and the idea for the shared missions giving,” Butler said.

Giving to the missions offerings allows Baptists to reach the underserved parts of America and unreached people groups around the globe, Butler said, stressing that “the Cooperative Program is the single best way to ... for lack of a better phrase ... cover all your bases. You are supporting international missions; you are supporting national missions; you are supporting local missions. [It] allows missionaries to focus time on ministry rather than focus their time trying to raise money through the churches.”

Because of the down economy churches are struggling as well.

“Churches aren’t able to send the same amounts as in past years because their budgets have suffered,” Butler said.

Churches struggle to pay certain fixed costs such as building payments and salaries.

“Missions is usually the nonfixed cost that suffers,” said Butler, indicating that generally churches give a fixed amount to CP. That amount is usually set by the church’s finance committee. Unlike the missions offering, churches don’t usually take up a special offering for CP.

Butler advised churches to make CP a percentage amount in the budget, rather than a fixed amount. As

the budgets increase, so will the church’s CP giving.

BSC leaders have moved each year during its annual meeting to raise its CP giving a half percentage point. Even while tightening its belt in other areas, the Convention has worked to continue to raise the CP amount sent to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Butler highlighted the push for church planting expressing the statistic that new churches reach more people within a community than older, more established churches. Giving to the Cooperative Program allows finances to help with church planting efforts.

“It’s causing churches to rethink their values and their priorities in terms of how they can be more effective in reaching their communities with essential resources.”

Because money is tight, many are evaluating whether they are using their resources wisely.

“I see [God] engaging people in hands-on missions because maybe they don’t have the money to give but they want to give to ministries across the state,” Butler said.

Churches can restrict funds given through the Convention by designating that certain amounts go to specific organizations or excluding any of the funds that go to the SBC or another entity.

Any restricted funds are sent straight to the organization and are not considered CP giving.

What is the Cooperative Program?

The Cooperative Program is a program of giving that allows churches to pool their resources to aid various missions and ministries of the Southern Baptist Convention with a single contribution.

State and regional conventions collect CP funds. They keep a portion and forward a percentage to the SBC. The SBC distributes the funds to all the missions efforts, seminaries, organizations, etc.

SBC numbers

A news release issued in early January reported that year-to-date contributions to Southern Baptist national and international missions and ministries received by the SBC Executive Committee are down.

**“Even in a down economy, I see God calling people out to minister.”
– John Butler**

As of Dec. 31, 2011 giving is down 7.01 percent below the same time frame in 2010. The total includes receipts from state conventions and fellowships, churches and individuals for distribution according to the 2011-12 SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget.

Gifts received by the Executive Committee for distribution through the Cooperative Program Allocation Budget totaled \$44,269,204, which is \$3,334,711 behind the \$47,603,915 received at the end of December 2010. For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the year-to-date total of \$44,269,204 is 95.20 percent of the \$46,500,000 budgeted to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America.

As of Dec. 31, designated giving of \$11,700,343 for the same year-to-date period is 3.04 percent, or \$367,238, below gifts of \$12,067,581 received at this point in the previous year. This total includes only those gifts received and distributed by the Executive Committee and does not reflect designated gifts contributed directly to SBC entities.

“It is a great blessing to witness the faithfulness of God’s people to give to God’s work even in difficult times,” said Frank Page, SBC Executive Committee president and chief executive officer. He cited the lingering impact of the economic crisis that has affected so many churches.

Noting that consumer confidence continues to lag, he said, “Our confidence in God’s gracious provision has not wavered. The promise of Philippians 4:19 remains true – our God ‘will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.’”

December’s CP allocation receipts for SBC work totaled \$15,841,477. This is the first month in the new fiscal year – which began in October – that contributions have exceeded monthly budget projections.

During the last fiscal year (Oct. 1, 2010 - Sept. 30, 2011), Cooperative Program receipts for the year were up 0.06 percent – the first increase since 2007. Combined CP and designated giving for the year, meanwhile, were up 0.17 percent.

* Numbers have been rounded to the nearest dollar.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – A report from Baptist Press was edited into this story to reflect the SBC CP giving as a whole.) **BR**

\$100,000 gift to help Fruitland

George Shinn, former owner of the New Orleans/Charlotte Hornets, gave \$100,000 to Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute Jan. 26 during a chapel service.

Shinn and his wife, Denise, presented the check to David Horton, Fruitland’s president.

“George Shinn has helped students at Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute in the 1970s and 80s. We are extremely grateful for the renewed commitment demonstrated by the generous gift from George and Denise Shinn and the TruLight Foundation,” said David B. Horton, Fruitland’s president.

Shinn established TruLight Foundation in 2011 “to carry out a mission of service to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the people of the world and to promote a healthy and cancer-free lifestyle through nurturing the body, mind and spirit,” according to the founda-



GEORGE SHINN

tions’s website: *trulightfoundation.com*. Shinn, who was the speaker for the chapel service, did not restrict the use of the gift. Horton said the donation will go toward promoting Fruitland to potential students and help with accreditation expenses as well as applying some toward the debt on the chapel, which stands at \$930,000.

“As vice-president of development, J.D. Grant has been instrumental in establishing a tremendous relationship with the Shinn family and helping them see the great potential at Fruitland,” Horton said. The Shinn family indicated a desire to continue helping Fruitland. **BR**

BSC Board

Continued from page 1

The North Carolina Missions Offering received \$1,917,740.06, which is 2.49 percent over the 2010 offering. The goal for 2012 is \$2.1 million. The offering helps support church planting in the state, and it also supports the ministries of N.C. Baptist Men, who recently completed four homes destroyed by tornados last April.

Cooperative Program (CP) giving for 2011, however, was 8.78 percent behind budget. N.C. Baptists gave \$29,814,748.77 – a deficit of \$2,870,731.23. Preliminary reports for last year, however, show the convention finished the year in the “black.”

In spite of the decline, the actual dollar amount from CP receipts sent from the state to the Southern Baptist Convention has increased by nearly 4 percent since 2006, Hollifield said. To read more about Cooperative Program giving see related story on page 7.

“Even though we’ve had less dollars,” Hollifield said, “we’re sending more and I thank God for that.”

Hollifield also addressed concerns from some who contend the convention is investing too many resources in church planting, instead of helping existing churches in North Carolina.

“The staff invests a lot of time in helping smaller [existing] churches,” he said. “We want to create more healthy churches – we’re offering resources. I am in more smaller churches than I’m in larger [churches],” he said. “We can do more by working together than we can ever accomplish separately.”

‘Begging’ for the gospel

Hollifield praised reports regarding ongoing North Carolina mission partnerships in places such as Toronto, Moldova, Southeast Asia and New York. In New York, five new church plants have been started along with two church planting centers.

The Convention also plans to work with Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary over the next three years to identify unreached people groups in the state. This research will provide statistical data on people who do not know the gospel of Jesus Christ, said Michael Sowers, who directs Great Commission partnerships for BSC.

“A lot of times we go to the airports, and we pass by the very people we’re getting on a plane to go and take the gospel to,” Sowers said.

Marriage Amendment

The Board also heard a report on how they can become involved with the May 8 vote on a marriage amendment that would define marriage to be only between a man and a woman. Last November, the Convention voted unanimously to support the amendment.

Jarrold Scott, newly elected chairman of the Christian Life and Public Affairs Committee for the Board of Directors, challenged pastors to “hold up marriage” in the pulpits.

“We need pastors who will champion marriage – not only by their lifestyle, their personal life but also from the pulpit to teach what does the Bible have to say about marriage,” Scott said.

Scott cautioned the Board to be aware of legal limits that prohibit them from using their influence as Board members or as pastors to tell people how they should and shouldn’t vote. He encouraged them to preach on how God defines marriage in the Bible. To read more about legal limitations on this issue, see the guest col-



Milton A. Hollifield Jr., left, executive director-treasurer of the Baptist State Convention, presents a gavel to Bobby Blanton, pastor of Lake Norman Baptist Church in Huntersville, for his service as president of the Executive Committee. (BR photo by Shawn Hendricks)

umn on page 12 by Brian Davis, BSC’s executive leader for administration and convention relations.

“This is a very emotional debate for a lot of folks,” Davis said. “It would be very easy for media outlets to contact you as a member of the board and draw you into a debate and emotionally charge it.”

Each member of the Board was given a binder with articles from opponents and proponents of the amendment and information on its history and comparisons with other states. Steve Corts, pastor of Center Grove Baptist in Clemmons, compiled the information. It is available by contacting Davis at the BSC at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5506, or bdavis@ncbaptist.org. To read more on this issue, go to clpablog.org.

New officers

Michael Barrett, pastor of Pleasant Garden Baptist Church in Pleasant Garden, was elected president of the Board. Phil Qualls, retired pastor of Apex Baptist Church in Apex and vice president of the Board, was reelected as vice president and nominated Barrett.



MICHAEL BARRETT

Barrett has pastored three churches in North Carolina and has pastored for more than 36 years. He has served at Pleasant Garden for the last 24 years as well as on various Baptist committees in the state and on the Board of Directors. He served as an IMB (International Mission Board) trustee for eight years. He and his wife, Teresa, have been married for 38 years, and they have two grown daughters. He and his wife were foster parents for 13 years and cared for 52 children. Barrett replaced Bobby Blanton, pastor of Lake Norman Baptist Church in Huntersville, who completed his four-year term on the Board.

Theresa Jones, executive assistant for administration of the BSC, was reelected as Board secretary. All officers ran unopposed.

Executive Committee

Four members of the Board were elected to serve as at-large members of the Executive Committee.

Todd Marlow, pastor of Westmoreland Baptist Church nominated Mike Ivey, pastor of West Cramerton Baptist Church in Cramerton. Ivey nominated Tracey Bolick, of Laurel Springs Baptist Church in Deep Gap. Mark Brady, pastor of Fellowship Baptist Church in Moyock, nominated Rob Roberts who is the associational missionary in Chowan Baptist Association. Rit Varriale, pastor of Elizabeth Baptist Church in Shelby, nominated Sandy Marks, pastor of Alexis Baptist Church in Alexis. All ran unopposed.

Vision Fulfillment

Hollifield gave an update regarding the Vision Fulfillment committee. He named three study committees to focus on communication, church planting and existing churches, and strategy.

The first committee will be chaired by Davis, and the facilitator will be Tom Howell, chief executive officer of Unleashed by Design. The study committee is expected to complete its work by April 1.

Chuck Register, BSC executive leader of church planting and missions development, will serve as chair of the second committee. Brian Upshaw, church ministry team leader with congregational services, is the facilitator. They are expected to complete work by May.

The third committee will also be led by Davis, along with facilitator Russ Conley, who works with congregational services. They plan to bring their report to the Executive Committee in August.

Caraway

The Board approved the development of construction documents for an additional lodging facility at Caraway Conference Center. The new three-story facility will have eight rooms and a kitchen area/conference room on each floor.

The expenses of the construction documents – which will be about \$100,000 – will come from the “New Beginnings” capital campaign.

The \$7.5-million campaign will provide for facility expansion and future growth.

The board meets again May 22-23. **BR**

Chairpersons of Executive Committee

- **Business Services** – Jimmy Adams, Cornerstone Baptist Church, Oak Ridge
- **Christian Higher Education** – Rit Varriale, pastor of Elizabeth Baptist Church, Shelby
- **Christian Life and Public Affairs** – Jarrod Scott, pastor of Green Pines Baptist Church, High Point
- **Christian Social Services** – Wanda Dellinger, Green Street Baptist Church, High Point
- **Church Planting and Missions Development** – Todd Marlow, pastor of Westmoreland Baptist Church, Charlotte
- **Communications** – Jon Hall, pastor of Oak Grove Baptist Church, Charlotte
- **Congregational Services** – Patrick Fuller, pastor of Southside Baptist Church, Greensboro
- **Evangelization** – Randy White, LaGrange Park Baptist Church, Fayetteville

Souper service Continued from page 1

The Convention, which does not have a ministry directly addressing hunger needs, acts as a “conduit for the generosity of others,” said Butler.

The state received a little more than \$400,000 in 2011; \$200,000 ended up on the foreign mission field, distributed through Baptist Global Response. The North American Mission Board also received some and reallocates part back to ministries in North Carolina. Butler estimates \$200,000 is spent in North Carolina.

With one gift, N.C. Baptists can address hunger on a local, state and international level.

Churches and associations can apply for grants (up to \$3,000) to help with hunger-related ministries – anything from food pantries, soup kitchens, food banks, Meals on Wheels, community gardens, backpack buddy programs and shelters.

Butler said churches have even been started through these food ministries.

Each year, N.C. Baptists help fund 80-100 ministries. Some are ongoing outreach efforts or one-time events like holiday meals. Some of the efforts help

community organizations, but churches and associations that receive money have to be directly involved in those efforts.

Each recipient must turn in a quarterly report to the Convention sharing the story of the number of decisions for Christ and other related results.

“These are all designated funds,” Butler stressed, adding that none of the grant money comes from Cooperative Program contributions.

With the economy struggling, the amount of donations has declined. The BSC has information to help churches promote the offering as well as applications for funds. Churches or associations are encouraged to plan ahead and apply for a grant next year.

The N.C. Hunger Fund has also made strides in going paperless. Ministries are able to fill out reports and submit them online. This allows the Convention to compile the information faster and easier for the North American Mission Board.

To request materials about the North Carolina Hunger Fund, contact Emily Compton at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5536, or ecompton@ncbaptist.org. **B3**

Court allows ‘Jesus prayers’ to be banned in N.C. county

By **TODD STARNES** | Baptist Press

The Supreme Court will not intervene in a controversy over Christian prayers delivered before commission meetings in Forsyth County.

The North Carolina chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union and Americans United for Separation of Church and State praised the decision as a victory for the First Amendment. The high court’s decision Jan. 17 leaves in place a federal appeals court ruling that held that the predominantly Christian prayers at the start of commission meetings violated the First Amendment.

The court found that more than three-quarters of the 33 invocations given before meetings between May 2007 and December 2008 referred to “Jesus,” “Jesus Christ,” “Christ” or “Savior.” That, according to the court, was a problem. “Faith is as deeply important as it is deeply personal, and the government should not appear to suggest that some faiths have it wrong and others got it right,” Fourth Circuit Judge J. Harvey

Wilkinson wrote in the July 29 court ruling. The three-judge panel split, 2-1.

Americans United Executive Director Barry Lynn hailed the Supreme Court’s decision not to consider the case. His organization was one of the groups sponsoring the lawsuit. “When government meetings are opened regularly with Christian prayer, it sends the unmistakable message that non-Christians are second-class citizens in their own community,” Lynn said in a statement. “That’s unconstitutional, and it’s just plain wrong.”

But David Cortman, an Alliance Defense Fund attorney representing Forsyth County, said the ruling makes Christians second-class citizens. “That’s what this case shows. We believe the Court has missed an opportunity to clear up the differing opinions among the various circuit courts. It really is disappointing.”

The decision means prayers are still allowed, but the county must police the words to make sure one faith group is not represented over another faith group. **B3**

Cowboy church Continued from page 4

10 biker churches, and 10 cowboy churches throughout Canada by 2021.

“Planting 10 cowboy churches is a key component in the goal North Carolina Baptists have set to facilitate planting these 60 new churches over the next 10 years,” said Chuck Register, BSC executive leader for church planting and missions development. “This new congregation in Battleford is the first step in fulfilling that Kingdom-minded goal.”

“Our prayer is that for generations to come, lives will be transformed by the gospel through the Great Commission ministries of this new congregation.”

Michael Sowers leads the BSC Office of Great Commission Partnerships and is working to help connect North Carolina Baptists with strategic church-to-church partnerships in Canada.

“I’m excited to see all types of North Carolina churches getting connected in Canada for Kingdom impact,” Sowers said.

“We pray that the cowboy church in Battleford is a springboard to many more cowboy churches in Canada.”

Laborers needed

Thirty-four people attended the launch of the Battleford cowboy church. Though this may seem small to some people, Smith considered it a good turnout for Canada.

“In Canada, there is a lot of terrain and areas with no churches,” Smith said. “We need points of light all over Canada so that people can get to these churches.”

“We’re not worried about building super big buildings,” he added. “We want to plant a lot of smaller churches.”



One of the ways cowboy churches are planted or grown is through outreach events like rodeos. (Cowboy Church Network of North America photo)

In the Greater Toronto Area, where the BSC is focused on planting 40 churches, there is one church for nearly every 275,000 people. In that area there are only about 40 Southern Baptist churches.

About 43 percent of Canadians did not attend any religious worship service last year. Baptists statistically, at 2.4 percent, are the largest evangelical group in Canada. Two-thirds of them, though, never attend church.

“We have towns with up to 2,000 people and no evangelical witness,” said Maurice Tenkink, prairie/rural lead church planting catalyst for the Canadian National Baptist Convention. The word “missionary” is often perceived in Canada as a negative term. Some Canadians are two or three generations removed from any Christian witness at all.

“The church culture is just not here like it is in America,” Tenkink said.

Fewer believers means fewer people to share the

work. In North Carolina, Smith can start a cowboy church and then invite pastors from the area to help out.

“You can’t do that in Canada,” he said. “We have to raise up indigenous leaders. We’ve got to reach them, disciple them and train them to be leaders.”

For the next several months, Smith plans to preach once a month during the cowboy church worship service in the city of Battleford. Discipleship groups will meet in the weeks between worship services.

Although the cowboy culture is prominent, Tenkink said cowboy churches are a new idea for the area, primarily due to a lack of leaders. Still, the Battleford church has been well received, and Tenkink expects attendance and interest to increase.

A cowboy culture

About five years ago Smith helped start a cowboy church in Alberta. His first cowboy church was in North Carolina in 2003. He wanted to reach out to the cowboys he met when he began riding horses with his daughter. Cowboys weren’t interested in going to church, but they’d talk with him on the trail about Jesus.

“I was burdened for their soul,” Smith said.

Planting a cowboy church is the same as planting any other church. The theology is the same – the gospel of Jesus Christ is central.

North Carolina Baptists are encouraged to join the cowboy church planting effort in Canada.

“We’re not building on someone else’s foundation,” Smith said. “It’s pioneer work for the churches that want to partner with us.”

To learn how to get involved in cowboy church planting in Canada, visit ncbaptist.org/gcp. **B3**

N.C. Baptist Men recognized for disaster relief efforts

By BUDDY OVERMAN | BSC Communications

North Carolina Baptist Men (NCBM) staff and volunteers were honored during the 32nd annual Martin Luther King Triangle Interfaith Prayer Breakfast Jan. 16 for their service during the aftermath of the devastating tornado that struck several Raleigh communities last year on April 16.

Bruce E. Lightner, chairman of the Raleigh Martin Luther King Celebration Committee, lives in a Raleigh neighborhood that was in the storm's path.

He still remembers how frightened and worried he was for the safety of those in his community when he first saw the unimaginable destruction caused by the tornado.

"It looked like a bomb had exploded in my community," Lightner said. "There was devastation everywhere."

The tornado that hit Raleigh was one of at least 28 tornadoes that touched down in North Carolina that day and killed 24 people throughout the state. Nine months later, the destruction still seems unimaginable to Lightner. Multiple homes in his community were destroyed and many others severely damaged. Residential streets were littered with downed trees, power lines, and cars crushed under the weight of fallen trees and debris.

In the blink of an eye, Lightner's quiet neighborhood

was transformed into something that resembled a war zone. The damage left many of his friends and neighbors without food, water and shelter.

But it was not long before NCBM volunteers arrived on the scene to help with recovery efforts. Lightner said the speedy response and a willingness to get right to work separated NCBM from other relief agencies.

"The morning after the storm had passed these people were in our neighborhoods bringing comfort, service and hope," he said. "They did not need meetings or press conferences; they did not need anyone's permission except the Lord's."

In his remarks, Lightner thanked NCBM for the swift work in clearing trees from homes and driveways, for bringing hot food and water to people, and for helping victims find hotels and shelters.

"I rise this morning to simply say thank you to a group of people who did not live in Raleigh and certainly did not live in my community, but who came to our rescue when everybody else was still in a state of shock," Lightner said.

Within hours of the tornado outbreak, NCBM volunteers fanned out across the state to help those in need. Hundreds of volunteers helped repair homes, removed fallen trees and debris, located shelters for victims, served on feeding teams, and assisted with



"The morning after the storm had passed these people were in our neighborhoods bringing comfort, service and hope."

— Bruce E. Lightner

mobile shower/laundry units. NCBM served more than 79,000 meals to tornado victims and completed more than 1,400 work requests. Volunteers also led devotions, passed out Bibles, worked with children and, most importantly, shared the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Richard Brunson, NCBM executive director-treasurer, said he is honored and humbled by the recognition. Brunson said Martin Luther King's life of service toward others was driven by his faith in God and is a good example to follow. "Dr. King taught that service requires a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love," he said.

Brunson added that the volunteers who serve with NCBM do so out of the same passion and love for God that motivated King. "There were thousands of men, women and students who served after the April tornadoes and they were serving out of a heart full of grace and a soul generated by Jesus' love," he said.

Baptist Men efforts are supported through the North Carolina Missions Offering (ncmissionsoffering.org). **B3**

Designate one Sunday Baptist College Day

By BUDDY OVERMAN | BSC Communications

North Carolina Baptist churches are encouraged to name one Sunday during February as "Baptist College Day" and to use this day to celebrate how God is at work on the campuses of the five educational institutions affiliated with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC).

One way churches can celebrate Baptist College Day is by scheduling a speaker from one of the affiliated institutions: Campbell University, Chowan University, Gardner-Webb University, Mars Hill College and Wingate University.

Churches may also consider inviting college students to speak, distributing bulletin inserts related to Baptist College Day, or hosting a special prayer time for faculty, staff and administration serving these institutions.

Baptist College Day is also an opportunity to make students aware of the North Carolina Baptist Scholarship Program. Each year, the BSC awards scholarships to students from cooperating churches who are enrolled as full-time undergraduate students on the main campus of a BSC affiliated school. Nearly 700 Baptist scholarships were awarded for the 2011-2012 academic year, totaling more than \$800,000.

The scholarship is renewable for a



Samantha Redman, seen here with her father David at Gardner-Webb University's homecoming game, is thankful for her N.C. Baptist scholarship. A nursing major, Redman said GWU has challenged her academically and spiritually. (Contributed photo)

maximum of four years. Students must apply each year and maintain a minimum 2.5 GPA to be eligible for the scholarship. As part of the application process, students also answer essay questions about their personal testimony, the Cooperative Program, and their involvement in campus ministry.

Justin Giersbrook, a junior social studies education major at Wingate University, is a scholarship recipient from Chapel Hill. Giersbrook said the North Carolina Baptist Scholarship Program is an answered prayer that has allowed him to continue his college education at a school

that is teaching him the importance of growing closer to God.

"This scholarship has been huge in the way that it has provided me a way to remain at Wingate to learn more about what His demand on my life is and to be used for His purposes," he said.

Giersbrook's experience at a Baptist university has been invaluable to his growth as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Being away from the daily influence of his parents and his home

church has allowed him time at Wingate to learn what it means to take ownership of his faith.

Giersbrook's fellowship with other believers on campus and the instruction gleaned from time in the classroom has taught him how to seek God's glory each day. "My walk with God is different. I no longer see God as a Sunday or Wednesday activity, but my entire life was made to worship Him every day and in every situation," he said.

Samantha Redman also values the education and fellowship she receives at a Christian university. Redman is a

"By taking some financial stress away, I am able to focus on school a lot more."

— Samantha Redman

junior nursing major at Gardner-Webb University. She chose Gardner-Webb over other schools because she thought it would allow her to grow academically, socially and spiritually. "It was one of the few colleges where I could do all of those things," she said.

At Gardner-Webb Redman has developed friendships with people from a variety of backgrounds. She has enjoyed being challenged academically and spiritually by professors and campus staff who do not just teach academics, but who also model what it means to honor Christ in every situation. These combined experiences have been made possible with the help of the scholarship she received through the BSC. "This scholarship has helped me and my family tremendously," Redman said. "By taking some financial stress away, I am able to focus on school a lot more."

Applications for the 2012-2013 school year are available at ncbaptist.org/scholarships and are due by April 1. **B3**

Human trafficking event stirs fight against ‘modern-day slavery’

By SHAWN HENDRICKS | BR Managing Editor

Tasha is a 15-year-old runaway who was kicked out of a troubled home. An older man took her in and offered to care for her. Instead, he beat her and forced her into prostitution. Having nowhere to go, Tasha felt trapped and afraid to leave.

This is just one of the stories of human trafficking shared Jan. 20-21 at the Summit Church in Durham during an event called “Project Freedom: Human Trafficking Training – A Call to Action.” The event was presented by the Wake County Salvation Army.

More than 200 people attended the event to learn how they can become educated and involved in fighting human trafficking, and ultimately, help victims find a new life.

It’s an issue everyone – especially Christians – should be involved in fighting, said Brad Hambrick, pastor of counseling for the Summit Church.

“It is a subject ... so easy to ignore,” Hambrick said. “[We can] become the hands and feet for something that is very strong on the heart of God.

“Some of Jesus’ strongest words were spoken against those who would do anything to harm a child.”

Some studies show that 12.3 million people are being trafficked for sex, labor or domestic servitude in the world today. Others contend that 30.5 million are trafficked.

Because the industry is underground there is no way to know for certain the number of human trafficking victims, said Erica Snyder, with the Salvation Army’s Wake County office.

“Human trafficking is modern-day slavery,” she said. “With the Emancipation Proclamation slavery ended [in the

United States], but in fact, it is just more underground than ever before.”

Human trafficking – which can involve force, fraud or coercion – has become the second largest criminal enterprise. Right now it is tied with the sale of weapons, Snyder said during the event.

According to Snyder’s report, the largest criminal industry is drug trafficking. Human trafficking, which has become a \$32-billion industry, is a growing problem that is happening in both the inner city and the suburbs. Human trafficking victims can be found in nail salons, restaurants, a neighbor’s house and many other places.

The Wake County office began offering emergency and long-term case management services to foreign-born victims of human trafficking about six months ago. Since then the office has begun work on 19 cases of human trafficking – cases that involve 26 individuals.

“We’ve seen sex and labor trafficking here in North Carolina and know that we’ve only touched the tip of the iceberg,” Snyder said.

The Southeast accounts for 19 to 23 percent of human trafficking in the United States, she said. Snyder addressed reasons why N.C. is vulnerable to human trafficking.

One reason involves the interstate highway system.

“We are really well connected ... you can go from New York to Florida [on Interstate 95],” Snyder said. “The same roads that drugs go up and down, [trafficked] people go up and down.”

Though the industry is growing, the monetary value of a human life has gone down through the years, Snyder said.

“In 1810 a person was valued at \$5,000 to \$6,000,” she said. “Today, a person can be sold for \$550.”



Erica Snyder, who works with Wake County’s Salvation Army, talks Jan. 20 to a group about human trafficking. She encouraged churches to get involved in fighting this modern-day slavery. (BR photo by Shawn Hendricks)

There are things that people – specifically churches—can do to help fight human trafficking, Snyder said.

Some ways include offering more training events, providing counseling, donating a week’s offering to a local organization that fights human trafficking or donating clothing or food to shelters for victims.

“There are trafficking victims who identify with a particular faith,” she said, “and would be comfortable going to somebody in the faith community to get spiritual guidance and healing.”

Lisa Shaeffer is a member of the Summit Church and lay leader of its human trafficking ministry.

She and a small group of members started the effort last fall to find ways to help victims.

The group plans to go to a South Asian country in September with Tiny Hands International. There, they will work with

partners in the country who fight human trafficking.

The three purposes of the church’s human trafficking ministry, Shaeffer said, involves education, prayer support, and partnering with organizations that have a Christian perspective, such as the Salvation Army and Tiny Hands International.

“We don’t want to just save the body, but we want to reach the soul, too,” Shaeffer said.

“At Summit our motto is love God, love each other and love the world,” she said.

“We’re really trying to take a Christian approach to trafficking because it’s great to rescue people out of it, but ... we’re trying to rescue the whole person.”

For more information about how your church can help, contact the Salvation Army at keepthebellringing.org. To report cases of human trafficking call (888) 373-7888. **BR**

TAR HEEL VOICES

Evidence backs young Earth

I read with great interest the article by David Roach entitled “Pastors unconvinced about evolution, split on earth’s age,” in the Jan. 21, 2012 edition of the *Biblical Recorder*.

The author did a good job of recording the facts and giving statistical analyses.

Some of the pastors’ answers in the article seem to indicate a conflict in their minds.

My purpose is to encourage readers who are confused by conflicting messages about the Bible.

Suppose one chooses to believe the Bible is correct as written. Does the Bible indicate a recent creation – within the past 10,000 years? Yes it does.

Luke 3:34-38 gives the ancestry of Jesus from Adam (about 2,000 years – Genesis 5:3-32 and 11:10-26, except for Cainan) to Abraham (around 2,000 B.C.). That means God created Adam around 4,000 B.C., which was about 6,000 years ago. Also, the Ten Commandments affirm that creation took six days (Exodus 20:11).

Does the physical evidence also support a recent creation? Yes, it does.

There are only enough people on the earth for a few thousand years of existence.

The R.A.T.E. Project has consistently shown that there is enough helium (a byproduct of nuclear decomposition) remaining in Zircon crystals for only about

6,000 years of diffusion.

Dinosaur remains that still have blood cells in their bones have been found on the north shore of Alaska. Blood cells can only last 5,000 to 10,000 years in those conditions.

If one can show that the earth is less than 10,000 years old, there is not enough time for macro evolution from one kind of thing to another.

In conclusion, if one takes the position that the Bible is correct as written; the evidence does seem to support that position very well.

Tam Hutchinson Jr.
North Wilkesboro

Is there room for churches in marriage debate? Yes!

Much interest surrounds the upcoming vote on the proposed amendment to the Constitution of North Carolina defining marriage. The vote on May 8, 2012, will focus on adding the following 22 words to the state's governing document:

"Marriage between a man and a woman is the only domestic legal union that shall be valid or recognized in this State."

The churches comprising the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) are filled with individuals who are citizens of this state. As citizens, these individuals are free to engage in a process to support the passage, or the defeat, of this amendment. But what about the churches themselves – is there any place for the churches in the debate that is beginning to boil on this matter? The answer to that question is an emphatic "yes," but requires a number of qualifications and explanations.

Churches are non-profit entities that qualify for tax exempt status under section 501 C. 3 of the Internal Revenue Code, and as such are prohibited from endorsing political candidates. And while not strictly prohibited, churches are greatly limited by the tax code in their efforts to influence legislation. The vote on the amendment before the citizens of North Carolina is viewed as legislation; therefore churches must understand that there are restrictions to the

amount of time, effort, and resources that they may invest in such efforts. The problem is that the prohibition concerning



BRIAN K. DAVIS
BSC executive leader
for administration
and convention
relations

political candidates is a "bright line" while the limitations concerning the influence of legislation is a "gray area." While it is understandable that a significant investment of time, effort, and resources would be grounds for a potential challenge to a church's tax exempt status, the ability to clearly identify what is to be understood as "substantial effort" is difficult at best. Churches are encouraged to consult their attorney or contact our offices for additional assistance as they consider these matters.

Two important issues

First, and most importantly, churches and the individuals who comprise them must recognize that two matters must be properly understood in this debate. The first is the question of the definition of marriage. For the church, the definition of marriage is significant. There is great biblical basis for the church to voice its position on the definition of marriage. It is my hope that pastors will preach and teach on the biblical expectations of marriage; however, I strongly discourage pastors from preaching and teaching on the marriage amendment.

This leads to the second important issue in this debate: adding the definition of marriage in our state's constitution. It is difficult to find a biblical basis that

The debate brewing in communities across North Carolina about the marriage amendment must be viewed as an opportunity for ministry ...

motivates the church to engage in this aspect of the debate. However, that point should not be construed as a discouragement to individuals within the church from expressing their position on this aspect of the debate outside the church. A distinction must be made between efforts of church members and efforts of the church as a corporate body on this matter. This statement deserves some additional explanation.

Mission of the church

The mission and purpose of the church, as a corporate body, is to glorify God and to fulfill the church's divinely appointed mission. As Baptists, we hold very strongly to a doctrine of local church autonomy, meaning that each church is responsible to discern how God is leading them to uniquely fulfill their divinely appointed mission in their local community, across the nation, and around the world. While many Baptists hold to a clear doctrinal distinctive, we also defend the necessity to uniquely express those distinctions as the local body of believers senses God leading.

With this said, individuals are free to vote and to encourage others to vote for specific issues in specific ways. Churches may encourage individuals to vote, but should not instruct individuals how to vote. Individuals may invest their time, efforts and resources in significant ways

for the passage or defeat of legislation. However, churches may not invest their time, efforts and resources in significant ways for the passage or defeat of legislation.

Specifically, individual citizens of North Carolina who are also pastors and church leaders are free, separate from their positions in the local church, to invest their personal time, personal efforts and personal resources in the influence of legislation. However, pastors may neither leverage their position in the church nor church resources, such as facilities or membership for such purposes.

Some pastors will wonder if it is wise to say anything at all about the marriage referendum to their congregations. As stated earlier, preaching and teaching on the biblical definition of marriage is both encouraged and in order; preaching and teaching on the marriage referendum is discouraged. This brings us to a most important point in this debate: the opportunity that stands before the churches.

Ministry opportunity

The debate brewing in communities across North Carolina about the marriage amendment must be viewed as an opportunity for ministry – ministry that expresses the mission of the church: to take the life-transforming message of the

See Marriage amendment page 13

Do you have a mission strategy?

It's hard to believe we are already in the second month of 2012. Time certainly goes by quickly so we must be good stewards of our time. One way we can do this is by making a plan. Often we have very good intentions, but without a plan, it is sometimes hard to follow through on everything we want to accomplish.

For example, in my last column I mentioned that many of you began this New Year by determining to read through the Bible. Achieving this goal would be hard without a plan, which is why many pastors provide reading plans and other resources.

I am grateful to serve alongside Convention staff who desire to help you become more effective in your ministry efforts, and to help equip you with various resources.

One of those resources is Find it Here, which is a strategy, or plan, for making

a Kingdom impact. Our three-year Find it Here emphasis recognizes the need for individuals and churches to develop an intentional plan of action for evangelism, discipleship and missions.

In 2010, we encouraged you to develop a strategy for intentional evangelism.

One way you did this was by participating in an Easter evangelism emphasis, and I hope you will join us in this emphasis again this year.

Last year churches committed to focusing on life-transformational discipleship and to making disciples who in turn make disciples.

I want to invite you to join us this year as we focus on missions mobilization. We desire for all North Carolina Baptists to live missional lives in their community,

state, nation and world so that we can reach people with the gospel.

Find it Here 2012: Expanding the

Kingdom is about every North Carolina Baptist taking a step toward missional living. We understand that this "next step" will look different for different churches. Some of you may be well on your way to embracing a people group that has never heard the gospel. For others, that next step may be reaching out for the first time to your community.

Taking that next step will require intentionality on your part, a plan for doing so, and

this is where Find it Here can help. Find it Here is a holistic process designed to help your church formulate a customized Acts 1:8 mission strategy. The process includes four phases to help move your



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive
director-treasurer



congregation from mission assessment to missions mobilization to missions evaluation.

Free resources such as a planning guide, mission strategy assessment tools, sermon outlines, Bibles studies, prayer and devotional guides, and missions videos are available at finditherenc.org.

For more information about Find it Here please call (800) 395-5102, ext. 5571, or email findithere@ncbaptist.org.

Let's commit to doing whatever it takes to reach people with the gospel of Jesus Christ!

"Then He said to them, 'The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.'" Luke 10:2 **B3**

Super Bowl lessons for Christians

With all of the seasonal attention surrounding the Super Bowl, this is a good time to point out an important correlation between sports and Christian living. There is a valuable lesson here!

Football is a team event. When points are scored the credit cannot go to one player. The game is not about a single quarterback, a single receiver or a single kicker. There will be no touchdown or field goal if no one on the field is blocking. If the center does not hike the ball, no points are scored.

The reason there are 11 men on the field at a given moment is because each one is important to the work of the team. A team has offensive players and defensive players on the bench because they will be needed for specific reasons at specific times in the game. There are coaches working diligently on the sidelines because they are essential to the team's victory.

For generations now, western culture has been steeped in individualism – the ideology that elevates the value of the individual above all else. Even the church has not escaped its influence. There is too much evidence among us that we have lost sight of the scriptural truths which describe Christians as members of a “team.”

While there is value in every person as a creation of God, the universe does not revolve around any single individual. There is no evidence in scripture that the value of the individual is greater than the value of the “people of God.”

The Bible does not describe Christians as a mass of individuals who are each doing their own thing, demanding their own way, insisting that others bow to their selfish will. Individualism is not demonstrated in scripture – except in the context of disobedience and sin.



K. ALLAN BLUME
Editor

We are called the “body of Christ” (1 Corinthians 10, 12). That is a picture of plurality. It takes many parts to make a body. We are called a “holy priesthood” (1 Peter 2:4-8).

A priesthood is not one priest, but a plurality of priests. Jesus said he is the vine and we are the “branches” (John 15:5). The description is not of an individual branch, but many branches.

We are called an army, a flock, a kingdom of priests and the people of God – all plural metaphors.

So where do we come up with the idea that one person should have his or her way in the work of the local church? The answer to that question should be clear.

We have applied the non-biblical ideology of individualism to the operation of the body of Christ. We have refused to operate as a team.

By demanding our own way, disrespecting the role of the coach and disparaging the rest of the team, we undermine the potential for victory.

But the world of sports need not teach us the value of humbling ourselves in a team environment. We have a higher Authority who has declared His principles of “teamhood” to us.

Pride blinds us from His truth. Self-inflated individualism undermines our effectiveness.

Frankly, we need “the team” more than we are willing to admit.

If you watch this year's Super Bowl, let it be a reminder to you that the New Testament church needs the kind of genuine revival that destroys selfish individualism.

Turn off the television during the commercials and pray for a humble, teachable heart in every believer in your church – beginning with yourself. Pray that our eyes will be open

to the phenomenal power of humility.

Pray for a desire in your church to work in unison.

There is inestimable power in working together, giving together, praying together, worshipping together and proclaiming Christ to the nations together.

When the church serves together as a team, God gets the MVP award. All of the

glory is His.

“For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen” (Romans 11:36). BR

There is no evidence in scripture that the value of the individual is greater than the value of the “people of God.”

Marriage amendment

Continued from page 12

gospel to each member of the community, nation and world.

Churches are strongly encouraged to find ways that they might rise to the occasion and take the opportunity to preach and teach on the Bible's position on marriage in the days preceding the May 8 referendum. However, our preaching and teaching must be true to God's Word. Key point: Many fear that failure to pass the referendum will harm the “sanctity of marriage” in the future, but the truth is, the current views and expressions of marriage in our state, our communities, and our churches have already done so. Heterosexuals have already damaged the sanctity of marriage in significant ways, and the church has been very quiet on the matter.

At the risk of being misunderstood, I make the following observations:

I am of the opinion that if the churches rise to the occasion to preach and teach on the life-transforming – including marriage transforming – power of the gospel, then the church has made a wise investment of time and effort.

Regardless of the outcome of the marriage referendum, the church should view its efforts as a “win” only if the church rises to the occasion to fulfill its mission while the attention of so many North Carolinians is turned to the issue of marriage. However, if the church fails

Contact Brian Davis at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5506, or email bdavis@ncbaptist.org. Visit clpablog.org.

to rise to the opportunity to fulfill its mission, and worse yet, “sells its birthright,” then the church becomes a vassal of political forces on either side of the marriage debate. Then, passage of the referendum is a “loss” for the church, for our communities and for the great state of North Carolina.

How to get involved

Therefore, if churches may only involve themselves in an insubstantial way in the influence of legislation, where can its members turn? The churches cooperating with the BSC have enjoyed a long tenured relationship with the Christian Action League of North Carolina. Individuals, businesses and other groups are free to engage with the Christian Action League to support them in a myriad of causes, including but not limited to: gambling, alcohol issues and other matters of social concern. The executive director of the Christian Action League, Mark Creech, can be contacted via e-mail at office@christianactionleague.org or by calling (919) 787-0606. He will gladly share how individuals may choose to involve themselves in these matters. BR

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February 12

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

February 19

Center of My Church

Focal Passage: Colossians 1:24-27

Iranian house church pastor Youcef Nadarkhani was sentenced to death by hanging in November 2010 after being convicted of apostasy. Nadarkhani, who had been in prison for over a year, was convicted of converting from Islam to Christianity and for encouraging other Muslims to do the same. The court ruled that Nadarkhani was born Muslim, and ordered him to “repent” of his Christian faith. The pastor replied, “Repent means to return. What should I return to? To the blasphemy that I had before my faith in Christ?”

The judges ordered him to return to Islam. Nadarkhani refused. Iranian Christians say the government targeted pastor Nadarkhani because of the rapid growth of the house church he pastors, which now has more than 400 believers.

Nadarkhani’s spiritual journey parallels that of the Apostle Paul. Paul was born a Jew, not a Christian.

At a particular point in his life (Acts 9) he became a Christian. His conversion was dramatic, and in obedience to God, he was led into a ministry of church

leadership and evangelism. Although he targeted fellow Jews for conversion to Christianity, invariably the real success in his ministry came from Gentiles. For his faithfulness as a Christian pastor and minister, Paul was arrested and put into prison on several occasions. The letter to the Colossian Christians is one of the four prison letters that Paul wrote. Paul knew suffering. Paul could rejoice that he had been deemed worthy to suffer for his Lord.

Of particular note here (v. 26-27) is Paul’s use of the word “mystery.” In Paul’s Jewish world, Gentiles were second-class citizens. To become “God-fearers” was a step up for them, but the idea that Gentiles could be true spiritual equals to Jews was a stretch. But this was Paul’s point.

It is Christ’s Church, not man’s. Therefore, in Christ all are equal. There is no Jew or Gentile, just Christian.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – As of Jan. 30, 2012, Nadarkhani was still alive.)



WAYNE PROCTOR
Pastor, Eure
Baptist Church

Focal Passage: Colossians 2:8-23

A few years ago George Barna reported his research that only about 10 percent of teenagers and young adults possess a biblical worldview. What does that mean, and what are the implications for the next generation? Basically, it means 10 percent believe the stories and the teachings of the Bible are true: creation, miracles, prophecies, the virgin birth, the resurrection of Christ, the belief that Jesus Christ alone gives salvation, the belief that Christ will return and the belief in a “real” heaven and hell. One implication of not having a pervasive biblical worldview

is that fewer future adults will accept and keep the same belief system of their parents and grandparents. In Paul’s world he encountered, and faced head on, a number of non-biblical worldviews.

There were the libertarians and fatalists who lived by the creed, “Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow you die,” that

pleasure was the chief goal and end in life. There were also the stoics and legalists who were ultra committed to rules and obligations. And there were Gnostics, who believed the path to heaven and God was found by achieving levels of special intellectual and/or spiritual (mystical) knowledge. Many of the Christians of Colossae had been raised with either no faith, or a synthesis of religious beliefs. Paul believed it was his calling and duty to help them understand the basics or “center” of their new-found Christian belief system.

Doctrine is important. Why? Because our belief system determines how we live. In this passage we have both the doctrine of salvation (v. 8-15) and sanctification (v. 16-23) explained. Our salvation is all about Jesus Christ. In verses 8-15 there are over a dozen references to Christ. In teaching biblical sanctification, Paul explained what is essential and what is not in Christian worship practices. The substance (who we magnify) of our worship is Christ. And we are to be wary of following those who put their faith totally in either ascetic practices or ecstatic experiences.

February 12

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

February 19

Be Honest and Fair

Focal Passage: Deuteronomy 16:18-20; 19:14-20; 25:13-16

The lesson focus for this week calls on believers to “be honest and fair.” Specific examples are given for areas in which this conduct should be lived out: living justly toward all people; respecting the property of others; telling the truth always and fully; maintaining integrity in all business dealings. The question is, “Why did God spell out the laws in these chapters and how/why should believers live in this way?”

Some seem to believe that God gave the law so that, as we live it out, our lives will go along more smoothly and God will be happier with us.

Therefore, when such a person believes himself to be keeping God’s law more faithfully, he believes God is happier with him.

When he is not doing as well, he believes God is not happy with him. Further, if everyone else would simply keep God’s law, our society would be a “better place.”

The problem with such a view is that it gives far too much credit to man’s ability, and results in a works-based

righteousness. God did not give man the law so that man could keep it and, in so doing, be righteous. God gave the law in order to reveal His own holiness and to make known His holy standard.

Because of the sinfulness of man’s heart, man cannot keep God’s law. And, while the law can show man his sinfulness, it cannot change man’s heart. As I shared in a previous lesson, God gave the law not as a cure to make man well, but as a thermometer to show man the sickness of man’s heart (Galatians 3).

We do not become righteous by being honest and fair. We are declared righteous – given the very righteousness of Christ – by faith, which ushers forth in surrender and obedience.

We can be honest and fair, not by trying to keep the law, but because Christ fulfilled the law on our behalf. As we live with honesty and fairness toward others, they see not our strength and goodness but God’s power and goodness at work in us.



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

Focal Passage: Deuteronomy 30:1-4, 6-8, 15-20

God revealed to Moses that the people of Israel would turn away from God’s law and, in so doing, face God’s severe punishment (exile). God would not, however, turn His back on His people and completely abandon them. God would call His people to return to Him through faith and repentance, returning to an exclusive love of their covenant-keeping God which would result in obedience to Him.

God’s call to His people today is the same: love Him only and obey Him fully. When we do not and our hearts turn away from Him to worship or cherish other things, He calls

on us once again to walk with Him by faith and repentance. It is by faith and repentance that we enter a relationship with God through Christ. It is by faith and repentance that we return to right fellowship with God when we sin against Him (Colossians 2:6).

Be Repentant

There are several ways that believers respond to sin in their lives today. One way is to excuse it. One might say something like, “That is just the way I am.”

Or, “I have always been that way.” The problem with this approach is it fails to see the sin as an ongoing rebellious offense against a Holy God and it fails to acknowledge the power of the gospel to transform our sinful hearts. Another problematic way of dealing with sin is to admit it is there, while letting it continue to be part of one’s life.

Though some may call this “confession” (by which they mean acknowledging the sin’s presence), it stops short of true biblical confession which will lead to godly sorrow and repentance.

The only biblical way to deal with our sin is through true biblical confession and repentance that results in forgiveness and restored fellowship with God (1 John 1:9).

This kind of confession views sin the way God views sin and results in godly sorrow, repentance and obedience. Repentance is a decisive change of heart and mind that results in a change in action. We must live a lifestyle of repentance, walking by faith in the Lord Jesus.

Glorieta committee explores future possibilities

ALBUQUERQUE (BP) – The Baptist Convention of New Mexico’s (BCNM) Executive Board has followed up on a resolution adopted at the convention’s annual meeting in October authorizing the creation of a committee to “explore the future and possibilities of Glorieta,” LifeWay Christian Resources’ conference center near Santa Fe.

BCNM messengers, at the annual meeting in Farmington, resolved to “strongly urge the Southern Baptist Convention and LifeWay Christian Resources to insure that Glorieta continues its vital ministry to the people known as Southern Baptists now and well into the future or until Jesus returns.”

The resolution was New Mexico Baptists’ response to a decision in September

by LifeWay trustees to begin offering only summer events for students and to pursue “viable options for the disposition of the property. ...”

During the BCNM Executive Board meeting in Albuquerque on Jan. 16, members approved a motion to “authorize the creation of an ad hoc committee whose

members will be appointed by the chairman of the executive board.” The ad hoc committee will explore future possibilities for Glorieta. Most of the committee has been chosen.

Owners of cabins on the property are concerned about their future too. They are circulating a petition voicing their concerns.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Pastor

Trinity Baptist Church, seeks a **full-time pastor** to lead our conservative Southern Baptist church that believes the Holy Bible is the inerrant Word of God. Resident membership is approximately 200. Seminary degree and references are required. Send resumes by February 29, 2012, to: Trinity Baptist Church, Attn: Pastor Search Committee, 433 Southland Drive, Fayetteville, NC 28311.

First Baptist Church of Monroe, NC (www.monroefirstbaptist.org), is seeking a **Senior Pastor**. We have completed a transition process and self-study. We affiliate with Union Baptist Association, CBFNC, and CBF. A seminary degree is required, senior pastor experience is preferred. Send resumes, including references, to pastorsearch@monroefirstbaptist.org or Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 3385, Monroe, NC, 28111 by March 15, 2012.

SEEKING PASTOR. First Baptist Church, Williamsburg, Ky., located in a small town near a university, is actively engaged in local missions, including a food pantry, home repair ministry, care for both the very young and very old, outdoorsmen ministry, Center Shot, Upward Basketball, a quilting ministry, and distribution of necessities to the needy including coats, shoes, hygiene items and laundry detergent. FBC supports missions world wide including missions supported by Samaritan’s Purse, Compassion International, SBC and CBF. The church is seeking new avenues of ministry and outreach. Candidates should have a completed master of divinity. Pastoral experience desired. Resumes may be emailed to fbcwoffice@gmail.com or mailed to First Baptist Church, 230 S. 5th Street, Williamsburg, KY 40769.

FBC Locust, NC, seeking a **full time senior pastor**. Must have a minimum of five years experience, able to minister to all ages, effectively lead and teach. Believes the Bible it totally true and follows the Baptist Faith & Message. Send resume to: Pastor Search Committee FBC, , PO Box 159, Locust, NC 28097, or email to: cstewart80@carolina.rr.com.

Holloways Baptist Church of Southmont, NC, is currently seeking a **full-time Senior Pastor**. Please send resume to: Holloways Baptist Church Pastor Search Committee, 131 Briggs Road, Lexington, NC 27292.

Denominational

Woman’s Missionary Union of North Carolina is seeking an **Interim Executive Director/Treasurer** to direct the work of staff, manage budgets, assist with planning and executing events, and build relationships among Baptist churches statewide. Candidates must possess working knowledge of WMU, including a broad scope of ministry and missions; be mature in Christian faith and involved in a local church; hold a bachelor’s degree (master’s degree preferred); and three to five years of progressive work experience in a related field. Strong management and organizational skills are required, as are computer skills. Please send resumes to the attention of Tana Hartsell at WMU NC, PO Box 18309, Raleigh, NC 27619-8309; or email to htana@carolina.rr.com. Resumes must be received by February 20, 2012.

Church Staff

MINISTER OF YOUTH. First Baptist Church of Sanford, NC, is seeking a full-time minister of youth. FBC is affiliated with CBF and SBC with a membership of approximately 1,000 and affirms women in ministerial and church leadership positions. A master of divinity and previous experience is preferred but not required. Candidates must have strong youth leadership and communication skills and work very well with committees and church staff. Questions may be addressed to Senior Pastor, Dr. Jeff Clark at (919) 774-4220 or pjeffclark@windstream.net. Submit resume to sanfbc@windstream.net or 202 Summit Drive, Sanford, NC 27330.

Metro Atlanta Baptist church seeking **Minister of Spiritual Formation and Families**. Please send resumes attn: Mrs. Susan Lewis at 561 Veterans Memorial Hwy, SE, Mableton, GA 30126, or via email at susan@mtharmony.org.

Macedonia Baptist Church, Raleigh/Cary, NC, seeks a **part-time** (20 hour per week) **Children’s Minister** for birth to middle school students. For specific information and a full job description visit our website at www.mbcnc.org/childrensminister. To apply, submit a letter of interest and a resume that includes both a Statement of Faith and a Statement of Call to Ministry to: Macedonia Baptist Church, ATTN: Shannon B McColm, Chair, Personnel Ministry Team, 7100 Holly Springs Road, Raleigh, NC 27606. Questions can be directed to Shannon McColm at [shannonbmccollum\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:shannonbmccollum(at)gmail.com) or (919) 868-5989.

First Baptist Hildebran is seeking a **part-time Director of Youth Ministries and Activities**. Position requires experience working with youth and 20–25 hours per week. Send resume to First Baptist Hildebran, PO Box 220, Hildebran, NC 28637 or revronarndt@embarqmail.com.

Millers Creek Baptist Church, a conservative SBC church, is seeking a **full-time Children’s/Discipleship Pastor**. This position leads ministries for children from birth to sixth grade and their families plus coordinate discipleship training. MDiv. preferred but not required. Send resume to Personnel Committee, Millers Creek Baptist Church, PO Box 559, Millers Creek, NC 28651, or email: churchoffice@millerscreekbaptist.org.

Village Baptist Church has two part time openings: **Singles’ Director & Music Associate**. Please send resumes to 906 S. McPherson Church Rd., Fayetteville, NC 28303, Attn: Cathy, or e-mail cathy@villagebc.org.

Riley’s Creek Baptist Church: **Part-Time Music Minister** to plan and direct all music aspects of the church under supervision of the Pastor. 5+ years’ experience desired. Send resumes to rcbc@rileyscreekbaptist.com or to 19845 NC Hwy 210, Rocky Point, NC 28457, Attn: John Ward, Chairman, Minister of Music Search Committee.

Miscellaneous

Join Pastor & Mrs. Michael Cloer on their 16th Tour of Israel, June 13-23, 2012. For a color brochure call 252-937-9811, ext 230, or online at www.inglewoodbaptist.com/?p=israel.

Used books plus Bibles, biblical studies, commentaries, theology, Baptist history, counseling, preaching, Civil War, literature, art & music. (For Sale: Paschal, History of NC Baptists, 2 volume Set, NEW REPRINT, \$69.95) STEVENS GALLERY, BOOKS, ART & FRAMING, 6921 Capital Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616, 919-876-3030. www.stevensbooksandgallery.com.

Surfside Beach, S.C. For rent 3 bedroom, 2 bath Beach House near Beach access, large back yard. Call 864-367-0066 or 864-221-1587.

NCBAM needs servant volunteers to educate aging adults about the use of Red Bags. Contact North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry to learn how Red Bags prevent overmedication and the use of conflicting medicines: 877-506-2226 or online at www.ncbam.org.

NCBAM needs volunteers for the biggest ramp-raisin’ marathon this state has ever seen. Sign up for Rampin’ Up! – an April 28, 2012, event at www.ncoperationinasmuch.org. Check out www.rampinup.org for more information or call North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry: 877-506-2226.

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Cost for Baptist churches and 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 that run in the paper also are carried online.



Door of Hope offers another ministry opportunity for Baptist Men

By MICHAEL RAY SMITH | N.C. Baptist Men

VIRGINIA BEACH – Thirteen-year-old Georgina Smith, originally from South Africa, still gets a kick out of introducing her parents to friends from school.

When classmates see the white parents of this vivacious teenager, they look stunned.

Then parents Roy and Shirley Smith exchange a time-worn glance and say simply, “Can’t you see the family resemblance?”

The joke never gets old for the Smiths who adopted Georgina as the first baby from the Door of Hope ministry that they helped organize in 1999.

“We prayed that God would bring a family to adopt Georgina when she was a baby,” recalled Roy Smith, who used to work with the North Carolina Baptist Men. “God answered that prayer with us.”

Baptist Men helped the ministry as another way to reach the world with the message of Jesus Christ. The Door of Hope is one of the partnerships facilitated by Baptist Men, who continue to recruit volunteers and donations for this ministry.

Today Georgina represents one of about 1,000 babies the Johannesburg ministry rescued in a city where up to 100 children per month are abandoned.

Although the Smiths have two grown sons, one with children of his own, Roy and Shirley Smith saw the need of an orphaned baby who has since matured into a bubbly American teenager. She now radiates a singular faith of her own.

“I am really blessed,” Georgina said from the cozy kitchen of her family’s two-story house in a snug Virginia Beach neighborhood, a 30-minute drive from the ocean.

“There are a lot of kids out there who are not in the Door of Hope program, and it makes me really sad to think about it,” Georgina said.

For Richard Brunson, executive director of North Carolina Baptist Men, the Door of Hope ministry may be more than 8,000 miles from his office, but it couldn’t be closer to his heart.

“Baptist men and women are known internationally for their help with disaster relief,” he said from his Cary office.

“But we are involved in lots of ministries.

“We try to be world Christians with ministries such as Door of Hope based in Berea Baptist Church in Johannesburg.”

Brunson’s office is filled with reminders of places Baptist men and women go including a tarnished silver fork mounted on a 10-inch wooden plaque, a reminder of a family of 12 that had to share the fork for lack of eating utensils. Brunson’s files overflow with letters from supporters.

“They give because of the work that God is doing,” Brunson said.



The Smiths pause to share a smile on the deck of their Virginia Beach home. Roy and Shirley Smith adopted Georgina, the first baby rescued thanks to the Door of Hope ministry in South Africa. North Carolina Baptist Men helped establish the ministry in 1999 and continue to support it. (Photos by Michael Ray Smith)

“Baptist men and women give because we are called to share Christ with a needy world.”

Smith now works as a missionary with Norfolk Area Baptist Association. In 1999 the Smiths worked in Johannesburg under a joint appointment with IMB (International Mission Board) and partnered with Berea Baptist Church to help with the problem of abandoned babies.

According to Roy Smith, grinding poverty and other social ills contribute to mothers abandoning babies in refuse heaps, the river, even storm drains.

He and his colleagues worked to open Door of Hope where babies could be nurtured in a loving environment at the hands of trained volunteers.

The Door of Hope features a window-shaped opening on the street where a mother can leave a baby without revealing her identity.

Once the baby is inside the opening, a sensor alerts the staff who rush to the baby’s aid.

The goal of the ministry is to provide a safe haven for the baby with medical treatment, and ultimately a home.

Smith said prospective parents are screened for their commitment to the baby and commitment to the Lord while the state oversees the process, which can be quite rigorous.

Georgina was among the first babies to arrive at Door of Hope and, before long, she took to the Smiths.

“It got so that when I came in, if I didn’t pick up



Art from South Africa reminds Roy and Shirley Smith of their time in the country as missionaries with the IMB (International Mission Board). The Smiths adopted Georgina during their time there.

“I am really blessed. There are a lot of kids out there who are not in the Door of Hope program, and it makes me really sad to think about it.”
– Georgina, 13

Georgina right away, she would latch around my leg,” Smith recalled.

“She would stand on his feet and walk with him,” added Shirley Smith. Before long the Smiths sensed that they should adopt Georgina.

Smith remembers the day he and Shirley waited in a courthouse in Johannesburg for a legal remedy. They waited so long, each thought

the adoption must have gone awry.

When all seemed lost, a clerk had the Smiths sign a series of legal documents and then a judge appeared and quickly congratulated the family on adopting Georgina, saying, “According to the laws of South Africa, she is the same to you as a blood-born child.”

Nearly 12 years later, Georgina eyes her parents with a merry side-long glance and says, “They are pretty awesome parents.”

A good student, Georgina excels in English and music and plans to perform with People to People Student Ambassadors in Europe.

She wants to have a career in music or work in foreign relations.

Whatever she does, she said ministry wouldn’t be too far from her mind.

Additional information on Door of Hope or other ministries of North Carolina Baptist Men may be obtained by visiting ncmissions.org or calling (800) 395-5102, ext. 5613.

Visit doorofhope.co.za/ to find out more about the ministry. **BR**

