



BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

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BSC Board faces \$3M budget shortfall

By CHAD AUSTIN | BSC Communications

Despite experiencing a budget shortfall in 2018 that was called “significant,” Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) officials are optimistic about the long-term financial outlook for 2019 while cautioning that adjustments will need to be made to the budget that will be proposed for 2020.

While receipts were more than \$3.3

million or 10.85 percent below the \$31 million Cooperative Program (CP) budget for 2018, BSC Executive Leader for Business Services John Butler told the state convention’s board of directors Jan. 29 the overall financial picture includes a few “bright spots.”

One of those bright spots was giving to the North Carolina Missions Offering (NCMO), which exceeded its \$2.1 million goal by nearly \$26,000. NCMO supports a variety of ministries such as church

planting, missions projects and the 18 different ministries of Baptists on Mission (also known as N.C. Baptist Men), which includes disaster relief.

Butler attributed the budget shortfall to several factors that included the impact of Hurricane Florence as well as some accounting guidelines that govern the state convention.

Impact of Florence

In the aftermath of Hurricane Flor-

ence that caused widespread damage in eastern North Carolina last September, the BSC received more than \$6 million in designated giving for disaster relief.

Butler said it is not unusual for churches to reallocate some missions dollars to disaster relief following major storms like Florence.

“The reality is that churches often adjust their missions budgets following natural disasters, moving funds planned

See Budget page 4

ANNIE ARMSTRONG EASTER OFFERING

FOR NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONS

MISSIONARY PROVES YOU CAN GO HOME AGAIN

During a Vacation Bible School, Jorge Santiago speaks with some of his volunteers. Santiago is an Annie Armstrong Easter Offering 2019 Week of Prayer missionary. One Church Comerío launched after Santiago and his family responded to the desperate needs of the community following Hurricane Maria in 2017. The long road to physical and spiritual recovery continues, and Santiago continues to serve and preach the gospel. See story, page 8. (NAMB photo by Casey Jones)

North American Mission Board

SENDING HOPE

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‘Cordial’ meeting: Patterson, SEBTS divide documents

By DAVID ROACH | Baptist Press

After two days of meetings, representatives of Paige Patterson and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary say they have determined, with no disagreements, the rightful ownership of 89 boxes of documents related to Patterson’s 1992-2003 presidency at Southeastern.

Southeastern said it recovered “student” and “personnel” records from Patterson. Patterson’s representa-

tives said he maintained all but about one-third of a box out of the documents at issue. Both sides agreed the meetings – held Jan. 7-8 on the campus of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary – were cordial.

The meetings occurred seven months after Patterson was terminated by Southwestern following nearly 15 years as president there. Less than a week following Patterson’s termination from Southwestern, Southeastern released a statement claiming it was “not in possession

See Divide page 10

How well are we impacting lostness, making disciples?

In 2013, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) adopted a strategy titled “impacting lostness through disciple-making,” which our staff began implementing the following year.

Our mission as a state convention is to assist N.C. Baptist churches in their divinely appointed mission, which can be found in the Great Commission. The Lord commands us in His Word to “go and make disciples.” These are our marching orders from Him.

In keeping with our stated mission, our goal with the strategy has been to help facilitate a disciple-making culture across our state. It’s hard to believe that it has been five years since we began carrying out the strategy, and I praise God for all that He has allowed us as a convention of churches to accomplish over the past five years.

We have made great strides in helping people understand disciple-making as a holistic process that involves both evan-

gelism and discipleship, which results in disciples who make disciples who make more disciples.

I am encouraged by the reports I am receiving from our staff regarding N.C. Baptist’s engagement of lostness across the state. Our strategy calls attention to 250 pockets of lostness within North Carolina. While there are significant populations of people who are far from God across the entirety of the state, our strategy calls attention to those locations where lostness is most concentrated. The good news is that churches are developing strategies to engage these pockets of lostness and the potential for multiplication of disciple-making is inspiring.

We have also made great strides in identifying and engaging unreached people groups who are living right here in our state. We have seen hundreds of new churches planted in our state who are reaching new people from a variety

of ethnic backgrounds with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We have also seen an expansion of ministry on college campuses thanks to local churches engaging students on the campuses near them.

These items represent just a few broad highlights of how we have seen God work in and through N.C. Baptists over these past five years. Now the time has come for us to evaluate how effective the strategy has been and how N.C. Baptists have engaged with it.

During our recent Board of Directors meeting in late January, our Associate Executive Director-Treasurer Brian Davis and I shared with the board that we will soon begin the formal process to evaluate the strategy.

The evaluation will be multifaceted and will include electronic surveys, a series of public forums across the state and personal interviews.

More information about the evaluation process will be announced in the near future, but I want to urge you to partici-

pate. We want and need to hear from a variety of North Carolina Baptists about the strategy.

This includes pastors, church staff, associational mission strategists, lay leaders, congregants and others.

The results and findings from the evaluation will be shared as part of my report to messengers at this year’s BSC annual meeting in Greensboro on Nov. 11-12.

While we have learned a lot over the past five years, we still have much to learn. The strategy to “impact lostness through disciple-making” is far from being completed or fulfilled. But your valuable input and insights will go a long way in helping us better understand where we are and where we need to go from here.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...” – Matthew 28:19a (NKJV). **BR**



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive
director-treasurer

Another abortion video goes viral

Recently, a second video about abortion went viral. But instead of New York, this one was from the general assembly in Virginia. The video features a Democratic member of the Virginia House of Delegates offering comments in defense of proposed legislation that would dramatically expand abortion laws in the commonwealth. Like the legislation passed by the New York State Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Andrew Cuomo (see page 3), the bill put forward in Virginia would remove nearly all restrictions on abortion up to the child’s actual birth. And as with the first, the exchange captured in the video is chilling.

What does the video reveal?

Under current laws, abortions may only be performed in Virginia during the first and second trimesters of pregnancy. Abortions performed in the second trimester must be performed in a hospital. But the proposed legislation being debated in the general assembly, which proponents call the Repeal Act, would remove these restrictions.

In the video, House Majority Leader Todd Gilbert asks the sponsor of the bill, Kathy Tran, “How late in the third trimester could a physician perform an abortion if he indicated it would impair

the mental health of the woman?” Tran hedges in response, indicating that the bill allows for abortions based on either mental or physical health. But when Gilbert presses for an answer, Tran responds, “Through the third trimester. The third trimester goes all the way up to 40 weeks.”

Following that statement, there is a long pause.

Gilbert then asks the following,

“Where it’s obvious a woman is about to give birth, that she has physical signs that she is about to give birth – would that be a point at which she could still request an abortion if she was so certified? She’s dilating.”

Tran replies, “Mr. Chairman, that would be a decision that the doctor, the physician, and the woman would make at that point.” To which Gilbert immediately asks, “I under-

stand that. I’m asking if your bill allows that.” And just before the clip ends Tran states, “My bill would allow that, yes.”

Watching the video is difficult. And it is little wonder that it is the second in as many weeks to go viral and draw attention to the issue. Abortion has long been a contentious issue in the United States, but there is an element featured in both of these videos that stirs our humanity: cruelty.

Abortion advocates once called for

abortions to be “safe, legal, and rare.” But the goalposts have moved. We now live in an age where women are encouraged to “shout” their abortions. We recently watched members and the gallery of the New York State Legislature stand and cheer when its version of this bill was passed. And here we see a member of the Virginia General Assembly defend a bill that would allow an infant’s life to be ended only days, hours, or even moments

away from birth.

And this is simply too much to abide. How could one possibly help but imagine the kind of barbarism involved in taking the life of an innocent person – one well past the point of viability? For many, if not most, simply contemplating such an act makes them shudder.

Not only would this bill sanction abortion on demand through the third

See Abortion page 10



JOSH WESTER
Guest Column

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Ellis: Human, civil rights ‘inseparable’

By **SETH BROWN** | BR Content Editor

In an era marked by political and cultural polarization, Karen Ellis, a speaker at the 2019 Evangelicals for Life conference, believes Christians should be united in their support of both human and civil rights.

“They are inseparable,” said Ellis, who is director of the Center for the Study of the Bible & Ethnicity at Reformed Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Ga., and president of The Makazi Institute. “Both realities – civil and human rights – reflect different aspects of an affirmation of life.”

The event, which coincides with the annual March for Life, was co-sponsored by the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and North American Mission

Board. It was held at McLean Bible Church in Vienna, Va., a suburb of Washington, D.C.

Ellis began her talk by offering brief overviews of multiple leaders and activists from the past who embodied an undivided commitment to civil and human rights.

The list included Frederick Douglass, an abolitionist and orator who opposed the American slave trade; Maria Fearing, a former slave and Presbyterian missionary to Congo; and Ralph Bunche, the first African American to receive the Nobel Peace Prize and contributor to the United Nations’ creation and adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. She also called Christians to understand pro-life issues in light of scripture, not solely as partisan talking points.

“Oh, how we love to demonize our political and cultural opponents as if they are the enemies of human souls,” she said. “For the Christian, there is only one enemy of life, the deceiver himself.”

Ellis urged attendees to find hope in Jesus Christ alone, whom she described as the ultimate “affirmation of life.”

She included insights from her own family history of civil rights advocacy and experience with abortion.

When Ellis was a child, her mother brought her along to the polling station each election day, even allowing her to help in the voting process.

She said the “ritual” was her mother’s way of passing down “hope in the next generation – as it had been

See Ellis page 10

N.Y. abortion bill: ‘alarming in every sense’

By **TOM STRODE** | Baptist Press

New York may have re-established itself as America’s leading abortion state by enacting a law that critics say goes beyond even the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision.

Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed the Reproductive Health Act (RHA) into law Jan. 22 shortly after the state legislature completed passage of the controversial proposal.

Enactment of the legislation came on the 46th anniversary of the high court’s decision striking down all state bans and legalizing abortion throughout the country.

The new law legalizes abortion until birth for the mother’s “health,” which is not defined and has been interpreted by the Supreme Court to include, in essence, any reason.

The measure also enables non-physicians – midwives, nurse practitioners and physician assistants – to perform non-surgical or chemical abortions.

In addition, it protects abortion performers by moving abortion law from New York’s criminal code to its health code.

The new law not only puts pregnant women at risk, but it is so radical it permits infanticide by eliminating protections for babies who survive an attempted abortion and by removing fetal homicide penalties, according to Americans United for Life (AUL), a pro-life organization that focuses on legal issues.

If the Supreme Court were to overturn the *Roe* opinion and return the issue to the states, New York’s law would remain in effect.

“The Empire State’s new abortion bill is alarming in every sense,” said Russell Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, in written comments for Baptist Press (BP).



Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo signs Reproductive Health Act (RHA) into law Jan. 22, legalizing abortion until birth for the mother’s “health,” which is not defined. (Flickr photo from Gov. Cuomo’s press office)

“This bill stripped all possible legal protections for children past 24 weeks in the womb.”

AUL President Catherine Glenn Foster called the law “extreme,” saying in a written statement it “de facto permits infanticide of the sort that notorious Philadelphia abortionist Kermit Gosnell was convicted [of] only recently.”

Christina Fadden, chair of New York State Right to Life, described the law as “inhumane.”

“RHA has made abortion a ‘fundamental right’ and prohibits all limits on abortion. ... RHA has expanded abortion-on-demand in New York past 24 weeks – well past when unborn children feel pain, are viable, and suffer during the course of an abortion – and up to birth,” Fadden said, according to National Right to Life News Today.

Cuomo, who had promised passage of the measure in the first 30 days of the legislative session, said in a written statement, “With the signing of this bill, we are sending a clear message that whatever

happens in Washington, women in New York will always have the fundamental right to control their own body.”

The governor has said he wants the law to be added to the state constitution.

Laura McQuade, president of Planned Parenthood of New York City (PPNYC), said in written remarks, “This is a historic day in New York and we are thrilled to see our legislation catch up with our progressive values in building the state our communities can thrive in.”

Abortion rights advocates have expressed concern the Supreme Court may reverse *Roe* with the addition of Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh as associate justices since President Donald Trump took office.

The N.Y. Senate had prevented passage of such a measure for more than a decade while it was controlled by Republicans. Democrats gained the majority, however, in the November election.

The Senate voted, 38-24, for the bill, while the Assembly approved it in a 92-47 vote.

When the Senate passed RHA, many observers in the gallery cheered and gave the members a standing ovation.

A seven-second video posted by PPNYC on Twitter went viral with many pro-lifers declaring their angst over the response.

Moore told BP, “The scene in the New York Senate chamber highlighted this horror as the abortion industry applauded lawmakers further codifying the culture of death. The applause in that chamber should remind us of the importance of the work before us as we engage our neighbors with the gospel.

“The church will not be deterred from speaking up for those the world wants to silence.

“My prayer is that some of those who cheer ghastly injustice as we saw this week might be awakened to the reality of life in the womb and, even more importantly, of the possibility of everlasting life in Christ,” Moore said.

“Maybe, like the Apostle Paul, some of those now cheering the destruction of the vulnerable may one day be the most powerful witnesses for the sanctity of every human life, born and unborn.”

New York legalized abortion in 1970, and New York City became the abortion capital of the country as a result, drawing thousands of women from other states for the procedure.

While the Supreme Court struck down state laws in its *Roe* decision in 1973, a companion ruling – *Doe v. Bolton* – had the effect of legalizing abortion “on demand,” as pro-lifers have described it.

In *Doe*, the high court provided an exception from state regulations of abortion for “maternal health,” which it defined as “all factors – physical, emotional, psychological, familial and the woman’s age – relevant to the well-being of the patient.”

The Supreme Court affirmed *Roe* in a 1992 opinion but also ruled states may regulate abortion to protect the lives and health of women. **BR**

Budget

Continued from page 1

for Cooperative Program support to meet the immediate needs in their communities and our state, and that's OK," Butler said.

"Giving to disaster relief enables us to help churches and individuals in crisis, opening the door for gospel conversations that often result in decisions for Christ. That's an eternal impact that cannot be measured in dollars and is in keeping with our strategy of impacting lostness all over North Carolina."

Hurricane Florence also impacted CP giving because many churches were not able to gather for worship for, in some cases, stretches of several weeks due to damage to their facilities, Butler said. The budgets of hundreds of N.C. Baptist churches were devastated by the storm, and those churches must rightfully take care of their immediate needs, he added.

Additionally, the N.C. Baptist Assembly at Fort Caswell experienced more than a quarter of a million dollars in lost revenue due to closures and canceled events in the wake of Hurricane Florence. With the loss of revenue plus unplanned costs of extensive repairs, the facility ended 2018 with a slight operating loss.

Timing a factor

Butler said timing and a lack of an uptick in end-of-year giving also impacted the final 2018 balance sheet.

The convention began 2018 behind budget because BSC bylaws stipulate that income received for five business days following the last Sunday of the year must be credited to the previous year's totals. Since Dec. 31, 2017, fell on Sunday, all income received until Mon., Jan. 8, 2018, was applied to 2017.

"We started the year behind and never really caught up as the year went on," Butler said.

He believed some of the shortfall would be made up in December when end-of-year giving generally increases. However, the December giving bump did not come in 2018.

"I've never seen that in my 12-plus years at the convention," Butler said. "Fortunately, it was just a delayed bump, as those gifts we normally receive the last week of December ended up hitting our books the first week of January 2019. In fact, we had the largest first week of receipts in our history."

The budget shortfall was softened somewhat by the fact that the state convention's CP budget is allocated on a percentage basis, but Butler still described the budget deficits that BSC ministries had to absorb as "significant."

When removing the operational expenses for the BSC's camps and conference centers at Caraway, Caswell and

Truett, the state convention's operations budget finished slightly in the black for 2018, Butler said. He praised state convention staff members for being good stewards of CP receipts, adding that BSC ministries operated at 90 percent of their budget allocations for most of 2018.

Strong start to 2019

As Butler noted, giving is strong so far in 2019.

More than \$1.4 million was received for CP the first full week of January, which is about two-and-a-half times the weekly budget requirements. In addition, the convention received nearly \$2.8 million for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering that ended 2018 more than \$3 million below 2017 receipts.

"Obviously one week can make a huge difference," Butler said. "Whether it was due to the early snows in December or delayed mail processing, it is obvious that much of the giving we normally experience at the end of the year didn't make it to us before we closed the books on 2018. That certainly gives us some much needed breathing room as we begin 2019."

Looking ahead

Despite the strong start to 2019, Butler said convention leaders must not ignore the giving trends of 2018 and previous years when planning a budget proposal for 2020.

"We can't ignore what has taken place," Butler said. "It would be foolish for us to plan a budget that disregards where we finished 2018."

Members of the Budget Committee will be on hand at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the BSC board of directors in May to hear comments, answer any questions and receive other input or feedback that board members may have about the budget process and the working budget proposal for 2020.

The Budget Committee will meet following the May board meeting to receive budget requests from the institutions and agencies supported by the Cooperative Program budget.

The committee will send a final 2020 budget recommendation to the BSC's Executive Committee for consideration this summer before board members consider



Harvey Brown, who serves on the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's (BSC) Business Services Special Committee as well as the BSC Investment Committee, is turning 100 years young March 31. The committee celebrated Jan. 28. (Contributed photo)

the recommended budget at their regularly scheduled meeting in September.

Final approval of the 2020 budget proposal will be made by messengers attending this year's BSC annual meeting in Greensboro on Nov. 11-12.

'God will provide'

Butler said state convention ministries, institutions and agencies should expect a reduction to their CP budget allocations for 2020. "Everyone will have to share in any cutback of the overall budget," he said.

"I don't know what hurricanes may

impact us this fall," Butler said.

"I don't know what our economy will do. I don't know what cultural shifts are coming. What I do know is that we serve a God who is faithful, and He will provide." **BR**

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N.C. Baptists celebrate 2018, look ahead to 2019

By CHAD AUSTIN | BSC Communications

Leaders of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) celebrated 2018's successes and outlined ministry initiatives for the year ahead during the state convention's first board of directors meeting of 2019.

The highlights came from BSC Executive Director-Treasurer Milton A. Hollifield Jr. and other members of the state convention's executive leadership team during the Jan. 28-29 meeting at Caraway Conference Center near Asheboro.

Strategy evaluation

Hollifield said a significant task in 2019 will involve evaluating the state convention's strategy of "impacting lostness through disciple-making," which was adopted in 2013 and implemented at the beginning of 2014. The strategy evaluation will include electronic surveys, personal interviews and a series of public forums to be held across the state.

More details about the strategy evaluation are forthcoming, said Brian Davis, BSC associate executive director-treasurer.

Church Planting and Missions Partnerships

Church Planting, Collegiate Partnerships and Office of Great Commission Partnerships are three of the ministries under the umbrella of the Church Planting and Missions Partnerships (CPMP) group. Chuck Register, the executive leader for CPMP, said these strategic efforts will continue to be emphasized in 2019.

A new church planting initiative called the Sending Church Collective will bring together churches that desire to multiply by planting new churches. The collective will provide training, best practices and assistance in developing church planting strategies.

In the five years since the strategy's implementation, the state convention has welcomed 488 new churches into its fellowship and increased ministry on college campuses, growing disciple-making efforts by going from nine campuses in 2014 to 51 currently thanks to a paradigm shift that encourages more local church involvement.

In 2018 alone, the convention welcomed 80 new churches into fellowship as church plants and new affiliate churches. Those churches collectively reported more than 7,000 professions of faith and more than \$126,000 in Cooperative Program giving.

In 2019, the Collegiate Partnerships Team will focus on helping local churches develop a reproducing gospel presence on the state's large number of community college campuses, Register said, while also working with churches who already engaging in ministry on one campus to expand to two or more campuses.

Register said the Office of Great Commission Partnerships will focus on continued gospel engagement with unreached people groups in the state, as well those who live in multifamily housing complexes across the state. The overwhelming majority of each of those populations are unchurched.

Evangelism and Discipleship

Lynn Sasser, executive leader for the convention's

Evangelism and Discipleship Group, said the ministries which comprise his group are working to reverse the trend of declining baptisms within the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

Part of that solution is encouraging and equipping others to engage in more gospel conversations.

"All of us need to do a better job of sharing the gospel," Sasser said.

Several gospel conversations trainings are planned throughout the state in 2019, and the BSC will support the forthcoming initiative by SBC President J.D. Greear, pastor of The Summit Church in the Raleigh-Durham area, titled "Who's Your One?"

The "Who's Your One?" initiative encourages every Southern Baptist to be intentional about sharing their faith while praying that God would allow them to lead at least one person to faith in Christ in the coming year.

Sasser said he is also working with the North American Mission Board (NAMB) to bring a "Gospel Above All" tour featuring longtime pastor and current NAMB Senior Vice President for Evangelism and Leadership, Johnny Hunt, to the state.

Sasser also reported that 64 pastors are currently involved in a church revitalization cohort. Two more cohorts are scheduled to begin in the near future, bringing that total to 74.

Two local Baptist associations have expressed interest in developing additional cohorts.

Additionally, Asians are one of the fastest-growing populations in North Carolina, Sasser said, and many Asians are coming from the "10/40 Window" – the

See Celebrate page 16



A circular graphic divided into four quadrants. The top-left quadrant shows a man and a woman in a discussion. The top-right quadrant shows a man in a suit. The bottom-left quadrant shows a man in a suit. The bottom-right quadrant shows a man in a suit. In the center of the circle is an orange circle with the text "DISCIPLE-MAKING CONFERENCE".

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Yates association hosts ‘Who’s Your One?’ preview

By LIZ TABLAZON | BR Staff Writer

Leaders from more than 250 Southern Baptist associations across the country joined a simulcast Jan. 31 previewing the “Who’s Your One?” evangelism initiative. Yates Baptist Association hosted the live event at Ridgecrest Baptist Church in Durham, N.C.

Marty Childers, Yates’ director of missions, said he hopes the initiative will “wake us up as a church and help us to see that lostness is real” and remind Southern Baptists of the mission God gave “to seek and save the lost.”

Southern Baptist Convention president J.D. Greear, pastor of The Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham, introduced the initiative, which will launch Feb 20. Greear explained three convictions on which the strategy is built. First, he said, the core of Baptists’ commission is to spread the gospel and make disciples.

“There are a lot of important things we can get involved in, but none of them should ever compete



with the one essential thing that we absolutely must be involved in, and that is seeing people bring other people to faith in Jesus Christ,” Greear said.

He continued by explaining how ordinary people, not pastors, associational strategists or state convention staff, “are the tip of the gospel spear” and serve as channels of the greatest work of evangelism.

The third conviction is to equip people to reach others outside of church. Greear emphasized the necessity of relationships in earning credibility to preach the

gospel into other people’s lives in everyday contexts.

Kevin Ezell, president of the North American Mission Board (NAMB), introduced a recorded video of Johnny Hunt, NAMB’s senior vice president of evangelism and leadership, explaining the resources available to churches that want to participate.

Churches can request to receive a free “Who’s Your One?” kit that includes an implementation guide, 30-day prayer guide, graphics, posters, bulletin inserts and sermons by Greear and Hunt. Sermon guides and transcripts, as well as presentation slides are also included. Kits will be sent mid-February, but the implementation and prayer guides are available immediately at whosyourone.com.

Hunt highlighted the importance of prayer for the initiative. “We need more than resources,” he said. “We need a passion and a heart for evangelism. You can be equipped but not really have Christ’s heart for the lost.”

Childers closed the event by leading local pastors in committing to pray for their own “one.” **BR**

‘Evangelism with Johnny Hunt’ NAMB podcast launched

By BRANDON ELROD | NAMB

Johnny Hunt, the new senior vice president of evangelism and leadership at the North American Mission Board, has launched a podcast – “Evangelism with Johnny Hunt” – co-hosted by NAMB President Kevin Ezell.

The podcast is among the new resources from NAMB to boost evangelistic conversation and activity among Southern Baptists.

“This is another hook in the water of lostness to remind us, inspire us, instruct us and convince us that if the evangelistic spirit is to return, it’s up to us,” said Hunt, a former president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Over the last decade, Southern Baptists have seen a decline in baptism numbers across the convention, reflecting a downturn in churches reaching people and making disciples.

“I believe baptisms are down due to the fact that evangelism is not a front-burner issue in most churches,” Hunt said.

“In the 1990s Southern Baptist churches discarded their programmatic evangelism resources ... and never replaced them. Many churches have moved away from a set time of outreach, and the bottom line is evangelism is not being done.”

While many churches shifted focus from referencing and utilizing tools and strategies, Hunt said, one of the keys to reigniting evangelism in the Southern Baptist Convention is the pastor.

“Pastors are the key to evangelism,” he said. “If it’s not important to them, it will never be important in their church-



Johnny Hunt, senior vice president of evangelism and leadership at the North American Mission Board, has launched a podcast – “Evangelism with Johnny Hunt” – co-hosted by NAMB President Kevin Ezell. The podcast can be accessed on Apple iTunes and at NAMB’s website. (NAMB photo)

es. Pastors must lead the way.”

Hunt, who began his new role at NAMB on Jan. 1 after 32 years as pastor at First Baptist Church in Woodstock, Ga., said each episode of the podcast is designed with pastors in mind.

Hunt and Ezell regularly interview current pastors to hear their wisdom and perspective. Jimmy Scroggins, pastor of Family Church in West Palm Beach, Fla., Todd Unzicker, sending pastor at The Summit Church in Durham, N.C., and Steven Kyle of Hiland Park Baptist Church in Panama City, Fla., are among the guests who have already been interviewed for the podcast to discuss strategies in their local churches.

The evangelism decline among South-

ern Baptists, Hunt said, is not about a lack of resources but a lack of passion.

“We can see a surge once again when we put evangelism back where it belongs, front and center,” he said. “I have always prayed that I would never get over being saved. I pray, ‘Lord, remind me what it was like to not know You. Help me see others the way You do.’”

The evangelism podcast launched on Jan. 8 with the first three episodes. New episodes release every other week. Each installment lasts roughly 12 to 15 minutes, including encouraging testimonies, explanations on evangelism resources and tested church-wide strategies.

A podcast alone, Ezell said, won’t turn baptism numbers around, but it is

one more way NAMB is trying to help Southern Baptists focus energy on sharing the Gospel with a world that needs its message.

“Everything we do at NAMB is about helping Southern Baptists share the Gospel,” Ezell said.

“If every pastor makes this a priority, that will be a huge start. Brother Johnny’s podcast will share examples of the incredible ways he and many other pastors are leading their churches in evangelism.

“There are great stories and helpful ideas on every episode.”

The podcast can be found on Apple iTunes or accessed through NAMB’s website at namb.net/evangelism. **BR**

Greear: White privilege should extend to all races

By DAVID ROACH | Baptist Press

Anglos receive “privilege” in American culture because of their ethnicity, Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) President J.D. Greear said in a podcast. But rather than debate the political ramifications of that privilege, Greear urged believers to “extend” it to people of all races.

The views Greear expressed in his “Ask Me Anything” podcast are similar to opinions he has voiced publicly since at least 2014, following a tragedy that sparked racial tensions in Ferguson, Mo. Yet he told Baptist Press his perspective of white privilege has become more acute over the past five years from “being in relationship with brothers and sisters of color.”

“Is white privilege real?” was the topic of a Jan. 28 episode of Greear’s podcast. He told podcast host Todd Unzicker he has “struggled with” the question and concluded there is an “invisible set of assets that I get from being part of the majority culture.”

“When I get pulled over by the police,” said Greear, pastor of The Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham, N.C., “... I’ve never one time questioned whether or not it was because of my race. Every

person of color I know has some story” about being pulled over “where it just appeared that there was a line of questioning that was being given to them because they were a certain race.”

Greear noted other examples of white privilege, informed by his relationships with people of other races including Emory University philosopher George Yancy, who has spoken at The Summit.

Among them:

- Anglos often shop freely in stores while people of color report being followed because clerks seem to “assume [they’re] going to steal something.”

- Anglos may receive preferential treatment when seeking housing. An African American pastor at The Summit once applied for housing at an apartment complex and was told, “Sorry, we don’t accept subsidized housing.” The apartment worker, Greear said, incorrectly “assumed” the pastor needed government assistance.

- Employers “may give a closer look” to a job applicant with “a white-sounding name.”

- “Some evidence seems to indicate” that “being a person of color increases the likelihood that the death penalty is given” to convicted murderers.

The proper response to white privilege

is not to take privileges away from Anglos, Greear said, but to help all people experience them.

“As a Christian, I know that I’m responsible to bear the burdens of others around me,” Greear said.

“And I want to see privilege extend to them. So, if I’ve been given any privilege in whatever situation, I’m going to leverage that not for self, but leverage it to lift others up.”

Political debates about affirmative action, Greear said, are “beyond the scope of what I, as a pastor, would want to get into.”

Greear has written and spoken about the cultural privileges Anglos enjoy at least since August 2014, when he wrote on the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission website of “unwarranted prejudice” African American males experience. In 2018, Greear blogged about

cultural “blind spots” that “result from positions of privilege and power.”

Greear’s treatment of white privilege drew critique from some Southern Baptists leading up to the 2018 SBC presidential election and following his Jan. 28 podcast. Other Southern Baptists have commended Greear for his treatment of privilege.

Asked whether his perspective on ethnic privilege has shifted in response to feedback over the years, Greear told BP, “I have certainly become more acquainted with how some of our brothers and sisters of color experience societal dynamics differently. I’ve come to see that many benefits that I have taken for granted are not experienced equally by all. It’s not that I have changed my view – but I have grown more aware of certain struggles by being in relationship with brothers and sisters of color.” **BR**

Former *Index* editor, dies

Baptist Press

Jack Harwell, 86, editor of *The Christian Index* for 21 years during his 30 years with Georgia Baptists’ news journal, died Jan. 18 at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta.

In December, Harwell resigned his 10-year staff position as minister of pastoral care at First Baptist Church in Morrow, Ga., due to failing health, *The Index* reported after his death.

Harwell’s theological views were challenged in 1976 – three years before the SBC’s Conservative Resurgence took root – by the late *Christianity Today* editor Harold Lindell, author of *The Battle for the Bible*, who focused on Harwell in one of eight subsections in a chapter on Southern Baptists.

At the Georgia Baptist Convention’s annual meeting in November 1979, Harwell received a vote of confidence from messengers. In August 1986, *The Index* board of directors created an editorial review board in response to complaints after Harwell had editorialized against conservative nominees.

But in October 1987, Harwell announced his resignation, stating that he “could not continue with the restric-

tions or the pressures that have been created by the review board analyzing everything we do.” At that year’s annual meeting in November, Harwell’s supporters prevailed in a vote that he return to the paper. But the following month, the convention’s executive committee, vested with final hiring authority, narrowly voted that Harwell’s resignation remain in effect.

Harwell retired on Dec. 31, 1987, at age 55.

Harwell subsequently served 10 years as editor of *SBC Today*, a publication of Baptist moderates subsequently named *Baptists Today*, and 10 years at First Baptist in Morrow where he was ordained to the ministry and his wife Teliea was serving as minister to senior adults.

Born Jack U. Harwell in Mobile, Ala., he made a profession of faith in Christ at age 13; earned an undergraduate journalism degree from Samford University in Birmingham; served as a public relations specialist for the U.S. Army from 1953-1956 and the Air Force in 1957; and was associate editor of *The Index* from 1957 until he was named editor in 1966 at age 34.

In addition to his wife, Harwell is survived by a son, Ron; three grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren. **BR**

“Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they shall live.” EZEKIEL 37:9 NKJV

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The missions and ministries of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina are made possible by your gifts through the Cooperative Program and the North Carolina Mission Offering.

OPPORTUNITY CORNER

Providence Baptist Church, Raleigh, hosts its annual women’s conference Feb. 22-23. The event features Jennifer Kennedy Dean as speaker and Shelly Moore, worship leader, along with breakout sessions on a variety of topics.

Registration costs \$65 and includes breakfast and lunch on Saturday, Dean’s

book *Synched: Living Connected to the Heart of Jesus*, snacks on both days and all conference materials. Register online by Feb. 10 or at the door. Doors open at 6 p.m. Friday and 7:30 a.m. Saturday. The event ends at 8:30 p.m. Friday and 4 p.m. on Saturday. Visit pray.org/providence-womens-conference.

Rebuilding communities, planting the gospel in Puerto Rico

By BRANDON ELROD | NAMB

When Jorge Santiago left Puerto Rico as a young man, he never thought he would return. His family sent him to the U.S. mainland in a last-ditch effort to shake him loose from a lifestyle of doing and dealing drugs.

“I never thought that I was going to come back to Comerío,” recalled Santiago of his home town, “and I didn’t want to come back.”

In 2007, Santiago left behind a community that was struggling economically, whose people wrestled with hopelessness. Santiago did not know then that God was authoring a much larger story than he could possibly imagine.

Fast forward 12 years – Santiago is a 2019 Week of Prayer missionary for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering who is ministering in his hometown. He lives and serves among men and women who endured one of the worst natural disasters to hit Puerto Rico and continue to experience the same desperation Santiago attempted to overcome through substance abuse.

Before Santiago became a missionary, however, God had to lead him through his own personal storm. When he first moved to the United States, the new scenery in Washington, D.C., only gave him fresh opportunities to continue down the same, futile path.

“I was still the same person with the same problem,” Santiago said, “but I was able to cover my addiction by working. I met the same type of people that I used to hang around in Puerto Rico, and I started doing wrong things.”

One of Santiago’s new friends got him into selling contraband, and one of their buyers turned out to be undercover police. The threat of a 30-year prison sentence loomed over his head. “I was smoking a cigarette in front of my apartment after that situation,” Santiago recounted, “and I remember I was meditating over my life, and thinking, ‘How did I get here?’”

His family had raised him with good values, but drugs dragged him down a lonely path to a destination he never intended to go. As he replayed his life that day, God started working.

“I ran to my bedroom, got onto my knees and called out to God, ‘If you save my life from jail, I will give you my life forever, and I will serve you forever. I will never go back again,’” said Santiago. A few weeks later, he received the news that his case had miraculously been dismissed. Santiago gave his life to Christ at Primera Iglesia Bautista (First Baptist Church) of Groveton, Va., and things started to turn around. He met his wife Rebeca and answered a call to ministry.

Whenever he traveled back to see family in



Above, a mission team with Send Relief, the compassion ministry of the North American Mission Board, and Jorge Santiago (white shirt) pray over a family after helping them repair their homes from storm damage. Santiago is an Annie Armstrong Easter Offering 2019 Week of Prayer missionary who started One Church Comerío in Puerto Rico. Santiago, below, and his wife Rebeca moved to Puerto Rico in 2017 with their two children, Sebastian and Sofia. (NAMB photo by Casey Jones)

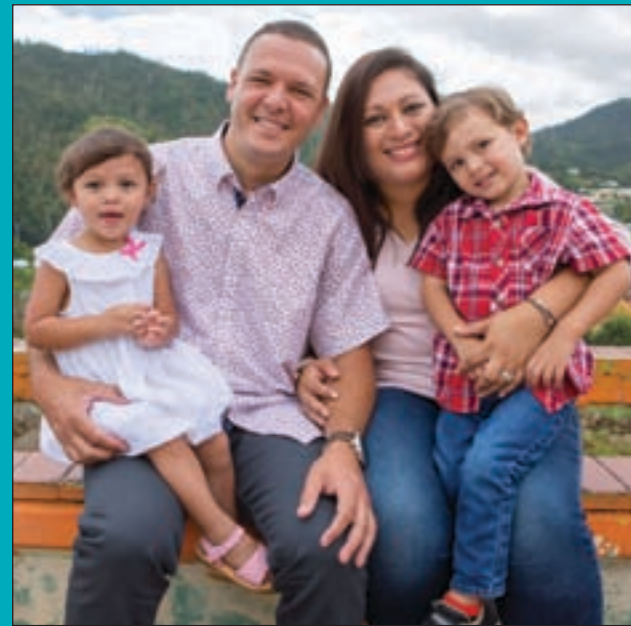
Comerío, he couldn’t help but notice how little had changed in his old neighborhood. The economic need and spiritual discouragement still permeated the town. As he remembered his past life on the island, Santiago could not recall ever hearing anyone tell him, “Jesus is the answer.”

Seeing and understanding that need led Santiago and his family to decide to start a new church. There are less than 80 Southern Baptist churches on the island that has a population of about 3.3 million people, which equates roughly one church for every 42,000 residents. As he was laying the groundwork for the new church, Santiago found himself back in his hometown, staring down one of the worst hurricanes ever to pound the Caribbean – Hurricane Maria.

The monster storm struck a few months after Santiago moved to Puerto Rico with his family, and a disaster many might have predicted would derail Santiago’s ministry actually accelerated the process. With electricity knocked out, simple, day-to-day tasks, such as washing clothes, became extremely difficult. Santiago and his family had the desire to reach out and aid their neighbors.

After help arrived from families on the U.S. mainland and Send Relief, the compassion ministry arm of the North American Mission Board (NAMB), Santiago and his wife received funds to purchase washing machines and a generator that enabled them to start a makeshift laundromat to offer for free.

After a couple months, Santiago read Mark 1 where Christ goes to another village to preach the gospel after healing the sick. He realized



that, while the physical aid was a good thing, he also needed to start preaching the Good News.

“God spoke to me through His Word, saying that, ‘It’s good to serve the people ... but the reason you are here is for the gospel,’” Santiago said.

On Nov. 12, 2017, Santiago preached the gospel after serving a hot meal with his neighbors, and he never stopped. One Church Comerío was born.

In March of 2018, Santiago held the church’s first baptism service.

God has continued to move through One Church, allowing them to secure a building of their own and become a fixture in the community because of the church’s service to their neighbors and faithful preaching of the gospel.

Visit anniearmstrong.com. **B1**

Mike Pittman called as BSC church planting leader

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

Mike Pittman, church planter and lead pastor of Vertical Church in Lumberton, was approved as the new Church Planting Team Leader for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) by the convention's Executive Committee (EC) on January 29.

BSC's Executive Leader for Church Planting and Missions Partnerships, Chuck Register, presented Pittman to the EC after conducting a nationwide search to replace Mark Gray who recently retired. "From a human perspective, church planting in North Carolina has been built on the shoulders of Mark Gray," Register told the EC. "He's provided outstanding leadership for our church planting team."

On learning about Gray's plan to retire, Register said he began looking for someone who has the "passion, knowledge and the administrative ability to lead our church planting team."

He invited recommendations from his counterparts in other state conventions, staff at the North American Mission

Board and those involved with church planting in N.C. Register said he interviewed candidates from various parts of the country including the Midwest, New England and several southern states.

"Through that process, it became obvious that Mike Pittman is the best man to lead our church planting efforts."

Pittman has served Vertical Church since 2011. The multi-site church added locations in Bladen in 2013 and Pembroke in 2015. The church has celebrated more than 400 baptisms in seven years.

Pittman has served as a contract worker on the BSC's church planting team since 2014, and is the primary coach in southeast North Carolina as well as a trainer for church planters in the state. He has been involved in helping develop the Sending Church Collective, a tool that helps multiply church planting in the state.

"This is a gentleman who understands the traditional, local church, which comprises a large segment of North Carolina

Baptist life, having spent 11 years on staff of Hyde Park Baptist Church in Lumberton," Register added. "He comes to us not only with a passion, knowledge and experience in church planting and church multiplication, he comes to us with an understanding of the established, traditional local church."

"He is a proven church planter that advocates and practices both disciple-making – which is our strategy – and church multiplication."

Pittman is a native of Maine. He told the EC he was not raised in church and dreamed

of stardom in the music industry until his mid-20s. At the age of 19, he attended Westside Baptist Church in Red Springs with his girlfriend who is now his wife. "I heard the gospel for the first time in my life, ... but my dreams for stardom were not over."

At the age of 25, realizing he was married, had a child and did not have a record contract, Pittman said, "it's time to grow up." He returned to attending Westside Baptist. Four months later in



MIKE PITTMAN

a conversation with the pastor, he gave his life to Christ. When presented to the EC as a candidate for the church planting position, Pittman said he often talks with other pastors about the need for a church planting movement in America.

"According to the traditional definition of a church planting movement, there isn't one anywhere in North America," he said.

He believes such a movement will help individual churches understand the call of God to reproduce the local church.

"I don't know when we stopped understanding that God has called our church to reproduce," said Pittman.

A church planting movement does not depend heavily on a "visionary, entrepreneurial individual's dream," he added, but instead it will depend on "prayer-soaked, vision-fed seeds in churches all across North Carolina. Without a supernatural move of God, this is dead in the water. But I believe God is about to do something amazing in our state. I relish the opportunity to be part of that."

Pittman announced his resignation from his church Feb. 3. He and his wife, Keyna, have two children. **BR**

Diversity in focus as Baptists await EC announcement

By SETH BROWN | BR Content Editor

The Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) Executive Committee (EC) has an upcoming meeting Feb. 18-19 in Nashville, Tenn., and many Southern Baptists eagerly await the announcement of the EC's decision on a new leader for the organization.

As a handful of entity leadership roles were vacated over the past year, beginning with the resignation of Frank Page as EC president due to moral failure, some church leaders have called the organizations to use the openings as opportunities to consider ethnic minorities for executive leadership positions in an effort to promote diversity across the convention.

Last year, Vance Pitman, pastor of Hope Church in Las Vegas, publicly urged the EC and the International Mission Board (IMB) to take steps that would demonstrate their commitment to ethnic diversity. At the time, David Platt had announced his intention to step down as president of the IMB.

"Right now we have two major entities in the Southern Baptist Convention that have vacancies at the leadership level," Pitman said during a panel discussion at the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission's MLK50 conference in April 2018. "It is imperative that at least one of them be filled with minority leadership."

The IMB has since come under the leadership of Paul Chitwood, who was selected by trustees Nov. 15 to be the entity's new president. Chitwood was installed Feb. 6.

One of the EC's own advisory councils uses a database to track progress and develop strategies to encourage greater participation of ethnic minorities in Southern Baptist life and leadership.

The EC presented a report to messengers at the 2011 SBC annual meeting with recommendations for all SBC entities that were "designed to foster conscious awareness

of the need to be proactive and intentional in the inclusion of individuals from all ethnic and racial identities within Southern Baptist life."

Those recommendations included the implementation of ethnic-specific data in yearly informational reports submitted to the EC from SBC entities and due consideration of ethnic representation in presidential appointments, committee nominations and entity hiring practices.

The *Biblical Recorder* reached out to the EC's search committee in early December 2018 to find out more about how they were reviewing potential candidates.

Stephen Swofford, chair of the EC search committee and pastor of First Baptist Church in Rockwall, Texas, told the *Recorder* in an email Dec. 10 that the group had been "proceeding based on those who were recommended" but they had not utilized the Convention Advancement Advisory Council's database to aid their efforts.

The database draws information from LifeWay's Annual Church Profile (ACP), along with other data collected by the EC and the North American Mission Board, to help leaders of the SBC's ethnic fellowship groups track their respective churches' efforts in evangelism, discipleship, missions and cooperative giving, according to EC staff.

Mike Stone, EC chairman and pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Blackshear, Ga., declined to comment on the details of the search process but referred to statements made by SBC president J.D. Greear in an address to the EC.

"Remember that they (committees, boards, etc.) are filled with people who love Jesus," he said. "They are doing their best to make the right decision, one that honors the Lord."

On Jan. 29, a trio of well-known Southern Baptist pastors, including two former SBC presidents, sent a letter to the EC search team asking if any ethnic minority candidates were interviewed for the lead role, and if not, why. The letter, viewed by the *Recorder*, was signed by

Pitman, James Merritt, pastor of Cross Pointe Church in Duluth, Ga., and Bryant Wright, pastor of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga.

The group emphasized they were not demanding that the EC hire a minority, nor requiring consideration for any particular candidate, but inquiring whether any minority candidates had been interviewed.

"We can assure you at the end of the process whoever you choose we will trust it was the Spirit of God leading you to select that person," the letter said. "Still, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to explain to the increasing minority element of our convention and an outside world why no minority candidate was even given the courtesy of an interview."

The pastors invoked the election of Greear as SBC president in their appeal, saying he had made ethnic diversity "one of the six initiatives of his presidency" in 2018 and was elected by nearly 70 percent of messengers.

Greear told the *Recorder* he had seen the letter but declined to comment on details. Greear did say, however, that he "agree[s] with their concern over whether we are making strategic and intentional efforts" to consider non-White Southern Baptists for denominational leadership positions.

"As I have said before, we need to recognize the leadership gifts of brothers and sisters of color that God has placed in our midst and embrace their wisdom and influence," Greear explained.

"I am sure this search committee will follow the recommendation from the full EC board and interview at least one person of color. As I am sure this search committee knows, there are many highly qualified candidates who would be more than deserving of an interview. While nearly a fifth of [SBC] churchgoers are Black, Latino, or Asian, our leadership still falls far short of that mark and this search committee can take a giant leap forward." **BR**

Ellis Continued from page 3

done for so many generations before us.”

Ellis said her own abortion “broke the line. If my life had been a movie, in that moment all of my ancestors would have cried out from history with a collective ‘No!’”

Now, when she sees the voting booths on election day, “I don’t just miss my own child. I miss the hundreds of thousands who are not present throughout the generations of all races,” Ellis said. “I often wonder how our political and cultural landscape would look if the generations of voices lost to abortion were present to decide for themselves how they want to live.”

Comparing the societal effects of present-day abortion practices to the chattel slavery practices of America’s past, Ellis said, “I am reminded that the 20th century brought something that 400 years of mass human trafficking did not produce on a large scale. Somehow a loss of hope

in the potential of the next generation, to carry on the hope of the ancestors, has been lost.

“... When we deny someone their agency to make a lifetime of decisions ... we debase ourselves and find that, at our core, we are no different than the slave trader or the architects of Jim Crow.”

She concluded the talk by encouraging people to understand human and civil rights as being unified, universal and biblical.

“We learned during the civil rights movement that legislation is a powerful tool for saving lives, but we also learned that legislation cannot do what the gospel of Jesus Christ can. Legislation alone cannot change hearts,” she said.

“Life is neither a progressive issue, nor a conservative one. It belongs not to Republicans, nor Democrats. It is an issue of respect for all humanity. It is an issue of hope. It is an issue of wisdom. For the Christian, especially the right to life, it is a biblical issue.”

View the full talk at the ERLC’s Facebook page (facebook.com/erlcsbc). **BR**

Abortion Continued from page 2

trimester and eliminate requirements that these procedures be performed by doctors in appropriate medical facilities, it would also remove Virginia’s informed-consent, ultrasound and 24-hour waiting period policies.

Speaking in support of the bill after the video began circulating widely on social media, Gov. Ralph Northam of Virginia appeared on a radio show to comment on the legislation.

Northam described the public reaction as “out of proportion” to the substance of the bill. But far from quelling the opposition, the governor’s remarks drew further criticism as he explained what would happen under the proposed law should a mother choose to seek an abortion while in labor: “If a mother is in labor ... the infant would be delivered. The infant would be kept comfortable. The infant would be resuscitated, if that is what the mother and the family desired.”

At issue here is not privacy or safety, but barbarism. Simply put, this bill would further legalize violence against the vulnerable.

And it is a tragedy that this is not apparent to all of us.

After the New York bill was passed, Russell Moore commented, “The closer one gets to the issue, the more one sees just how blinded by injustice people can get. Some who claim to be about protecting the weak from the strong are able to nonetheless completely ignore those, the unborn, who are politically unpopular in their tribe.”

And this is certainly true. We live in a

world that is fallen. All of us are blinded by sin.

Hope amid evil

But even in the face of this rising tide of abortion activism, there is good news. Polling shows that young adults are more likely than other demographics to support abortion restrictions, including the gradual implementation of pro-life legislation.

These efforts to expand access to abortions in New York, Virginia, and elsewhere do not necessarily represent the future or a permanent trajectory.

What is required is vigilance and commitment. Those committed to the cause of life, who would see this dreadful movement reversed, must continue to work and pray.

Advancing the cause of life takes many forms, from voting in elections to supporting crisis pregnancy centers. It includes showing up at city council meetings and cultivating churches that are prepared to receive and care for women, children, and families in need. It means showing the love of Christ and being a neighbor.

Those videos were chilling. And so is the abortion clinic. The church is the body of Christ, and we can offer the world something better by opening our arms to the vulnerable.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Josh Wester is director of strategic initiatives in the office of the president at the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. This post first appeared at ERLC.com. Used by permission.) **BR**



Karen Ellis addresses attendees at the 2019 Evangelicals for Life conference in a talk entitled, “Pro-Life and Civil Rights: Loving our Unborn Neighbors.” (ERLC photo by Karen McCutcheon)

Divide Continued from page 1

of documents” from Patterson’s Southeastern presidency that were “deemed as being owned by the seminary.” Official documents likely were not removed “maliciously,” Southeastern stated, but because of “a misunderstanding on the part of the Pattersons.”

Some of the documents, Southeastern stated, likely were needed for internal review of an alleged 2003 sexual assault on the SEBTS campus that became public amid Patterson’s tumultuous final days at Southwestern.

Patterson’s attorney Shelby Sharpe said in June, Patterson “flatly denies that SEBTS archives were ever stolen.”

Following this month’s meeting, both sides declined to identify the specific documents they maintained. But they agreed the meetings ended with no disputed documents.

Southeastern executive vice president Ryan Hutchinson, who represented Southeastern at the meetings along with legal counsel George Harvey, told Baptist Press (BP) in a statement, “Representatives from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) and the Pattersons met in Fort Worth ... (Jan. 7-8) to review the documents related to Dr. Patterson’s tenure at SEBTS.

“SEBTS and the Pattersons entered into the review under an agreed-upon system of evaluation. SEBTS was able to recover the documents that would be classified as either student or personnel records.

“Both groups examined the remaining documents and then categorized them as being either of historical significance to SEBTS or of a personal nature related to the Pattersons. The time was productive and collegial. SEBTS believes the matter is closed,” Hutchinson said.

Patterson told BP in written comments, “Ryan Hutchinson and George Harvey were the consummate Christian gentlemen that I have always experienced them to be. Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary remains fortunate and blessed of God to have them as a part of their team.”

Patterson’s representatives at the meeting were his wife Dorothy, former Southwestern professor Candi Finch and Patterson assistant Scott Colter. Patterson was not present.

Colter told BP via email, “Even with the few documents [Southeastern] retained, there was no charge of wrongdoing – they were mostly letters on which Dr. Patterson was copied that he filed along with all of the other mail he received and nothing that we felt strongly we needed to maintain.”

Colter stated, “From our perspective, the two most significant points are that it was a very cordial and amenable meeting, with no difficulties arising, and actually no documents that were even in dispute. ... The Pattersons were glad to release to SEBTS what they felt they needed – approximately one-third of a box if my memory serves correctly.

“There were also several items the Pattersons had collected of historical significance (newspaper clippings, letters from dignitaries, event programs, invitations, etc.). SEBTS requested copies of some of these items for their institutional history archive to record the story of Dr. Patterson’s time there as president.”

A meeting has been scheduled for late February, Colter said, at which Patterson’s representatives will sort through documents from his Southwestern presidency with Southwestern representatives. **BR**

Committee on Resolutions named for 2019 SBC

Baptist Press

Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) President J.D. Greear has named members of the Committee on Resolutions for the June 11-12 SBC annual meeting in Birmingham, Ala.

“These committee members hail from state conventions, national entities, seminaries, local churches and local associations,” said Greear, pastor of The Summit Church in the Raleigh-Durham, N.C., area. “Each was chosen because they demonstrate great commitment to the Southern Baptist Convention, and because they reflect both who we are and who we are becoming. They are men and women who desire to see our convention keep the gospel above all.”

Curtis Woods of Kentucky was named

as the committee’s chairman by Greear.

Woods is co-interim executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and a member of Watson Memorial Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky.

“Southern Baptists should be enthused about the brothers and sisters selected to serve as your 2019 Resolutions Committee,” Woods said, “since ‘the many faces of the SBC’ are well represented. Each person will prayerfully bring their academic expertise and experience to bear on each resolution.

“As chair, my heart is fixed on praying for each committee member to inhale the Word of God daily so that we approach this noble task with compassion, conviction and courage,” Woods said. “We must honor each brother or sister who takes time to pen and present a resolu-

tion even if the committee rejects the content.”

Greear appointed the committee in keeping with the provision in SBC Bylaw 20 that its members be named 75 days prior to the start of the annual meeting.

The other committee members, in alphabetical order, are:

- Tremayne Manson, associate pastor for community development and outreach, The Summit Church, Raleigh-Durham, N.C.
- Adron Robinson, pastor, Hillcrest Baptist Church, Country Club Hills, Ill.
- Walter Strickland, associate vice president for diversity, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.; member of Imago Dei Church, Raleigh, N.C.
- Angela Suh Um, founder and chief consultant, Boston Academic Consulting Group, Cambridge, Mass.; member of Antioch Baptist Church, Cambridge.
- Trevin Wax, Bible and reference publisher, B&H Academic Group, LifeWay Christian Resources, Nashville; teaching pastor, Third Baptist Church, Murfreesboro, Tenn.
- Jared Wellman, pastor Tate Springs Baptist Church, Arlington, Texas.
- Rick Wheeler, lead missional strategist, Jacksonville Baptist Association, Jacksonville, Fla.; member of Mandarin Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla.
- Keith Whitfield, vice chair; vice president for academic administration, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.; member of Faith Baptist Church, Youngsville, N.C.
- Alicia Wong, director of women’s program, Gateway Seminary, Ontario, Calif.; member of Rosena Church, San Bernardino, Calif.

The committee’s composition, according to Bylaw 20, must include at least two members who served the previous year, with Robinson, Wong and Woods meeting this requirement. Bylaw 20 also stipulates that the committee include at least three SBC Executive Committee members. This year they are Robinson, Wellman and Wheeler.

The procedure for submitting resolutions is as follows according to Bylaw 20:

- Proposed resolutions may be submitted as early as April 15 but no later than 15 days prior to the SBC annual meeting, giving the Resolutions Committee a two-week period in which to consider submissions. The committee also may propose resolutions for consideration during its deliberations. Resolutions may not be submitted during the annual meeting.
- Proposed resolutions must be accompanied by a letter from a church qualified to send a messenger to the SBC annual meeting certifying that the individual submitting the resolution is a member in good standing.
- Proposed resolutions preferably should be submitted by email or mailed to the Committee on Resolutions in care of the SBC Executive Committee, 901 Commerce St., Nashville, TN 37203. The drafts must be typewritten, titled, dated and include complete contact information for the person and his or her church.
- No person will be allowed to submit more than three resolutions per year.
- If a properly submitted resolution is not forwarded by the Committee on Resolutions to the SBC annual meeting, a two-thirds vote of messengers would be required to bring the proposed resolution to the convention floor. **BR**

3 WAYS CHURCHES DEAL WITH CULTURE

It’s an understatement to say Christians are being bombarded with cultural changes. Every morning our smartphones alert us to the latest news, which often has more to do with celebrity gossip than world events. Certain laws of the land fly in the face of godly wisdom and biblical commands. Entertainment outlets flaunt behaviors the Bible calls sin and endorse reckless, self-destructive living.

This rapidly changing culture leads churches to respond in at least three ways. Some churches have a bunker mentality. Parents shield their children from society. Pastors call Christians to hide from bad influences, much like the medieval monasteries. Other churches have a battle mentality. They protest sin by forming sidewalk picket lines and attacking sinners on every corner of the internet. Pastors organize boycotts and blackouts against the merchants and media outlets who condone anything contrary to the Bible.

Elements from both of these options have their place. As a father, I have chosen at times to shelter my kids in the bunker. As a preacher, I have railed against the collective sin of eroding cultural norms. While barricades and battlefields may make us feel secure and even self-righteous, rarely do these approaches engage culture in a way that makes disciples or effects societal change.

Perhaps our era calls for a third option: a bravery mentality. While there may be times to hunker down or ride into battle, I believe the best approach is to be brave enough to talk to those engaged in behavior we find sinful.

Our culture needs disciples who are courageous enough to have a conversation with homosexuals or drug addicts or unwed mothers.

Christians need the courage of Christ who was indicted by the religious elite for eating with tax collectors and sinners (Luke 15:1).

We have designed our 2019 Disciple-Making Conference to help you be brave in a culture that makes us want to bunker or battle. On Feb. 26, at Green Street Baptist Church in High Point, John Stonestreet, president of the Colson Center for Christian Worldview, and over 30 practitioners from North Carolina will help you understand today’s prevailing worldviews and courageously engage people with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Take the first step of bravely engaging culture by registering for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina’s Disciple-Making Conference. Visit ncbaptist.org/event-disciple-making-conference.



BRIAN UPSHAW

EDITOR’S NOTE – Brian Upshaw is disciple-making team leader for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Contact (800) 395-5102, ext. 5632, or bupshaw@ncbaptist.org.

Lafferty named candidate for IMB role

By JULIE MCGOWAN | International Mission Board

International Mission Board (IMB) President Paul Chitwood announced Jan. 30 that Todd Lafferty will be presented to the entity’s board of trustees as his recommendation for the IMB’s next executive vice president.

Lafferty currently serves as pastor of mobilization for Shades Mountain Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala. He and his wife, Susan, previously served with the IMB for almost 29 years.

Lafferty first served as an IMB Journeyman in Scotland from 1983-85. The Laffertys were appointed as career IMB missionaries in 1991 and started their journey in a large South Asian city, where Lafferty served as pastor of an international church. Later he added the role of strategy coordinator for the city to his responsibilities.

From 2000-2003, Lafferty served as a candidate consultant with the IMB, based in Richmond, VA. The Laffertys returned to the field in 2003 and served in a variety of roles including strategy associate in the Pacific Rim Region, interim regional leader of Pacific Rim, and the affinity group leader for South Asian peoples.

The Laffertys finished their last state-side assignment with the IMB and retired in 2018.

Lafferty earned a bachelor’s degree in marketing management from the University of New Mexico, and a master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is currently completing work toward a doctoral degree from Malaysia Baptist Theological Seminary. The Laffertys have three children: Becca (27), Jenna (24), and Jonathan (20). **BR**

Stephen Rummage accepts call from Oklahoma City church

Baptist Press

Stephen Rummage has accepted a call to become pastor of Quail Springs Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, moving from the Tampa-area Bell Shoals Baptist Church where he had been senior pastor since 2009.

Quail Springs voted to call Rummage on Jan. 27 after he preached at the church's three morning services.

He will succeed Hance Dilbeck, who led Quail Springs from 2003 until becoming executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma in January 2018.

Rummage is scheduled to preach the convention sermon at the 2019 SBC annual meeting in Birmingham, Ala., and is a member of the SBC Executive Committee search committee seeking a successor to Frank Page, who left the position last year.

From 2016-2018, Rummage, 50, was president of the Florida Baptist State Convention and chairman of the SBC Executive Committee. He chaired the SBC Committee on Resolutions in 2016 and was a committee member in 2015. He also was the SBC's 2009-2010 second vice president.

"When we entered ministry together 27 years ago, Michele and I promised the Lord to follow wherever He led and to serve wherever He called us," Rummage said in a statement released by Bell Shoals.

"We have sought to be faithful to that commitment, and God has brought joy and blessing to our lives as a result.

"We know that God has great plans for Bell Shoals' future," Rummage added. "And we will be praying for God to make clear the man He wants to lead this great church going forward."

Under Rummage's leadership, Bell Shoals added four campuses and baptized more than 2,200 people. He also has led Bell Shoals to deploy dozens of local, national and international missions teams, and the church's disaster relief efforts have extended from North Carolina to the Florida Keys and Puerto Rico. While at Bell Shoals, Rummage also started the radio ministry Moving Forward, which airs on more than 120 stations nationwide.



STEPHEN RUMMAGE

A North Carolina native, Rummage served at Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C., from 2004-2009 and was associate professor of preaching and director of the doctor of ministry program at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., from 1997-2004.

Gary Payne, Bell Shoals' executive pastor, will lead the church's staff during this transition.

"I will miss Dr. Rummage's preaching, leadership and friendship," said Payne, who has served at the church for 25 years. "I also am looking forward to seeing who God brings to Bell Shoals. I am convinced that our best days are yet to come."

The Rummages have a son, Joshua, who is in the pharmacy program at the University of South Florida; his wife Morgan serves in Bell Shoals' student ministry. **BR**

Todd Deaton to rejoin S.C. Baptist Courier staff

Baptist Press

Todd Deaton has been named managing editor of *The Baptist Courier*, news magazine of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, effective March 1, moving from the editor's post at the *Western Recorder*, news journal of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Deaton, 55, a S.C. native who formerly served 13 years as *The Courier's* managing editor, will succeed Butch Blume, a 20-year *Courier* employee who succeeded Deaton in 2009 when Deaton became the *Western Recorder's* editor.

Blume, who will retire in April, has served South Carolina Baptists for more than three decades, including 14 years at Anderson College (now Anderson University) before joining *The Courier's* staff.

Deaton is a recent president of the

Association of State Baptist Publications and longtime member of Baptist Communicators Association and has won numerous journalism honors, including five first-place editorial awards from the Kentucky Press Association.

He also previously served as associate editor of the *Biblical Recorder*, North Carolina's news journal.

Deaton holds a doctor of education degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.; a master of divinity degree from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.; and an undergraduate degree from Furman University in Greenville, S.C.

He and his wife, Michelle, have two children, Laura, a nurse in Louisville, and Caleb, an aviation major at Eastern Kentucky University. **BR**

NEWS BRIEFS

Georgia Baptists drop 20 staff members

(Baptist Press/*Christian Index*) The Georgia Baptist Mission Board (GBMB) has laid off 20 staff members after a near-\$1.2 million budget shortfall in 2018 Cooperative Program giving, *The Christian Index* reported.

The GBMB will restructure the workforce for greater efficiency, GBMB Executive Director W. Thomas Hammond, Jr., told the convention's news journal Jan. 24.

"We're committed to making the Georgia Baptist Mission Board the best resource our pastors could ask for," Hammond said. "Part of that will include streamlining some ministries and evaluating all of the activities of the Mission Board." *The Index* did not release the full list of eliminated positions, but the convention previously employed 170 missionaries and support staff, according to the GBMB's latest annual report.

The \$40,004,756 Georgia Baptist churches gave in 2018 fell \$1,195,243 short of the 2018 budget, representing a 2.9 percent shortage, according to GBMB figures. In 2017, Georgia Baptists gave \$40,846,763. Kevin Smith, GBMB vice president of operations, described the Jan. 22 layoffs as a difficult decision that involved reassessing priorities and consolidating some positions.

Chitwood installed as IMB president

(International Mission Board) The International Mission Board (IMB) installed Paul Chitwood formally as its 13th president Feb. 6 at Grove Avenue Baptist Church in Richmond, Va.

The public was invited to attend the installation service, which included a Sending Celebration honoring the appointment of 19 new Southern Baptist international missionaries.

The IMB's board of trustees unanimously elected Chitwood, 48, as president of the organization on Nov. 15 in Richmond. Chitwood, who previously served as executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, took office immediately as president of the 173-year-old entity, the largest denominational missionary-sending body among American evangelicals. More than 3,600 Southern Baptist international missionaries serve worldwide. The service was broadcast via Livestream at 6:30 p.m.

Dishwasher's \$21.5M victory honors Sabbath

(Baptist Press) A hotel dishwasher awarded \$21.5 million in her court battle to honor the Sabbath is a faithful member of Bethel Evangelical Baptist Church in Miami, pastor Keny Felix told Baptist Press (BP) Jan. 18.

Marie Jean-Pierre, fired from the Conrad Hotel in 2016 after she refused to work on Sundays, has attended the Haitian church nearly 20 years, Felix said. Various news reports have erroneously identified Jean-Pierre, 60, as Catholic.

The Southern Baptist pastor describes Jean-Pierre as a "devout believer" who "embraces her faith in all aspects of her daily life."

Felix welcomed the jury's Jan. 14 verdict in the Federal District Court of Miami recognizing Jean-Pierre's civil right to honor the Sabbath.

The jury ruled that the Conrad Hotel managed by Park Hotels and Resorts Inc. of Tysons, Va., formerly known as Hilton Worldwide, violated the Civil Rights Act of 1964 when it failed to accommodate Jean-Pierre's Sunday worship, *The Washington Post* reported. The hotel fired Jean-Pierre in March 2016 and plans to appeal the verdict.

The jury awarded Jean-Pierre \$36,000 in back wages, \$500,000 for emotional pain and mental anguish, and \$21 million in punitive damages. But any amount she receives will be substantially less, as federal law limits punitive damage awards to \$300,000.

Trump's ban on transgender military service stands

(Baptist Press) The Supreme Court ruled Jan. 22 to allow the enforcement of President Donald Trump's ban on transgender military service, a ban previously frozen by lower court injunctions.

The policy immediately stops transgender persons from entering the military except "under certain limited circumstances," according to media reports. It was first announced by Trump via Twitter in July 2017 and then tweaked in March 2018 to help it pass through lower courts attempting to block it.

In the time since, the military has continued to operate under the old policy. But in December, the Justice Department asked the Supreme Court to uphold the ban, and on Jan. 22, justices ruled 5-4 to do that provisionally while the lower courts worked it out.

Full stories available online at BRnow.org.

Kammerdiener leaves legacy of service to missions

By MARY JANE WELCH | IMB

Donald R. Kammerdiener, a longtime missionary and administrator with the International Mission Board (IMB), died Jan. 23. He was 82.

Kammerdiener was especially known as the steady hand administering day-to-day operations of the IMB under two presidents and stepping in to lead as interim president between the two, spanning a period from 1990 through 2001. Kammerdiener and his late wife Meredith began their missions careers in 1962 in Colombia and later served in Argentina as he moved into leadership positions, first while serving in Latin America and later at the IMB's home office in Rich-

mond, Va. "Don Kammerdiener is a legend in Southern Baptist missions," IMB President Paul Chitwood said. "Leaders around the world consistently use words such as integrity, faithfulness, wisdom and role model to describe Dr. Kammerdiener's reputation and his impact on their lives and work. And it is because of his unwavering commitment to his Lord's work that the lives of countless people associated with the International Mission Board are richer for the privilege of knowing him and working alongside him."

According to Jerry Rankin, IMB president emeritus, Kammerdiener was a respected administrator, "giving oversight to operations while others of us traveled the world and sought to mobilize South-

ern Baptists. When other administrators advocated idealistic visions and innovation, Don kept his feet on the ground with a pragmatic balance."

"His humble and gracious style engendered respect and defused many tensions and conflicts," Rankin noted. "He led and mentored as a servant and was largely responsible for my survival as president and any accomplishments attributed to me in the early years of my tenure."

'On my way'

Kammerdiener's passion for missions was born in boyhood during nine years in Royal Ambassadors, Southern Baptists' mission organization for boys. His mother was his leader.

When he headed to Oklahoma Baptist University, Kammerdiener wrote what was then the Foreign Mission Board, saying, "I'm on my way." He kept in touch at least once a year through college and then as one of the first students at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, which opened in 1958.

He kept his word, serving with IMB nearly 40 years.

In Colombia, Kammerdiener held such positions as pastor-director of the Christian Cultural Center in Cali, national coordinator for the Crusade of the Americas evangelistic campaign, field missionary in the Colombian department (state) of Valle, treasurer of the Colombia Baptist mission and trustee vice president of International Baptist Theological Seminary in Cali.

As Kammerdiener found himself taking on administrative tasks, he says he quickly learned he would grow stale if he let those drown out more important things.

"But if I would get out and witness to somebody, life became vibrant again," he said.

Quiet nurture

In Argentina, Kammerdiener served as field representative, seen as a pastor to missionaries, in eastern Spanish-speaking South America from 1970 to 1980. He also directed evangelism and missions for the Argentine Baptist Convention and taught missions at the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Buenos Aires.

Whatever his role, Kammerdiener quietly nurtured leaders – both Latin American leaders and missionary leaders. Ron Wilson, retired IMB staffer who started as a missionary in Latin America, has vivid memories of the way Kammerdiener guided by asking questions.

"If you were going to do this over

again, what would you do differently?" Kammerdiener would ask. Or, "You read this book? What did you learn from it?"

Kammerdiener was always open to talk with him, Wilson said, but he also was firm that Wilson make his own decisions and own them when he presented them to those he led. "Don't hand your leadership over to me," Kammerdiener told him.

Ron's wife Janice remembers a time when she and Ron were young missionaries in the Dominican Republic. They were discouraged to report how little response they had seen.

Kammerdiener responded by asking them to tell what their plans were, what they were trying to do. "If I can

hear you're making attempts and failing, I'm good with that," Kammerdiener said. He would be concerned, he said, to hear they were not trying.

Kammerdiener later served as area director for Middle America and the Caribbean and then vice president for the Americas until 1990, when he assumed the role of executive vice president.

Missionary-statesman

Tom Elliff, IMB president from 2011 to 2014, noted, "Don Kammerdiener's impact on the IMB is both considerable and enduring.

"Coupling wide experience on the field with his administrative gifts, Don helped shape much of what IMB is today. Don epitomizes the role of a missionary-statesman. His genteel nature never subdued his passion for the lost, nor did his dry sense of humor mask the fact that he is studied and well-informed."

Kammerdiener continued to serve as executive vice president of IMB until his retirement in 2001. A multipurpose auditorium complex at the IMB's International Learning Center training center was named for Kammerdiener in 2002 as a testament to his legacy.

Before missionary appointment, Kammerdiener was pastor of churches in Richville, Okla., and Kansas City, and assistant pastor of a church in Independence, Mo.

He received the bachelor of arts degree from Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, and the master of divinity degree from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City.

He is survived by five grown children: Carol, Joyce, Linda, Donny Jr. and Jon.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Mary Jane Welch is a contract writer for the International Mission Board. Russell Rankin also contributed to this story.) **BR**



DONALD KAMMERDIENER

AROUND THE STATE

Staff change

TARA JACKSON has been called as the worship leader and women's ministry leader for West Edgecombe Baptist Church, Rocky Mount. A native of Winston-Salem, she formerly served as the part-time worship director at Sandy Plains Baptist Church, Gastonia.



TARA JACKSON

Obituary

ROBERT RICKS BOONE JR., 80, died Jan. 26.

Licensed and ordained to the gospel ministry by his home church, Cedar Rock Baptist Church, Castalia, on Sept. 18, 1960, Boone attended Campbell College. He married Carol Turner on Aug. 24, 1957, and transferred to the University of



ROBERT RICKS BOONE JR.

North Carolina at Chapel Hill where he received his A.B. Degree. He received a bachelor of divinity degree from Southeastern Seminary. He pastored Wood Baptist Church, Louisburg; Red Bud Baptist Church, Castalia; Grassy Creek Baptist Church, Bullock; Arlington Street Baptist Church, Rocky Mount; and for 25 years, Bethlehem Baptist Church, Knightdale. He also served on the general board of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and after retirement as interim pastor for seven churches in the Tar River Baptist Association.

He was awarded honorary deputy sheriff for Wake County on March 27, 2000.

He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Carol Turner Boone; daughters, Angelia Boone Duckworth of Raleigh and Amy Boone Lee of Knightdale; brother, William Shelton Boone of Greensboro; three grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Memorials to: Bethlehem Baptist Church, 8400 Poole Road, Knightdale, NC 27545.

Submissions

The *Biblical Recorder* is pleased to publish staff changes, church news and events with a statewide interest. Please send information immediately following an event, or for opportunity corner, send at least two months in advance. All submissions will be subjected to *Biblical Recorder* styles and guidelines and will be edited for style and length. Include cost and contact information in your email or correspondence.

Send to dianna@BRnow.org or *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512. Call (919) 847-2127.

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February 17

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

February 24

When Materialism Consumes

Focal passage: 1 John 2:12-17; 3:16-18

When I was 15 years old, my father brought home an old 1970 Camaro.

It had a lot of surface rust, the front windshield was cracked, the side window was gone and there was about six inches of water in the floorboard along with leaves and fishing tackle. He paid \$100 for the car, and told me it would be mine when I turned 16.

In many ways, that car was the best gift my dad could have given me.

He helped me work on it, and I learned to take something in really bad shape and make something really nice out of it.

For months, we worked together, so it would be ready to drive when the time came.

The day I turned 16, God taught me a valuable lesson. I got home from getting my license, and I went straight to the gas station to fill up the car. As I was turning into the store, a good friend was walking inside and I began waving to him. Not looking where I was going, I ran right into the concrete steel post that protected the gas pump.

It completely destroyed the right front fender of my newly restored car. I

was so upset. I didn't even get gas and went back home to tell my parents. They were very kind, because they knew I had worked so hard to make the car nice.

From that experience, I learned two valuable lessons.

First, pay attention when you are driving. Second, earthly possessions cannot ultimately satisfy you.

Even though I was a Christian when I wrecked my car, I had let restoring that car consume my life.

It was all I thought about for months. When I had the accident, it woke me up to the reality that earthly things will not last, and if I was not careful, they can compete for God's rightful place on the throne of my life. Only God's love can truly satisfy the longing of our hearts.

What about you? Do you have anything competing for God's love in your life?

"... we must do all we can to help others embrace the truth that Jesus is God, came to earth and dwelled among us, died on the cross for our sins, rose on the third day, ascended into heaven and is the mediator ..."

Focal passage: 1 John 2:18-29

Recently, I was on a plane sitting next to very successful land developer in Atlanta, Ga. We had a fascinating conversation about how he made important business decisions. Basically, he would draw a grid on a piece of paper and write all the pros on one side and all the cons on the other side.

The business leader would evaluate both sides of the grid using a rational and reasonable approach. If he knew his decision was wise and right, he would move forward and make the deal.

In the midst of our conversation, I told him I was a pastor and asked if he ever thought about using his grid when it came to making decisions about eternal matters.

Immediately, he began to argue that all religions, for the most part, were all the

same. So, to him, it did not matter if you were a Christian or a Buddhist, it was all equal. I tried to explain to him that all religions are not the same and they often make claims that are contrary to each other. I suggested using his grid to evaluate the claims of Christ, knowing that he would come to the conclusion that Jesus Christ is the Messiah – fully God and fully man.

Unfortunately, all his excitement about his strategy for making rational and reasonable decisions for his business endeavors were irrelevant when it came to truth claims about Jesus.

Tragically, he left the plane that evening rejecting what God had done for him in Jesus Christ.

As we think through our lesson this week, the Apostle John makes clear that anyone who denies that Jesus is the Messiah has no part in God's family (1 John 2:22).

With that in mind, we must do all we can to help others to embrace the truth that Jesus is God, came to earth and dwelled among us, died on the cross for our sins, rose on the third day, ascended into heaven and is the mediator between God and anyone who believes on Him so they will not spend eternity separated from God.



BARTLEY WOOTEN
Pastor,
Beulaville Baptist
Church

February 17

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

February 24

Opportunity Knocks

Focal Passage: Genesis 41:15-21, 33-40

While I was in seminary I worked at UPS, and while I was proud to wear the gold-en shield, I was miserable in my work.

During the day I was training for ministry, trying to master the skills I would need to take the gospel to wherever the Lord might send me.

At night, I was daily missing the chance to put those skills to the test by ministering to my lost coworkers.

My heart was not in the right place, and when opportunity knocked I was not listening.

Thankfully, we have a better example in the life of Joseph.

Joseph never missed the truth regarding his circumstances.

He knew God was sovereign and that no matter what there was always an opportunity to do God's work.

He had been given an audience with Pharaoh for such a time as this, to rely on God's wisdom to interpret Pharaoh's

dream and prepare for the famine that was to come. As a result, God exalted him to a place of great prominence to accomplish the task set before him. In doing this he would provide not only for the nation of Egypt, but for Jacob and his people as well, through whom God would send the Messiah.

Psalms 139:16 says, *"In Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them."*

In whatever circumstance you find yourself, God is not surprised. He has so ordained that you be where you are that you might glorify Him in Christ by spreading the gospel to the lost around you and by displaying the love of Christ through acts of service to all.

Rely on His wisdom, wisdom found in the Bible, and trust that if He has called you to the task, He will give you all that you need to accomplish it.

Focal Passage: Genesis 45:1-15

Little boys break things, and mine is no exception. Interestingly, my son looks to me to fix whatever it is he has broken. No one taught him to come to me, but something inside of him views me as the answer to the problem. The two pieces cannot come together unless I by some means unknown to him reunite them. On the one hand, this makes me feel great as a father. On the other hand, the pressure is a bit more than one person can bear. What happens when that which is broken is something glue cannot reunite?

Joseph suffered greatly at the hands of his brothers. They plotted to kill him but instead sold him into slavery. In Genesis 45 he stands over them as second in command of Egypt and responsible for the livelihood of the entire kingdom and those who surrounded her.



CASEY SHORT
Pastor,
Reddicks Grove Baptist
Church, Williamston

Reunited

The lives of his brothers are in his hands. What will he do? Will he get his revenge or will he forgive?

Joseph forgives. Joseph forgives, because he sees the sovereign hand of God in his circumstances to provide for His people. Because God has rescued him, he can offer the same to his brothers.

Second Corinthians 6:19 says that because God has reconciled us to Himself in Christ, He has given to us the ministry of reconciliation. In the narrow context that means He has commissioned us to call others into this reconciliation through salvation. More broadly it also means that because we have been reconciled to God we can be reconciled to others, even those who have committed the worst atrocities against us. What wrongs have been committed against you? They are nothing compared to the sin you have committed against God. Yet, He has offered you mercy and grace and forgiveness in Christ. Therefore, seek to be reconciled to your enemies. Offer grace and mercy and forgiveness to others. In this, you will bring God glory.

Interested in writing Bible study lessons? Contact seth@BRnow.org.

SBC's first black professor dies at 68

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Professor and pastor Thomas Vaughn Walker, 68, who was the first African-American elected to any Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) seminary faculty and who taught at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS) beginning in 1986, died Jan. 26 in Louisville, Ky. In 2016, Walker retired from teaching full-time. He then became senior professor of Black

Church Studies, which allowed him to teach and supervise doctoral students on a part-time basis.

Walker, who earned a master of divinity degree from SBTS in 1987, pastored First Gethsemane Baptist Church in Louisville for nearly 35 years, beginning in 1984.

In Missouri, Walker was a professor at the University of Missouri-Columbia and senior pastor of the Log Providence Baptist Church in Columbia.

In addition to the M.Div. from Southern Seminary, Walker earned degrees from Oregon State University (doctor of philosophy), Eastern Illinois University (master's) and Hampton University (bachelor's), where, as a student, he lettered in football and baseball.

Walker is survived by his wife, Cheryl D. (Jackson) Walker, as well as by their three children (David, Mary, and Eryn) and six grandchildren. **BR**



T. VAUGHN WALKER

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Pastor

Due to the retirement of a beloved, long-term pastor, Cherokee Avenue Baptist in Gaffney, SC, seeks a **full-time pastor**. We are a congregation led Southern Baptist church. We seek a caring leader who will proclaim the Truth with fervency and depth; an energetic proclaimer who will help us thrive in our faith and impact our community into the future. We look for an individual with at least a master's degree from a Southern Baptist seminary and at least three years of experience in a pastoral position. Please submit résumés to: cabcpastorsearch@gmail.com.

First Baptist Church, Maxton, NC, is seeking a **pastor** to lead in proclaiming the true gospel written in God's Word; reaching individuals for Christ and fostering spiritual growth; driven to be engaged with surrounding community; adding unto the membership is paramount; bi-vocational preferable. Send résumés to firstbaptist@ncrrbiz.com. Deadline March 31, 2019.

Beverly Hills Baptist Church, 110 Kemberly St., Rockingham, NC 28379, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Send résumé to the above address or to secretarybhbc@carolina.rr.com. Résumé deadline: Feb. 28, 2019.

Buckhorn Baptist Church, located in a rural farming community in the small town of Como, North Carolina, and is a multigenerational congregation seeking a **pastor** with a minimum of 5 years' pastoral experience and graduate of a seminary, divinity school or Bible college. We're searching for a pastor who is passionate about working with all ages of the congregation, being active in our small local community to grow our church, a pastor who possess a caring concern for the sick and shut-ins in our community and surrounding area, and one who gives of his time to visit those individuals. Buckhorn Baptist Church is a Bible based worship, believing the Bible was true yesterday, true today and true always. Congregation focuses on reaching local community, home and missions. Include statement of faith, personal testimony and audio or visual of recent sermon. Mail to: Buckhorn Baptist Church Pastor Search Team, c/o Pam Carr 448 Buckhorn Church Road, Como, NC 27818

Mount Carmel Baptist Church in Asheville, NC, is seeking a **full-time Lead Pastor**. Our future pastor should be a called man of God, led to give Christian leadership to our church family and surrounding community in the name of Jesus Christ. We believe the Bible is the supreme authority of faith and life, and is the true Word of God. We are aligned theologically with the "Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in the year 2000. As pastor, his goal should be to lead believers to become mature followers of Jesus Christ through loving, growing and serving (our mission statement). Minimum requirements are 5 years' ministry experience with bachelor's degree. Minimum age requirement is 25. Résumés should be sent to bryan44dover@gmail.com.

First Baptist Church of Clayton, NC, is prayerfully seeking an experienced **full-time Senior Pastor** who is energetic, enthusiastic and approachable, capable of bringing all age groups together to serve the Lord. Clayton is a rapidly growing community located close to Raleigh while maintaining small town charm. We currently have approximately 700 members, a child development center licensed for up to 59 children a day, and are affiliated with Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and Southern Baptist Convention. We have ordained women ministers and women deacons, and are a congregational model church. Requirements include a master's degree or higher from a seminary or divinity school with five years' senior pastor experience, or its equivalent. An online-only application can be completed by going to <http://goo.gl/8vEESq>. Once there, please supply requested information, attach your résumé, and other pertinent files. For additional information or questions, please email pastorsearch@fbcclaytonnc.org.

First Baptist Church, Marshall, NC, is a Southern Baptist church seeking a **full-time Pastor**. Applicants must be ordained with a SBC seminary degree. This person should be youthful, energetic and have good communication and visitation skills. Send résumé to: Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 484, Marshall, NC 28753, or ChurchOffice@fbcmarshall.com.

First Baptist Church, Hickory, NC, is seeking a **Senior Pastor** filled with the Holy Spirit, who has an intimate relationship with the Lord, and who affirms our mission and identity statements to minister to a multi-generational body of believers. Qualifications include: accomplished preacher/teacher of the Bible with a master of divinity degree or higher; minimum of five years' full-time senior pastor experience; a proactive, strong leader who collaborates with staff and church leaders; and a servant-leader who serves as a role model for the Christ-like life exhibiting humility and integrity. FBC is affiliated with the SBC and CBF. Send résumé and cover letter to PSC, First Baptist Church, 339 2nd Avenue, NW, Hickory, NC 28601, or to pscfbchky1819@gmail.com. Sermon audio and/or video recordings may be submitted. Deadline: February 23, 2019.

Church Staff

Mintz Baptist Church in Roseboro, NC, is seeking **part-time Music Minister**. Music position to provide leadership in choral music and maintain a comprehensive music program. Prior music training and experience preferred. Contact church office 910-564-6500 or Mintzbc@intrstar.net.

Glenn View Baptist Church, Winston Salem, NC, is seeking a **part-time Worship Leader** to lead our praise band and choir. If interested, please send your résumé and contact information to: search@glennview.org.

Green Street Baptist Church, High Point, NC, is seeking a **full-time Business Administrator**. Prior experience is preferred. Interested applicants should email résumés to kristi@greenstreet.org.

Concord Baptist Church (Granite Falls, NC) is seeking a **full-time Children's and Family minister**. Growing church with approx. 750 members. Three other full-time staff. Experience is required and affirm the Baptist Faith & Message 2000. Please send cover letter and résumé to: tomcdonald@charter.net or mail to church at: Concord Baptist Church, Attn Pastor, PO Box 127, Granite Falls NC 28630.

Miscellaneous

Hi, I am the founder of the Life FM Radio Network and also a World War II Veteran, US Navy South Pacific, and ended at the massive invasion of Okinawa in 1945 when the USA exploded the two atomic bombs over south Japan, thus beginning the Atomic Era. By the way, the Lord has allowed me to build WWQK FM in OakRidge, TN (Knoxville area) where the two bombs were made, called "Fat Boy" and "Little Man" and where the famous Oak Ridge Quartet originated. So I may be "Radio Active" HA! - Over the past seventy plus years I have seen a steady decline of **use of HYMNS in the church**. Billy Blackwood and the Blackwood Brothers Quartet have developed a program to promote hymns during these last days - Rev. 12:12. Do you want an event at your church? And at no cost to you? Email me - Bob@TheLifeFM.com.

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

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Cost for Baptist churches/organizations is \$1.25 per word, number and stand-alone initial (\$1.45 for commercial and non-Baptist entities) with a minimum charge of \$35. Classifieds also are carried online.

Celebrate

Continued from page 5

geographic area between 10 and 40 degrees latitude north of the equator that includes North Africa, the Middle East and Asia where the largest population of unreached people groups live. The BSC is currently engaged with 130 Asian churches representing 15 distinct language groups. Plans are in the works to expand that reach.

Financial update

Although the state convention finished 2018 more than \$3.3 million or 10.85 percent below its \$31 million budget, BSC Executive Leader for Business Services John Butler said the final financial report did include a few "bright spots."

Giving to the North Carolina Missions Offering (NCMO) exceeded the \$2.1 million offering goal by nearly \$26,000. Additionally, in the aftermath of Hurricane Florence, the state convention received more than \$6 million in designated giving for disaster relief through Baptists on Mission, also known as N.C. Baptist Men.

Butler noted that giving has been strong through the first part of 2019, but warned that budget reductions would most likely be recommended as part of the proposed 2020 budget.

'Morality' policy

In other business, the board approved a motion requesting that the Executive Committee develop a policy that would permit the removal of a board member if circumstances warranted such a decision.

The motion was presented during time allotted for miscellaneous business by board member Curtis Williams, pastor of Brown Creek Baptist Church in Wadesboro. In his explanation of his motion, Williams noted that a process is necessary in light of moral failures among several ministry leaders across the county in recent years.

Currently, neither the state convention's bylaws nor the policies of the board of directors include a formal process for removing individuals for what would be deemed disqualifying behavior, said BSC Associate Executive Director-Treasurer Brian Davis.

In the few previous instances where such actions had to be addressed, Davis said individuals resigned on their own. The board concluded that it would be wise to have a policy in place before ever having to address such an issue.

The Executive Committee will report on its progress on the motion at the May board meeting.

Caswell construction

The board also approved a motion by the Business Services Special Committee authorizing the construction of two new cottages at the N.C. Baptist Assembly at Fort Caswell.

Executive Committee additions

The board elected four individuals to serve as at-large members of the BSC's Executive Committee. They are:

Noah Crowe, member, First Baptist Church, Robbinsville; Troy Grant, lead pastor, Lakeview Baptist Church, Hickory; James Harrington, pastor, Fellowship Baptist Church, Moyock, and associational missions strategist, Chowan Baptist Association; and Keith Stephenson, pastor, Second Baptist Church, Rutherfordton.

Business Services at-large members

The board president informed the board of two individuals appointed to serve as at-large members of the Business Services Special Committee. They are: Ben Francis, Parkwood Baptist Church, Gastonia; and Delores Thomas, representing Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina.

Nominating committee additions

The board approved six individuals to serve on the BSC's Committee on Nominations based on recommendations by the state convention officers. They are: David Duarte, Daystar Church, Greensboro; Amy Harrison, Trinity Baptist Church, Mooresville; Pao Ly, First Hmong Baptist Church, Morganton; Robin Fisher, Sunset Avenue Baptist Church, Rocky Mount; David Mace, Blackburn Baptist Church, Hickory; and Gene Roberts, Newfound Baptist Church, Leicester.

Fisher will serve as the committee chairman.

New board secretary

The board also elected Kathy Bennett, executive assistant to BSC Executive Director-Treasurer Milton A. Hollifield Jr., as board secretary. Former board secretary Ginger Brown retired in late December.

Next meeting

The next board meeting is scheduled for May 20-21 at Caraway Conference Center. **BR**



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Johnny Hunt—National Strategist for Evangelism, Southern Baptist Convention