



BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

MARCH 14, 2015 • News Journal of North Carolina Baptists • VOLUME 181 NO. 6 • **BRnow.org**

N.C. Baptist Men: NARROW PURPOSE WIDENING MISSION

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

Richard Brunson has seen major changes in the way North Carolina Baptist Men (NCBM) does ministry over the 39-year life of the organization. But the basic purpose remains: “every Christian is a missionary; all Christians are called, gifted and sent; and our job is to help churches involve their members in missions,” he said.

He did not say, “involve MEN in missions.” He said “members.” And more than 20,000 Baptist volunteers accepted the invitation to serve last year.

Brunson, executive director of NCBM since 1992, said, “We want to challenge all men, women and students to be involved in missions. We provide opportunities for them because we think it changes their lives, and it changes the church.”

For that reason the organization’s title has confused some. Incorporated as North Carolina Baptist Men in 1976, the legal name is unchanged. But in the last 15 years they have used the name Baptists on Mission because, “it helps churches realize our purpose is to be on mission,” Brunson said. “It’s not just men. It’s men, women and students – this better communicates who we are, and that there is a place for everybody.”

Baptists on Mission is the title of their newsletter, promoted on the ministry’s website and emphasized in other materials.

The nucleus of NCBM began in 1959 when Clyde Davis served as the first full-time director of North Carolina’s Brotherhood organization. Every church had a Brotherhood, and every church had Royal Ambassadors in those days, according to Brunson.

Ed Bullock followed Clyde Davis as the leader of Brotherhood, which was

organizationally part of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. “It was during Ed’s time the idea of N.C. Baptist Men as a separate organization began,” Brunson explained.

“We existed as a separate entity to support Brotherhood and Royal Ambassadors in those days,” he said. “That’s how we did missions, was through Brotherhood.”

At that time churches did not typically do hands-on missions. Missions was done through programs and organizations like WMU and Brotherhood. The focus was on missions education, not on doing missions.

That’s where the greatest changes have happened. “In the last 40 years we have moved from just supporting the programs to helping churches involve their members in missions,” he said.

People didn’t seem to think they could be a missionary, he said. “They thought, ‘we’re praying, we’re giving, that’s

See Baptist page 7



Relatives, friends say goodbye to Ridings

By K. ALLAN BLUME & DIANNA L. CAGLE | BR staff

Family and friends gathered March 8 to say goodbye to Kenneth Ridings, 78, the longtime Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute (now College) professor and then president.



KENNETH RIDINGS

“Kenneth Ridings, who preached the written Word, has met the Living Word,” said Greg Mathis, Ridings’ pastor at Mud Creek Baptist Church, to open the funeral service held at the church. Ridings died March 5.

Mathis and D.L. Lowrie, former executive director-treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and a visiting professor at Fruitland, shared during the service. Lowrie recounted his long-time friendship with Ridings that began 57 years ago in Myrtle, Miss.

“Both of us have a rich heritage,” Lowrie said. “I’m here to join you in thanking God for this man.”

Lowrie said Ridings’ influence and impact will continue to be felt for years to come. “When you absorb into your soul the truth that God raised Christ from the dead, that changes everything,” he said. “The gospel says that every work [Kenneth] did here that was worth doing, followed him and will follow him to the judgment

See Ridings page 10

Kenneth Ridings: In the spirit of John the Baptist

We have a tendency to believe the greatest people we know will live forever. It's hard to imagine that the day will arrive when we must continue on without those who mean so much to us. The disciples of John the Baptist seemed to think that way about his departure. The students, faculty, alumni and friends of Fruitland Baptist Bible College feel the same way with the passing of one of our spiritual heroes – Kenneth Ridings.

I believe Kenneth was like John the Baptist. God spoke to my heart about the similarities between these two unusually gifted preachers. Both had a Spartan spirit, a unique personality, a heavenly power, an enormous ministry and an unexpected departure.

At the age of 78, Kenneth Ridings, who spent 60 years as an extraordinary expositor of God's Word, has gone to be with the Lord. Like many "heroes of faith," this world was probably not worthy of Kenneth's ministry, and will pay an eternal price for not hearing and heeding his preaching.

Like John the Baptist, Kenneth burst onto the scene out of nowhere to stir, rebuke and rally many through preaching. Like the Judean wilderness, Finger-ville, S.C., is not a well-known location. But the small, rural, hometown mill village, gave us a great prophet. He used to jest that any of us who rode by his old home place on "scenic highway 11" could put that on our resume.

Few could have imagined the slender country boy who married the local preacher's daughter would erupt on the platform as such an exciting expository preacher. God sovereignly set the direction Kenneth's life would take. The heavenly prediction Gabriel gave prior to the birth of the Baptist "that he would be great in the sight of The Lord," could have also been prophesied about Kenneth. He had few peers in scriptural insight, exposition and heavenly giftedness. Listening to him was spell-binding!

I wish everyone in our Southern Baptist Convention could have heard him. He was a "prince among preachers." Like John the Baptist, he preached repentance and demanded righteousness. He grew us spiritually with his well-prepared, homiletically-crafted messages. Many of his alliterated outlines will linger with us long after his passing.

His messages on The Lord's Prayer, Psalm 23 and Hosea 14 are legendary.

With his King James Bible firmly held in his left hand and the unforgettable gestures of his right hand as thumb and fingers pointed out at his audience, his voice cut the air with the precision of

the most seasoned orator. He never finished with the scriptural text until the text was spiritually finished with us!

Kenneth's sermons were often loud and long. He regularly preached for more than an hour, generally to the delight of his listeners. Most preachers have neither the content, the attention of their audience nor the stamina to preach that long. I told Kenneth that my

brain couldn't think as fast as he could preach, and that my seat would get sore from listening to his long sermons.

I asked him if he had ever considered shortening his sermons, and he said he would think about it. So in our next

Bible conference he decided to become a short-winded preacher. After I preached my usual 30-minute sermon, Kenneth arose to the platform and preached exactly 29 minutes. He then sat down beside me snarling, "You ain't going to out short me!" I never again heard him preach another short sermon.

Recently I told him that some of the young preachers were finding it stylish and acceptable to preach nearly an hour. I suggested if he would consider purchasing a deep V-necked shirt, and some skinny jeans, perhaps some contemporary churches might invite him to preach for an hour. He glared at me and let me know that Baptists were more apt to see him in John's camel hair and a leather girdle than skinny jeans.

But I appreciate Kenneth's willingness to realize that other preachers were arriving on the scene who didn't look or dress like him. That's another thing he had in common with John the Baptist. He wisely informed us that God could call whomever He chooses.

Kenneth was a herald like John who gladly humbled himself so that Jesus alone would be seen and magnified. He accepted his preaching assignment with John's humility. For much of his life, he felt most at home at Fruitland Baptist Bible College. His sole purpose was to point his listeners to Jesus, and he taught his "preacher boys" to do the same.



GREG MATHIS
Guest Column

Kenneth was a herald like John [the Baptist] who gladly humbled himself so that Jesus alone would be seen and magnified.

Like John, Kenneth had his followers and imitators. Perhaps his greatest impact was on the preachers who would graduate and emulate him in their preaching. Today the college chapel bears his name with the motto, "Where preaching is our passion!"

Kenneth said many times that he and his wife, Ann, wanted to finish their lives in the rapture. In the end, God saw fit to welcome him to heaven through death.

Like John, no one expected Kenneth's life to end as it did. I thought Kenneth or John the Baptist might have died preaching or baptizing. I certainly would not have thought that John should die in prison lonely and uncertain in his thoughts.

In his last days Kenneth experienced John's isolation, insecurity and intimidating circumstances as he suffered in his own emotional confinement brought on by dementia. Alzheimer's is a painful

mental prison. It was difficult to witness the toll it took on his once keen mind.

His loving wife Ann and his daughter Beverly were so good to him. They were with him every step of the

way. Ann, who led Kenneth to the Lord when he was a teenager, was there to place Kenneth's hand into God's as he stepped into glory an aged, weathered and faithful servant. God's man finished his course!

Even if Kenneth's ministry lessened toward the end, his deserved respect will never be lost. I am reminded that it was in John's prison experience when Jesus asserted that John was more than a prophet and better than the best man who had ever lived. If John the Baptist was the greatest man to ever live, could Kenneth, with John's spirit, be far down the list?

Those who knew him witnessed his spiritual greatness. We cherished our time with him. Hopefully we can carry a little of his legacy with us. Young or aged, modern or old fashioned, we should all strive to move forward in Kenneth's spirit and in John's spirit.

The famous preacher, Alexander Maclaren, commended us to emulate John the Baptist in this way: "[With] an unalterable resolution, stand as solid as an iron pillar, live as an unshakeable reed, speak with a clear vision from heaven and minister with a calling to ready people for the Kingdom of God!"

Kenneth Ridings completed his ministry pursuing God's glory. He allowed others to come along as he quietly faded off the scene. He allowed God to move him out of the spotlight of success to the shadows of obscurity. What a lesson from a man of God who lived his life in the spirit of John the Baptist. Kenneth seized his opportunity, and shouldn't we as well? God bless the memory of a "unique, one of a kind" preacher.

Perhaps, like John the Baptist, we may never see another like him.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Greg Mathis is senior pastor of Mud Creek Baptist Church in Hendersonville.) **BR**

BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

(ISSN 0279-8182)

News Journal of the Baptist State Convention
of North Carolina

Founded 1833 by Thomas Meredith

K. Allan Blume, Editor/President
editor@brnow.org

Seth Brown, Content Editor
(919) 459-5697; seth@brnow.org

Dianna L. Cagle, Production Editor
(919) 459-5698; dianna@brnow.org

Alison McKinney
Business and
Advertising Manager
(919) 459-5691
alison@brnow.org

Emily Blake
Editorial Aide

Erin Gandy
Circulation Manager
(919) 459-5693
erin@brnow.org

Kelly Hunter
Graphic Designer

Volume 181 No. 6
(919) 847-2127
Fax (919) 467-6180

BRnow.org

Board of Directors

Chris Byrne, chair; Jerry Stephens, vice chair; Cindi Stevens, secretary; Kevin Atchley; Kelli Benfield; Angela Brady; Christina Brown; Kevin Clubb; Gene Fowler; Lisa Harris; Gerald Hodges; Chester Jones; Lee Pigg; Rob Poche; Michael Smith; Aaron Wallace; Tammy Weeks; Peggy Weiss; Keith Whitfield and Ed Yount

Subscriptions

- Individual subscriptions, \$15.99 (one year); \$27.99 (two years); \$39.99 (three years)
- Bulk Plan, \$11.50
- Club Plan, \$13.50
- Family Plan, \$12.50
- Single copies, .60 cents each

Payable in advance. N.C. sales tax is included.
Digital rates: \$5.99 (one year); \$10.99 (two years); \$15.99 (three years).

Publication

Published biweekly on Saturdays by *Biblical Recorder* Inc., 205 Convention Drive, Cary, NC 27511, as authorized by the Baptist State Convention in annual session at Winston-Salem, November 21-23, 1939. Periodicals postage paid at Raleigh, NC 27676.

Postmaster

Send address changes to *Biblical Recorder* Inc., P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512-1185.

Birthday blessings to a faithful servant: Fred Lunsford

Those who know Fred Lunsford know that he considers himself just a simple mountain preacher. Yet the faithfulness of this humble servant of God has impacted the lives of many individuals far beyond the mountains that he calls home.

Earlier this month, many friends and family joined Brother Lunsford in celebration of his 90th birthday. His life and ministry have touched and influenced many North Carolina Baptists, myself included. He is a treasure to many, and we are honored to celebrate this special occasion and wish him a very happy birthday.

Born and raised deep in the mountains of Western North Carolina, Lunsford's life is characterized by an unceasing desire to serve the Lord. He gave his life to Christ at a young age and surrendered to a call to preach the gospel after serving in the U.S. Army during World War II. He has been serving the Lord ever since and has not slowed down.

In addition to pastoring several churches, he faithfully served the Truett Baptist Association as director of missions for 26 years. He is one of the finest associational missionaries to ever serve in this state.

In 1987, Fred was recognized by the Home Mission Board (now known as the North American Mission Board) with the Outstanding Missionary Leader Award for rural/urban associations in the eastern part of the United States.

His love for the Lord, combined with his folksy manner and homespun humor, made him a popular conference leader and evangelist. He is well known for conducting numerous Sunday School revivals, during which he encouraged and equipped pastors and churches to reach and disciple new members.

Even after he "retired" from the Truett association at age 65, Lunsford returned to local church ministry and pastored up until just a few years ago. Even now at age 90, Fred teaches a Sunday School class and opens his home once a week for pastors and anyone

else who wants to seek God's face in prayer. Fred has personally mentored several men who serve churches in western North Carolina, and he continues to be a "pastor to pastors."

In this column, I've only just begun to scratch the surface about how God has used Fred Lunsford to touch the lives of countless people. To learn more about his life story, I would encourage you to read *Glory in the Mountains: The Sound of Many Waters* and *Golden Nuggets from the Mountains*. In these books, Brother Fred shares more about his life and ministry as a testament to God's glory and faithfulness.

He also published a book about mountain preachers titled *God's Messengers from the Mountains*.

Brother Fred's life is truly an example of someone who has been faithful to his calling. As a result, he has built a strong legacy in North Carolina Baptist life. In doing so, God continues to use this ordinary mountain preacher in extraordinary ways for God's glory. Happy birthday, Brother Fred!

"A faithful man will abound with blessings ..." – Proverbs 28:20a (NKJV) **BR**



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive
director-treasurer

P.K. PREACHER'S KIDS

BY DAVID AYERS



Submissions for Tar Heel Voices (letters to the editor)

Please send no more than 300 words, along with contact information, to editor@BRnow.org or *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512-1185. Only one letter from the same writer will be published in a 90-day period. All submissions will be edited by *Recorder* style guidelines and according to content and space constraints. Occasional longer submissions will be accepted as guest columns. Have questions? Call (919) 847-2127.

He is faithful

In a couple of weeks, the dogwood trees will begin blooming, and the cherry blossoms outside my office window will provide a most welcome glimpse of spring. The spring season brings a sense of newness as the sun is shining, the temperatures are warmer and springing forward makes the days longer.

Newness is always an invited guest. Maybe because the winter season continues from Dec. 31 to Jan. 1, the new year doesn't feel as fresh as the changes that take place in nature later in the year. Yet, even in the midst of change, the Lord is faithful, and He is unchanging.

As I have read through the scriptures chronologically this year, I have been reminded that the same God who showed Abraham the stars in the sky, who led the Israelites out of Egypt, who gave Moses the Ten Commandments, who consumed the burnt offering Elijah offered, who was declared "holy, holy, holy" in Isaiah,

who came to earth and was pleased to dwell among mankind, who died on a cross, was buried and rose again on the third day, is still the same all-powerful, all-knowing, ever-present God I serve today. Over the course of time, though people, technology, culture and a host of other things have changed, God has not, and He will not. He is the one and only constant. The writer of Hebrews wrote, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever," (Hebrews 13:8).

As this year progresses, and the seasons of earth and life change, be encouraged and reminded that God does not change. He is constant, and He is faithful.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Ashley Allen is consultant for Embrace Women's Ministry for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. For more information you can reach her at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5559. Read her blog at www.worthyofthecalling.com.)



ASHLEY ALLEN

Tennessee Temple, Piedmont International to merge

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

In an historic move the trustees of two Baptist colleges, Tennessee Temple University (TTU) in Chattanooga, Tenn., and Piedmont International University (PIU) in Winston-Salem, N.C., voted unanimously to merge the institutions.

Established only a year apart in the mid-1940s, the two universities share a common mission that dates back to their founders, Charles Stevens of PIU and Lee Roberson of TTU. They were friends who shared similar founding visions.

The merger will be finalized April 30, 2015, pending the approval of the Transnational Association of Colleges and Schools, which accredits both universities.

TTU online students can expect decreases in tuition rates and a seamless transition, according to PIU officials. Online programs will be transferred in their entirety to PIU. Residential students who move to Winston-Salem will experience a drop in tuition and room and board of

approximately 25 percent. Several TTU board members will join PIU's board, and some of TTU's faculty and staff will move to Winston-Salem.

TTU's legacy will be preserved through the continuation of Temple Baptist Seminary as a school of PIU.

The Tennessee Temple Scholarship has been established that will provide one-third of tuition for programs offered at Piedmont. It will be available in perpetuity for TTU students, applicants, current faculty and staff, and alumni, as well as for their children and grandchildren.

This is PIU's third merger in less than a decade.

In 2004, the college merged with Spurgeon Baptist Bible College of Mulberry, Fla., creating the Spurgeon School of Online Education. In 2008 PIU merged with Atlantic Baptist Bible College of Chester, Va. and established the Atlantic Scholarship for Ministry Training.

Fruitland Baptist Bible College (FBBC) in Hendersonville, N.C., and PIU have articulation agreements that allow academic credits to transfer easily. **BR**

Michael Barrett's long history of lively ministry

By **SETH BROWN** | BR Content Editor

Michael Barrett brims with energy and excitement when he talks about pastoral ministry. He describes church programs and activities like a newly minted seminary graduate dreaming of future endeavors, except Barrett has been pastoring his church for 27 years – longer than most seminary students have been alive.

Barrett became the pastor of Pleasant Garden Baptist Church in Pleasant Garden, N.C., in 1988. He served as a trustee of the International Mission Board (IMB) from 1998 to 2006, and recently finished a three-year term as the president of the BSC's Board of Directors.

He is the third person to have occupied the board presidency for three consecutive terms, preceded by Glenn Holt and K. Allan Blume, currently president and editor of the *Biblical Recorder*.

Barrett's longtime pastoral service at Pleasant Garden and leadership in both the state and national Baptist conventions make him a unique figure among North Carolina Baptists.

His journey into ministry began when Barrett was a teenager.

At 16 years old, Barrett felt called into ministry at a Billy Graham evangelistic event in Roanoke Rapids, N.C. The young minister began to exercise his preaching gifts occasionally at his home church, Quankey Baptist Church, and at Union Mission homeless ministry events, also in Roanoke Rapids.

"I got some great early opportunities and early training," said Barrett. Door-to-door evangelism was another way he engaged in the work of ministry.

Quankey licensed him as a minister of the gospel in 1970, his senior year of high school. Then in college he preached youth revivals as a part of the Fellowship of Christians United in Service at Gardner-Webb University. Following his undergraduate study, he went on for further training at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest.

After a serving in a few churches, revitalizing declining ministries, Barrett received a call to pastor Pleasant Garden.

"It was a perfect match," he said. The church's former pastor had served there for 25 years, and they were looking for someone to cast a new vision for the church. Barrett jumped right in.

The years that followed were – and still are – full of lively ministry where both church and pastor worked together to cultivate a growing and healthy local church.

Green pasture at Pleasant Garden

Reflecting on his 27 years at Pleasant Garden, he said there are "certain things that have been great strengths through the years that have, I think, created the environment that we have of spiritual health at our church."

The prayer life of the church was first on his list: "I've had people ... for years that say, 'Every day I pray for you. Every day I pray for God to be honored in this ministry.'"

Barrett also identifies longevity of pastoral staff as another contributor to their church health. Pleasant Garden has other ministers that have served alongside Barrett for almost 20 years.

Another strength of the church, according to Barrett, is its wide array of programs. "We have done a great job



Michael Barrett has been the pastor of Pleasant Garden Baptist Church in Pleasant Garden, N.C., since 1988. (Contributed photo)

through the years," he said, "at specialized ministries – whether it's preschool or children or students or senior adults ministry."

They have also emphasized missions for over a decade. The church hosts several mission trips each year. They have plans to go to British Columbia, Jamaica, Peru, and other locations later in 2015.

Pleasant Garden's ministry is not a one-way street, though. Barrett's wife, Teresa, was diagnosed with Leukemia almost four years ago. "God really opened our eyes," he said, "to not only ministering to the church but the church ministering to us. ... Not only do you get to shepherd people; you get to do life with people." The church is a "wonderful gift from God," according to Barrett.

The greatest testimony Pleasant Garden has, said Barrett, is that the church loves its pastor, and the pastor loves his church, and together they love the community.

Reaching out to the community

Pleasant Garden draws on several ministries to serve the Greensboro area.

One of their special emphases has been Week of Wonder (WOW), which is similar to Vacation Bible School. WOW is unique not only because it has garnered upwards of 1,000 attendees, but because it is an event for the whole family, not just children.

Barrett said the church has focused more on family ministries in recent years to equip parents to disciple their children.

"Our church has a shepherding heart," said Barrett, while describing another of Pleasant Garden's ministries.

"All over Greensboro we're known for our hospital ministry."

At least one staff member and one deacon make hospital visits each day.

They are currently gearing up for an ongoing ministry in April 2015 called Hope Out Loud. Kicking off Hope Out Loud are two service projects.

They have paired individual church members with

136 elderly men and women in assisted living facilities. Church members will connect with an elderly person, offer them gifts and pray with them. Barrett says the church is doing this "to let everybody in that nursing home know they matter."

The church has also adopted a nearby school where they will refurbish the exterior and take care of landscaping on the campus.

Barrett hopes that every small group in the church will do one or two projects each year to bless the community.

The real strength of the church lies in its biblical foundation, said Barrett. They value preaching the gospel. Church members once told him, "Anytime you get in that pulpit, you be ready. You be prepared. You be in tune with the Lord."

Pleasant Garden's focus exemplifies the old saying, "As the pastor goes, so goes the church."

Serving IMB, BSC Board of Directors

When asked whether his involvement with the IMB and BSC had any influence upon his church, Barrett responded, "We wouldn't have the missionary heart if it hadn't been for that connection [to the IMB] – bringing the personnel, missionaries; hearing those stories; having them pray for me."

It mattered greatly, according to Barrett. The same is true with the BSC. "Getting to learn and rub shoulders with the leadership ... Those relationships mean everything to you."

Barrett's connections to the state convention through the BSC Board of Directors helped Pleasant Garden partner with Baptists on Mission (also known as North Carolina Baptist Men) to build houses in Haiti and water wells in India, and with Great Commission Partnerships to join with other churches for ministry in New York City.

Recent collaboration with Michael Sowers, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina Strategy Coordinator for the Triad region, allowed Pleasant Garden to begin developing a strategy to engage Nepali people in the Greensboro area.

Barrett hopes to use that strategy to help his church take the gospel to their ever-changing community.

He wants to bring up a new generation of pastors as well.

Raising up new leaders

Barrett mentors young pastors and church planters through roundtable discussions in Hendersonville, Greensboro and Pilot Mountain. He said there are three things that new pastors need to hear.

- Be kingdom focused. It's not about building your own kingdom.
- Be connected to others. You don't want to do this alone; you need others to invest in your life.
- You have something to say too. "We [seasoned pastors] need to learn from you and you need to learn from us."

After a long history of ministry, Barrett is still eager to learn. And so he continues on with energy and excitement as he ministers to the people of God.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Michael Barrett, senior pastor of Pleasant Garden Baptist Church, lives in Pleasant Garden, N.C., with his wife, Teresa. They have two daughters, Shannon and Shelley, and four grandchildren.) **BR**

Caraway expansion offers opportunity for growth

By MIKE CRESWELL | BSC Communications

Four new buildings plus a 9,000 square-foot auditorium that is nearly complete at Caraway Conference Center will greatly expand the facility's ability to serve North Carolina Baptists.

The 299-seat auditorium is located in front of Caraway's existing administration and guest room wings.

The structure is expected to be ready in May 2015, said Jimmy Huffman, Caraway's director.

Two new group housing buildings, a new classroom building and a new multiple-purpose building now stand in Caraway's new Awesome Children's Outdoor Recreation and Nature Study section (ACORNS), located separately from the main conference center and Camp Caraway. Caraway is located on Caraway Mountain Road in Sophia, near Asheboro. The facilities are spread across forested, rolling hills.

Funds for the expansion have come partly from Caraway's New Beginnings

capital campaign and from the sale of Hollifield Leadership Center, a 30-acre conference facility on Lake Hickory, near Conover.

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina purchased Hollifield in 2000 for about \$3 million, but low use by non-profit organizations and churches did not sufficiently cover the cost of operating the facility.

In 2013 the convention sold Hollifield to North Carolina Boy's Academy, a branch of Teen Challenge that has established a Christian, Bible-based ministry to boys on the site. The \$2.5 million purchase price will be paid over five years, following a \$250,000 down payment.

Caraway's new \$1.3 million auditorium will be known

as Hollifield Hall in honor of Gwendolyn Hollifield, who provided a significant gift to establish Hollifield Leadership Center.

She was a long-time member of First Baptist Church in Winston-Salem and served on the board of Gardner-Webb University from 1992-95.

Hughey and Gwendolyn Hollifield provided generous gifts to Gardner-

"This was a major investment but one which will handle ... growth."
— Jimmy Huffman



With the main Caraway Conference Center building in the distance, a group nears Hollifield Hall, which is currently in construction to serve as the center's auditorium for conferences and special events. Below is one of the new buildings associated with Awesome Children's Outdoor Recreation and Nature Study (ACORNS). (BSC photos by Chad Austin)

Webb University and North Carolina Baptist institutions and agencies over the years.

"Hollifield Hall will be a really nice building," Huffman said. It will include state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment and a covered veranda so guests can load and unload out of the weather.

Caraway's existing auditorium will be divided into two large conference rooms, providing more flexibility in hosting conferences and other events, Huffman said.

In the new ACORNS section, two new group-housing buildings have been completed and were dedicated Oct. 28, 2014.

Each of the identical buildings can accommodate 40 guests in bunk beds. The buildings were named the Jim and Nancy Nell Jacumin Retreat Lodges. Baptist layman and retired businessman Jim Jacumin provided a significant part of the \$750,000 construction cost for the two lodges.

The Joyce Classroom building was created by adapting an existing building and is named for Margaret Joyce, who provided a significant part of the renovation costs, Huffman said.

Joyce, a retired educator, is a longtime and generous supporter of various ministries such as church music, children's ministries and college scholarships. A multi-purpose building will provide classrooms for meetings and dining area.

"ACORNS will be a fully self-contained area that church groups and others can book to hold their retreats



and conferences, with accommodations in the Jacumin Retreat Lodges and space for meeting and eating in the other two buildings," Huffman said.

ACORNS is the name of the popular environmental education program hosted at Caraway. It became fully operational earlier this year, Huffman added.

While visitors at Caraway will focus mostly on the buildings, Huffman said a lot of work was required that is mostly out of sight.

For example, an eight-acre septic field was required to handle the new construction.

"This was a major investment, but one which will handle present and future growth," Huffman said. In addition to all the new construction, driveways have been widened, drainage has been expanded and electrical service has been upgraded.

Huffman said the New Beginnings capital campaign is continuing. Overall plans call for a stand-alone housing building to provide an additional 12 to 16 bedrooms for guests.

If individuals or churches are interested in donating to the New Beginnings capital campaign, please contact Jimmy Huffman at jhuffman@caraway.org. **BR**

Not
subscribing
→
to the
BIBLICAL?
RECORDER?

Let us be
YOUR
news
source.

Go to BRnow.org to
learn more or contact
us at (919) 459-5693

Kivett's - Your Source for Renewal

Complete Renovations • Refinish
New Pews • Steeples • Stained Glass
Steeple Cleaning • Baptistries

www.kivetts.com
KIVETT'S INC.
The Largest Family Owned
Church Furniture Manufacturer in the US

1-800-334-1139 • Clinton, NC

PEW UPHOLSTERING & REFINISHING
REVERSIBLE PEW CUSHIONS
NEW PEWS CARPETING
COMPLETE RENOVATIONS
1-800-289-7397
Church Interiors Inc.
The Nation's Leading Church Renovation Specialists
High Point, North Carolina
www.churchinteriors.com

Spencer Tillman talks college football, impacting others

As an All-American running back for the University of Oklahoma, Spencer Tillman was the captain of the National Championship team in 1985. After that he was drafted in the fifth round of the 1987 NFL draft by the Houston Oilers.

Two seasons later he was traded to the San Francisco 49ers where he became co-captain with Joe Montana and Ronnie Lott as part of the Super Bowl XXIV championship team. He went back to play for the Oilers in 1992, where he stayed for two more seasons, completing his football career.



ROMAN GABRIEL III
Sports Q & A

Tillman transitioned to sports broadcasting and eventually joined CBS Sports in 1999 as lead studio analyst for “College Football Today,” the network’s pre-game studio show. Currently he co-hosts a radio show for Houston-based KTRK called “Houston Texans: Inside the Game.”

I caught up with Tillman at Super Bowl XLIX in Phoenix, we talked about the new college football playoff and his commitment to walking closely with God and making a difference in the lives of others.

Q: You have covered college football for CBS Sports for over a decade. What was your take on the new college football championship format, and did we get it right?

A: I think we got it right, and that’s the most important thing. The panel we started off with had 13, but Archie Manning had to step aside to get a surgical procedure. But we ended up with a biblical 12-member panel.

It was an awesome finish – Ohio State the way they finished. [I had] a little bit of acrimony with Baylor and TCU in the Big 12 being left off. I don’t think anyone can refute what Ohio State did, obviously, one of the best teams in the nation.



Roman Gabriel III, right, interviews Spencer Tillman during media days for Super Bowl XLIX in February. Tillman played for the University of Oklahoma before being drafted by the Houston Oilers. He was on the Super Bowl XXIV Championship team when he played with Joe Montana for the San Francisco 49ers, see below, and completed his football career back at the Oilers. He currently has a radio show in Houston, Texas, and is a CBS sports analyst. (Contributed photos)

Q: How do you feel about the four-game playoff system?

A: You’re not having the sense that they got it wrong. For me having tracked these teams all year long, if there was a team among the final four that got a mulligan, it would probably be Florida State. In my opinion the other teams – Oregon, Ohio State, Alabama – you could not refute the fact that they belonged there.

If there is an aspect that could be improved it would be putting more scrutiny on an incumbent team like Florida State. To have an expectation that they

would be as good as the undefeated team the year before was not fair.

I think FSU got a pass on more than a few of those close games.

Q: You are committed to your faith. Who has had an influence on your Christian walk?

A: I’m the son of a missionary, my mom did work all over the world, as a kid she would quote scripture, and there’s one passage I remember, “As the sun and the rain come down from heaven the water recedes and causes it to bring forth after its own kind, So shall my word not return void until it achieves the purpose for which

it was sent.” But she wouldn’t leave it there; she would explain it to me. She’d say, “Spencer, do you understand that?” I’d say, “No ma’am.”

“Well God is so arranged the affairs of nature, so that you take a seed ... and you put it in the ground and you water it, the sun kisses it.

“The seed really has no choice in the equation. It must do what God designed it to do. ‘So shall then my word be.’ The word cannot return void until it achieves the purpose by which it has been sent.

“So shall I send you – and all the things you’ve been set up to do with my gifts and talents – as long as you confess what God says about that situation. Do your part, leave the outcome to Him and leave it alone from there. And move on. You are exercising faith when you do this.”

Q: What do faith, family, and football mean to you?

A: “Faith, family, and football” is kind of my mantra.

I wrote a book with Thomas Nelson Publishers called *Scoring in the Red Zone: Leading successfully when the pressure is on*.

The theme of it was, first, find out what a red zone is – more importantly, understanding what is necessary to thrive in the red zone.

Life is nothing but a metaphor and sports is a metaphor for life. Who would approach a game without having a game plan, without having a way to deal with mitigated risk and pressure. ... Paul told Gaius, “I wish above all things that you would prosper and be in good health, even as your soul prospers.”

The bottom line is you don’t do that devoid of some sort of system of approach, adhering to the word of God,

admonishing yourself and others around you as to what is right and what is wrong.

Q: As Christians we are called to use our influence and platform to make a difference where we work. How are you able to minister effectively in the media environment, on national television?

A: That’s a great question. You know here’s what I would say: Know that God has created this thing called time, as a module for man to dwell in, and God stands out in time-eternity. And He sees our travails and our triumphs pressed into this eternal now.

What that does for me is it gives me some sense of how to look at problems. And in our business there are always problems, and those problems bring about opportunities to minister.

So by giving me a platform to be at CBS as long as I have ... I get a chance to say, “Hey, here’s a solution to that problem. Let me show you how God would have me handle it.”

And how you would handle it, of course, is your life and your responsibility. ... That’s how I do it; I look for opportunities.

People gravitate to you if they see you as a person who came in during the difficulties. There’s no shortage of opportunities to minister.

Q: Why is taking advantage of the platform God has blessed us with so critical?

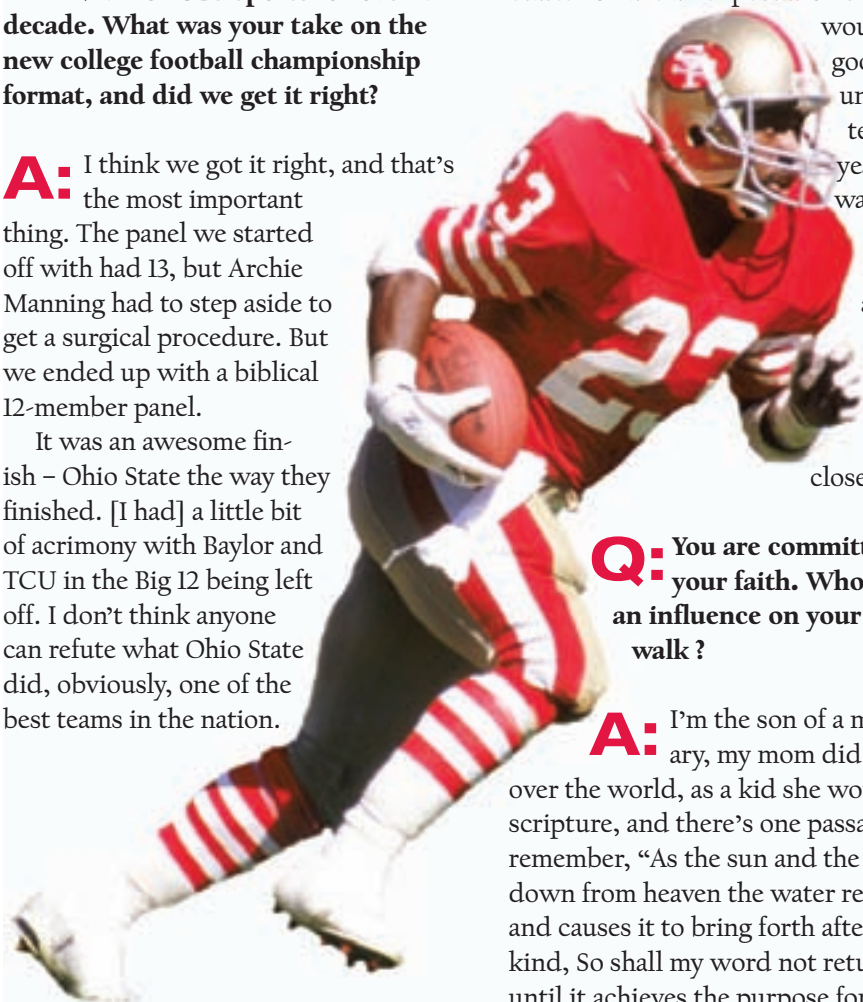
A: It’s straight forward to leverage the platform wherever God places me.

The bigger that platform and the bigger that challenge may be, I know He’s able to equip me.

The Bible says that He will perfect those things and He will watch over his Word and see things through. I will leave it to Him to do that. But if you put me there, I will make something of it. ... I need to stay in His perfect will for my life and get done what He has called me to do.

Follow Spencer Tillman on Twitter: spencetillman.

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



Baptist

Continued from page 1

all we can do.' Missions has changed and I think a lot of that is because people see they can be a missionary. They can go and do something – not just pray and give.”

Missions involvement rises

Baptists who were just sitting in church on Sunday began to get involved in NCBM disaster projects like Katrina, Floyd and Sandy. When they returned home, they gave, prayed and impacted the church by telling their story. “There are so many people – men, women, students – who want to get involved in missions. So a long time ago we realized that our future is with men, women and students.” The focus shifted from missions education to missions involvement.

Although known mostly for disaster relief projects, the ministries of NCBM have exploded to include national and international partnerships, aviation ministry, medical and dental clinics, prison outreach, construction projects, agriculture, mission camps, training, summer camps at Caraway Conference Center and Camp, Deep Impact, Operation Inasmuch and a host of other hands-on mission resources.

Disaster relief has expanded to more than 15 unique ministries that include construction, clean-outs, chaplaincy, childcare, food preparation, food service, laundry and water purification. “There have been some amazing changes in how we do missions. I couldn’t have imagined 20 years ago that we would be involved in so many different ways of doing missions,” said Brunson.

NCBM operates Southern Baptists’ largest disaster relief operation and has pioneered many innovations. More than 50 service units are used to respond to needs, according to Gaylon Moss, disaster relief coordinator for NCBM.

Five mobile kitchens feed thousands of people. The largest unit can serve up to 30,000 daily meals. There are three generators mounted on trailers, four tool trailers, two recovery units filled with tools, five sleeper trailers, three laundry units, five RV motor homes, seven shower units, four road tractors, seven pickup trucks, two water tankers, a command unit, mini-excavator and other service equipment. Each piece of equipment is born out of a specific need. Six sleeper units were built during the hurricane Katrina response. Used horse trailers were purchased and volunteers did most of the up-fitting. Brunson estimates the value of the equipment at 10 times NCBM’s investment. Another unit is being built by volunteers in the eastern part of the state. “Pastor Richard Weeks is a carpenter who has built all of the cabinetry in the unit. Each bunk has a shelf where you can charge your phone, curtains and earplugs so you can get a good night of sleep. That’s a big need when you are working hard all day on location,” he added.

The first laundry units were built in response to the Sept. 11, 2001, attack on New York’s Twin Towers. NCBM set up in the old Navy shipyard in Brooklyn, providing lodging and food for volunteers from many states. We washed clothes for the volunteers and rescue workers, then wrote scripture verses on the plastic bags with the clean laundry,” Brunson said.

Helping churches

One of the best ways NCBM helps churches is by providing managed projects. Smaller churches benefit from this ministry says Brunson. “Right now we have

an on-site coordinator in Seaside Heights, N.J. A church can go there, and our coordinator will have building material ready with food and lodging. We can help make it a meaningful mission trip for them. And for some that will be their first mission trip.”

When a disaster strikes, Brunson’s staff works with churches in the region. Last spring tornados struck in eastern N.C. NCBM sent an on-site coordinator to Elizabeth City, and Corinth Baptist Church continues to provide space for volunteers to serve locals.

“Internationally we are developing a camp in Honduras,” Brunson added. “Mike and Ginger Green are there year round. Volunteers are building facilities with a mission camp model. We’ll be able to house volunteers, serve people in the community and offer many services to the community. The churches in Honduras will be able to use it for a retreat facility, also.”

What are the mission camps?

NCBM owns two mission camps in North Carolina. Facilities in Shelby and Red Springs are equipped to house and feed more than 200 volunteers at a time, with on-site coordinators in both locations. They operate year-round, but fill up with volunteers in the summer. Mission camps were born out of the disaster relief ministry. In the Katrina project some volunteers built over 700 homes. Other volunteers set up and serviced kitchens and sleeper units.

Brunson said, “We realized that people really want to be involved and churches really want to help, but they don’t know what to do logistically. There are so many things that have to be managed in a disaster and limited resources in the area of the disaster. So we thought about having mission camps in N.C. in areas where there is a lot of need. This helps churches get involved in missions in our own state; it keeps people involved and it trains them.”

Also, there was a lot of equipment left over when projects were completed. “The mayor of Gulfport, Miss. had no further need for the kitchen equipment we installed there, so he asked us to take it,” Brunson said. “So we took it to our first mission camp in Red Springs.”

Red Springs is a 52,000 square-foot facility on 15 acres with a large fenced parking lot in Robeson County. NCBM was able to purchase it for less than \$300,000. Larry and Teresa Osborne are on-site coordinators. There are many needs in the area. Volunteers work with the battered women’s shelter, help churches with Backyard Bible Clubs, work with schools, hold eye glass clinics and lead events in cooperation with the local association.

Brunson calls the Shelby camp another “God story.” The town’s mayor helped NCBM locate 40 undeveloped acres for \$170,000. Metal buildings serve as a dormitory, dining area, auditorium and warehouse. Ministries for volunteers include wheelchair ramps, working in the homeless shelter and the potato project. Sweet potatoes are grown on-site, harvested and shared with needy families. David and Janet Brown serve as coordinators.

Medical Dental Bus

Medical personnel across the state birthed the idea of a medical dental bus. “When we started providing that as a way to get people involved in missions, more people

got involved and more churches saw the needs in their communities,” Brunson said.

Today there are three medical dental buses. Two are mobile, and one has become stationary in the Truett Baptist Association. The association manages it, staffs it and coordinates appointments. The two mobile buses see over 4,000 patients each year in 170 locations.

How is NCBM funded?

The organization’s budget is funded entirely by the North Carolina Missions Offering (NCMO). Some support comes from Cooperative Program resources, such as rent in the Baptist Building and employee benefits. But all program expenses and salaries come through NCMO. Brunson said the offering is essential to the ministry. When there is a disaster, many churches respond with an offering and send designated gifts to NCBM. The funds are used immediately to pay for meals, lodging and other direct expenses related to the disaster.

Aviation ministry

A lesser known, but important part of NCBM is the aviation ministry. More than 200 pilots are involved that either own or have access to an aircraft. Working with Angel Flight Mid-Atlantic, they offer medical mercy flights. “About every other day, they are flying somebody for medical care. Sometimes they are taking an N.C. patient out of state and sometimes they are flying an out-of-state patient to one of our fine hospitals in North Carolina,” Brunson said.

Other disaster relief organizations

NCBM understands the importance of good relationships with other disaster relief organizations. “We have good relationships with other partners and with government,” Brunson emphasized. “Government can be in a position to stop what you are doing or to enhance what you are doing. We especially have a great relationship with N.C. Emergency management. We see ourselves as partners with them.”

Strong bonds are established with the Red Cross, Samaritan’s Purse and Salvation Army, among others. In some disasters Salvation Army asks NCBM to assist them. “There are other situations where we are serving in the same location with Samaritan’s Purse. We coordinate our work so we are not competing. We are there to serve those in need,” he said.

In Haiti Samaritan’s Purse (SP) and NCBM worked out of the same facility. SP provided the building materials and NCBM volunteers built more than 800 houses.

The Southern Baptist Convention has an agreement with Red Cross in every state. Red Cross provides the food and the state Baptist disaster teams provide whatever it takes to prepare food including cooking units, propane and volunteers.

Annual missions conference

The annual missions conference is a major event for the ministry. The purpose is to encourage the men, women, and students who are already involved, thank them, provide ministry updates, expand training and boost the challenge of missions. The meeting features prominent speakers, testimonies and popular Christian musicians. It has become a reunion for many volunteers.

This year’s conference is April 10-11 at Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem. Visit baptistsonmission.org. **BR**



RICHARD BRUNSON

[nc]connect

Baptist State Convention of North Carolina


ncbaptist.org

facebook.com/ncbaptist

twitter.com/ncbaptist

Our Vision “By God’s grace, we will become the strongest force in the history of this Convention for reaching people with the message of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

‘One Day’ for one-stop equipping

by Chad Austin

1 DAY

EQUIPPING LEADERS TO MAKE DISCIPLES

Many church training events provide equipping for a particular ministry focus area, such as youth or Sunday School. It’s often hard to find events that offer training in virtually every aspect of church ministry, but an upcoming event sponsored by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) is helping meet that need.

The One Day training event, scheduled for Sat., May 2 at Green Street Baptist Church in High Point, is designed for pastors, church staff, ministry leaders and volunteers to receive training and equipping in their respective ministry areas all in one place and all at one time.

“You can think of One Day as a ‘one-stop shop’ for ministry leaders to get trained in the work they are called to do in their churches,” said Lynn Sasser, executive leader for evangelism and discipleship with the BSC.

“This is an opportunity for us to help ministry leaders in the local church understand how they should and could be making disciples, no matter what area of ministry they serve in.”

One goal of the event is to help ministry leaders understand how each ministry area aligns and contributes to the church’s overarching mission to make disciples.

“Disciple-making is not a separate ministry of the church,” said Brian Upshaw, team leader for the disciple-making team with the BSC.

“It should be the glue that connects

every ministry within the church.”

Bruce Raley, director of church partnerships with LifeWay Christian Resources, will lead plenary sessions to help leaders see how different church ministries connect with one another and contribute to creating a disciple-making culture within the church.

Raley will also lead training and leadership sessions throughout the day for pastors and church staff.

In addition to hearing from Raley, attendees can select from a host of

practitioners will lead equipping sessions in each ministry track. Tracks include: Sunday School; small groups; disciple-making; preschool, children, youth and special needs ministries; women’s ministry; family ministry; preschool and children’s choir; worship; pastoral and lay leadership; stewardship; Hispanic ministry and more.

Kenny Lamm, BSC consultant for worship and music, said attending the One Day training event offers the depth and quality of a stand-alone ministry training that is coupled with an emphasis on how that ministry fits within the overall life and mission of church.

“You are going to get the practical training in your particular focus of ministry, and it’s all couched under the big umbrella of discipleship,” Lamm said.

More information about the One Day training is available at onedaync.org. Registration is underway and includes an early-bird rate of just \$15 per person for those who register by April 17. The registration fee includes lunch.

“The One Day event is a tremendous value, and I would encourage people to sign up today,” Sasser said. “This is a great opportunity for pastors, staff, volunteers and all ministry leaders to come together for one day in one place for training and equipping that will help them sharpen both their ministry skills and their ministry focus.”

“The One Day conference will stand out among other trainings because it provides church leaders not only the opportunity of a single day set aside for training, but all of the breakout sessions for each church ministry track, from birth to senior adults, are focused on the vision of making disciples.”

Ashley Allen,
Embrace Women’s Ministry

ministry tracks ranging from preschool to senior adult ministries and everything in between.

BSC consultants and other church

onedaync.org

Connect *now*

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

News articles, videos, first-person columns and many resources are available for you to use.



ncbaptist.org

NEXT STEP VIDEOS

N.C. Baptists are taking the next step in making disciples. These videos are available for download and would be helpful tools to encourage your church to do the same.



ncbaptist.org/nextstep

TWITTER

Follow @ncbaptist for up-to-date event and ministry information.



twitter.com/ncbaptist

FACEBOOK

We are putting out tons of great resources on Facebook this year. Go “like” our page today!



facebook.com/ncbaptist

Discover & engage people groups in your city

People Group Discovery & Engagement Workshop

God is bringing the nations to North Carolina. Do you and your church know who these people are, where they are from and how best to engage them with the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Those are just a few of the questions that will be addressed during the People Group Discovery and Engagement Workshop, being held Mon., March 30 to Wed., April 1 at the convention offices in Cary.

During the workshop, representatives from the International Mission Board (IMB) will provide hands-on training for pastors and church leaders to help them discover and engage unreached and unengaged people living in their own communities.

Cost of the three-day workshop is just \$25, but space is limited, so register today at ncbaptist.org/peoplegroups.

“This workshop will not only help you discover who the people in your community are and



ncbaptist.org/peoplegroups

where they’re from, but it will also provide practical steps to begin building relationships with them through which the gospel can flow,” said Chuck Register, executive leader for church planting and missions partnerships with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

The workshop will feature classroom and field-ministry components. Attendees will learn how to conduct web-based research on unreached people groups and be trained on how to apply their research by engaging with individuals in the community.

For more information on the workshop, contact Steve Hardy with Great Commissions Partnerships at (910) 810-0353 or shardy@ncbaptist.org.

Small Group & Sunday School: Side-by-Side

March 26
ncbaptist.org/sidebyside

Embrace & Flourish Equipping Day

March 28
ncbaptist.org/ministrywives15

People Group Discovery & Engagement Workshop

March 30 - April 1
ncbaptist.org/peoplegroups

50 Days of Intercession for Hispanic Church Plants

April 5 - May 24
ncbaptist.org/50dias

The Story: Regional Training

Charlotte: April 7
Greenville: April 23
ncbaptist.org/thestory

One Day: Equipping Leaders to Make Disciples

May 2
onedaync.org



ncbaptist.org

2015 Events

50 Days of Intercession for Hispanic Church Plants

Did you know an estimated 1 million Hispanics call North Carolina home? The Hispanic population is only expected to continue to grow rapidly across the state.

We have an opportunity to impact lostness and make disciples among Hispanics through the rapid multiplication of churches. For this to happen, it will require God’s people to pray, and pray like we have never prayed before.

Join us for the upcoming 50 Days of Prayer emphasis for

Hispanic church planting in North Carolina. The prayer focus begins Easter Sun., April 5, and continues through May 24. During this time, pray for a revival in Hispanic churches across the state that leads to spiritual awakening, evangelistic fervor and disciple-making that will result in new church plants among the Hispanic community.

[Learn more at](#) ncbaptist.org/50dias

Embrace & Flourish Equipping Day

The role of ministry wives is very unique. So unique, in fact, that it is common to feel isolated in this role that places them constantly in the public eye.

Ministry wives can receive strength and encouragement for their unique roles at an upcoming Equipping Day event, scheduled for Sat., March 28 at Old Town Baptist Church in Winston-Salem. Join Kathy Litton, national consultant for

Flourish, the North American Mission Board’s ministry to pastors’ wives, and Lori Frank, whose husband Bruce is the lead pastor of Biltmore Baptist Church near Asheville, for this day of equipping and enrichment.

The registration deadline is Fri., March 20, and the cost is \$25. Please make plans today to join us for this event.

[Learn more at](#) ncbaptist.org/ministrywives15

The Story Training

Stories have a way of connecting and engaging people. Have you ever considered how your story and others’ stories connect with God’s grand story of redemption? Make plans now to attend one of “The Story” regional training conferences being held throughout 2015.

The Story is an evangelism and discipleship tool that helps believers understand the overarching story of scripture and equips them to share the gospel through the biblical themes of creation, fall, rescue and restoration.

Each daylong regional conference includes lunch and conference materials, which includes The Story leader kit. Cost is \$20 per church leader and \$10 for each additional attendee from your church. Conferences are scheduled across the state throughout the year, so register for a training event near you today.

[Learn more at](#) ncbaptist.org/thestory

Ridings

Continued from page 1

seat of Christ. ... It's not over for the man or woman in Christ. It's not over for brother Kenneth."

Mathis shared that Ridings was a unique individual.

"Kenneth never wanted to be like anybody else," Mathis said. "He was most comfortable being Kenneth Ridings."

"Personally I never met anyone that felt a greater priority or purpose in preaching than Kenneth Ridings. Preaching was his passion. He considered his role as a pulpiteer to read the Word, explain the Word and apply the Word. That was his supreme calling."

Mathis read a statement from David Horton, current president of Fruitland: "Throughout his ministry, Dr. Kenneth Ridings was a living legend among Baptist preachers. His exceptional homiletical skills placed him in the category of such notable expository preachers as Stephen Olford, Ron Dunn, and Adrian Rogers. His legacy as a pastor, professor, and previous president of Fruitland Baptist Bible College will continue throughout the years as we build on the foundation that he laid. Today, Dr. Ridings has joined the other heroes of the faith in



Kenneth Ridings, seen here at his retirement service, died March 5. He was a president of Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute (now College) in Hendersonville. (BR file photo)

'that great cloud of witnesses' and he is cheering the rest of us on!"

Ridings, a South Carolina native, became a Christian in 1953 with the help of his now wife, Ann. He is a graduate of North Greenville College, Furman University and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He received doctor of divinity degrees from Fredericksburg Bible Institute and Covington Seminary. He served as pastor of churches in South

Carolina and North Carolina, including Ebenezer Baptist Church of Hendersonville, N.C., and Grassy Branch Baptist Church of Asheville, N.C., where he led for 22 years while teaching at Fruitland.

Ridings began his service to Fruitland in 1968, teaching church administration and pastoral counseling. He started what would become a 39-year tenure as professor of homiletics the next year.

He was on the board for the International Mission Board and was second vice president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

Ridings retired as Fruitland's president Dec. 31, 2008, and was named president emeritus on July 16, 2009. He was president for 11 years and taught at the school for 40 years. Fruitland honored Ridings with a Baptist Heritage Award in 2009. During his retirement service, Ridings revealed his heart about Fruitland: "You can go to heaven from many places. But when you go to heaven from Fruitland, you don't notice the difference as much."

In a statement released March 5, Milton A. Hollifield Jr., executive director-treasurer of the Baptist State Convention,

urged people to pray for the family and to thank God for Ridings' impact on the "lives of pastors, and as a result, the churches of this convention."

He said, "Ridings was more than a faithful employee of the Baptist State Convention and more than an excellent professor of homiletics; he was a dear friend and a tremendous influence upon my life. Like so many students at Fruitland, the members of the churches he served, and those impacted by his extensive preaching ministry, Kenneth helped me to not only appreciate expositional preaching but modeled for me how to preach God's Word. I will miss him greatly, but find comfort in the truth that we will meet again."

Ridings is survived by his wife, Ann; daughter, Beverly; and one granddaughter. Donations can be made to the Fruitland Baptist Bible College Chapel Fund that bears Ridings' name: Fruitland Baptist Bible College, 1455 Gilliam Rd., Hendersonville, NC 28792.

To view the sermon online, visit mudcreekchurch.sermon.net/Live_Broadcast and choose the "Kenneth Ridings Funeral Service" from the list of episodes. **BR**

'A.D.: The Bible Continues' slated for primetime

By GINNY DENT BRANT | Special to the Recorder

Actress and producer Roma Downey and reality producer Mark Burnett announced recently at the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB) convention in Nashville, Tenn., that the success of "The Bible" series has opened doors to a follow-up TV series called "A.D.: The Bible Continues."

It is a 12-part continuation of The Bible that portrays the history of the early church as described in the first 10 chapters of Acts. The series will air on NBC beginning Easter, April 5. Filmed in Morocco, A.D. will delve into the book of Acts and show the humanity and true character of the apostles, as well as their undying devotion to take the gospel to the known world no matter the cost. The persecution of the early church and its miraculous growth are also highlighted.

"We pulled from history and Acts using scholars from both areas and wove it together into a cool, relatable, true and compelling story so people can see what the early church was like," said Downey.

Jerry Johnson, NRB president, commended Downey and Burnett for their good work researching the historical and political setting. Burnett was thankful for God's provision through scholars and pastors, saying, "God doesn't always call the qualified. He qualifies the called."

The success of The Bible has opened this door. He noted the 100 million viewers who watched this series and added, "In Canada, The Bible series even beat out hockey!" Nothing would please the producers more than for people to be talking about A.D., God and Jesus ... They are hoping "The Bible will become a regular series and open the door for many others."



Mark Burnett and Roma Downey announced during the National Religious Broadcasters convention that their follow-up to "The Bible" debuts April 5. "A.D.: The Bible Continues" covers the first 10 chapters of Acts following the apostles as they spread the gospel no matter the cost. (Contributed photo)

Burnett added, "Christians need to be noisier in regards to letting Hollywood know what we want."

Devon Franklin, a rising producer in Hollywood who just formed his own company to make God-honoring films, echoed Burnett's sentiment. "The power of our unified voices (as believers) is important," he said. "The biggest way we vote is when you turn on your TV and pay for your movies at the box office. So choose those that honor God."

Burnett and Franklin's comments resonated as Christians at the NRB convention were coming to grips with the initial success of "Fifty Shades of Grey."

Burnett also commented that the characters in A.D. look much like people in today's society. The Roman Empire was a melting pot in its day. So after heeding advice from his African-American friends that The Bible series was "a little white," Burnett said this cast is more diverse. Burnett also pointed out the providence of God in that Jesus was born at a time in the Roman Empire when "Roman roads were the Internet of their day."

The series begins with the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, and then chronicles an intense time in history. Downey refers to it as, "A time filled with enormous faith, persecution, brutal Roman oppression and the desperate Jewish revolt – a time when history would be changed forever."

A musical score by Hans Zimmer – of "Gladiator," "The Dark Knight" and "Inception" fame – highlights the dramatic twists and turns in the series' plot.

Downey said Rick Warren warned her, "The most dangerous prayer you can pray is, 'Lord, use me' – because He might just answer you." Although that has been her prayer for years, both Downey and Burnett confessed the past year had been a time of spiritual warfare as they made strides to make the Bible come alive on television. Their son Cameron collapsed while they were filming in Morocco and was diagnosed with a massive brain tumor. Burnett said, "We covet the prayers of God's people."

Visit nbc.com/ad-the-bible-continues.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Ginny Dent Brant is an author, speaker, counselor and soloist. She is editor-at-large for Sonoma Christian Home Magazine. Visit www.ginnybrant.com.) **BR**

God uses ordinary people – like Henry Blackaby

By J. GERALD HARRIS | *The Christian Index*

Most ordinary people never achieve an extraordinary life because they are too fearful to take that leap of faith and simply take God at His word.

Elijah was an ordinary man, “*subject to like passions as we are*” (James 5:17). One translation says, “*He was a mortal man just like we are.*” Yet he became an extraordinary man who could pray and shut up the heavens so that it did not rain and he could also pray so that the heavens were opened up and rain came in abundance. In fact, on Mount Carmel he outdueled the prophets of Baal when he successfully prayed down fire from heaven.

Extraordinary men are in scarce supply today, but Henry Blackaby is an ordinary man who has become a mighty instrument in the hands of God.

Blackaby was born in British Columbia. He studied English and History at the University of British Columbia as an undergraduate and earned his bachelor of divinity and master of theology from Golden Gate Seminary. He also holds five honorary doctorate degrees. Henry and Marilyn Blackaby served in churches in California before serving 18 years in Canada, where they saw many new churches begun. They raised their five children in Canada.

It was also at that time that God taught the Blackabys the truths concerning walking with God that would eventually become the basis for the best-selling book *Experiencing God*.

Raised in that environment, all five children sensed a unique call of God into ministry. Their oldest son, Richard, currently serves as president of Blackaby Ministries International and resides in Atlanta. Thomas is the former senior pastor of North Sea Baptist Church in Stavanger, Norway and now is the international director of Blackaby Ministries International. He and his family reside in Maple Ridge, British Columbia. Mel is the senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Jonesboro, south of Atlanta. Norman Blackaby is a professor at Dallas Baptist University in Dallas, Texas. Carrie Blackaby-Webb is a career missionary serving in Germany.

A God-perspective

The Blackabys have 14 grandchildren; and the three older ones are currently enrolled in seminary and several others have sensed a call into some form of ministry. “I prayed that I would live out my life with God in such a way,” Blackaby said, “that my children and grandchildren would choose to be involved in ministry.”



Henry Blackaby, seen here receiving an honorary doctorate from North Greenville University in 2012, will be celebrating his 80th birthday this year. (Blackaby Ministries International photo)

In 1970 Blackaby began serving a small church in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada. During those days he began to mentor some of the students at the University of Saskatchewan. Among the many students that he encouraged and disciplined was one French-Catholic by the name of Gerry Taillon. Taillon was saved and called to serve an Indian church ninety miles from Saskatoon. He presently serves as the National Ministry Leader for the Canadian National Baptist Convention.

Taillon recently commented, “Henry Blackaby is the most theocentric person I know. He is always more concerned about God’s perspective than the human one. He influenced me more than words can tell.

“Henry was my first pastor and my mentor. His life has formed the greater part of my theological outlook and forms the core of my confidence in God and His mission in our world. Henry is a dear friend and a wonderful example of a man who walks with God. I am forever grateful for his influence in my life.”

In addition to impacting the lives of many university students Blackaby has also mentored numerous CEOs of large corporations. Mac McQuiston, director of Institutional Development for Focus on the Family, had his life amazingly transformed by reading *Experiencing God* and began to relate the principles of the book to CEOs around the country.

One day McQuiston called Blackaby and asked, “Henry, would you help me disciple these CEOs? They are asking for some spiritual counsel, for someone who can guide them through the scripture and then through the scripture to the relationship.”

A greater meaning

McQuiston added, “Many of the CEOs were connected to President Bush

and all the cabinet – you name it – but they were asking, ‘How can we use our lives?’ Forty-seven of those CEOs met and agreed to make decisions regarding television sponsorship that would insure that prime time television would be more family friendly. A lot of that came out of their studying *Experiencing God*.” There are now more than 200 CEOs being mentored by Blackaby.

Blackaby’s ministry to missionaries has also been a vital part of his ministry. When Jerry Rankin was president of the International Mission Board, he called Blackaby one day and said, “I would like for you to go around the world and encourage our missionaries.”

In a recent interview with Richard he indicated that he was speaking at a missions conference in Florida when three missionaries shared with him how much his dad had blessed and encour-

aged them in his visit to their missionary outposts.

Richard explained, “One missionary in Central America was so discouraged that he was ready to quit, but when Dad came to see him on the mission field things changed. One day they got in a boat to travel to some destination and while they skimmed across the water they talked. By the time they docked the boat the missionary had decided to stay at his post of duty.”

While visiting in Russia, Henry encountered a forlorn missionary who complained, “The people here are unreceptive. They won’t even talk to us. It is unfair for us to spend our time in a place where the people are so cold and sometimes even hostile.”

Henry replied, “Well, you are getting to experience in a small way what Christ experienced when he left heaven to come into this world.” The missionary decided to renew his commitment to serve where God had placed him.

Given a platform

It is obvious that the publication of *Experiencing God* opened innumerable doors of opportunity for this gentle, yet powerful man of God, now approaching his 80th birthday. In July of 1990 and prior to the publishing of *Experiencing God* Richard was speaking at a missions conference at Ridgecrest to preview the new workbook that was to come out in November.

He had been assigned a room that was arranged to accommodate eight people. When more than 200 showed up his conference was relocated to the spacious

See Blackaby page 13

SBTS offers degrees in applied apologetics

SBTS Communications

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary will now offer both doctor of ministry (D.Min.) and doctor of educational ministry (D.Ed.Min.) degrees in applied apologetics to ministry leaders for equipping their churches to confront current issues and reach people with the gospel, school officials recently announced.

“Apologetics remains indispensable for biblical ministry, therefore, the study of apologetics should be regarded as fundamental in ministry preparation,” said Ted Cabal, professor of philosophy and apologetics. “No one obeys our Lord’s Great Commission to evangelize without apologetics.”

The D.Min. degree is a 32-hour program and the D.Ed.Min. a 46-hour pro-

gram, both designed to be completed in 36 months.

The doctoral programs include modular courses offered in the winter and summer terms.

The applied apologetics program unites a team of professors from the School of Theology and the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Ministry, whose varying ranges of experiences and expertise provide the student with the best possible context for studying apologetics.

“The result of this synergy of two schools, two professors, and renowned guest lecturers is an apologetic degree that is practical and academic, historical and philosophical, evangelistic and culturally engaged,” Jones said.

More information about the degrees is available at sbts.edu/dmin. **BR**

Robby Gallaty: We must replicate disciples

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

At the recent One Story Discipleship Conference in Clemmons, Robby Gallaty said his journey to passionate discipleship began in 1995 when a college friend shared the gospel with him. “I rejected the gospel. ... But I will remember the seeds that he sowed in my life. God would bring that to fruition seven years later,” he said.

Now the senior pastor of Brainerd Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tenn., Gallaty’s life floundered after college. He started a computer business that failed. He worked as a bouncer at a New Orleans bar. After a threat on his life, he moved inside the bar to be a bartender.

In 1999 he sustained serious injuries in a traffic accident with a tractor-trailer rig. He said the hospital treated him, then sent him home with four addictive prescription drugs, including Valium and Percocet. Within three months the 22-year-old was addicted to pharmaceutical drugs.

Gallaty developed a \$180 per day heroine habit at the height of his addiction. Six of his friends went to prison; eight of his friends died during that time.

His aimless life began to take a new course in 2002. “Finally after all of that I remembered what Jeremy Brown told me in college. I got on my knees ... and prayed, ‘God if you’re real I promise I will commit my life to you and I will not be ashamed to tell people about what you did,’” he said. “I had a radical Paul-like 24-hour experience with the Lord Jesus Christ.”

The encounter was so radical he told his father the next day, “Dad, God’s called me into the ministry.”

His dad shot back, “Son, what are you smoking?” But this time it was not drugs that overpowered his life.

“I wandered for the next eight months,” Gallaty recalled. “I didn’t know how to live the Christian life. I didn’t know how to read the Bible. I knew how to pray rote prayers ... I didn’t know how to memorize scripture. I didn’t know I should do those things.”

At church the next Sunday someone said, “Robby, you’re like a Timothy. You need a Paul.” So he prayed for about two months that God would put a Paul in his life.

One Sunday at church, “a man by the name of David Platt walks up to me and says, ‘God put you on my heart. Would you be interested in meeting once a week to study the Bible, memorize scripture and pray? I said, ‘David I’d love to.’ He said, ‘Pray about it.’ I said, ‘I already have. When do we start?’”

For the next two years, Platt, then



Robby Gallaty is senior pastor of Brainerd Baptist Church, Chattanooga, Tenn. and co-founder of Replicate Ministries. (BR photo by K. Allan Blume)

pastor of The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Ala., invested his life in Gallaty. “He gave me a passion for expository preaching. He gave me a burden for the lost. He gave me a desire for missions. More importantly he lived what discipleship is.”

Gallaty told approximately 500 conference attendees he is a product of discipleship.

He said he often asks himself, “How different would my life be today if I had never been discipled by David and others? I wouldn’t be here today.”

But the better question is “How different would your life be if someone would have invested in you?” he asked. “How different would the lives of our people be if we got serious and passionate about the things that were passionate to Jesus – which is making disciples?”

He said the discipleship movement is “the Reformation of the twenty-first century,” like the movement Martin Luther sparked in sixteenth century Germany.

“You have to understand that when Martin Luther nailed the 95 theses to the door of the church at Wittenberg, it was the shot that was heard around the world. Why?” he asked. “Because Martin Luther was returning back to something that was started early on, that is the priesthood of the believer.”

Luther believed any person could take the Word of God, read it and live it out, without a priest, bishop or pope to interpret it for them. The present discipleship movement gives the average church member the opportunity to take ownership of their faith.

Brainerd Baptist Church gives their congregation a definition of discipleship. “Disciple making is intentionally

equipping believers with the Word of God through accountable relationships empowered by the Holy Spirit in order to replicate faithful followers of Jesus Christ.”

“Discipleship without reproduction is not biblical discipleship,” Gallaty added.

Groups like Sunday School classes, Bible study groups and home fellowship groups have a role in the church. But if they are not reproducing, they are not biblical, he said. “How many generations of groups have you seen replicated in your church? How many groups who have invested in groups, who have invested in groups, who are replicating the process?” Gallaty offered a four-fold process of making disciples based on 2 Timothy 2:1-2.

First, Christians need to abide in the power of Christ. “We cannot underestimate the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit in our lives,” he said. Paul reminded Timothy that God has not given him a spirit of fear, but power, love and self-control.

Paul was emphasizing to Timothy that he must rely on the abiding power of Christ, Gallaty said. “When your people tell you, ‘Hey pastor, I can’t make disciples. I’m not smart enough. I’m not intellectual enough. I don’t have enough maturity under my belt. I don’t know enough. I just need one more class, one more seminar, one more conference. I feel inadequate.’ Do you know what you say to them? ‘You’re exactly where you need to be.’”

Second, Gallaty said Christians must accept the principles of Christ. “One of the most overlooked commands of the Great Commission is the little word ‘obey.’ ... To the Jew the word ‘hear’ is synonymous with the word ‘obey.’” Re-

ferring to the book of Deuteronomy, the book Jesus quotes more than any other, he said the Bible teaches that hearing and doing have the same meaning.

The third necessity is to invest in the people of Christ. Paul’s word to Timothy was to teach “faithful men who will teach others,” he said. “We must take discipleship to the next level and entrust the truth to faithful men who are able to teach others also. The discipleship process is not complete until the player becomes the coach.”

Gallaty’s fourth focus was the need to reproduce the priority of Christ.

He illustrated a common fault in churches. “Would you ever [take your child to church], walk into the preschool room with nobody in there, put the child on the ground, and as you’re leaving, throw them the bottle and say, ‘By the way, feed yourself?’ You’d never do that! We do it every week. We call it church.”

Evangelism and discipleship are two oars on the same boat, he added. If there is discipleship without evangelism a time will come when there are no more people to disciple. And a church emphasizes evangelism without discipleship there will come a time when evangelism dies.

Gallaty co-founded Replicate Ministries to educate, equip and empower believers. He invites believers to visit ReplicateMinistries.org for disciple making resources.

The one-day event in Clemmons also included Ed Stetzer, pastor of Grace Church in Hendersonville, Tenn., and executive director of LifeWay Research; Afshin Ziafat, pastor of Providence Church in Frisco, Texas; and Jon Erwin, filmmaker.

“It was really encouraging, because it says there is a hunger for church leaders to be equipped to make disciples,” said Martin, senior pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Winston-Salem. “I am really thankful for this emphasis on discipleship. I am all for evangelism, and we support that in our church and engage in it, but evangelism is not complete without discipleship. This (event) is just making it complete.”

The Baptist State Convention is also hosting “One Day,” a training and equipping event May 2 at Green Street Baptist Church in High Point.

The event is designed for anyone involved in church ministry from pastors to lay leaders to receive training in in their particular ministry focus area. The event will also show each ministry within the church connects with Christ’s call to make disciples.

Early bird registration is available for One Day through Fri., April 17. More details are available at onedaync.org. **BR**

AROUND THE STATE

Obituaries

MARION WILTON POWELL of Newton died Feb. 1.

He received an associate of arts degree from Mars Hill College, a bachelor of arts degree from Lenoir-Rhyne College and a master of divinity from Southeastern Seminary. He was a 1969 graduate of the N.C. Baptist Hospital School of Pastoral Care.

Powell’s pastorates included: East Valdese Baptist Church, 1956 – 1960, First Baptist, Newton, 1960 – 1963, First Baptist, Taylorsville, 1963 – 1971, Pine Valley Baptist, Wilmington, 1971 – 1977, Evangelist at Large, 1977 – 1981, Mt. View Baptist, Hickory, 1981 – 1993, Three Forks Baptist, Taylorsville, 1993 – 1997.

Upon his retirement Powell continued to serve as interim pastor for churches throughout the Catawba Valley.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Sylvia Harrison Powell of Valdese; and four children, Timothy Neal Powell of Newton, Lisa Lomax of Hickory, Maria Johnson of Valdese, and Tamara Frazier of Mt. Holly. Memorials to: Youth for Christ, c/o Sylvia Powell, P.O. Box 212, Newton, NC 28658.

WILLIAM “BILL” OTHA GOBLE JR., 88, of Taylorsville, died Jan. 28 at Frye Regional Medical Center.

A graduate of N.C. State University in electrical engineering, Goble went on to receive a master of divinity degree from Southeastern Seminary. He was part of the U.S. Army Air Corp during World War II.

Goble served at Aynor Baptist Church, Aynor, S.C., and First Baptist Church, Rutherford College, and was director of missions for the Catawba River Baptist Association, Morganton, for 26 years. In

retirement he served as interim pastor of the Korean Baptist Church, Charlotte. After moving back to Taylorsville in 1995, he became the director of missions for the Alexander Baptist Association.

He is survived by his wife, Roberta Teague Goble; son, Stephen Goble of Raleigh; daughter, Elizabeth Benfield of Taylorsville; brother, Raeford Goble of Charlotte; three grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

Memorials to the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, in care of Antioch Baptist Church, 580 Antioch Church Rd., Taylorsville, NC 28681.

DENNIS SPIVEY, 67, of Hickory, died Dec. 19, 2014.

He served Aenon Baptist Church, Elm City, Antioch Baptist Church, Taylorsville, Holly Springs Baptist Church, Taylorsville, as well as Bethel United Methodist Church, Boone, and at the time of his illness, First Advent Christian Church, Hickory.

He is survived by his wife, Joye Velve Harrington Spivey; daughter, Karen Grigg of Mooresville; son, Bryant Spivey of Garner; and three stepchildren.

Memorials to Pregnancy Care Center of Catawba Valley, 421 Main Ave. SW, Hickory, NC, 28601 or Our House Child Abuse Prevention Team, 203 E. Main St. Wilkesboro, NC 28697.

Staff changes

MICHAEL MILLER has been called as associational missionary at Transylvania Association, Pisgah Forest. Miller served for 37 years as senior pastor of churches in several states before transitioning to associational missionary in Middle Florida.

Rolling Roads Baptist Church, Greensboro, has called **JAMES JORDAN** as bi-vocational pastor. Jordan previously served at Magnolia Street Baptist Church, Greensboro.

JERRY CHADDICK has been welcomed as senior pastor by Tri-City Baptist Church, Conover. He previously pastored churches in both Louisiana and Mississippi.

South River Baptist Church, Statesville, has called **SCOTT TOWNSELL** as student minister. Townsell’s previous position was pastor at Purlear Baptist Church, Purlear.

KEVIN VALEU has been called as pastor of Parkway Baptist Church, Greensboro. Valeu previously was associate pastor at Riverside Baptist Church, Graham.

Retirement

STEVE and **WANDA GOUGE** are retiring from their ministry at the Brushy Mountain Baptist Association where they have served in many capacities since January 2010. After his retirement on March 31 as director of missions, the Gouges will move to Kentucky. A reception will be held March 15 at Cub Creek Baptist Church at 3 p.m.

JAMES MICHAEL SIMMONS, senior pastor of Buies Creek First Baptist Church since 1995, retired from the pastorate on Feb. 28. Simmons has served six N.C. Baptist churches as pastor over a period of nearly 45 years. He and his wife Sandra are living in Coats. Simmons is available for pulpit supply and interim preaching. He may be reached at jms-sjs1969@gmail.com.

OPPORTUNITY CORNER

Event highlights small groups, Sunday School

“A Conversation with Rick Howerton” March 26 brings pastors and leaders for a conversation about small groups and Sunday School. Howerton is the discipleship and small group specialist for Life-Way and is also the founding pastor of The Bridge Church in Spring Hill, Tenn.

First Baptist Church in Garner will host the event from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. Cost is \$7 (includes lunch). Visit ncbaptist.org/index.php?id=1738 to register.

‘Equipping Day’ for ministry wives

Embrace Women’s Missions and Ministries and Flourish are partnering to offer “Equipping Day” for North Carolina Baptist ministry wives. The March 28 event, held at Old Town Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, will include interactive sessions to problem solve collaboratively with other wives about ministry life. Registration fee is \$25 and includes a light breakfast, lunch and all program materials. It begins at 9 a.m and ends at 3. Visit ncbaptist.org/index.php?id=1714. For more information call/email Ashley Allen at aallen@ncbaptist.org or (800) 395-5102, ext.5559.

PraisRing brings together 60+ handbell choirs

Handbell choirs are invited April 17-18 to PraisRing at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro. Registration deadline is March 20, or until space is filled. Cost is \$275 per BSC affiliated church, \$350 per non-affiliated church/group and \$50 per individual. Fees are nonrefundable after April 2, unless festival is canceled. If paying by check, make check payable to BSC and send to Worship & Music, Baptist State Convention, P.O. Box 1107, Cary, NC 27512-1107. Visit ncbaptist.org/index.php?id=746.

Blackaby Continued from page 11

Spilman Auditorium. It was obvious that God was up to something with Henry’s book.

Since that time Blackaby has spoken in the East Room of the White House for the National Day of Prayer, the Pentagon, the United Nations, and in churches and conferences all over the world. He has also addressed people in churches of many denominations including Lutherans, Presbyterians, Dutch Reformed, Mennonites, Catholics and Seventh Day Adventists.

He explained, “If they are inviting me to preach the message God has given me and placing no restrictions on what I have to say, why not?

“When Bob Russell was pastor of Southeast Christian Church in Louisville, Ky., he bought thousands of the Experiencing God books. When Governor Mike Huckabee was a pastor in Arkansas he was greatly influenced by my book.

“But,” Henry added, “my ministry would not be pos-

sible without Marilynn. Words fail me to describe how instrumental she has been in my life and ministry. She is the major force in my life apart from God.”

Although Blackaby has officially retired, he knows that God still has a work for him to do. He explained, “My future is open-ended with my service to CEOs, pastors, and political leaders. There is no limit to what the future holds for me. “My philosophy is if you save your life you will lose it, but if you give it away you will save it. Jesus’ plan for the ages was and is the local church. He loved it and gave Himself for it; and I believe any church wholly given to God has unlimited potential. Those first century disciples turned the world upside down and it can happen again. We want to believe that all our churches and denominational agencies have their ministries bathed in prayer, but it is foolhardy to assume that people are praying fervently and frequently. We must make prayer a priority!”

Celebration in worship

On April 17-18 the public is invited to join Blackaby for his 80th birthday/retirement celebration at First Baptist Church in Jonesboro, Ga. It will be a time of worship and fellowship. Special guests will include Frank Page, Johnny Hunt, and Michael Catt. The worship service on Friday evening begins at 7 p.m. To get details about this special event or indicate you are attending, go to blackaby.net. Henry Blackaby’s only explanation for the anticipated celebration may be found in Zechariah 4:10 where God says, “For who hath despised the day of small things.” Ralph Waldo Emerson might well have had Henry Blackaby in mind when he said, “A great man is willing to be little.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE – J. Gerald Harris is the editor of The Christian Index, news journal of the Georgia Baptist Convention. This story first appeared in the Index and is used by permission.) **BR**

March 22

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

March 29

Teachings Like No Other

Focal Passages: Mark 1:21-22; 10:17-22

I first met Robert Stewart just months after I got married. My wife and I were living in Raleigh as she was finishing her last year at Meredith College. I was working and taking classes at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest; in addition, we were both working in a local church.

In order to help the church with its Sunday School ministry, I sought the advice of the Baptist State Convention, which at the time was located in downtown Raleigh. That is where I first met Stewart. Fast-forward about 30 years – I joined a group meeting at Chowan University called the Center for Christian Growth and Development. Now retired, Stewart, Mr. Sunday School, was still investing his time, energy and expertise with this fledgling group.

Always the visionary and proponent of teaching the Bible to help Christians and churches grow and fulfill their purpose, one of his favorite sayings was “our task is to punch holes in darkness.” A master teacher in his own right, Robert always sought to imitate his teaching ministry

after that of Jesus Christ. Jesus’ teaching style and message were unique. First, he taught with authority. When people compared Jesus’ teaching with that of the religious elites, they recognized Jesus’ message as coming from God alone.

Second, Jesus was motivated by love, and He asked His followers to practice love. Third, Jesus’ message called for a response. Jesus’ encounter with the one we call the “rich young ruler” produced a unique learning opportunity. He wanted to follow Jesus and “inherit” eternal life. What must he do? Was obeying the law as given to Moses enough?

In this instance Jesus said it was not. Jesus’ required the man to rid himself of all his earthly belongings (treasures). Was Jesus’ demand excessive or unreasonable? We see in verse 21 that Jesus “loved” the man. Jesus genuinely wanted the man’s commitment.

Jesus required much of people because their task was difficult, like ours today – “to punch holes in darkness.”



WAYNE PROCTOR
Pastor, Eure Baptist
Church, Eure

Focal Passages: Matthew 27:28-31, 45-50, 54

On July 2, 2014, Louis Zamperini died, but it wasn’t the first time he was declared dead.

In World War II he spent 47 days adrift in the ocean after his plane crashed. Japanese soldiers captured him and tortured him almost to the point of death multiple times. Zamperini’s grit and spirit kept him alive; unbroken against overwhelming odds.

Because of the media efforts of Laura Hillenbrand, Franklin Graham and Angelina Jolie, millions of people across the globe know the Zamperini’s story. The U.S. government once classified him as “killed in action.” Their mistake was understandable. After 97 years, Mr. Zamperini’s body did in fact fail him.

In some ways the capture and torture of Jesus bears similarities to the capture and torture of Louis Zamperini.

The Gospels tell the story of Jesus

being stripped naked, beaten, whipped to the point of exhaustion, mocked and publicly humiliated. The Roman form of capital punishment known as crucifixion was barbaric to the extreme – reserved for the worst criminals on earth. Death was a welcome relief after hours of sun-exposure, loss of bodily fluids and asphyxiation.

In ancient Rome many thousands of men suffered death by crucifixion. So, what was different about the death of Jesus of Nazareth?

Jesus’ death was far more than a physical struggle. It was primarily spiritual. We see it at Gethsemane, and we see it in Matthew 27:46 when Jesus quoted Psalm 22:1.

Jesus was alone. Jesus was forsaken, and not just forsaken by the Sanhedrin and the Roman government and his closest friends. Jesus was forsaken by God the Father.

Although Jesus had the power to avoid and avert this horror, it was not to be. Why? Because this was the Father’s plan, and the Father’s plan was to be honored. He who had no sin became sin; our sin. His death was truly like no other.

March 22

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

March 29

Compassion for the Lost

Focal Passage: Obadiah 1:1-4, 10-17

The contention between Edomites and Israelites was legendary. Just as Esau and Jacob fought within Rebekah’s womb, so their respective descendants would fight for generations to come.

Obadiah might be the smallest book in the Old Testament, but the message is large: because Edom celebrated the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem, rejoicing at their expense, God would judge them.

Instead of compassion, their hearts were full of pride and false security. The people assumed they had great wisdom, favor, and protection.

But just as they had done to Israel, so God promised it would be done to Edom.

Instead of caring for and protecting Israel like a brother, Edom boasted and gloated over the nation.

The people joined in ransacking Jerusalem with the intruders when it was weak, stealing goods and capturing survivors.

So God sent word through His prophet that He was ready to respond. He punished Edom for its pride and lack

of compassion, and He showed mercy to Israel’s remnant. Christians, our God is merciful and He calls his people to act accordingly toward the hurting.

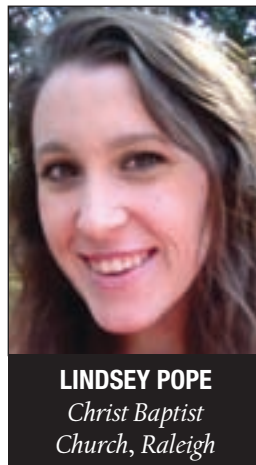
When we refuse, when we take pleasure at the pain of others like Edom, we are unlike God. He is just and tenderhearted, always seeking restoration and redemption.

Often we forget how merciful He has been to us, how forgiving and kind in our most hateful moments. Every thoughtless word and prideful intention is fully known by God, the One most offended by our sin.

Yet, God freely chose to send His Son to die for us and to send His Spirit to dwell within us.

So we do not grow weary in grace, we show compassion to the hurting.

We patiently endure, working hard to bring the lost from all nations to salvation in Christ through the proclamation of His holy Word, making disciples and then baptizing them into the restored, eternal family of God.



LINDSEY POPE
Christ Baptist
Church, Raleigh

Focal Passage: Zechariah 8:1-8; 9:9-12

If the wind is right in downtown Jacksonville, Fla., you can smell the Maxwell plant roasting coffee from Bay Street to the Florida Theater on East Forsyth Street.

I usually drive through that area on the way to my parents’ house, and by then, I’m travel-worn and tired. But the simple sight of the lit blue arch of Main Street Bridge and the smell of fresh coffee is enough to wake me up.

When Zechariah prophesied to Israel, the people of God were weary. Seventy years of exile were over, and the captives in Babylon were finally allowed to return home.

But Jerusalem was in ruins, and the temple was gone.

The promises of God’s blessing must have seemed distant. Where was the Messiah?

What do we do now?

Because of their sin, God judged them through exile. Rather than turn back to

The Promised Messiah

Him, the Israelites continued in their wickedness and idolatry.

They refused to listen when God spoke to them through His prophets – even when He warned them. But God kept His promise to deliver them. Seventy years they spent in exile as He said they would, but God provided for their return.

In Zechariah’s time, though given the chance to rebuild their nation as a people faithful to their God, they chose to build up their own houses, as Haggai says, and neglected the house of the Lord.

So God sent His Word to remind the people of His promises, to show them visions of their true home: the good Kingdom He was preparing.

In humility and victory, the Messiah would bring salvation, deliverance, freedom and peace to the world. He would establish righteousness and justice and a people of restoration. God was near. The Messiah was coming.

We know God kept His promise: Jesus came and inaugurated His Kingdom. We also know by God’s Word that soon He’s coming back. So we continue His work, here and among all nations, and we don’t stop until Christ returns.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Denominational

The Beulah Baptist Association is accepting resumes for their next **Executive Director**. The Association is located in Roxboro, NC, and includes churches in Person, Caswell, Orange and Granville counties. The Beulah Baptist Association exists to unite churches for Kingdom growth through encouragement, mobilization and training. Potential candidates may send their resume by e-mail to londal@beulahassociation.com or mail to BBA, POB 1175, Roxboro, NC 27573.

Pastor

Senior Pastor. First Baptist Church of Lenoir, N.C., is prayerfully seeking a full-time senior pastor. FBC affirms the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message. The church is now in its 126th year and has 782 members. It is important to our members to have opportunities for personal spiritual growth, continue in our local and national missions and have appealing programs for youth and children. Candidate should be a strong spiritual leader, and an inspirational worship leader, who is mission-minded. Qualifications should include an advanced theological degree from a seminary or divinity school. Please send resume and references to pastorsearch.fbclenoir@gmail.com or to Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 304 Main Street NW, Lenoir, NC 28645.

Wilkesboro Baptist Church in Wilkesboro, NC, is seeking a **Senior Pastor**. We are a missions-minded church supporting the Southern Baptist Convention, the Baptist State Convention of NC and the NC Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. We are a 733 resident-member congregation offering a contemporary and a traditional worship service each Sunday. We have a full-time staff of 6 and a part-time staff of 17 including a vibrant preschool. Applicants must have a masters degree from an accredited seminary/divinity school and 5-10 years pastoral experience in a multiple staff church. Applicants must 1) be an effective communicator of well-prepared biblical sermons 2) be a gifted teacher of spiritual truths 3) possess effective leadership and strong interpersonal skills 4) be a skilled caregiver in pastoral ministries and 5) have a strong commitment to missions, discipleship, evangelism and Christian education. Compensation commensurate with education and experience. Send cover letter and resume by March 31, 2015, to pastorsearchcommittee@wilkesborobaptist.org or to Pastor Search Committee, Wilkesboro Baptist Church, PO Box 294, Wilkesboro NC 28697. Visit www.wilkesborobaptist.org.

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

Beaver Dam Baptist Church, Shelby NC, seeks **Senior Pastor**. BDBC is county church averaging 200 weekly in Sunday School. SBC affiliated, located near Gardner Webb University. Debt free, well equipped facility with supportive staff. Master's degree preferred. Send letters of interest and resumes to: Pastor Search Committee, Beaver Dam Baptist Church, 123 Beaver Dam Church Rd., Shelby, NC 28152, through March 31.

Macedonia Baptist Church in Monroe, NC, is prayerfully seeking a **full-time pastor**. A compassionate, caring servant led by the Holy Spirit. Applicants should be biblically grounded, mature with 4/5 years experience. We prefer a seminary degree but will consider other options. Please send resumes and references to: Pastor Search Team, c/o Richard Quick, 5903 Highway 218 E., Marshville, NC 28103; or email DRL238@windstream.net.

Corinth Baptist Church located in Elizabeth City, NC, desires to determine availability of potential candidates having an interest in serving as an **Interim Pastor** for our congregation. The period of service would be for an unspecified length of time, but begin approximately mid-2015. We are an active congregation with approximately 325 attending worship weekly. More information about our church may be found at www.corinthbaptist.com. If you would be interested in learning more about this possible opportunity of service, please forward your resume with contact information to: Corinth Baptist Church, ATTN: Chairman of Deacons (Confidential), 1035 US Highway 17S, Elizabeth City, NC 27909, or you may respond electronically to bruce.brickham@dom.com.

Church Staff

Growing, conservative church in Raleigh area (Knightdale) seeking **part-time Associate Pastor**. Assist pastoral visitation, evangelistic outreach & pulpit supply as needed. Good communication & organizational skills. Min. 4 yr. degree. 25 hrs. per week. Traditional worship, 2 morning services. Excellent music, Sunday School, youth, children, VBS & Upward Basketball ministries. Great mix of young couples with children, middle-aged folks & seniors. Discipleship classes for youth through adult Sunday evening. Strong music program with choirs for all ages. Wednesday evening prayer meeting with separate programs for children & youth. Growing missions ministry. Send resume to Lewis Spragins at lspraginsjr@nc.rr.com or 8400 Poole Rd., Knightdale, NC 27545.

Ocean View Baptist Church on the Outer Banks of North Carolina is currently looking for a **part-time Youth/Children's Director**. OVBC is a part of the SBC. Experience with children/youth and an understanding of Baptist doctrine required. Interested candidates please send resume and transcript to Rev. Steve Siegrist @ Ocean View Baptist Church, 902 South Virginia Dare Trail, Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948, or pastorovbc@yahoo.com.

First Baptist Church of Woodbury, TN, is seeking a **full-time Associate Pastor for Student Ministries and Education**. This position will involve primary responsibility for student ministries from ages 12-25 and education administration for the church. Break down of position will be approximately 60% student ministry, 30% education and outreach, 10% pastoral care. Previous ministry experience, seminary degree, and strong relational skills are required for this position. This church values traditional worship and is affiliated with the SBC. Please submit resumes and cover letter to: Personnel Committee, PO Box 218, Woodbury, TN 37190; or send email to fbcbwby@dtccom.net.

Minister of Music, FBC Hillsville, Va. Lead choir, oversee music ministry, recruit and train members for singing and music. Part time, 20hr/wk. Pay negotiable. Send resume to fbchillsville.org. Call 276-728-7801. Respond by March 20, 2015.

Town Creek Baptist Church is seeking **full-time Associate Pastor/Youth Leader**. Our church is associated with the Brunswick Baptist Association, the Baptist State Convention and the SBC. Please send resumes to Search Committee, Town Creek Baptist Church, 832 Greenhill Road, Leland, North Carolina 28451.

First Baptist Church, Burlington, NC, is seeking a qualified **Organist** for part-time position in an established, comprehensive music program. Sunday and Wednesday schedule. Send resume to: Minister of Music, First Baptist Church, 400 S. Broad Street, Burlington, NC 27215, or e-mail to joelmarshall@FirstBaptist-Burlington.com.

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

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

Beech Glen Baptist Church, a biblically grounded, Southern Baptist church in Mars Hill, NC, is seeking a **part-time worship leader**. This person will plan and lead the music for our blended 11 am worship service, 6 pm Sunday evening service. They will be responsible for working with our choir and being part of the Beech Glen staff and church family. If interested please contact Rev. Josh Hughes, 828-316-8290; Preachthewordministries.jh@gmail.com.

Miscellaneous

NCBAM has planned a special event for ministers 65+. Call 1.877.506.2226 to register for FaithQuest2 – to be held March 31 in Winston-Salem.

Looking for old Bibles in good condition, prefer unmarked in. I also buy libraries from pastors. Contact Bob's Book Finders bobsbookfinders@yahoo.com or 704-754-6498.

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

Share the Biblical Recorder – FREE. Order a three-month free subscription. Contact Erin Gandy at (919) 459-5693 or erin@BRnow.org to make arrangements.

MOVED? Don't forget to change your address with the *Biblical Recorder*. Contact Erin Gandy at (919) 459-5693 or erin@BRnow.org.

BRnow.org

BE SURE TO CHECK
OUT OUR WEBSITE



FOR THE LATEST N.C. BAPTIST NEWS AND INFORMATION

Placing a classified ad in the *Biblical Recorder*

Choose one of three avenues:

- Send e-mail to: alison@BRnow.org.
- Submit the information via the *Recorder's* website at BRnow.org.
- Send a Fax to (919) 467-6180.

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

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

BRnow.org

Charlotte City Council votes down LGBT ordinance

By M.H. CAVANAUGH | Christian Action League

Media reports say the Charlotte City Council meeting held March 2 was one of the most contentious in many years. Hundreds of concerned citizens gathered at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Building to express their support or opposition to a proposed city ordinance that would have included enumerations of “sexual orientation,” “gender identity,” and “gender expression” as legally protected categories.

With more than 100 people speaking at the meeting, each for two minutes and more than 40,000 emails sent to the City Council concerning the proposal, the ordinance failed by a 6-5 vote.

During the five-hour long meeting, approximately 60 percent of the speakers expressed their opposition to the proposal. Clergy, business owners, people from academia, soccer moms, concerned fathers and people from all walks of life spoke with passion, often citing scripture, arguing the proposal would diminish religious freedoms and make women and children vulnerable to sexual predators.

Supporters of the proposal said opponents were simply fear-mongering and that Charlotte was one of a few larger cities in the country without protections for gay, lesbian and transgender people. They argued gay and transgender people are subject to violence and suffer various forms of deprivation and humiliation because of discrimination against them.

Before a final vote was taken on the measure, council members passed an amendment that removed the bath-

room section of the bill that allowed transgender people to use the restroom of the gender they best identified. But even after removing that most controversial provision, council members remained divided over the ordinance as a whole, saying the amendment significantly weakened it.

Two council members, Lawana Mayfield and John Autry, who were ardent supporters of the proposed ordinance, said they could not vote for the proposal in its amended form because it didn't provide protections for everyone in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community. Thus, a final vote on the bill would bring opponents and supporters of the original proposal together to defeat it.

In a letter composed by attorney Tami Fitzgerald, head of the North Carolina Values Coalition and sent to council members before the meeting – a letter Mark Creech, executive director of the Christian Action League, as well as many other religious leaders signed – Fitzgerald clarified the ordinance was unconstitutional and placed an undue regulatory burden on private businesses, exposing them to lawsuits and infringing on their First Amendment rights. The letter explained it also put women and children in danger, violating their sense of privacy and security. It said the ordinance required the city to engage in discrimination on the basis of religion by choosing to disfavor companies that wouldn't employ or provide certain services that breached their religious beliefs. Moreover, the letter argued the ordinance ran afoul of a provision in the North Carolina constitution prohibiting the regulation of trade in a way not applicable statewide.

The ordinance was first introduced to the City Council on Nov. 24 by Scott Bishop of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), the largest gay rights advocacy organization in the country.

Bishop's presentation to council members urged them to insert the new language into the city's nondiscrimination policies.

The City Council responded by asking the City Manager Ron Carlee and its attorney, Robert Hagermann, to draft information on the proposal. On Feb. 9, Hagermann gave an overview of various non-discrimination laws and provided council members with a proposed ordinance. The City Council then voted 7-4 to put the ordinance on the agenda.

But numerous speakers during the March 2 meeting, as well as some council members, expressed concerns that no requests were made by city leaders to hear from those who could provide legal or moral counterpoints to what HRC and the LGBT community had presented to the City Council.

“I am very thankful to God this proposal for the City of Charlotte was defeated,” said Creech. “We've seen the damage these so-called non-discrimination policies have had, creating special rights for the LGBT community and diminishing rights for people of faith who believe homosexuality and transgenderism is immoral.”

If the Charlotte City ordinance had passed, it would have been the first city in North Carolina to enact such a policy. LGBT activists have vowed not to give up and plan to bring the matter back before the Charlotte City Council. Opponents have promised to remain vigilant and zealous against it. **BR**



Carolina Thomas
Bus Sales Service Parts Body Shop

Buses in all sizes and configurations specifically built to meet your needs!

The Bus Professionals In Your Service!

- Our Focus is completely on you and your transportation ministry.
- All we do is buses so we are superior at it.
- We would like an opportunity to earn your trust.
- Carolina Thomas' outreach goal is to be the best bus supplier in the Carolinas.


1-800-440-3492 or 336-851-1718 (ext. 367)
www.carolinathomas.com



FRUITLAND BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE
ENROLL NOW FOR NEW QUARTER ON MARCH 31, 2015

- Preparing the “God Called” to minister since 1946
- Our graduates are serving churches all across the S.B.C.
- Earn an Associates Degree in Religion (choose from Christian Ministry, Church Planting, and Christian Worldview tracks)
- Our Associate degree is now fully available online
- Courses offered for Spanish speaking students at several N.C. locations (Call Robert Fernandez at 828-399-0109)

For more information call (828) 685-8886, or write: David Horton, President
Fruitland Baptist Bible College, 1455 Gilliam Road, Hendersonville, N.C. 28792
Owned and operated by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina



2015 NC Foothills Prayer Conference
DRAW NEAR 2

MAY 1-3

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH ICARD
2178 US Highway 70 • Connelly Springs, NC 28612

Richard Blackaby • Steve Ellis • J. Chris Schofield
Marty Jacumin • Larry Steven McDonald

WWW.NCBAPTIST.ORG/DRAWNEAR2 • (828) 397-3451



Baptist State Convention of North Carolina • Milton A. Hollifield, Jr., Executive Director-Treasurer
205 Convention Drive • Cary, NC 27511 • (919) 467-5100 • (800) 395-5102 • www.ncbaptist.org
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.