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U.S. Army Maj. Timothy Cross, left, Battalion Chaplain, 2nd Lt. Todd Daniel and Chaplain Cpt. Barry "Hoot" Busby, right, pray in the chapel at Fort Bragg, N.C., home of the 82nd Airborne Division. Military chaplains are responsible to their commanding officers to provide advice, not only on the spiritual welfare of their troops, but of the spiritual temperament in their areas of operation. (NAMB photo by Ted Wilcox)



SBC CHAPLAINS SHARE CHRIST WHERE LOCAL CHURCH CAN'T

By TOBIN PERRY | Baptist Press

From foreign battlefields to American corporate board rooms to hospital bedsides to the front seats of police cars and more, Southern Baptists minister through their chaplains in some of the most hard-to-reach locations of North America.

"Southern Baptists have continued to see the need to send chaplains to places where the church may not have access," said Doug Carver, the North American Mission Board's (NAMB) executive director for Southern Baptist chaplaincy and retired chief of chaplains for the U.S. Army. "They provide the ministry of presence, provide the good news of Jesus Christ, opportunities to

evangelize and witness – and sustain the faith of Southern Baptists who are in those places."

Carver, who is also interim pastor at First Baptist Church in Matthews, notes that Southern Baptist chaplains – serving in military, institutional, counseling, disaster relief, corporate and public safety roles – extend the evangelistic reach of SBC churches throughout North America and around the world.

Chaplaincy is one of six areas of focus for NAMB's evangelism group. He says while evangelism at times happens differently in the military and organizational

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Anne Graham Lotz speaks March 21 at Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte. (BR photo by Michael McEwen)

When missions meets 'glory' of God

BR staff

"The reason we have breath is that we may live for all peoples. There are individuals who live, die and never hear the gospel. This cannot be tolerable for us," said David Platt, pastor of The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Ala., at the 2014 North Carolina Missions Conference.

Sponsored by Baptists on Mission (or North Carolina Baptist Men), the "For the Glory of His Name" missions event took place March 21-22 at Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C. About

1,600 registered for the event.

"The need is urgent," Platt said, "to be on the front lines of the battle. Are we going to spend our lives for the accomplishment for the Great Commission or not?"

Founder and president of AnGeL Ministries and daughter of Billy Graham, Anne Graham Lotz spoke on the subject of forgiveness among Christians.

She said, "Forgiveness is an act of worship. If you ask me, the greater the wound forgiven the greater the act of worship."

In order forgive, Lotz explained, Christians need to bring their wounds to

the Lord, choose to forgive, seek reconciliation and then leave the rest to God.

In Matthew 25:31-47, "Jesus is not preaching works-salvation," said Brian Loritts, lead pastor of Fellowship Memphis, a multicultural church ministering to urban Memphis, Tenn.

Narrating the life of William Wilberforce – English statesman, philanthropist and abolitionist – Loritts said that the main question for young Wilberforce was, "How do I reconcile the gospel of freedom with a culture advocating the evils of slavery?"

Loritts emphasized to the attendees

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Millennials & the call for dialogue

A few weeks ago at the State Evangelism Conference in Raleigh, I listened to Tom and Stephen Wagoner discuss their distinctive ministries.

Here are a father and son who love Jesus and faithfully pastor their congregations, yet they have different approaches to disciple-making and ministry.

Tom has pastored Central Baptist Church in Dunn for 30 years, and he describes himself as “a country preacher” with “a big choir and a rural church.”

Stephen, influenced by the Acts 29 network, is a pastor of a missional community called the Church in the Triad.

On the stage, the two continued to emphasize different contexts and generations require disparate methodologies.

While I’ve heard this principle taught dozens of times, I thought it would be an opportune time to expound on some identity markers of my generation – the Millennials – in order to provoke trans-generational dialogue in the church where you serve. Millennials are a very confusing group to interpret and understand. Speaking about Russia in his day, Winston Churchill once remarked that this political superpower was “a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.” This captures well the lives of the largest and most diverse generation in American history, the Millennials.

Millennials are individuals between 18- to 29-years-old. They’re also known as “Generation Y,” the “Mosaics” or “Generation Me.” But be careful to not label them too much, they’re skeptical of designations. In fact, Pew Research makes this point well. “Only about half (49 percent) of Millennials say the phrase ‘a patriotic person’ describes them very well – with 35 percent saying this is a ‘perfect description.’” Let me see if I can provide some clarity: think about an envelope you just received in the mail. It has a few identification markers: one being a

(sticker) stamp and also an (embossed) stamp. One is stuck on, the other is etched or imprinted onto the envelope.

Millennials may use labels, but they don’t want them to be “etched” on. Generally speaking, they attempt to alienate themselves from any descriptor. Labels, the logic goes, are stifling, rigid, confining and artificial. Which leads to another identity marker of Millennials: the religious Nones. Barna Research has done more work in this area than any other organization or company that I am aware of.

The Nones, Barna notes, are “those who self-describe as ‘spiritual, but not religious’ – individuals who like to associate with what they perceive as the positive elements of spirituality but not the negative associations of organized religion...the ‘Nones’ [are] the much-discussed adults who are religiously unaffiliated and who don’t want to use any conventional label for their religious faith.”

“Religiously unaffiliated” doesn’t mean “atheistic” or “agnostic” toward God; 86 percent of Millennials believe in God. Rather, the Nones are skeptical toward most institutions – political and religious, while somewhat more optimistic toward educational institutions. Pertaining to the religious sphere, Millennials may love Jesus but they’re hesitant about the church. As we are all too aware, one of the prominent characteristics of Millennials is their usage of technology and how this influences their social life. Smartphones are now in the hands of 1.4 billion people and 81 percent of Millennials are on Facebook. With this digital explosion comes new patterns of thinking, relating and influence. This can be both good and bad. As for the good, Millennials are very relational creatures with most average 250 friends on Facebook. They love sharing their stories, their “statuses” and they like “liking” their friends’ pictures. Some analyses show that Christian Millennials are one of the factors behind

the downsizing of the megachurch.

Thom Rainer, president of LifeWay Christian Resources said, “This generation is already affecting the size of the worship gathering ... worship centers will be smaller. The Millennials are at the forefront of this facility revolution. They will eschew large worship services for more informal and smaller gatherings.”

With an emphasis on authentic community and healthy relationships, the motto for Millennials is, “Small is the new big.” Christian Millennials want to be in a church that preaches and practices social justice and where congregation care is carefully and thoughtfully exercised.

On the flip-side, technology can be bad as well. David Kinnaman, president of Barna Research, says in his book, *You Lost Me*: “Technology access allows [Millennials] to experience and examine content origination from nonbiblical worldviews, giving them ample reasons to question the nature of truth.”

In the past few generations, wisdom was primarily given through structures such as the family, educational systems and religious institutions. With the rise of the Internet and with it the accessibility to content anywhere in the world, knowledge is at their fingertips. Literally! Hence, the traditional form of passing down insight about the world, and how to inhabit it well, has been largely bypassed with the creation of smartphones and similar technologies.

For instance, if the average Millennial wants to know the answer to the question, “What is the meaning of life?” In generations past, an individual would have asked his or her grandmother or father; today, all the individual has to do is “Google it.” And when Google provides approximately 730 million results in 0.58 seconds (seriously, “Google it”),

the familiar conclusion becomes, “Well, there must be more than one meaning to life.” This breeds not only skepticism toward certain authorities, but it also encourages an unhealthy pluralism and a tolerance that says where *truth is whatever you want it to be*.

Lastly, even though Millennials might be more likely to search for answers through technology, they’re very much open to mentorships that can become fertile ground for discipleship. In fact, 90 percent of Millennials who drop out of the church didn’t have a mentor. This alarming statistic cries out for all generations to take seriously the role of mentorship in an age where young adults are more likely to be “discipled” by screens rather than human beings.

Indeed, I am a Millennial writing about Millennials for a majority audience that is likely not Millennial. No, this guest column is not narcissistic – a common label given to Millennials by our elder generations. As Tom and Stephen emphasized in their interview, the church needs honest, trans-generational dialogue. And when all ages of saints can gather together, genuinely discuss and partner in this Great Commission mission, the gospel advances. This is what I’m after.

These facts provoked my wife, Jade, and I to choose a church that encompasses all generations, young and old. We desire wisdom from the generations preceding us and in turn, we want to offer it to the generations after us.

I apologize that we Millennials may be “riddles wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.” The best advice I can offer is this: Please remain patient with us, because we truly desire relationships, wisdom and Jesus.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Michael McEwen is content editor for the Recorder.) **BR**



MICHAEL MCEWEN
Guest Column

Submissions for Tar Heel Voices

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. Have questions? Call (919) 847-2127.

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Pastors' Conference to focus on God's Glory

The 2014 Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference, June 8-9, will be held in Baltimore, at the Baltimore Convention Center right on Inner Harbor.

Notable speakers include Francis Chan, Tony Evans, Ronnie Floyd, J.D. Greear, Johnny Hunt, Clayton King, James MacDonald, Eric Mason, David Platt and Rick Warren.

"What Moses was begging for [was] a manifestation of God's presence," said Bruce Frank, lead pastor of Biltmore Baptist Church in Asheville and 2014 Pastor's Conference president, about the conference theme "Show Us Your Glory" based on Exodus 33:18-23.

"Whether that be saving a marriage, [breaking from] addiction, reviving a pastor who may be burned out. Man can't do those things. God can."

Frank said the theme follows along with his personal journey over the last

few years of learning to tilt things vertically toward God.

Many churches are doing things that are "pragmatically cool but [do] not glorify God," Frank said.

Clint Pressley, senior pastor of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte, serves as an officer of the Pastors' Conference. He will be nominated for the office of first vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention in Baltimore, June 10-11.

To make accommodations for the Pastors' Convention and/or Southern Baptist Convention, visit sbcannualmeeting.net/sbc14/.

The Pastors' Conference has secured special rates at area hotels when you register via sbpc.net. This event is free of charge and open to the public.

Church messengers, be sure to pre-register at sbcannualmeeting.net/sbc14/PreRegistration.asp. For more details about these events and more, see pages 4-5. **BR**



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NEWS IN BRIEF

Baptist Convention of Iowa names new exec

(Iowa Baptist News) After a year of searching, the Baptist Convention of Iowa elected Tim Lubinus to fill the position of executive director-treasurer on March 10. He replaced interim executive director-treasurer Tom Law on March 24. Lubinus was the regional and global ministry director at Cornerstone Church in Ames, where he has served for the last eight years leading their church planting efforts. He also spent nearly 10 years in leadership with the International Mission Board while serving in Central Asia.

Southeastern announces fully online M.Div.

(SEBTS Communications) Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary announces its first fully online master of divinity degree. The seminary has also provided several masters programs and an associates degree attainable completely online. Jerry Lassetter, director of distance at SEBTS, said, "Our online M.Div. and M.A.'s make it possible for students to earn a degree and still serve in the ministry they love."

GuideStone trustees meet, honor Jones

(GuideStone Financial Resources) GuideStone's trustees met in regular session March 3-4 in Dallas. GuideStone's president, O.S. Hawkins, declared 2014 "a year of transition" saying, "GuideStone is going places in 2014 that we have never been before as we expand our ministry assignment by making our funds available to members of Southern Baptist and other evangelical churches." Trustees also heard a report from chief operating officer John R. Jones, and from executive officers John Raymond and Ron Dugan. Jones was honored for his 25 years of service to GuideStone.

Christians beheaded in Somalia

(Baptist Press/Morning Star News) Islamic extremists from the rebel Al Shabaab militia publicly beheaded a mother of two girls and her cousin March 4 in southeastern Somalia after discovering they were Christians, Morning Star News reported from sources inside the country.

In the port town of Barawa, the extremists called residents to the town center to witness the executions of the 41-year-old mother, Sadia Ali Omar, and her 35-year-old cousin, Osman Mohamoud Moge, the sources said. Before killing them, an Al Shabaab militant announced, "We want to wipe out any underground Christian living inside of mujahidin [jihadists] area," according to an area resident whose name is undisclosed for security reasons. Omar's daughters, ages 8 and 15, witnessed the slaughter, sources said.

Abedini, in hospital, shackled & denied care

(Baptist Press) Pastor Saeed Abedini, a U.S. citizen, was moved to a private hospital in Iran but was shackled and denied medical care, prompting the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ), which is working for his freedom, to say his case took a turn for the worse.

The next day, March 13, ACLJ reported that Abedini had been released from the shackles and was allowed to receive visitors. He had not been treated, though, for severe abdominal ailments resulting from beatings by Iranian prison guards.

ACLJ reported that Abedini wasn't even allowed to know the results of the tests he underwent.

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Restoration, revival, prayer 2014 meeting focus

Baptist Press

“Restoration and revival through prayer,” is the theme of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) 2014 annual meeting June 10-11 in Baltimore, SBC president Fred Luter has announced.

“We have not had a theme that focused on prayer and revival for many years,” said Luter, pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans. “I pray that God will send revival across America and particularly among Southern Baptists.”

Psalm 80:18-19 is Luter’s selection as the biblical text to support the theme: “Then we will not turn away from You; revive us, and we will call on Your name. Restore us, Yahweh, the God of Hosts; look on us with favor, and we will be saved” (HCSB).

Luter will preach during the June 10 evening session.

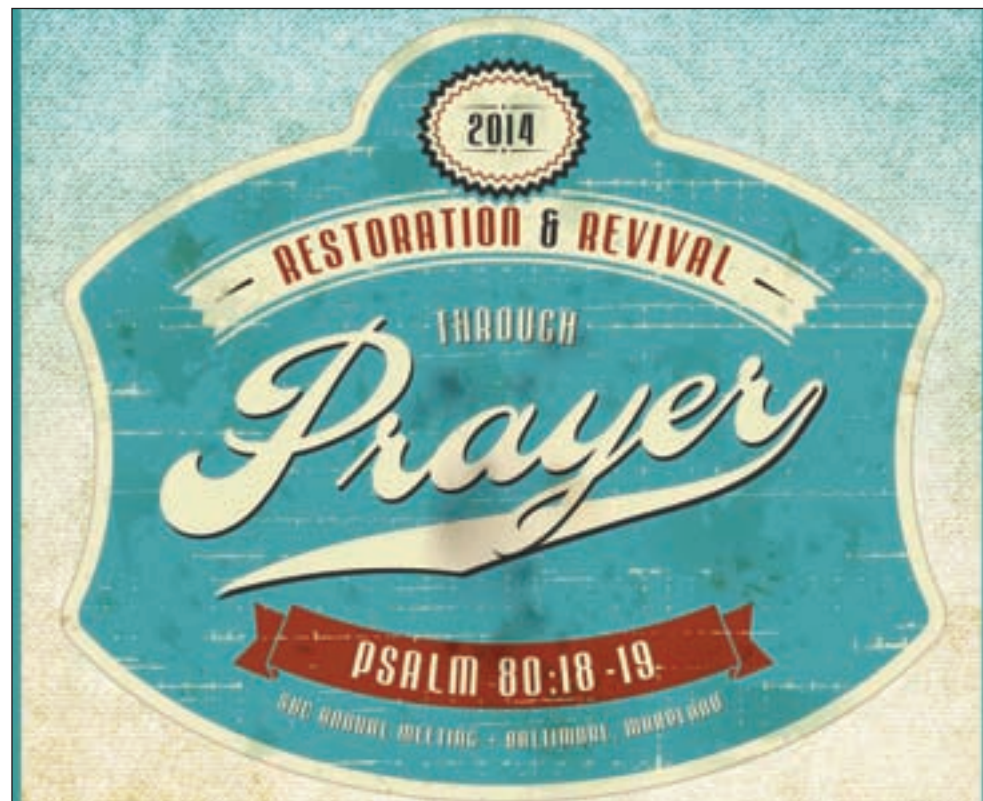
No other business will be presented or discussed in the evening session, adhering to last year’s annual meeting format, said David Smith, chairman of the SBC Committee on Order of Business and executive director of the Austin Baptist Association in Texas.

“It obviously had such a great response last year that we decided we wanted to do it again,” Smith said of the evening session.

“We just think it’s going to bring back something that folks go to Convention for – to hear the Word, to be inspired, and to worship. And we’re looking forward to it.”

Luter, a member of the committee, requested at the September 2013 Executive Committee meeting that the evening worship format continues, Smith said.

“[President Luter] said, ‘I’d really like to recommend that we do the Tuesday night event again.’ And of course our committee wholeheartedly supported



that,” Smith said. “On Tuesday night of the convention he’ll be sharing his president’s address and Roger [McGee, pastor of music and worship at First Baptist Church in Alexandria, Virginia] will be leading in the worship time.”

Two candidates for officers have been announced: Ronnie Floyd, pastor of Cross Church in Arkansas, for president and Clint Pressley, senior pastor of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte, for first vice president. **BR**

SBC children, student registrations open

Baptist Press

Registration is open for preschool child care, Children’s Conferences International, Children in Action Missions Camp and Youth on Mission in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention’s (SBC) June 10-11 annual meeting in Baltimore.

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief child care volunteers will care for preschoolers, while Children’s Conferences International and Woman’s Missionary Union will guide the Children in Action Missions Camp and Youth on Mission curricula and activities.

Preschool child care and activities for children who have completed grades 1-6 will be housed at the Baltimore Convention Center, the annual meeting site. Youth who have completed grades 7-12 will begin their days at the convention center with worship before going into the community for hands-on missions work.

Pre-registration is required and will be accepted online at www.sbcannualmeeting.net under the “Children/Youth” tab. All participants should register as soon as possible because of limited space. Onsite registration will not be accepted.

Preschool child care

Preschool child care for newborns through 5-year-olds will be available during the SBC Pastors’ Conference, June 8-9, and the annual meeting, June 10-11. The cost is \$25 per child for each of the events. In addition, there is a \$10 non-refundable registration fee per child. Lunch for preschoolers will be available for \$6 Monday and \$12 total for Tuesday and Wednesday.

Parents should pay all related fees when registering to insure their child’s participation. The SBC will verify registrations with an emailed confirmation packet, including a parents’ handbook.



Billy Joe Calvert, center, pastor of First Baptist Church in Normandy, Tenn., his wife Kerri and their children visit the Global Hunger Relief exhibit at the 2013 SBC annual meeting in Houston. There are options for all ages during the annual meeting. (Photo by Thomas Graham)

Children’s Conferences International

Children’s Conferences International will offer the adventure “Christ Who Strengthens Me” for children ages 4-12 during the Pastors’ Conference. The cost for Sunday evening and Monday is \$27 or for Monday only is \$23. Registration at the door will be \$30.

Registration is open at http://www.childrensconferences.com/*!sbc-pastors-conference-2014/cl8n4.

Children in Action Missions Camp

Children in Action Missions Camp for children who have completed grades 1-6 by May/June will be offered June 10-11.

The camp theme “Gotta Tell It!” is designed to challenge children to tell God’s story to people who need to hear it.

“Children attending the Children in Action Missions Camp will learn that they can know God and have a relationship with Him,” said Cindy Bradley, Michigan WMU executive director and camp coordinator.

“In addition to Bible studies, children will visit with missionaries representing both the International Mission Board and the North American Mission Board,” Bradley said. “Children will also participate in worship sessions, games and recreation, crafts and mission projects. These Bible study and missions experiences will show children that they are a part of God’s story and have a place in His story.”

The cost is \$40 per child. In addition, there is a \$10 non-refundable registration fee per child. Snacks will be provided; lunch will not. Parents will need to pick up their children both days at the conclusion of the morning session.

Youth on Mission

Youth on Mission for students who’ve completed grades 7-12 by May/June will be provided June 10-11. “Youth on Mission will learn that they can know God and have a relationship with Him. They will be encouraged to be bold in telling His story and by serving others. The youth will serve through hands-on missions projects in Baltimore,” said Kristy Carr, National WMU Ministry Consultant and Youth on Mission coordinator. “Each morning mission studies will be presented by both International Mission Board and North American Mission Board missionaries.”

The cost is \$55 per youth. In addition, there is a \$10 non-refundable registration fee per youth. Lunch and a snack will be provided both days.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Compiled by Lynn Richmond of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee’s office of convention finance.) **BR**



Southeastern students headed to Crossover Baltimore

By DIANNA L. CAGLE | BR Production Editor

In June more than 100 college and seminary students will head from North Carolina to Baltimore to participate in hands-on mission as well as get in some theological training.

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) and The College at Southeastern in Wake Forest are sending students and professors to Maryland to take a missions class as well as help church plants through Crossover Baltimore June 7 just before the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) June 10-11.

“We really want to see for the city of Baltimore a real sense of awakening,” said Scott Hildreth, director of the Lewis A. Drummond Center for Great Commission Studies at SEBTS.

SEBTS students will be joined by Southern Baptists from across the country.

“We are excited about the interest we’ve seen from other states and churches to serve with us in Baltimore this year,” said Bob Mackey, executive director of the Baltimore Baptist Association, for a story by the North American Mission Board (NAMB). “These partners coming alongside us will help extend our reach around the city and connect our community to the local churches already at work in Baltimore.”

Mackey spent time at Crossover Houston last year to learn about Crossover and the many opportunities available during that concentrated time of outreach. He saw Southern Baptists partnering with



Baltimore Inner Harbor is just one of the places volunteers are likely to see while serving through Crossover Baltimore in June. (BP photo)

the local association, churches and volunteers from across the country.

“We visited a lot of different events taking place as a part of Crossover Houston,” Mackey said. “It was exciting to see what God can do for a city through service and partnership. I left with a great sense of hope and expectation for what God will do when Crossover comes to our city this year.”

Hildreth said SEBTS leaders have been working with NAMB to coordinate their service in Baltimore. The students will be in class each weekday morning leading up to Crossover. In the afternoons, they will be teaming with churches in the area to reach their communities for Christ.

While the students will receive seminary credit for the class, Hildreth emphasized the ministry experience each

student will receive as a result of their involvement in Crossover Baltimore.

Baltimore is one of NAMB’s Send North America cities focusing on high concentrations of population and lostness.

SEBTS has been sending students to Send cities as well as mission trips overseas to work with the International Mission Board personnel. The seminary has also been online helping research for NAMB and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Students and leaders have been involved in 18 months of research of 100 metropolitan areas in America. Their findings will help Baptists better understand their communities – languages spoken, ethnic makeup, population, etc. The hope is that the research will help church planters find where they can make the biggest impact.

“We’re really asking the Lord as He raises up a larger than normal number,” Hildreth said. “We’re really hoping and praying that we’ll see an awakening across our campus.”

The seminary is waiving the cost of the class. The cost is \$10 which includes a T-shirt and water bottle. NAMB is finding housing and providing meals for the students during its class and Crossover. Students also have the option of staying longer and taking a class on the SBC.

They will have to find housing during those days.

Hildreth said students are “ready, willing and able” to serve. He and other seminary leaders hope that service “spreads a passion for spiritual renewal” and a passion for those who are lost to come to faith.

“We’re going to serve the church,” Hildreth said.

While Crossover Baltimore is generally the Saturday before the SBC, Hildreth, Mackey and other leaders hope the block parties, evangelism outreaches, health clinics, sports camps and various other outreach events will make a difference for years to come. Already there are participants coming from more than 12 states.

“Our churches are excited about the unique opportunity to share Christ with our city that Crossover will bring,” Mackey said. “Baltimore is not like a lot of other places in the country. We’re not in a predominantly Christian region of the country; we don’t have a church on every corner or throngs of people actively seeking out Christianity. Our hope is that, through the partnership of others in the SBC, Crossover will represent Christ to the people of Baltimore and our region and lay a greater foundation for our local churches.”

Mackey became a Christian when he was 15 after he encountered a Southern Baptist church in Connecticut. He considers Crossover an answer to prayer.

“It’s an honor and a privilege to have events like Crossover and the Southern Baptist Convention come to Baltimore this year,” he said. “To see the name of Christ glorified through service to our city is an answered prayer. Now our continued prayer is that individuals in our city who haven’t before had the opportunity to see what it looks like to see Jesus will see Him in the hands, feet and hearts of those serving at Crossover.”

For more information on Crossover Baltimore, visit embracebaltimore.com/crossover or contact Cindy Irizarry at cindy-crossoverbaltimore@gmail.com. **BR**

2014 SBC Ministers’ Wives luncheon

Priscilla Shirer is set to be the speaker at the 2014 Southern Baptist Convention Ministers’ Wives luncheon June 10 at noon.

The event will be held in Key Ballroom at the Hilton Baltimore. The theme is “No fear. No excuses. He is able.”

Shirer has been married to Jerry for 13 years and is the mom to three boys. She has authored several books including,

One in a Million, *The Resolution for Women* and most recently *God is Able*.

Advance tickets are \$15 each; \$20 at door (if available).

A table for 10 is \$150 and the person reserving the table will serve as hostess and is responsible for notifying guests and distributing tickets.

Call (800) 254-2022 or visit lifeway.com/Keyword/sbc+wives?type=events. **BR**

Olympics widens platform for Christian hockey player

Gisele Marvin is a forward who helped the USA Women's Hockey team win an Olympic silver medal at the 2010 Vancouver Games and a silver in Sochi, Russia. She played for the Minnesota Golden Gophers from 2005 to 2009. And Marvin is a three-time member of the U.S. Women's National Team for the International Ice Hockey Federation World Women's Championship (IIHF) who won her fourth International IIHF gold medal in 2013.



ROMAN GABRIEL
Sports Q & A

Recently, Roman Gabriel III interviewed Marvin about her experiences in Sochi, her love of the game as well as her passions off the rink and her faith.

Q: Gigi, tell us about your most recent Olympic experience in Sochi.

A: It's truly a blessing to be able to compete with that group because everyone was able to witness that gold medal game. The hearts of my teammates and the coaching staff around us was amazing. We definitely poured everything out that game.

Q: Now that you look back on the last game in Sochi, do you wish you and the team could have done anything differently?

A: I think hindsight is 20/20, and absolutely there may be some little things that could have gone our way. So, obviously as competitors we would have loved to have won the gold. Most important though is resting in the fact that we truly did play with absolutely everything on the line. We did everything in our power to use the gifts that God has given us.

Q: Tell me about some of the passions that you have off of the rink.

A: Well, I work with schools and hang out with a lot of kids. I love kids. My aunt and I own a hockey school for young kids that we have done every single summer for seven years now. And I have a huge passion for speaking about what God has done in my life.

Q: From a faith standpoint, what type of atmosphere surrounded Team USA?

A: God has done such an amazing job. And that was one of the prayers before we left [to go to Sochi]. My heart has grown stronger and I think that's true for others as well. You know, the point of this life is to grow more like Christ every single day. So training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things so that was something very evident to us. It's amazing to see growth in those people who've never known about Him and choose to follow Him. It has definitely encouraged my walk, and it has encouraged my teammates.

Q: Do you raise your money like everyone else in the Olympics through corporate and individual donations?

A: That is definitely one way. We also get a stipend from the United States Olympic Committee. However, you definitely need to go and be your own advocate and reach out to others and basically put yourself out there in order to finance and facilitate what you have been called to. That's the path that I've been on. It is an interesting spot but I'm very thankful for what I have and what I've been blessed with.



Gigi Marvin, #19 USA huddles with her teammates at the Sochi Olympics.

Q: So, you grew up in Minnesota, you played for the Gophers in college. Obviously hockey is huge in your area, but how did you first get interested in it and how did you know that you wanted to start?

A: I started when I could walk, so before I was two. I grew up in a hockey town and in a hockey family so it would have been going on whether I liked it or not.

Everyone talks about hockey and you pretty much live at the rink. I skate every day and just grow in the gift I've been given. I love that the family who first put the skates on me continues to celebrate my growth in it.

Q: Now your dad was the manager of the 1965 USA National Ice Hockey team. What kind of influence did your dad have in terms of you loving hockey?

A: He was the first guy that put the skates on me. He took me to the rink every single day, and he was there to share his experience, knowledge and love of the game. So, yes, it influenced me greatly. You see a lot of parents that see a dream in their child and they say, "Hey, you know what, I'm going to do everything to support you, encourage you and provide for you." That was my dad.

Q: What is the biggest thing that you've taken from your experience on Team USA?

A: The biggest experience is the fact that the Team USA jersey is going to come off at some point, but the Team Jesus Christ will absolutely never come off. My physical training ultimately means nothing compared to my spiritual training if my heart is not right in Christ and truly seeking Him every day.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Roman's Sold Out Sports Talk Radio program on American Family Radio can be heard in 200 cities nationally or streaming live at afr.net. It's all about faith, family and sports. Visit his website: soldouttv.com; Facebook page: Roman Gabriel III Fan Page; connect with him on Twitter: [romangabriel3rd](https://twitter.com/romangabriel3rd); email him: soldoutrg3@gmail.com.) **BR**

NCMO provides for the Shelby Mission Camp

By **MARTY SIMPKINS** | BSC Communications

David and Janet Brown are the new camp leaders for the Shelby Mission Camp. David is very familiar with the ministry of the Shelby Mission Camp as he has been a missions leader for his church, Elizabeth Baptist Church in Shelby.

Through Elizabeth Baptist, Brown spent many years ministering to young men through Royal Ambassadors, and as the men's ministry director, he was instrumental in organizing the church's disaster relief and handyman ministries as well.

Professionally, he was an auto technician for 40 years and the owner of his own automotive service for 32 of those years.

As the new camp leader, Brown is excited and looking forward to the opportunity to further God's Kingdom through the missions and ministries of Baptists on Mission or North Carolina Baptist Men (NCBM).

"Besides just maintaining this facility, we want to make sure that it is used to help minister to the needs of the people of Cleveland and surrounding counties," Brown said.

"We host volunteer groups from our local communities, throughout the state and across the nation."

Volunteers give anywhere from one hour to several weeks of their time as they participate in the camp's various missionary and ministry efforts. Volunteers



David and Janet Brown are the new camp leaders for Shelby Mission Camp. (BSC photo)

may be involved in organizing projects for future teams as well as completing projects begun by other teams. Some of the projects include home repair, Vacation Bible Schools, sports camps and evangelism.

More specifically, volunteers have worked with the Cleveland County Homeless Shelter and the Pregnancy Resource Center in remodeling their facilities. However, in order to participate in these ministries, the Shelby Mission Camp needs consistent financial support – that's where the North Carolina Missions Offering comes in.

"The N.C. Mission Offering is our lifeline of support," Brown said.

"While very grateful for what we have, we also have needs. Many of our tools are becoming worn out and need replacing. Initial plans called for more use of this wonderful property that we have been blessed with. I would like to see these plans carried out so this property can be fully utilized to glorify God."

This special offering being received across North Carolina supports all of the missions and ministries of NCBM, as well as provide critical support for church planting efforts through the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

The Shelby Mission Camp is just one of the 18 unique ministries of NCBM.

Through the ministries of NCBM, individuals like Brown come to recognize that God is calling them to missions and ministry. There are thousands of men, women and students who are involved in missions through the Missions Camps at Shelby and at Red Springs.

Generous support of the North Carolina Missions Offering may be used by the Lord to provide experiences for others through which God may call them to His service.

For more information about the Shelby Mission Camp, visit www.baptistsonmission.org/camps. To learn how you and your church can support the North Carolina Missions Offering, visit www.ncmissionsoffering.org or call (800) 395-5102, ext. 5515. **B3**

Wilmington association hosts T4T training

By **C. WALTER OVERMAN** | BSC Communications

When Jeff Sundell returned to the United States after serving overseas for more than a decade with the International Mission Board, he recognized a need for renewed disciple-making efforts among American churches.

"It's so clear that disciple-making is just missing in many of our churches," Sundell said.

Feeling a burden to renew a passion for disciple-making in the U.S., Sundell began training believers in his local church in an evangelism and discipleship strategy originally designed for the foreign mission field known as T4T ("Training for Trainers").

"T4T is evangelism and discipleship connected. These two were always connected with Jesus," Sundell said. "We must get back to connecting evangelism and discipleship."

Soon after implementing the training in his local church, a number of people came to faith in Christ and soon neighboring churches asked to receive training. From there he began hosting T4T training in cities across North Carolina. Now with the help of additional partners, he and his team are leading T4T movements in 27 cities throughout the U.S.

He said God is moving in each of these



JEFF SUNDELL

cities in ways he never imagined. "Every day we receive emails from people we have trained who tell us about the new people they are reaching for Christ," Sundell said. "Every day people are com-

ing to faith in Christ."

Sundell spoke during a T4T training event held March 4-5 in Wilmington. The event was sponsored by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) and hosted by the Wilmington Baptist Association. During the training, pastors and lay leaders learned the basics of T4T, including how to share the gospel and how to train and disciple new believers.

The overall goal of T4T is to train disciples of Jesus Christ to make disciples, who in turn make disciples. "The guiding word is reproducing," Sundell said. "We want to make disciples who reproduce themselves."

Lester Evans, BSC team leader for Associational Partnerships, said T4T fits closely with the strategy of the BSC, which emphasizes reaching the state's 5.8 million lost people through disciple-making.

"T4T is a method that can be used to develop and mobilize every believer to become a multiplying disciple of Jesus Christ," Evans said. "This is where the Great Commission happens."

Evangelism and Discipleship T4T begins with a focus on evangelism. The training prepares Christians to share their testimony and the gospel with nonbelievers in natural conversations and equips them to ask for a response to the gospel during the course of the conversation.

Sundell said combining the gospel with personal testimonies help people understand God's grace and their need for forgiveness of sin. "Our testimony is not the power unto salvation, the gospel is the power unto salvation," he said. "But our stories are experiences that others can relate to."

Evangelism is an important part of the process, but Sundell said the key to T4T's success is its emphasis on discipleship. Within 48 hours of coming to faith in Christ, every new believer is taught a simple gospel presentation, but they are also placed in a one-on-one discipleship relationship with a mature believer for a minimum of nine months.

"When people come to Christ, we don't want to stop there," Sundell said. "We don't want to birth them and walk away."

The end-goal for T4T is to connect new believers to the church, a process that is not always easy, Sundell said.

"New believers sometimes find it difficult to navigate the church," he said. "Disciple them through that. Most of the time you can work new believers through a lot of those things if you just invest in them."

Although T4T was originally designed to reach unreached people groups on the foreign mission field, it has found success in the U.S. Sundell said that is not surprising, given the rise of secularization combined with the increasing number of unreached people groups migrating to the U.S. in recent decades.

"The bottom line is that the ends of the earth have come to our doorsteps," he said. "We've got to proclaim the gospel to them. We have to love them and tell them about Jesus."

Sundell said that will only occur when churches rediscover their mandate to make disciples of all people. "The gospel is clear. We have to go make disciples," he said. "We have to get to where the church house is a training center to equip people to fulfill the Great Commission."

For more information about T4T in the United States, visit www.t4tusa.com. For more information about the Convention's five-year strategy, visit www.ncbaptist.org/strategy. **B3**



Handbell festivals ring in good cheer, better choirs

Seventeen handbell choirs took part in the East Adult Handbell Festival Feb. 28-March 1 at Winter Park Baptist Church in Wilmington. (BR photo by Dianna L. Cagle)

By DIANNA L. CAGLE | BR Production Editor

Gathering handbell choirs together may seem odd to an outside observer.

But choir directors across North Carolina find the annual youth and East/West adult handbell festivals a great place to learn better techniques and to practice and learn songs together.

“Our students look forward to this event every year,” said Dawn Tatum, youth handbell choir director for First Baptist Church in Huntersville. “It’s a highlight of the year’s experience. Festival helps our individual groups be a part of the bigger picture of music ministry. It encourages them to achieve a higher level of excellence in their ringing skills, while affirming their own abilities.”

Tatum said the youth handbell choir has been attending the annual festival, which is sponsored by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), since 2001.

Comprised of students from grades seven through 12, Tatum said the festi-

val helps the youth advance their music reading and helps “them become great ‘appreciators’ of music. These kids also gain poise and presence, and confidence that transfers to all areas of life.”

Both the Youth Handbell Festival and the East and West Adult Handbell festivals met in February.

Planning the festivals takes time and organization said Jim Davidson, minister of music at First Baptist Church in Hickory.

Davidson is the handbell event coordinator for the BSC.

For the youth festival, Davidson said seven choirs totaling 85 people (including drivers and directors) attended this year’s festival at Friendly Avenue Baptist Church in Greensboro. The adult choirs are divided most years with one gathering in the East and one in the West. The East festival attracted 17 choirs totaling about 180 people at Winter Park Baptist Church in Wilmington. The West festival is usually bigger. Its location was at the LeGrand Center in Shelby. Around 400 ringers from 34 choirs participated.

“Each clinician brings some new insights into music and into handbell ringing,” Davidson said.

The festivals help ringers with technique and provide fellowship. If churches have a handbell choir there is usually only one so they never have the chance to hear another choir unless they come to the festival.

“Having the chance to ring under the direction of a widely known director is a privilege and a pleasure,” Tatum said. “It’s exciting and exhilarating to ring alongside so many other choirs. Festival truly unites our ringers through a specific musical art.”

Tatum considers handbells a team sport because it requires elements of team play and commitment to the group. She also believes involvement in handbell choir “enhances the students’ spiritual development through the teaching of scripture, praise and prayer.”

Davidson has a tough job of mapping out where choirs are located in the festival space. Since the choirs bring their own equipment, Davidson has to figure

table lengths appropriate for each choir. Each festival has a set list of music which helps build the church’s repertoire for its playing schedule at its respective church.

Every five years, Davidson said the BSC hosts PraisRing, which joins East/West festivals together. Next year’s PraisRing is April 17-18 at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro. At least 60 choirs are expected to attend. Directors will be Tim Waugh and Ed Tompkins from The Charlotte Bronze. The festival is for TINS (2-3 octave choirs) and COPPERS (4-5 octave choirs). PraisRing also offers breakout sessions teaching anything from handbell repair to various types of techniques like ringing four bells in hand.

Registration will open July 2014 for the adult festival.

The 2015 Youth Handbell Festival is scheduled Feb. 27-28 at Friendly Avenue Baptist Church in Greensboro. Registration will open later this year.

For more information, contact Sherry Thompson at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5624, or sthompson@ncbaptist.org. **BR**

Ice storm spurs N.C. Baptists to action

BR staff

Volunteers from a number of North Carolina Baptist churches have responded to the requests for help across the state from an ice storm that struck much of North Carolina in early March.

Baptists on Mission (or North Carolina Baptist Men) have three sites arranged for cleanup activity: Alamance, Davidson and Guilford counties.

Since the storm struck March 7 volunteers have not only prepared meals but served these three areas as well as helped the Baptist Children’s Home of North Carolina (BCH) in Thomasville.

“The community response has been beyond impressive,” said BCH president Michael C. Blackwell, in a press release. “The help began as soon as people became aware of the damage.”

Food Lion, which has its headquarters in Salisbury, has been a long-time supporter of BCH.

Chris McDonald, the store manager of Food Lion’s Cloniger Drive location in Thomasville, presented BCH’s Blake Ragsdale with \$3,000 in gift cards. Mills Home staff will use the Food Lion shopping cards to replace the perishable food the campus lost during the four-day power outage.



Volunteers pray with some homeowners who had tree damage on their property after an ice storm. Men and women helped cut trees and clear debris. The Baptist Children’s Home of North Carolina’s Mills Home campus was also damaged. There are currently needs for volunteers at BCH as well as through Baptist on Missions (North Carolina Baptist Men). (Baptist on Mission photo)

See Ice page 11

Baptist Temple remembers couple killed 10 years ago in Iraq

By DIANNA L. CAGLE | BR Production Editor

For the Elliott family, a legacy of ministry and missions lives on in their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Larry and Jean Elliott were killed in Mosul, Iraq, 10 years ago. Retired from missionary service in Honduras, the International Mission Board had asked them to use their expertise to help Iraqi people get clean water and hear about Jesus Christ.

“Their legacy, their life, their mission continues to go forth around this world in more places than you or I know about,” said Larry D. Beaver, interim pastor of Baptist Temple Church in Reidsville, during a remembrance service March 16 at the church.

Larry and Jean Elliott, along with Karen Watson and David McDonnall were killed when six terrorists surrounded their vehicle and opened fire. McDonnall’s wife, Carrie, was the only survivor.

The Elliotts were members of Baptist Temple when they answered the call to seminary and international missions. Larry dreamed of going behind the Iron Curtain, but after seminary at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, responded instead to a chaplain position in Honduras. When Larry and Jean arrived, however, the job had been withdrawn. Instead they spent more than 25 years in Honduras helping get clean wells to different areas as well as teaching English.

On March 16, 2014, two of the Elliott’s sons – Scott and Todd, their children and grandchildren gathered at Baptist Temple to remember the sacrifice and ministry of the couple, who had been called out of the church. Daughter, Gina Kim, and her family, could not attend the service.

Scott Elliott spoke during the service. He thanked the church “that started it all off” for the family on behalf of the Elliott’s three children, three children-in-law, 10 grandchildren, one granddaughter-in-law, and two great-grandchildren.

His remarks centered around his parents’ life verse Matthew 6:33: “Seek you first the kingdom of God ...”

“That was more than a verse that they claimed; that was a verse that they lived,” Scott said, sharing five things that constitute a Kingdom-seeker, which is what his parents were. The thing that made the Elliotts Kingdom-seekers was not about them, Scott said.

“It was about their glorious, all-powerful, loving God,” he said. “Only He could craft such extraordinary lives out of a farm boy and a mill worker’s daughter. They were just willing vessels.”

The church showed a video of the McDonnalls and Karen Watson along with photos of the Elliotts at the church and in Honduras.

One of the photos was from a night Larry and Jean shared in January 2004 before they left for Iraq.

Susie Stroud, who has been a Baptist Temple member



since before the Elliotts joined, presented a collection of materials to the Elliott brothers and planned to mail one to their sister who could not attend.

Max Furr, a retired missionary who served with the Elliotts in Honduras, based his message on Matthew 21:28: “Father says, ‘Son, go work today in my vineyard.’”

“That’s the basis of our Christian service, said Furr, who lives in Advance and helps with a Hispanic church plant. “We’re children of God.”

Furr said he and his wife heard the call as did Larry and Jean Elliott. The “go” in the verse was “all the authority that Larry and I needed. He said ‘Go.’

He didn’t say ‘If you want to,’ or ‘if you’d like to.’ It was an imperative ... and we went.”

Furr said he thought his call was in North Carolina but when he met his future wife, she said she’d been called as a foreign missionary. He thought God would change her mind.

The Furr’s had 22 years of “fruitful ministry” in Peru before being assigned to El Paso, Texas, for two years. Jean Elliott attended an associational meeting at First Baptist Church in Reidsville one March when the Furr’s shared about their service.

Later the Furr’s were assigned to Honduras where they became “instant friends.”

Furr was asked by the family to speak at the graveside services for the Elliotts in 2004.

Both Stroud and Furr shared from the book, *Lives Given, Not Taken: 21 Century Southern Baptist Martyrs*, by Erich Bridges and Jerry Rankin. The Elliotts are two of the missionaries featured in the book.



Larry and Jean Elliott were killed March 15, 2004, while traveling through Mosul, Iraq. Two other missionaries also died in the attack. (IMB photos)



Max Furr, left, and Scott Elliott share their thoughts about Larry and Jean Elliott during a March 16 service at Baptist Temple Church in Reidsville. Furr served with the Elliotts when they were missionaries in Honduras. Scott is the Elliott’s eldest son. The Elliotts were members of Baptist Temple when called to the mission field. (BR photos by Dianna L. Cagle)

During their time in Honduras, there were 12 churches, 92 mission points and more than 80 water wells made possible through the Elliott’s ministry.

An email from Jean shortly before her death noted the couple’s happiness on being called to Iraq.

“This is a very special time for us, and God is so REAL,” she wrote. “No matter what happens, we are in His hands, and we know that we are where we should be.”

Furr shared about the disaster recovery efforts after Hurricane Mitch struck Honduras in 1998. More than 5,000 people died.

Furr and Larry Elliott went to the airport to pick up a shipment when Larry found 10 pallets sitting by themselves. He asked a guard about them and found out they had been there 10 days and were going to be given away or thrown away. The airport was receiving so many shipments because of the hurricane that there was limited space. Without knowing what it was Larry asked one of the guys with them to come help him load it. With 50 cases on each pallet, the shipment was labeled as candied yams.

“I thought, ‘Larry’s lost it,’” Furr said. “Larry, do you know Hondurans don’t eat candied yams. He said they will if they get hungry enough.”

Furr said he wasn’t excited about having to unload the yams but when they opened the boxes, they found two cans of yams among the 500 boxes.

“The rest of it was dry rice, cereal, sugar ... exactly what we needed,” he said.

When the Furr’s retired, Larry gave Max a can of yams as a parting gift.

“Why did God call Larry and Jean Elliott to Iraq?” Furr asked, indicating it was because of the Elliott’s love and wisdom that they could share with Iraqis.

“We do know their lives and love have blessed thousands; their deaths have inspired and challenged more.”

First Baptist Church in Cary also set aside time during its March 16 morning services to remember the couple. The church’s mission house is named in the Elliott’s honor.

People can still give to “The Larry and Jean Elliott Endowment” through the North Carolina Baptist Foundation, 201 Convention Drive, Cary, NC 27511. Include the name of the fund in the memo line or a note; account #002329. Funds go to pay for mission work through Baptist Temple Church.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – The Bridges/Rankin book is available through imb.org.) **BR**

“Only [God] could craft such extraordinary lives out of a farm boy and a mill worker’s daughter. They were just willing vessels.”

– Max Furr, retired missionary who served with Larry and Jean Elliott

Chaplains

Continued from page 1

contexts where chaplains serve, sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ is a critical part of any chaplain's ministry environment. In 2013 SBC chaplains presented the gospel to over 125,000 people and baptized more than 3,700.

"When chaplains preach during our worship services here on post at our Protestant services, they have the freedom to preach a powerful evangelistic message," said Col. Jeff Houston, the installation chaplain at Fort Campbell, Ky. "We regularly baptize folks who have come to trust Jesus Christ as their personal Savior."

Often the critical places and times when chaplains serve provide open doors for ministry that aren't available to the local church.

"When we walk into the room of someone who is not a Christian, our approach is to provide pastoral care," said Jim Wright, a Southern Baptist chaplain serving as the director of pastoral care at Baptist Hospital in Paducah, Ky. "But eventually the missionary aspect will come out. We've had many opportunities to lead people to Christ."

Carver said NAMB's chaplaincy team is focused on four main areas over the next year.

First, NAMB will focus on providing care, support and appreciation for chaplains on the field. Carver said when chaplains are fulfilling their pastoral roles, they're often doing so in some of the most difficult circumstances.

"It's those critical, and often tragic, moments of life that chaplains provide an invaluable ministry of the presence of God to those seeking peace, comfort and hope in a particular life situation. Obviously," he added, "when our chaplains are engaged in that demanding and emotionally draining role, they need pastoral care themselves."



U.S. Army Chaplain Daniel Malin, center with flying disk, competes with fellow soldiers in a game during exercise at Fort Bragg, N.C. Being available is critical for military chaplains as they minister to service members of all faith communities. (NAMB photo by Ted Wilcox)

Carver says embracing chaplains will mean giving them more frequent opportunities to share their stories in SBC churches.

He also says his team is working on a strategy to help re-engage chaplains in the ministries of local churches once their chaplaincy ministry concludes.

Second, NAMB's chaplaincy team will continue to educate churches on the ministry of all of its chaplains and about their own opportunities to serve the military. As part of that effort, NAMB has produced a toolkit (<http://www.namb.net/Honoring-Military-Service-Members-and-Chaplains/>) to help churches honor and appreciate chaplains in their midst. NAMB is also encouraging churches to adopt chaplains

"Often, our churches don't realize that they have chaplains and veterans in their midst," Carver said. "We want to increase the awareness so that chaplains can help local churches in their evangelistic efforts."

NAMB will continue to come alongside churches and help them reach out to the military community among their members and around them.

"Just because of the way God works, those serving in the military are often searching spiritually," said Gary Sanders, the founder and president of Military Missions Network

and the pastor of military missions at First Baptist Church of Norfolk, Va.

"It is a tremendous opportunity to share the love of Christ with them because they are looking for relationships, they are looking for stability, they are looking for hope. And of course all of those things can be found in God through Jesus Christ."

Sanders' own ministry at FBC Norfolk is an example of this. Among other service opportunities, FBC Norfolk provides their building and childcare for military Family Readiness Groups.

"Just by serving the military that opens all kinds of doors of getting to know them and to get into conversations with them about Christ," Sanders said. "We serve them in word and deed."

Third, Carver and his team are developing a strategy to help pastors and denominational leaders incorporate chaplains into their ministry plans. Often, Carver says, chaplains have ministry expertise that can help in other efforts, but those planning the efforts don't know of their availability.

Fourth, NAMB chaplaincy is working toward a long-term strategy of developing a church plant ministry near every U.S. military base in the world. At this point, Carver says, NAMB is in the process of talking with leaders in each North American region about what it would take to increase military ministry around U.S. bases.

NAMB recently made the strategic move to appoint a military church planting catalyst to help foster church plants to better serve members of the military and their families. U.S. Marine Reserve Captain Endel Lee accepted the position in January. Lee brings a 33-year career as a reservist, 20 as a chaplain, to the work. Lee has also served as the national Southern Baptist Disaster Relief chaplaincy coordinator since 2006.

Although there are strong military-focused churches and Christian organizations already supporting many of these bases, Carver said there aren't nearly enough to properly reach these military communities with the gospel.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Tobin Perry writes for the North American Mission Board. The North American Mission Board's evangelism ministries are focused on six primary areas: Evangelism Networks/Resources, Chaplaincy, LoveLoud ministry evangelism, Disaster Relief, Church Revitalization and Collegiate evangelism. This article, the first in a series of six, spotlights chaplaincy ministries. There is an audio interview with Carver available at http://namb.s3.amazonaws.com/namb_podcast/Chaplaincy_Ministry-Podcast_1.14.14.mp3.) **BR**

BSC offers chaplaincy help, partners with ministries

BR staff

North Carolina Baptists have more than 400 chaplains who partner with churches and associations to reach this "white unto harvest" mission field.

From prisons, hospitals and disaster settings to local businesses, chaplains serve North Carolina Baptists. North Carolina has one of the largest military populations in the world.

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's (BSC) military and chaplaincy ministry focuses on five primary areas:

- **Operation Crossroads** is the name given to the ministry with Wounded Warriors. Crossroads works with churches, associations and individuals to

support the Soldier and Family Assistance Center at Fort Bragg. The ministry has coordinated a variety of children's activities for Family Day, hosted a spaghetti supper as part of their "Back to School" event, provided sack lunches for holiday travel, purchased materials to teach financial management and collected more than 1,000 cookbooks from N.C. Baptist churches to stock kitchenettes in the new Warrior Transition housing facility.

- **Disaster Relief** has been part of the training available since 2005 through Baptists on Mission (or North Carolina Baptist Men). Visit baptistsonmission.org.

- **Career Chaplain Network** is a database of all Southern Baptist career chaplains in the state.

- **Community and Public Service Chaplaincy** is a frequent request from ministers and laypersons. Some

minister through fire stations, police departments and other community agencies.

- **Adopt-an-Armory** is a program developed to minister with local National Guard and Reserve units scattered "from Murphy to Manteo." All these organizations have access to chaplains, but many of these military pastors are stretched too thin to provide adequate coverage. Assigned chaplains are paired with pastors and laypersons who are willing to share the load. These individuals lead worship services on drill weekends and provide pastoral care to soldiers and their families as necessary. They also help to facilitate mobilization services and other supportive events.

For more information visit ncbaptist.org or contact Thomas Watson at (704) 575-2736 or thomas.lee.watson@gmail.com. **BR**

Missions

Continued from page 1

that for “Wilberforce and for us, salvation precedes works. Your redemption in Christ will lead to fruitful action. And that fruit is a change in lifestyle that is in proportion to the Holy Spirit in your life.”

The conference also held a hands-on mission breakout session where attendees could serve the neighborhoods and people of Charlotte. Opportunities included a mobile dentistry clinic, a block party, prayer walking and a children’s ministry.

Cabin Missionary Baptist Church in Duplin County had many participants at the apartment ministry. “We’re here trying to share the gospel,” said Dennis Kennedy, a member of the church. Referring to a man playing corn hole with him he said, “I can’t speak [the language of] this fellow, but he seems happy about the game. I’m glad to get his mind off the stress of life for a while.”

Kennedy hoped to later show him a gospel presentation video in Burmese on his friend’s iPhone.

E. Stanley Jones professor of evangelism at Drew University in Madison, N.J., and visiting distinguished professor at George Fox University in Portland, Oregon, Leonard Sweet said that the average American views nearly 3,000 advertisements daily.

Sweet warned that these can become “sermons” the individual begins aligning his or her life to.

Identity requires narrative, said Sweet, and America is shaping our identities with a narrative contrary to true story of scripture. One particular place where identity is shaped is around the dinner table.

“The whole ministry of Jesus is one big table,” Sweet said. “If you are reading the Gospels and not getting hungry, you’re not reading them correctly. Jesus ate good food with evil people.

“The first command from God’s mouth in the Bible is ‘Eat freely’ and the last command is, ‘Drink freely.’ Everything in between is a table. Scripture is not to be a snack or smorgasbord. It is a meal and Jesus is served up



During a breakout session at the 2014 N.C. Baptist Missions Conference, churches were given opportunities to do various mission projects in the community surrounding Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte. One of the projects available was a block party held in a diverse apartment community populated largely with Burmese immigrants. Here, volunteers help children to make bracelets with beads representing the gospel story. (BR photo by Emily Blake)

on this platter.”

Platt encouraged the attendees to sacrifice everything for the sake of the gospel. He asked, “What if God really wants the entire world to hear His gospel? We have the Holy Spirit residing within us and because of this, we should be intentional about using the power of the Spirit to make disciples all over the world.”

The 2015 conference will be at April 10-11 at Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem.

There is a DVD available for each of the three sessions at a cost of \$5 per DVD. The resource includes only the speakers. Visit baptistsonmission.org for more information or contact (800) 395-5102, ext. 5599, or NC Baptist Men/Baptists On Mission, P.O. Box 1107, Cary, NC 27512. **BR**

Ice

Continued from page 8

“Food Lion is always there for our boys and girls. We are so appreciative of what they’ve done to help,” says Ragsdale who serves as BCH’s director of communications.

“Both of Food Lion’s Thomasville stores experienced their own food loss when their power went out.

“Their generosity at this time speaks volumes about who they are as an organization.”

The ice weighed so heavily on some trees that they were uprooted. Trees that were toppled took down some power lines on the BCH campus as well as near homes across the state.

During the North Carolina Missions Conference March 21-22, leaders talked about the need for more workers not only for the recovery efforts in North Carolina but for many other requests they have from other states and nations.

For Baptists on Mission, donations designated for Winter Storm 3.7 Disaster Relief can be mailed to: North Carolina



James Campbell of Woodlawn Baptist Church in Wake Forest cuts a tree on the Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina (BCH) Mills Home campus in Thomasville. An ice storm on March 7 caused some trees to fall throughout the property. (BCH photo)

Baptist Men, P.O. Box 1107, Cary, NC 27512-1107. Visit baptistsonmission.org/Projects/Type/Disaster-Relief/Winter-Storm-3-7.

BCH has set up an “Ice Storm Disaster Recovery” fund at bchfamily.org/givenow or call (336) 474-1224. **BR**

Al Mohler: Inerrancy debate never goes away

By RUTHANNE IRVIN & MATT DAMICO | BP

Inerrancy is never a settled issue. The debate will never go away, said R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

“It comes part-and-parcel with the modern world. Modernity itself presents a set of issues that are going to have to be answered one way or another,” Mohler said. “Thus, we’ll land either in the affirmation of inerrancy or in some other place. I think inerrancy continues to be a defining issue for what evangelical integrity requires.”

Mohler, as a contributor to *Five Views on Biblical Inerrancy*, defines and defends the doctrine of inerrancy as articulated in the 1978 Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy. The Chicago Statement is the preeminent evangelical explanation and affirmation of the doctrine of inerrancy of the scriptures. Nearly 300 evangelical

scholars, including Carl F. H. Henry, J.I. Packer, Francis Schaeffer, R.C. Sproul, James Montgomery Boice and others signed the statement in 1978.

In his contribution to *Five Views*, Mohler asserts inerrancy means “the Bible, as a whole, and in its part, contains nothing but God-breathed truth,” Mohler said in an interview. Published by Zondervan, the book features five writers, each articulating different views: Mohler, Peter Enns, Michael F. Bird, Kevin J. Vanhoozer and John R. Franke. The assignment for each contributor was to discuss inerrancy – along with corollary topics like the doctrine of inspiration and the nature of truth. After each chapter, the four other contributors offer a brief response.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – The interview with Mohler is available online at www.sbts.edu/blogs/2014/03/05/inerrancy-a-modern-definition-of-an-historic-view.) **BR**

Where are the wise at Gardner-Webb?

The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 1:20, “Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age?” I would ask the Gardner-Webb University (GWU) leadership these same questions in their decision to allow an openly gay, ordained Baptist minister to speak in their “Life of the Scholar” (LOTS) series.

Cody Sanders, a 2005 graduate of GWU, spoke about his most recent book, *Queer Lessons for Churches on the Straight and Narrow: What All Christians can Learn from LGBT Lives*. He also published the second edition of: *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth: A Resource for Congregations on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*. According to his website, Cody lives in Sacramento, Calif., with his partner Ben Curry, who is also a Baptist minister.

According to the Feb. 27 issue of *The Shelby Star*, “Dr. Ben Leslie, GWU provost and executive vice president, sent an open letter to members of the GWU community highlighting the event’s purpose, which he said was to understand a position on an increasingly common point of view within Protestantism. In his letter, he also said Sanders is a professing Christian and an alumnus of the university.

This young man is a son of GWU who has taken a different road, and the LOTS lecture is an opportunity to understand better the views that characterize his writings. Mr. Sanders’ views are not the views of the university or its leadership. But university leadership does believe that mature college students benefit from talking openly about the serious issues and challenges of the day.”

Where is the wisdom in allowing Mr. Sanders to speak at GWU? Is there wisdom just in the fact that he graduated from GWU in 2005 and has become a rising star and a published author in the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) community? Or was it his notoriety as a Baptist minister who is living an openly gay relationship with his Baptist minister lover? Who is next in the LOTS lecture series?

Will GWU allow other alumni who have openly violated scripture to present a lecture on his or her perspective?

According to scripture, homosexuality is not descriptive of who one is, but of the sin that individual practices.

The forgiveness of that practice is promised in 1 Corinthians 6:11 where the Apostle Paul said: “*And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.*”

Is it wise to give Mr. Sanders a forum for promoting his publications, his assumption being that if we would only read his books, we would be as enlightened as he is? Even one of his titles suggests that if, we *Rightly Divide the Word of Truth*, we could arrive at his distorted conclusion.

There is fear that GWU leadership may be guilty of 1 Timothy 3:7, “*always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*” Is it wise for the leadership of GWU to compromise their convictions for the sake of academic freedom and fairness; then take little thought in offending a holy God and North Carolina Baptists who have supported GWU?

Is there wisdom in believing that mature college students can actually benefit from the musings of an individual who has committed his life to distorting scripture, disobeying the Savior and denying the sinfulness of his own behavior?

The lack of wisdom assumes that mature college students, whether Christians or not, need to at least be given an opposing view of sexuality which will enable them to make their own choices.

What students need is to be challenged to live godly and holy lives, loving Jesus and loving sinners enough to call all sin what it is, whether homosexual or heterosexual.

I noticed on the GWU homepage this motto: “Learning and leadership for God and Humanity in a changing world.” Did Cody Sanders go down a different road in spite of his days at GWU or because of it?

Is there more to his life than just being a son of GWU? The apostle Paul said in Ephesians 5:17, “Do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE – M. Doyle Holder is pastor of Philadelphia Baptist Church in Connelly Springs.) **BR**



M. DOYLE HOLDER
Guest Column

Obedience in spite of fear

I hope you are hearing more and more from fellow North Carolina Baptists about impacting lostness through disciple-making. I also hope you are listening to God’s Spirit when He impresses you to pray for and converse with family members, friends, neighbors and acquaintances about the wonderful

opportunity to accept Christ as Savior and grow in this relationship. There are many people in this state who do not even realize that God loves them and wants to give them eternal life.

Our supreme motivation to share Christ with others is His command to us in Matthew 28 to make disciples. In John 14:15, Jesus says, “*If you love me, keep my commandments.*” In 1 Corinthians 3:6-7, we learn that sometimes God uses one

person to sow the seed of the gospel and another to water the seed, but it is God who actually gives the seed life. He is counting on us to share this good news with others, and He will fulfill His responsibility.

You are not alone if you are missing opportunities to share with others because you fear that you will fail, be rejected or mocked. However, we must each ask ourselves, “Am I willing to disobey God’s command for me just because someone may respond with unkindness?”

In his latest book, *The Insanity of Obedience*, Nik Ripken writes about missionaries and pastors who don’t make excuses. He tells about people he has interviewed in different places in the world who are persecuted daily; they are being tortured and beaten for sharing the love of Christ. Ripken reminds readers in Chapter 3 that Jesus’ ultimate priority for His followers is the sharing of the good news of grace. As the good news is shared, according to Matthew 10, Jesus assures us that there are times when persecution will occur. The goal, therefore, is not to reduce or eliminate persecution but to see persecution as Jesus sees it: as an inevitable result of the obedience of His followers.

The Apostle Paul, in 2 Timothy 1:7-8, reminded Timothy that God has not given us a Spirit of fear, but of power and love. He challenged him to not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, but by God’s power to accept his share of suffering for the gospel.

Instead of being shy and afraid of sharing the Good News, be confident that God will empower you by the Holy Spirit to do His command. Recognize that the reward of sharing the gospel is worth more than the risk itself.

Think about this reality: Our brothers and sisters serving Christ in different parts of the world are performing this task under the hardship of persecution. Is it logical that those of us living in North Carolina should remain silent in our Christian witness because we are afraid someone will not like us? What is your excuse? **BR**



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive
director-treasurer

TAR HEEL VOICES

IMB search committee lacks N.C. member

It is with disappointment we note the short tenure of International Mission Board (IMB) President Tom Elliff. My most serious concern recognizing his imminent departure is the make-up of the search committee to find his successor.

On receipt of an IMB letter sent to former board members and missionaries, my attention was quickly drawn to the fact that there is not a member from North Carolina on the search committee. Even more troubling is that there are none from Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia or any other east coast state north of Florida. It is interesting that Texas has three members. Missouri has two on the committee.

Mapping the location of each committee member quickly shows where the influence of appointments was generated. On my last check the states that were omitted are among the leaders in Lottie Moon and other sources of mission support. Chairman David Uth indicated he

appointed the committee after consultation with trusted leaders and prayer. You would think that N.C. and other “old line states” would have had at least one qualified individual recommended that he felt worthy.

There may be a legitimate reason for avoiding these states and selecting each individual, but somehow as a life-long N.C. Baptist who has long supported missions as a pastor and convention employee, it appears totally illogical.

I would hope that Chairman Uth could share any insight that might help to explain his failure to recognize the states where IMB support is highly generated. Without explanation it cannot help but raise questions regarding motivation and intent. Our prayers for missionaries must continue and never cease no matter what his answer might be!

Tom Womble
Fuquay-Varina

OPPORTUNITY CORNER

Outdoor opportunity for men

Baptists on Mission (or North Carolina Baptist Men) is hosting a men's outdoor weekend May 16-17 at Camp Caraway near Asheboro. The event targets men who are interested in men's ministry and the outdoors. There will be a men's worship rally at 8 p.m. Friday evening, and a focus on effective men's ministry Saturday morning. There will be opportunities for target shooting, fishing, canoeing, archery, skeet shooting, zip lining and hiking. The weekend concludes Saturday at 8 p.m.

Contact Kacia Morgan at kmorgan@ncbaptist.org or call (800) 395-5102, ext. 5613. For more information visit <http://www.baptistsonmission.org/Missions-Education/Adult/Mens-Ministries/Outdoor-Ministry>.

Fruitland celebrates Founder's Day

Fruitland Baptist Bible College in Hendersonville is holding a Founder's Day service on Tuesday, May 6 at 10 a.m. in the Kenneth Ridings Prayer Chapel. Chris Roberts will lead worship and lunch will be offered to all in attendance at no charge.

Guest speakers will be Brandon Ware, pastor of Green Street Baptist Church in High Point, and Jeff LaBorg, pastor of East Campus First Baptist Church in Indian Trail. Buses are welcome. Call Fruitland at (828) 685-8886 for further information.

Developmental disabilities retreat planned

The Happiness Retreats are a three-day, two-night retreat for people with developmental disabilities and delays, ranging from mild to severe. The original Happiness Retreat has met annually since 1974 and is located at Caraway Conference Center. Last year more than 800 youth and adults attended the Happiness Retreat. There is also a Western Happiness Retreat which has met 32 times.

The retreat is set up similar to a Vacation Bible School event, including Bible story study, worship, creative times, indoor/outdoor activities, and more. Campers will have many opportunities to learn about Jesus at their unique level of ability.

The price for Happiness Retreat is between \$165-174 depending on the size of your group, and the price for Western Happiness Retreat is \$80. For more information on either retreat call or email Maria Luoni at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5629, or mluoni@ncbaptist.org.

Dates for the Happiness Retreat held at the Caraway Conference Center in Sophia are:

Happiness Retreat 1: July 25-27
Happiness Retreat 2: July 27-29
Happiness Retreat 3: July 30-August 1
Happiness Retreat 4: August 1-3

The Western Happiness Retreat held at Truett Camp in Hayesville will take place June 6-8.

CHURCH NEWS



Mountain View Baptist Church, Lowgap

The Children in Action (CA) at Mountain View Baptist Church, Lowgap, have been collecting food for Cedar Ridge Elementary. The above picture shows the food collected in February. Food was also collected by the children in January, and \$150 each month has been given to the fund to buy more food for this program. The Woman's Missionary Union had been leading this ministry and thought including the children would help the ministry grow. There are eight children enrolled through the CA program at church. Most are ages 5-8. About a quarter of the students at Cedar Ridge take home "Panther Packs" each weekend through the program. Ewell Vernon is pastor.



Baptist State Convention of N.C.

Pete and Peggy Butler, at left, were recognized by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's (BSC) evangelism and church growth team in 2013 for their 22 years of faithful service as the state director for the N.C. Campers On Mission (NCCOM), a ministry of Christian campers. The Butlers are members of Union Missionary Baptist Church, Rocky Mount.

AROUND THE STATE

Staff changes

Green River Baptist Association has appointed **DAVID JENDREY** as director of missions. Jendrey previously served at Corinth Baptist Church, Ellenboro.

CHRISTOPHER INGRAM has been called as senior pastor of Yates Baptist Church, Durham. He previously served as pastor of First Baptist Church, Elizabeth City.

Courtney Baptist Church in Yadkinville has called **RICHARD H. CAPPS** as senior pastor. Capps is the former director of missions for South Roanoke and Liberty Baptist associations.

TRAVIS BURT has been called as minister of missions and evangelism at Mount Vernon Baptist Church, Boone. He and his wife, Cele, have been serving with the International Mission Board for the past eight years in Asia.

Mars Hill Baptist Church, Colerain has called **MIKE WILLARD** as senior pastor. He previously served as pastor at Greens Cross Baptist Church, Windsor.

Find Us on Our Knees

There are several ministry moments that are seared into my mind. Some come from mission trips, while others come from leading Bible studies and teaching.

However, times of prayer are also powerful moments that are recalled. Two of these specifically stand out to me.

I remember a group of approximately 100 women at the altar of Binkley Chapel interceding for people in their lives who do not know Christ.

I also remember a group of 11 women from one church together at the altar praying through jealousies, gossip, bitterness and backbiting that had taken place at their church.

They were seeking the Lord's forgiveness, reconciliation and a change to begin with them. Prayer is such an important – but often neglected – part of ministry. Yet, we know that we should

seek the Father's face in everything.

Prayer was so important in Jesus' life that the disciples knew early in the morning they could find Him at His "spot" as He was communing with His Heavenly Father.

Is the Father finding men and women in our churches fervently in prayer? Not just in the five minutes before a Bible study or fellowship time begins, but spending significant amounts of time together before the Throne of God.

How can you – whether the designated leader or "just" a member of the local church – challenge those around you to be on our knees before the Lord?

(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

Submissions

The *Biblical Recorder* is pleased to publish staff changes, church news and events with a statewide interest.

Please send information immediately following an event, or for opportunity corner, send at least two months in advance. All submissions will be subjected to *Biblical Recorder* styles and guidelines and will be edited. Include cost and contact information in your email or correspondence.

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

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April 6

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

April 13

Give Work a Rest

Focal Passage: Exodus 31:12-17

In our passage this week, God commands Israel to keep the Sabbath as a holy day of rest and celebration (Exodus 31:12-18). Although we are no longer under the Old Testament law that does not mean keeping the Sabbath is unimportant. In fact, there is still much disagreement about the nature of the Sabbath and biblical rest in the New Testament among biblical scholars today. Nevertheless, I would like to give several thoughts concerning this issue that could be applied to our lives.

First, biblical rest should never be seen as laziness. We live in a society that praises the workaholic and the tendency is to consider a person lazy if they take a day off. God is very clear, in six days He made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed (Ex. 31:17).

Now, certainly God did not have to rest, but He modeled for us a way of life that honors Him and benefits us. So when a person does not take time for biblical rest, he is living contrary to God's design, which is quite foolish.

Second, biblical rest is not inactivity. When God gave the Sabbath He had a purpose in mind. He wanted His people to reflect and remember that He alone is the One who provides (Ex 31:13). Without God, nothing is possible. So, taking time away from work not only gives your body an opportunity to rest, but it also gives you the opportunity to actively remember and honor the Lord for His provisions.

Third, biblical rest is a gift not a hardship. There are so many recreational sports that conduct their activities on Sundays that many believers are made to feel bad if their children can't make it to the game. Secular organizations see Sunday worship as a hardship and a hindrance to their objectives. Christians must help our society remember that having a day of biblical rest is a precious gift that must be treasured and not neglected for something less meaningful. What can you do to help the next generation embrace the beauty of biblical rest?



BARTLEY WOOTEN
Pastor, Beulaville Baptist Church, Beulaville

Focal Passage: 2 Samuel 9:6-13

Growing up, my Dad would tell me stories that he had heard as a young man. Some of the stories were fictional and quite humorous, but all were designed to teach valuable life lessons. One of the stories was about a young country boy who had very little education and was traveling down an old, dusty road.

As he was walking, an older farmer, who was very much a practical joker, came up beside him in a wagon. Although, the wagon was full, the farmer invited the young man to climb atop the cargo and rest his feet while they traveled. The young boy gratefully obliged and jumped up on the rear of the wagon with his back toward the farmer. Not long into their trip the farmer spotted a low hanging limb and thought it would be a great opportunity to have a little fun at the young boy's expense.

As he approached the limb he quickly

dunked his head and grabbed it with his free hand. Because the boy was facing the opposite direction he could not see what the farmer was doing.

The farmer held onto the limb as long as he could causing as much as recoil as possible. At the very last minute, the farmer yelled, "Watch out for the limb!" In perfect timing, the boy turned just in time for the limb to collide with his face knocking him clear off the wagon. The farmer, laughing inside, was amazed at the boy's response.

After picking himself up from the ground the boy said, "Boy I sure am glad you held onto that limb as long as you did, otherwise it would have probably killed me!"

I guess there are various life lessons we could gain from this story, but the one I would like to leave you with is that no matter what life throws at you, with the right perspective, there is always hope.

Maybe it is hard for you to believe in hope today. My prayer is you will have the right perspective and know God loves you. With Him all things are possible. Don't ever give up!

April 6

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

April 13

Exercise Financial Responsibility

Focal Passages: Proverbs 16:16; 22:1-2; 23:4-5; 28:20; 30:7-9; 13:11; 15:27; 20:17; 21:6; 22:16; 28:6, 8, 24; 3:9-10; 11:28; 16:8

If I had a dollar for every time my dad quoted, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches" (Proverbs 22:1a, KJV), I could afford a rather nice dinner this evening. He quoted this verse among others to remind me that many things in life are worth more than a dollar. Unfortunately, modern American culture seems to affirm another quote, "It's all about the Benjamins!" This quest for financial gain leads people to cash in even their integrity to make money. The greedy drug lord enslaves both dealers and clients, and doesn't care that he is destroying their lives, families and futures. Our country has multiple lotteries and other forms of gambling that destroy more fortunes and futures than they will ever create, because the government's hunger for money is fed by the citizen's love of money. Most people who try get-rich-quick schemes get poor quickly, and the few that manage to fulfill their lust for wealth forget that someday soon their money will make wings for itself and fly

away (Proverbs 23:5). Often funeral directors and pastors are the only people who see the little drawer in the lids of some coffins. Sadly, some people take jewelry and other valuables to the grave, but they never take them to their final destination, be it heaven or hell.

One of the greatest evangelistic challenges we face is witnessing to wealthy people. How do we tell people who want for nothing that they lack what matters most? Jesus did not hesitate to tell the rich, young ruler that he lacked one thing. Imagine his disappointment as he prepared to check the last thing off his self-righteous list only to hear that he needed to sell all that he had and give the money to the poor in order to have treasures in heaven (Matthew 19:22). The Bible says he walked away grieving because he had great wealth. Instead of using his wealth to honor the Lord, wealth had become an idol that kept him from the Lord. He chose what was temporally valuable but eternally worthless.



TROY RUST
Pastor, Florence Avenue Baptist Church, Oxford

Focal Passages: Proverbs 22:24-25; 17:14, 19; 26:21; 25:19; 13:20; 14:17, 22, 29; 15:18; 16:32; 19:11; 3:3-4; 16:6; 20:6; 10:12; 11:17; 15:17; 17:17; 18:24; 27:9

The way we define "friend" changes considerably between childhood and adulthood. A child will call someone a friend simply because they like to play together and have certain shared preferences. When I was young I had certain friends that I never got to spend the weekend with because my parents knew they wouldn't be going to church. Although I held on to similar friendships through adolescence, my early adult years confirmed my parents' convictions. I wanted friendships built on shared Christian beliefs and foundational principles. As Solomon said, "The one who walks with the wise will become wise, but a companion of fools will suffer harm" (Proverbs 13:20). My friendships deepened with my convictions, and most of them remain today. We must choose our friends care-

Forge Godly Friendships

fully. Although most people like to stand with the tough guys, Solomon warns that a hot-tempered person promotes foolishness (Proverbs 14:29). A retired pastor once told of a time in his adolescent years when his father would not let him hang out one night in town with a group containing some rather hot-headed boys. He became very angry at his father, but wisdom unveiled her beauty the next morning when the future pastor was not at city hall with those boys paying for the street lights they had shattered.

Even if you aren't actively involved in your friend's mischief, you will be guilty by association. One of my fifth grade classmates went to the principal's office and got a paddling for merely observing the group that hung me on a coat rack. While that incident was relatively harmless, it revealed within the young observer a budding character flaw. The last I heard he was in jail and HIV positive, most likely due to drug abuse. Friendships built on righteousness will yield friends that are closer than brothers (Proverbs 18:24), but friendships built on sin will crumble as sin screams, "Every man for himself!"

Conference equips parents, teens to work together

By MARTY SIMPKINS | BSC Communications

Life as a teenager can be full of uncertainty, transition, peer pressure and more, and parents have trouble traversing those angst-ridden years.

The Tag! Parents and Teenagers Together conference March 1 at First Baptist Church in Garner was meant to help parents and teenagers learn how to build solid relationships with each other.

“We all were teenagers at one time and we all made mistakes,” said Merrie Johnson, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) senior consultant for youth evangelism and discipleship. “As our family grows, we become the parent of a teenager, trying to instill in them our number-one goal, which is to have an everlasting relationship with Jesus Christ and ... following after Him.”

The conference, sponsored by the convention, in-

involved teens and parents worshipping the Lord, playing games and sharing personal experiences together.

Following an introductory session, teens participated in gender-specific breakout sessions while Johnson teaches parents how to prepare their sons and daughters for the difficulties of life ahead.

The conference schedule provides opportunities for parents and teenagers to enjoy lunch together and to spend time during the afternoon engaged in activities revolving around building trust, learning to listen to one another and finding ways to do more fun things together.

Teaching from Joshua 1:9, Johnson used this passage to illustrate the fact that teenagers go through a period of transition that is comparable to the Israelites’ transition from being led by Moses to being led by Joshua.

“I want [parents and teens] to make a commitment to do one thing by the end of this session, and that’s to

ask themselves, ‘What’s the one thing that they want to change in their family?’” Johnson said. “Our emphasis is to bring the parents and teenagers together, mainly because teenagers just stop talking. We’ve got to be a voice that is as loud as what the world is telling them,” she said. “Somewhere along the way, we think that they don’t want us around anymore, but they still have to have guidelines and to have someone fighting for them in the things that they are going through.”

The purpose of the “Tag! You’re It” theme is to equip Christian students to make their lives count and to stand up for what they believe. Participants are trained in a form of apologetics specifically tailored to the young audience at this conference.

The results from the North Carolina Baptist Youth Ministry Survey in 2011 revealed that out of 4,281 students who completed the 83-question survey, 3,744

[See Conference page 16](#)

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Pastor

Antioch Baptist Church of Morganton, NC, is seeking a **full-time pastor** for a mission-minded SBC church whose services are traditional and whose music program is blended. Our church prefers a pastor with a Seminary or Divinity degree with five or more years of experience. We seek God’s Will for a pastor who will love our folks and they in turn will love him and his family in Jesus Christ. Together, we can carry out God’s Great Commission. Send resumes to Antioch Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, 2441 Antioch Road, Morganton, NC 28655.

Bethlehem Baptist Church, Louisville, prayerfully seeks **full-time Senior Pastor** for multi-cultural community. Send resume to Jerry Phelps, Bethlehem Baptist Church, 5708 Preston Highway, Louisville, KY 40219. Information: www.bethlehembaptist.com. Profile listed under Working with God/Pastor Search Committee.

Full-time pastor. Batesburg First Baptist Church, Batesburg, South Carolina, is accepting resumes for full-time pastor. Looking for a pastor who is biblically-grounded and mission-minded to provide us pastoral leadership, a clear vision, and an understanding on how to grow a church. Batesburg First Baptist is committed to the Southern Baptist Convention, the SC Baptist Convention, and the Ridge Association. Batesburg First Baptist Church affirms the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. Send resumes to Pastor Search Committee, Batesburg First Baptist Church, 436 W. Church Street, Batesburg, SC 29006, or e-mail to rcockrell2@sc.rr.com.

Nashville (NC) Baptist Church seeks energetic, ordained **Senior Pastor** with special skills in outreach and ongoing ministries for children. Must be seminary graduate with enthusiasm to build on current average attendance of 100. Please send resume to Nashville Baptist Church, 512 E. Washington St., Nashville, NC 27856 (Attn: Search Committee).

First Baptist Church is seeking a **pastor** who will support our vision: “God is calling us to be a compassionate, serving, accepting church.” Worship style is blended with traditional and contemporary elements. FBC has a strong commitment to missions, especially on local level. The location is Taylorsville, NC, with desire to expand opportunities in this mission field. Church ordains men and women deacons; both men and women hold church leadership positions. The search is for a pastor who will relate well to all ages and seek outreach opportunities in the surrounding community. Average Sunday School attendance is 85, worship is 125. The congregation desires a relational pastor, with gifts in preaching and teaching God’s Word. The pastor should work with the leadership, staff, and congregation to determine strategic direction and policies. A seminary degree is required with previous pastoral ministry experience. A church sponsored Child Development Center has ministered to community 43 years; AA meetings, 40 years. The church affiliation is with NC Baptist State Convention and Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. For information about the church contact office at (828) 632-4225. Letters of interest can be sent to Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 305, Taylorsville, NC 28681.

Eastside Baptist Church, Shelby, N.C., is prayerfully seeking a **full-time pastor** that God has chosen to lead and shepherd our congregation of 250+ active members in blended worship. Eastside Baptist Church is a member of the Greater Cleveland County Baptist Association. We are seeking a pastor who believes in the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message. Our church prefers a pastor with a minimum of five years pastoral experience and a Master’s degree from an accredited seminary or divinity school. Send letter of interest and resume to Attn: Pastor Search Team at officeebc@carolina.rr.com or 1165 Wyke Rd., Shelby, NC 28150.

Church Staff

Ives Memorial Baptist Church Pinebluff, NC, seeking a **part-time associate pastor** with the possibilities in becoming the full-time pastor. A traditional Southern Baptist church seeking a pastor gifted in preaching, teaching and pastoral care, with a passion for reaching the lost and unchurched. Seminary degree and experience preferred. We support the Sandhills Baptist Association, BSCNC, SBC. Send letters of interest, references and resumes to Pulpit Committee, Ives Memorial Baptist Church, PO Box 278, Pinebluff, NC 28373, or e-mail ivesmemorial@windstream.com.

Antioch Baptist Church, Mamers, NC (5 mi W of Lillington, NC) seeking a **PT Minister of Music** to lead a multi-generational choir program. E-mail betsypsloan@gmail.com if interested.

Pleasant Grove Baptist Church of Fuquay-Varina, NC, is seeking a **full-time Preschool and Children’s Minister** to follow the teachings of the Bible in directing the church’s Mother’s Morning Out daycare program for preschool aged children and other ministries specifically related to preschool children, children in elementary school, and the families of these children. For a complete job description, check out our website at <http://www.pgbcfv.org/>.

Mountain Grove Baptist (Hickory) seeks a **Minister of Education: Youth and Families**. The position is part-time, 30 hours/week. Send resume to seloftis@yahoo.com or 6156 Mountain Grove Road, Hickory, NC 28602.

Salem, Apex, NC, is seeking a **part-time, skilled “band/ worship leader”** – guitar (or keyboard), and vocal skills preferred, to help in a variety of contemporary worship settings, primarily on Saturday evenings. Resumes may be sent to jbeckett@salem-bc.org.

Calvary Baptist Church, Gastonia, NC, has a **part-time Worship Leader/Choir Director** position currently available. Duties would include planning and leading blended worship services, directing choir and working with the praise band. Must have a strong commitment to serve our Lord through music. Experience preferred, but not required. For more information on Calvary go to www.calvarygastonia.com. Resumes can be sent to Calvary Baptist Church, 3001 South York Road, Gastonia, NC 28052, or emailed to ccalvarybaptist@carolina.rr.com.

Miscellaneous

Planning your Beach or Smokies vacation? Check with us first!! Family ministry offering discounted rates for weeks in 2014. staciegil-lenwater@gmail.com.

NCBAM needs servant volunteers to transport aging adults to appointments at the VA Medical Center, Baptist Hospital, Duke Medical Center, and other NC locations. Call North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry: (877) 506-2226.

For Sale. 1992 MCI 44 passenger Diesel Bus. Contact: Fort Trial Baptist Church, Stanleytown, Va.; (276) 629-2964.

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Choose one of three avenues:

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- Submit the information via the *Recorder’s* website at BRnow.org.
- Send a Fax to (919) 469-1674.

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

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

CP ministry reports now available online

Baptist Press

In an effort to give more visibility to the work of Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) entities, the Cooperative Program 2014 Ministry Reports are now available to all Southern Baptists in an easily-accessible, online format, viewable at SBC.net.

The Executive Committee had previously made these reports available to Executive Committee (EC) members and state Baptist paper editors in a printed format. Now these reports are being made available to the general public online in a digital format. "This new platform gives every Southern Baptist an opportunity to see firsthand the good work our SBC entities are doing," Ashley Clayton, vice president for Cooperative Program and stewardship, said. "It brings to life ministry reports that the Executive Committee was already compiling as part of its own ministry assignment."

The EC, under the leadership of Frank S. Page, has emphasized the importance of the Cooperative Program as the best way to fuel and support what God is doing at home and around the world through Southern Baptists.

"This change in format for annual

ministry reports, providing public access with up-to-date reporting, is consistent with Dr. Page's efforts over the past three-and-a-half years to elevate and champion all SBC missions and ministries," Clayton said, "as well as to promote long-held SBC values of missions, church planting, evangelism, church strengthening and revitalization, theological education, collegiate ministry, disaster relief, and moral advocacy, along with many other important ministries provided by our state conventions."

Rather than having to hunt through multiple sources to find information, Southern Baptists can find ministry updates in one convenient spot, Clayton said. Reports are available from the SBC entities which receive Cooperative Program funds: International Mission Board, North American Mission Board, Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, six SBC theological seminaries and Council of Seminary Presidents. GuideStone Financial Resources does not receive Cooperative Program dollars, but also submits annual reports.

The 2014 Ministry Reports are compilations of SBC entity responses to questions and other related reports, presented in separate categories.



Each category can be viewed by clicking its respective tab in the online interface: President's Letter, Ministry Inquiries, Ministry Goals and Accomplishments, and Financial Management. Each seminary report also includes a Seminary Formula and Association of Theological Schools Report. The online format allows for the addition of visual elements like graphics, videos and color.

In addition to the written component of the reports, entity presidents are given the opportunity to share their own heart for ministry through a President's Letter video message. These President's Let-

Southern Baptists celebrate Cooperative Program Sunday, April 13.

ter videos "allow the stories of the great things God is doing through our entities to be told in a fresh way, and from a personal perspective," Clayton said.

"They allow Southern Baptists to get face-to-face with our leaders, see their passion, and put a face to a name."

The flexibility of the online format also allows for additional up-to-date information to be added through a mid-year update section. The current reports are available at sbc.net/cp/ministryreports.

(EDITOR'S NOTE - This article first appeared in the Spring 2014 SBC Life.) **BR**

Conference

Continued from page 15

failed the biblical literacy portion.

"This was the 'cream of the crop' of students from N.C. Baptist churches: involved in youth ministry that were attending youth camp," Johnson said.

She admitted that she knew the scores would be low, but she never anticipated more than 87 percent failing in what they know about God's Word. The survey results also revealed that this generation is neither being mentored nor getting involved in discipleship groups.

The Tag! conferences help combat this by training students how to pray, how to share the gospel, how to defend what

they believe and how to be leaders.

The "Tag! You're It" theme was developed upon the conviction that the BSC should assist churches in making disciples among teenagers. Scripture instructs parents to engage in disciple-making with their children and to discover how to grow as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ together.

For more information on upcoming BeDoTell events and future "Tag!" conferences, contact Merrie Johnson at (919) 459-5566 or email tag@ncbaptist.org. Additional information may also be found by visiting www.bedotell.com. **BR**

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