

BECAUSE OF THE
EMPTY TOMB
page 2



SORIANOS
TO RETIRE
IN HONDURAS
page 4



BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

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Greensboro church reaches immigrant neighbors

By LIZ TABLAZON | BR Staff Writer

Ther Dee came to the United States as a Karen refugee six years ago. When asked why he wanted to become a U.S. citizen, he said, smiling, “I live in America. I love America.”

Dee is one of about 20 refugees and immigrants who attend a weekly citizenship class at Friendly Avenue Baptist Church (FABC) in Greensboro, N.C. Every Monday evening, they spend almost two hours practicing the pledge of allegiance and oath of allegiance, reading, writing and conducting mock interviews.

Jenny Vaughan from Guatemala started coming after a friend completed the class. She said the class has helped her build confidence for the interview and learn how to connect with a lawyer.

“They’re good teachers,” she said about the volunteers who facilitate the class.

See Church page 11



Brenda Forlines leads a citizenship class at Friendly Avenue Baptist Church in Greensboro. (BR photo by Liz Tablazon)

MISSION ENDEAVORS ENSURE N.C. Baptists ‘Known by Love’

By DIANNA L. CAGLE | BR Production Editor

North Carolina Baptists continue to be “Known by Love” throughout its many mission endeavors. Baptists on Mission (NCBM) executive director-treasurer Richard Brunson thanked participants of the April 6-7 NCBM Missions Conference for their work and urged them to stay committed for the long haul of Hurricane Florence recovery efforts.

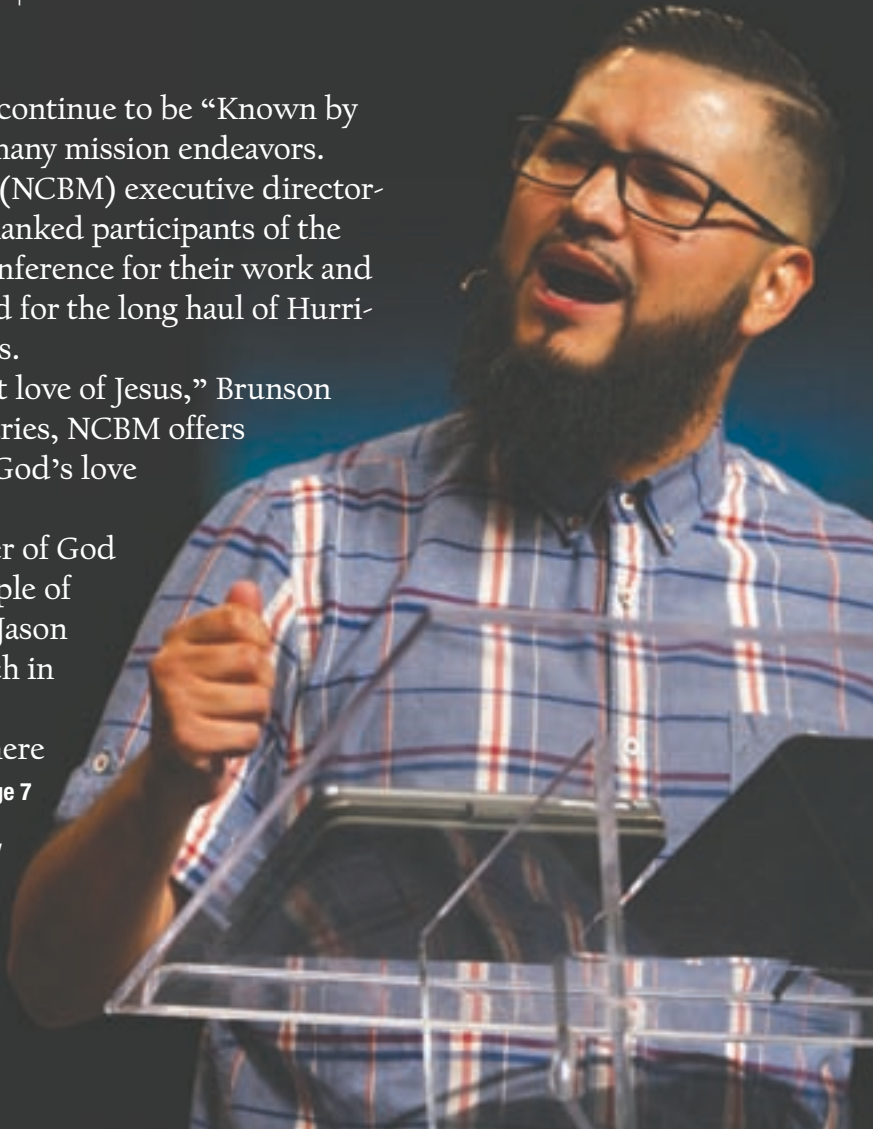
“You’re known by the great love of Jesus,” Brunson said. With 18 different ministries, NCBM offers many opportunities to share God’s love with our neighbors.

“I know it was in the power of God and the obedience of the people of North Carolina,” said Pastor Jason Burden of First Baptist Church in Nederland, Texas.

N.C. Baptists responded there

See Missions page 7

“The Great Commission is for every believer equally,” said D.A. Horton, pastor of Reach Fellowship in Long Beach, Calif., to the N.C. Missions Conference April 5 at Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte. (BR photo by Steve Cooke)



WHAT’S INSIDE

Milton Hollifield: What makes Good Friday good?	2
Adrienne Miles: Abuse is not new: #MeToo confessions of a middle-aged Baptist woman	3
Traci Griggs: Urgent call for women’s voices in our churches	3
SWBTS removes controversial stained-glass windows	6
Greear to be nominated for 2nd term as SBC president	6
Heritage: 11 entities honor 14 with awards	8

Trustees, donors celebrate Akin’s 15th anniversary

By LAUREN PRATT | SEBTS

The public launch of the For the Mission campaign is just one way among many in which President Danny Akin is continuing to cultivate an enduring, Great Commission vision at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) as he marks his 15 years as president of the institution.

These significant highlights, along with many other decisions, were among the many items discussed and celebrated at the Spring 2019 Board of Trustees (BOT)

and Southeastern Society (SES) meetings April 7-9.

“We will now, in the year 2019, prepare ourselves for continued growth because faithfulness to Christ and love for the nations demands it,” said Akin at a banquet held April 8 for donors and trustees.

The campaign is being publicly launched to raise \$20.5 million for the purpose of funding four strategic initiatives in four years. These initiatives include funding a new dining hall, renovations to Simmons Hall to provide campus housing, student aid, the Southeastern

See Trustees page 16

What makes Good Friday good?

Have you ever stopped to consider why Good Friday is described as “good” if that’s the day Jesus was crucified?

On the surface, “sorrowful” may appear to be a more appropriate description of the day that the sinless God-man Jesus the Christ was crucified in our place on a cruel wooden cross to pay the penalty for our sins.

Jesus’ own disciples were scared and went into hiding following His crucifixion.

To them, the first Good Friday must have seemed anything but good.

But what took place three days later – Resurrection Sunday – turned sorrow into joy and made Good Friday good. Jesus Christ’s resurrection from the dead validated the fact that Jesus was God and His death on Good Friday was an

all-sufficient, fully atoning and acceptable sacrifice for our sins.

Another reason Good Friday is good is because the veil of the temple was torn in two, from the top to the bottom (Matthew 27:51).



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive
director-treasurer

The curtain that had separated common man from the holy of holies, where a Holy God made His presence known, was torn in two signifying that through the sacrificial death of Jesus and His triumphant bodily resurrection, a forgiven person would now be able to come directly into the presence of God without an earthly priest to intercede on their behalf.

So, as we celebrate Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday, let us reflect on the death, burial and triumphant, glorious bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave.

Jesus was the “sin bearer” for us. He gave Himself as the ultimate sacrifice so we could be reconciled to our Father. Why? Because He loved us even while we were His enemies (Romans 5:10).

Without His sacrificial, vicarious death, there would be no resurrection, but without His resurrection, His death would have had no meaning.

That is the glorious news of the gospel and it makes Good Friday a day we can celebrate.

We must spread this great news to everyone who does not understand the true meaning of Resurrection Sunday. Share with them how they can receive eternal life when they repent of their sin, ask Jesus to forgive them, trust in Him as their Savior and follow Him as Lord of their life.

In Philippians 2:8-11, we are reminded of another thing God did which



helps us understand why we can call it “Good Friday.”

This is one of my most favorite scripture passages.

Every time I read it, I feel more gratitude for Jesus and want to proclaim “Hallelujah, what a Savior.”

“And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore, God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” – Philippians 2:8-11. BR

Because of the empty tomb

On the third day after Jesus’ crucifixion, a group of women went to His tomb. But instead of finding a dead body guarded by strong Roman guards, they found the guards fearful, looking “like dead men,” and the tomb empty.

Jesus had risen from the dead. On this fact rests every other aspect of the Christian faith.

If the resurrection of Jesus is real, it’s game-on for all things Christian. And if it isn’t, it’s game over because everything else we believe is a hoax.

If that Jerusalem tomb really is empty, then everything else in our lives suddenly looks different. What would otherwise threaten to destroy us no longer has ultimate power. The darkness that promises to speak the final word does not get the final word.

Because of the empty tomb ...

Guilt doesn’t have the last word in our lives.

Apart from God, we stand condemned. Our guilt before God deserves the wrath that we saw poured out on the cross. But because Christ hung on that cross for us, the full penalty of our sin has been absorbed. So now we can say, with the apostle Paul, “*There is no more condemnation for those of us who are in Christ Jesus*” (Romans 8:1).

Injustice doesn’t have the last word.

We live in a world filled with injustice. Each of us has

been wronged, sometimes in heinous ways. Injustice is so pervasive that we almost get used to it. (No one had to teach my children the phrase, “That’s not fair!”)

But God never gets used to injustice. And the empty tomb is a promise that God will overturn every evil intention by bringing true justice into the world. Justice will roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream (Amos 5:24).

Addictions don’t have the last word.

Maybe your addiction has messed up your career, your health, your family or your very life. Maybe you are so mired in addiction that you can’t even imagine a way out. The resurrection means that God’s power to heal is available to you today. And even if you struggle till your dying day against the darkness of addiction, the resurrection is a promise that

God will raise you to new life – whole life, abundant life – with His Son.

Pain doesn’t have the last word.

Medieval Christian theologians often called this world a “vale (or valley) of tears.” They knew what many of us try to ignore: Everything we love eventually falls apart. Chronic illness racks our bodies. Miscarriages fill us with grief. Diseases like Alzheimer’s make us watch in pain as our loved ones’ minds fade away, even

“Apart from God, we stand condemned. Our guilt before God deserves the wrath that we saw poured out on the cross.”

while their bodies remain. As Victor Hugo said, “Those who do not weep, do not see.”

But the resurrection shows us that pain has an expiration date. The empty tomb is a promise that Jesus will bring us to a place where every tear is wiped away and crying is no more.

Despair doesn’t have the last word.

It doesn’t matter how dark the night may seem to you right now. When was it ever darker than after the Son of God had been murdered at the hands of sinful men like you and me?

But while Jesus’ followers tossed and turned on Saturday night, God’s plan was at work. The men and women who went to bed in despair met the next morning with a surprising hope – the same hope that is available to us today. If Jesus is alive, He can bring the dawn of resurrection into your life. As long as Jesus is alive, there is hope for you.

Death doesn’t have the last word.

When Jesus died, His enemies thought they had

See Empty page 12



J.D. GREEAR
Guest Column

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Abuse is not new: #MeToo confessions of a middle-aged Baptist woman

When yet another Southern Baptist leader resigned because of sexual misconduct, a Christian colleague of mine was sincerely baffled. “What’s going on?” he wondered. “Why are so many Christian leaders involved in sexual abuse these days?” I looked at him weighing potential answers in my mind. I hesitated but convinced myself it was time to tell the truth. “It’s not new. What’s been done in darkness for generations is finally being brought to light.”



ADRIANNE MILES
Guest Column

I’m a middle-aged Southern Baptist woman who grew up in a Baptist church and attended a Christian school. I’ve always known who the suspected predators were.

I thought everyone knew and was initially puzzled by my colleague’s naivety; then I realized he couldn’t have known because he wasn’t a member of

the secret-keeping sisterhood. Before Anita Hill in the 1990s, sexual misconduct was rarely discussed in mixed company.

The women and the girls knew, but many of the men and boys did not. The more recent exposure of so much sexual abuse and misconduct among Christian leaders is a watershed signaling an end to whispered warnings in the sisterhood.

“Don’t ever be alone with Mr. So-and-So!” I remember these instructions very clearly. My mother told my sister and me again and again during our childhood, “Avoid him! If you see him coming, run away. Come find me or your grandmother. Don’t allow yourself to be trapped alone with him in a Sunday School classroom.”

We listened. We obeyed. We never asked why, but we knew by the look on mom’s face that this deacon was dangerous. As I grew older, I was told what he had done and to whom.

“Do people know?”

“Some.”

“Should we call the police?”

“No, what would we say? It would sound like a rumor, and Mr. So-and-So is a deacon. He has a good reputation. He’s a powerful man and has done a lot for our church.”

These kinds of interactions along with more general teaching like “If you don’t have anything nice to say, don’t say anything at all,” “turn the other cheek,” and “it is to your glory to overlook an offense” taught me that the “Christian” thing to do was to be vigilant with my sisters but keep quiet around my brothers. I don’t fault my mother.

She was teaching us what mothers upon mothers had taught their daughters for generations. Mr. So-and-So’s sexual assaults (and all the Mr. So-and-Sos before him) became water under the bridge.

As I grew into my middle and high school years, the culture of secret-keeping grew with me. In seventh grade, the quiet alarm of the sisterhood sounded.

See Woman page 12

Urgent call for women’s voices in our churches

As a North Carolina Baptist who has worked and worshipped in Baptist circles for most of my adult life, I see an urgent need for conservative evangelicals to take decisive steps to ensure that women’s voices are being heard in our churches. In light of recent revelations of sexual harassment and abuse in Southern Baptist churches (*Houston Chronicle*, February 10, 2019), as well as the long list of pastors and church leaders who have fallen due to impropriety related to women, it’s important to ask ourselves: are the lines my church has drawn between the functions of men and women based on tradition and opinion, or are they based on a close scrutiny of the entirety of scripture?

I do not pretend to be seminary-trained on the nuances of this issue. However, I have done a lot of reading and discussed it with countless pastors, church leaders and laypeople over the years. I have been met by varied reactions. My response is always the same: Is that a personal opinion, a presumption of what the Bible says, or is that based on where your careful study of the Bible leads you?

I want to clarify. I am not challenging scripture. I am calling all of us to be truer to it. I affirm the biblical concept that teaching pastors are to be men, and I gladly accept my husband’s leadership in the home. However, it seems clear that the delicate relationship God created between men and women is one we need to get right. The skewing of God’s design for that relationship in the home can have tragic and far-reaching effects. Why would this be any less true in the church?

I am not saying that giving women more of a voice in the church would have protected us from sexual impropriety in our churches. The issue goes much deeper than that. But, I do know that when we tolerate even unintentional misapplications of scripture, no matter how insignificant we might deem it, there are consequences. I believe taking proactive steps toward ensuring women have a voice in the direction and decisions of the church may help prevent some of the problems outlined above – in part, by serving as a different set of eyes. I wonder if our churches may experience some of these problems, in part, because they have insulated themselves from women leaders and women’s unique understanding of and sensitivity to issues pertaining to sexuality, and what might turn into problems.

There are other good reasons to remove any unnecessary limits on women serving in the church. The most obvious is the amazing giftedness of some women in our churches. Why, without solid scriptural backing, should those gifts of administration be relegated to women’s ministry alone?

In addition, how women are regarded in our churches may affect our witness to those who are seeking Christ. In a culture that is acutely sensitive to improper treatment of women, why would we tolerate restrictions on women in the church not clearly commanded by scripture?

Finally, adding more women to leadership roles would enable us to better minister to women and children in our churches. The chairman of deacons in a church I attended, once asked the congregation: “What can we do to serve you all more effectively?” I answered him via text message: “Install some women deacons.”

Let women see they have a deacon who they can approach with a sensitive matter or a complaint they may be embarrassed to discuss with a man.

I concede women deacons may be a step too far for some. It is an issue on which beloved and respected brothers and sisters in Christ have come to differing conclusions. If you believe that scripture is clear and that God would have us only ordain men as deacons, I would not suggest that your interpretation of scripture is incorrect. However, many pastors and church leaders believe the Bible gives freedom here, and there are compelling reasons to move in this direction. Yet many remain silent because it would be “divisive” or “frowned upon” either within or outside of their church.

If you and your church are not comfortable with going in that direction, perhaps consider a women’s advisory board or council, voted on and commissioned by the church. To make this group effective and not simply a figurehead, it should meet regularly and church leadership should commit to seeking their opinion on all matters being considered. Creating such a group without giving it any “teeth” would do more harm than good.

If your church needs to take smaller steps, you could ask more women to serve on committees – and chair committees – and ask women to make presentations in front of the church. Even asking women to join in taking up the offering can be a big step in some churches.

I am also aware that change can be difficult, and this is not the most important issue our churches face. However, what does it say to women and men that this issue is not important enough to tackle or not worth the hard work? Especially when we see that women could bring even more value to the church and could add another layer of accountability that is clearly needed.

It is more important than ever for all of us, pastors and laypeople, to take another look at how women serve in our churches and ensure we are arriving at these conclusions based on solid biblical understanding of all applicable scriptures. If you would like to dig into this issue, and I urge you to do so, you might begin by consulting with your pastor or mentor. Some other good resources to get you started might be:

• *40 Questions About Elders and Deacons* by Benjamin Merkle

• *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches* (2019) by John Hammett

• *Sojourners and Strangers* by Gregg Allison

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Traci Griggs is director of communications for the North Carolina Family Policy Council and a member of Fairview Baptist Church in Apex.) **BR**



TRACI GRIGGS
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. Call (919) 847-2127.

Soriano to retire in Honduras

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

Guillermo Soriano and his wife, Maritza, were born in Honduras. After more than 30 years of ministry in the United States, the couple plans to take the gospel back to their homeland.

Soriano, Hispanic Ministries Senior Consultant for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), is retiring May 3 after 12 years of ministry in the state and more than 30 years in the United States. His roles led him to broad ministry involvement including multi-cultural evangelism, cross-cultural disciple-making, spiritual renewal and church planting.

Before joining the BSC, he served on the staff of the Florida Baptist Convention (FBC), as a pastor in Orlando and as an adjunct professor of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and the Baptist College of Florida.

The Sorianos grew up in north Honduras in what they called “non-evangelical homes.” The Catholic religion that dominates the region is the only religion they knew.

“One day my parents asked if I would like to go to the United States to study,” he told the *Biblical Recorder*. “I said yes. I did not know the Lord, but He brought me to Louisiana to go to high school at Acadia Baptist Academy when I was 14 years old.”

The boarding school was sponsored by the Louisiana Baptist Convention.

“Sports was a very special item in my life,” said Soriano. His interest in sports since childhood opened the door for his salvation experience. “I came to know the Lord as a freshman at Louisiana Tech University. My high school basketball coach was a strong believer and quite an example for me. He continues to be one of my prayer partners today.”

Temple Baptist Church in Ruston, La., became his spiritual home. Pastor Robert McGee and other church members nurtured him and financially supported part of his theological education at seminary years later.

The Baptist Student Union (BSU) and church ministries became a spiritual boot camp for Soriano.

He graduated from Louisiana Tech University with a degree in industrial engineering in 1977 and returned to Honduras, working in the industry for 10 years.

“The Lord led me to go back to my home country,” Soriano said. “I had zero evangelical friends there. I served bi-vocational in industry and in ministry for 10 years – five as a single man and five as a married man.”

He was a church planter, pastor and evangelist, and he also organized an association of Baptist churches in Puerto Cortés, Honduras.

While a student at Louisiana Tech, Soriano was part of a BSU team that went to an international missions conference at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS) in Fort Worth, Texas.

“Through that conference, the Lord really impressed on my heart the commitment to be on mission with Him for the rest of my life,” said Soriano. “That’s been what motivated me. The Lord also showed me I need to eventually go to seminary to be trained to serve Him more effectively.”

After 10 years in Honduras, the couple decided to pursue seminary in Texas. Several families from their home church in Ruston supported the move. He completed his master and doctor of ministry degrees at SWBTS, focusing on evangelism and missions. Soriano

also pastored a bilingual church in Fort Worth that reflected the growing multi-ethnic diversity of the community.

The FBC invited Soriano to serve with multi-ethnic language ministries across the state.

“The great blessing is that we were able to travel together as a family,” he said. “God blessed us with two sons. One was born in Honduras and the other in Fort Worth. They’ve always joined us doing ministry, traveling about the state in Florida, serving Hispanics, Haitians, Koreans, Russians, Vietnamese and others. It helped them appreciate other cultures as they later completed their education and entered professional careers.”

In 2007 Don McCutcheon, who led BSC’s evangelism ministry, asked Soriano to join the BSC to organize the multi-cultural evangelism department.

“That meant working with all language groups in the state,” he said. “Milton [Hollifield] affirmed that we would be able to travel North Carolina as a family. Our desire has been to serve the Lord together.”

The convention later reorganized departments and Soriano became the convention’s senior consultant for Hispanic ministries.

“Looking at the context and population of North Carolina, our encouragement to pastors has been to be patient with Hispanic ministries,” he said. “With the decline and even death of Anglo churches, these traditional churches should partner with ethnic groups to share church facilities for Kingdom outreach to new audiences.

“This is the beauty of partnerships between Anglo and Hispanic churches. Our communities are not declining, but transitioning toward other ethnicities. Churches need to find ways to reach their changing communities,” he said.

“We have over a million Hispanics in our state. We’re not talking about people who are crossing the border. We’re talking about people who are here. They are business owners and educated professionals.”

Soriano said he has no reason to leave the convention. The couple believes they are at the highest point of effectiveness in ministry. With dual citizenships in U.S. and Honduras, each year when they return to Honduras at Christmas, they considered staying in their homeland.

“We’ve been praying for about seven years, asking the Lord what to do at the point of retirement,” he said. “The Lord has been preparing us and has confirmed to us that He wants us to transition to missionaries in our own country. It’s not going to be easy. Most Latin American countries are highly Catholic, so we are going to experience some rejection – even from our own families.”

Maritza added, “I’ve been praying for many years. I’ve always wanted to go back to Honduras. Every Christmas vacation I say, ‘Guillermo, is this our last year



Guillermo, right, and Maritza Soriano, who are retiring to their home country – Honduras – receive recognition for their service March 16 from a joint celebration of two regional Hispanic fellowships. The service was held in Zebulon with more than 335 members of 15 congregations. (Contributed photo)

in the U.S.?’ Every year, we pray and seek the Lord’s will. Each year we agree, ‘one more year.’ Last year I said, ‘Honey, no more one more year.’”

They plan to spend 10 to 11 months each year in Honduras.

Additional time will be given to their sons’ families – including grandchildren – in Florida.

The immediate plan is to be self-supporting, part of that through their GuideStone retirement plan. They purchased land in Cortés where they have built a house that will be the center of their ministry operations. It is available for mission teams that come on site.

Milton A. Hollifield Jr., executive director-treasurer of the BSC commended the Sorianos. “I will always remember with great appreciation the different conferences Guillermo and Maritza have led at Fort Caswell each year for Hispanic church groups. Gloria and I feel that we are losing two friends because we have always enjoyed working with them in numerous state convention, Baptist association and North American Mission Board events during the Southern Baptist Convention annual meetings.

“I was so impressed to learn that they have built a house in Honduras that includes adequate space to host mission teams that will come from the U.S. to Honduras and help advance God’s Kingdom in their home land.

“They both realize there may be risks involved in living there, but following Christ wherever He leads is of supreme importance to this couple.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE – After May 3, the Sorianos can be reached at Gsoriano777@gmail.com, 919-612-4693 or on Facebook at Guillermo Maritza Soriano.) **BR**

N.C. Baptists embrace disaster preparedness for older adults

By SANDY C. GREGORY | N.C. Baptist Aging Ministry

The yellow-shirted North Carolina Baptists on Mission (NCBM) disaster relief volunteers relieve suffering after disasters in North Carolina and around the world by providing hot meals, debris removal, child care and in many other ways help families rebuild

their lives and their homes after disasters.

North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry (NCBAM) works closely with NCBM. When not serving in disaster relief, the men and women of NCBM are some of NCBAM’s most dedicated volunteers. Volunteers construct wheelchair ramps as well as provide handyman

See Disaster page 10

Trustees: SWBTS to ‘recalibrate,’ ‘strengthen core’

By ALEX SIBLEY | SWBTS, Baptist Press

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS) is looking to “recalibrate and to reposition” itself in “every way to strengthen the core of what we do,” SWBTS President Adam W. Greenway told trustees during their spring meeting, April 8-10.

Business included approving the budget for the 2019-2020 academic year, approving a change to Scarborough College’s degree offerings, electing a new vice president, and approving a change in the administration of the seminary’s endowment.

Addressing Southwestern’s full board for his first-ever president’s report, Greenway stressed the importance of recalibrating the seminary in order to return the institution to its core priorities – chief among them residential theological education.

“At the end of the day,” Greenway said, “our core of strength is what we do right here on Seminary Hill. It is the experience that happens here in the classroom and on this campus. Theological education in the context of a vibrant, worshiping, learning, living together community – that is of first importance.”

Greenway personally committed “to do everything I can to make sure that we have the resources and are making the investments to strengthen our residential theological education and to reprioritize our core degree programs of strength,” which he identified as the master of divinity, the master of arts in Christian education and master of music.

Though affirming the seminary’s other

degree programs – including doctoral degrees, other master’s programs and other specialized training – Greenway said all of these things must be done “out of a clear core of strength.”

In light of this priority, Greenway characterized the budget for the upcoming fiscal year as a reset to get back to the institution’s core strengths.

“In a time where we must be extraordinarily judicious in conserving the resources entrusted to us by our Southern Baptist Convention of churches, by the donors and friends who believe in our work and are willing to invest in us, [and] by the tuition dollars we receive from our students, we must make sure that we steward and shepherd every dime in a way that is going to enable our seminary to flourish and thrive in an increasingly challenging environment and world,” he said.

The budget “does involve some tough choices,” Greenway continued, and “it does involve some transitions. But I believe it will transition us to move forward to do what we must do to ensure that the work of Southwestern Seminary can continue in strength.”

The budget of \$32.6 million was later presented by the Business Administration Committee and approved without objection by the full board.

Trustees also approved the recommendation of the Academic Administration Committee to eliminate the bachelor of arts in humanities and biblical studies in Scarborough College and replace it with two degrees: the bachelor of arts in Christian studies and the bachelor of arts in humanities.

In addition, trustees elected Colby T. Adams vice president for strategic initiatives. This position oversees the Office of Communications, Campus Technology, and other administrative priorities.

Adams has held this position in an interim capacity since February. Adams also serves as chief of staff.

The board approved the recommendation that funds managed by the Southwestern Seminary Foundation be moved to GuideStone Financial Resources for management as soon as feasibly possible, and that once said action is completed, the Southwestern Seminary Foundation be dissolved.

New board officers were also elected:

Philip Levant, pastor of Iglesia Bautista La Vid in Hurst, Texas, as chairman; Danny Roberts, executive pastor of North Richland Hills Baptist Church in North Richland Hills, Texas, as vice chairman; and Jamie Green, retired speech-language pathologist in Katy, Texas, as secretary.

Other business:

- Randy Stinson, provost and vice president for academic administration, was elected professor of theology and ministry in the School of Theology, effective immediately.

- Patricia Ennis was given the title distinguished professor emeritus of family and consumer sciences, effective immediately.

- The board approved the recommendation of the Communications, Policies, and Strategic Initiatives Committee to amend the seminary’s bylaws, including updated nomenclature and administrative titles and job descriptions.

- The Jack D. Terry Jr. School of Church and Family Ministries was renamed The Jack D. Terry Jr. School of Educational Ministries; and The School of Church Music was renamed The School of Church Music and Worship. **BR**

SWBTS removes controversial stained-glass windows

By CARRIE BROWN MCWHORTER | *The Alabama Baptist*

The stained-glass windows in the MacGorman Chapel of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS) have been removed.

The windows featured Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) leaders who figured prominently in the denomination’s “Conservative Resurgence” movement, including former SWBTS president Paige Patterson; Paul Pressler, considered one of the architects of the resurgence; and several past presidents of the SBC.

In an April 11 email to *The Alabama Baptist*, SWBTS spokesperson Colby Adams confirmed what had been circulating on social media for several days: “The stained glass windows have been removed from MacGorman Chapel and we are working with donors to finalize plans for relocating the windows.”

No reason for the removal of the windows was provided.

A letter dated April 3 sent to “ministry partners” and signed by Kevin Ueckert, chairman of the SWBTS board of trustees,

stated in part: “After much prayerful consideration and discussion, we have concluded that it is in the best interest of the institution to remove and relocate the stained-glass windows installed in our J.W. MacGorman Chapel and Performing Arts Center. Expenses to remove the windows are minimal and will be covered by the seminary. ... The seminary will safely store the windows until we have a chance to discuss with you the next steps.”

The first of several stained-glass windows were installed in the chapel in 2013, according to an article in the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*. The *Star-Telegram* reported then that the windows were the dream of Patterson’s wife, Dorothy.

“My dream was to portray the 20-year history of the conservative resurgence of the Southern Baptist church,” Dorothy Patterson was quoted as saying.

An Oct. 19, 2015, SWBTS press release stated a similar purpose of the windows: “In order to pass along the story of the SBC’s Conservative Resurgence, Southwestern has dedicated

See Windows page 15

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Greear to be nominated for 2nd term as SBC president

By DAVID ROACH | Baptist Press

North Carolina pastor J.D. Greear will be nominated for a second term as president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), Pennsylvania pastor K. Marshall Williams announced April 12.

“In these troublesome and turbulent times, we need a pastor-preacher-prophet that will stand in the gap and lead with confident, consistent, convictional, Christo-centric, courageous courtesy,” Williams, pastor of Nazarene Baptist Church in Philadelphia, wrote in a statement announcing his intent to nominate Greear at the June 11-12 SBC annual meeting in Birmingham, Ala.



K. MARSHALL WILLIAMS

Williams said he sees “the Lord’s anointing on [Greear] as a result of him ruthlessly and relentlessly pursuing unhurried, uninterrupted time with the Almighty to heal, hear and instantaneously and radically heed the principles and precepts of the Holy.”

Greear, pastor of The Summit Church in the Raleigh-Durham, N.C., area, has focused his first year in office on the “Who’s Your One?” evangelism initiative, ethnic and gender diversity in his presidential appointments and a Sexual Abuse Advisory Study, which is advising him on a range of issues related to sexual abuse. “Who’s Your One?” asks believers to pray for and focus their evangelistic efforts on one individual over the course of a year in hope that person may come to Christ.

Williams said Greear “stands strong in calling us to return to holiness, so we can be vessels of His unconditional love, justice and empathetic blessing, which will enable us to demonstrate Greatest Commandment living, which is the pre-



J.D. Greear, seen here after his 2018 election in a press conference, will be nominated for a second term at this year’s annual Southern Baptist Convention in Birmingham, Ala. (BR file photo by Dianna L. Cagle)

requisite to the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

“He is passionate about the pursuit of inexplicable unity of Kingdom citizens of all ethnicities,” Williams said, “so we can demonstrate a collective redemptive healing presence that pushes back darkness and stands up with moral authority to call our nation to repentance as catalysts to usher in revival in the church that will precipitate a spiritual awakening and a healing in our land.”

Greear told BP in written comments, “It is a great honor to have K. Marshall Williams nominating me this June in Birmingham at our annual meeting. His faithful and bold leadership in our convention has been helpful to us all over the years. I believe our best days of cooperative mission are ahead of us if we refocus to keep the [g]ospel above all our preferences, styles, theological leanings and cultural differences.”

During the 17 years Greear has pas-

tored The Summit, worship attendance has grown from 610 in 2002 to just under 10,000, according to statistics available through the SBC’s Annual Church Profile (ACP). Total baptisms increased from 19 in 2002 to 616 in 2018 at the church’s nine campuses.

Over the past two years, The Summit has given a total of nearly \$1 million through the Cooperative Program (CP), according to the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC). The Summit has been the top CP-contributing church in the state in terms of total dollars given each year from 2016-18.

In 2018, The Summit gave 2.5 percent of its undesignated receipts through CP, a slight increase from 2016 and 2017, the church stated.

Six years ago, The Summit voted to increase its giving through CP to 2.4 percent of undesignated receipts over five years, but the congregation achieved that goal two years early, the church reported.

In 2016, The Summit began channeling all funds it regarded as CP gifts through the BSC rather than forwarding some directly to the SBC Executive Committee for distribution according to the CP allocation formula, as it had done previously.

The Summit said its Great Commission Giving totaled nearly \$4 million (some 20 percent of undesignated receipts) in 2018. Great Commission Giving is a category of giving established by SBC action in 2011 that encompasses giving through CP, Southern Baptists’ unified program of funding state- and SBC-level ministries, as well as direct gifts to SBC entities, associational giving and giving to state convention ministries.

Included in last year’s Great Commission Giving was \$3,500 through the local Yates Baptist Association, according to ACP data, a 700 percent increase from the church’s associational giving each year from 2013-16.

Funding for The Summit’s more than 40 Southern Baptist church plants is included in its Great Commission Giving as well, the church reported.

The Summit has planted 292 churches to date, including 244 outside the U.S., with a goal of starting 1,000 churches in 50 years, the church stated. Some 192 Summit members are serving as International Mission Board missionaries, the church stated. More than 250 total Summit members are serving as missionaries overseas.

Greear is married to Veronica, and they have four children. Greear holds master of divinity and doctor of philosophy degrees from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

“My prayer for year two would be that we would see the greatest evangelistic harvest in the history of our nation as every Southern Baptist intentionally reaches out to their ‘one’ for Christ,” Greear said. “I also pray we see a new movement of missionaries and church planters answer the call to carry the [g]ospel to all peoples.” **BR**

Floyd steps into SBC leadership at a ‘crucial moment’

Biblical Recorder & Baptist Press

The Southern Baptist Convention’s Executive Committee (EC) elected Ronnie Floyd as president and CEO of the organization by a vote of 68-1 on April 2, according to Baptist Press (BP).

The EC met in a special called meeting in Dallas after the search committee announced Floyd as their preferred candidate March 31.

Floyd has served as senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas for more than 30 years. He resigned from the church April 7.

“I’ve been a local church pastor for 42 years,” Floyd said in a press conference following the executive ses-

sion. “As long as I’m in this position ... I will think like a pastor, I’ll champion pastors. I believe in the church, and I will champion the church.”

“I will be about presenting the gospel to every person in the world and to make disciples of all the nations.”

The Great Commission, the Cooperative Program, supporting pastors and listening to Southern Baptists will be among the early emphases of his presidency, Floyd said.

“Our missional vision as Southern Baptists is to present the gospel of Jesus Christ to every person in the world and to make disciples of all the nations,” Floyd said. “It will be to that end, that end of reaching the world that I will give my life ... in this next season – 100

percent, from before daylight until exhaustion, until Jesus comes or until He calls me home.”

SBC president J.D. Greear said in comments to BP, “This is a crucial moment for Southern Baptists, and I am excited to work alongside Ronnie Floyd as he leads the Executive Committee forward.

Pastor Ronnie has had a lifetime of leading in the kinds of evangelism and sending we are promoting in the Who’s Your One? and Go2 initiatives, both on the



RONNIE FLOYD

Missions

Continued from page 1

after Hurricane Harvey. In the days after the hurricane to the time he appeared at the missions conference, Burden said 99 people joined his church, many by profession of faith and baptism.

Laura Story, senior worship leader for Perimeter Church in Johns Creek, Ga., provided the music for the two-day event, which started with a volunteer supper and included breakout sessions on a variety of topics. Several main speakers rounded out the schedule: Tom Richter, D.A. Horton, Jennifer Rothschild, Bryan Loritts, Karen Kingsbury and Bob Goff.

Richter, pastor of First Baptist Church in Cullman, Ala., walked participants through John 21 when Jesus meets the disciples on the shore to fish.

“He sent those fishermen out to fish, and He didn’t even need the fish,” Richter said.

“When the smoke clears ... He could do all this without us.”

Richter urged believers to follow Jesus every day.

“God’s call on your life comes regardless of your past,” he said.

“The call comes regardless of the cost.”

Horton, pastor of Reach Fellowship of Long Beach, Calif., said he respected the faithfulness of N.C. Baptists’ work.

“The Great Commission is for every believer equally,” Horton said.

“The reality is some things are worth dying for; Jesus made peace. A peacemaker does not sit in a place of peace they run toward the tension and work toward reconciliation.”

Horton stressed that our preferences need to die.

“The perfect life of our Savior covers us,” he said.

“May we tear down the dividing walls of hostility. Let Jesus destroy those walls.”

After sharing a couple of stories about not allowing her blindness to keep her from trying new things, Rothschild, an author and speaker, said, “We need to be granted the strength to say, ‘I can.’ Saying ‘I can’ is my response to His ability.”

Loritts, lead pastor of Abundant Life Church in Silicon Valley, Calif., shared Revelation 2 saying the church in Ephesus had abandoned its first love.



“He’s dealing with the idolatry of ministry,” Loritts said, even though the members worked hard.

“Jesus not being first is sin. Something becomes precious to you when you treat it as precious.

“Buy the flowers, write the note, plan a weekend excursion,” Loritts said of his relationship with his wife. “Even when she doesn’t feel precious, when you treat her as precious the feelings will come.”



At left, Laura Story leads music during the Missions Conference April 5-6 at Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte. Above, Bryan Loritts, lead pastor of Abundant Life Church in Silicon Valley, Calif., talks about idolatry in ministry and losing your first love. (BR photos Steve Cooke)



Top left: Bob Goff’s animated antics spreads joy to Baptists enjoying the Missions Conference April 5-6; above: Richard Brunson, right, presents the Volunteer Couple of the Year Award to Bobby and Wanda Temple; below left: Karen Kingsbury shares that believers are living out a best-selling life if they focus on God; below: Jennifer Rothschild stresses that any “I can” she has comes from God. (BR photos Steve Cooke)



Best-selling novelist Karen Kingsbury shared about her father’s belief in her writing, even at a young age.

“My dad was always such a big supporter,” she said. “You’re writing a bestseller with the days of your life. Make it about the Messiah.”

God calls His people to be on mission every day, she said.

“If we are on mission, we will see the miraculous,” Kingsbury said.

Bob Goff, author of *Love Does*, encouraged loving people.

“We don’t need any more programs,” he said. “It will never be about Jesus if I make it about me.”

He questioned their motivation for ministry.

“Are we doing it for the applause?” he asked.

“If we are doing it for the applause, join the circus. Satan doesn’t need to destroy us; he just needs to distract us.”

Goff urged N.C. Baptists to love people well.

“Love people without an agenda,” he said. “His biggest mission is that you would be His and He would be yours.”

Asatur Nahapetyan, general secretary for Armenian Baptists, presented Brunson with a plaque recognizing him and North Carolina Baptists for their work in his country.

Brunson presented Bobby and Wanda Temple with the volunteer of the year award. Currently, the couple serves in Puerto Rico.

They are members of Fellowship Baptist Church in Creedmoor. **BR**



HERITAGE: 11

From provided materials

Sponsored by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and North Carolina Baptist Foundation, the 19th annual North Carolina Baptist Heritage Awards were presented April 9 at the Grandover Resort & Conference Center in Greensboro. By entity, here is a list of this year's recipients.

Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, Inc. – Marguerite Lee and John F. Lee



MARGUERITE LEE

Marguerite Lee, 91-year old family matriarch and member of First Baptist Church in Wilson, and her son John F. Lee, Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina (BCH) trustee and former chairman of the BCH board, make BCH and its ministries a priority.

It started for the Lee family in 1953 when Marguerite Lee and her late husband James L. "Jim" Lee moved to Elm City and he began Lee Motor Company. At first in Elm City Baptist Church, she worked with young children and collected pennies in baby food jars to be delivered to Kennedy Home in Kinston. Later, when she worked with older children in her church, she and others took more tangible things for the children to see and enjoy.

Lee has passed the mantle of personal involvement to her son John, president of the Lee Motor Group; He is making sure that his mother's legacy of "sharing hope ... changing lives" will continue.

John Lee was an active leader in two BCH capital campaigns. How blessed he is that he and his mother can still have those lovely Saturday morning breakfasts that have become the highlight of their week. In addition to their meal of eggs, biscuits, coffee and grits. John always brings his mother up to date on how things are going in the Lee Motor Group.

Baptists on Mission/NCBM – Terry A. Hall

Terry Hall is known for his servant heart and an intense passion for missions. He has been a volunteer for Baptists on Mission/NCBM since 1999. He held the position of state disaster relief coordinator 2013-2015. Currently, Hall serves as NCBM vice president East and disaster relief advisory council feeding team leader.

He served as onsite/feeding kitchen coordinator in major hurricanes such as Erin in Florida, Katrina in Mississippi, Sandy in New Jersey, Harvey in Texas, Irma in Florida, Maria in Puerto Rico, and Florence in North Carolina as well as the Johnsonville, S.C., floods.

A member of First Baptist Church in New Bern, Hall serves as a deacon, missions committee chair, and Sunday School administrative assistant. Married to Brenda Hall, the couple have two daughters and one grandchild.

Professionally, Hall is an audiology doctor/provider since 1980 and is currently employed by CarolinaEast ENT in New Bern.



TERRY HALL

Baptist State Convention of North Carolina – Richard and Doris Roberson

Look around Truett Camp and Conference Center in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina, and you'll see a lifetime of Richard and Doris Roberson's devotion reflected all around the camp.

For more than 20 years, the Robersons managed Truett Camp as a husband and wife team, with Richard serving as the camp's director from 1985 to 2006, and Doris helping in a variety of capacities behind the scenes.

As director, Richard played a key role in improving and expanding the camp's facilities, which included a number of construction projects. Meanwhile, Doris wore many hats, such as bookkeeping, fundraising and more. The Robersons also pitched in with cooking and cleaning.

Managing the camp was a family affair. The Robersons' sons – Tim and Kevin – helped out when they were younger. Later, each son served a tenure as camp director following their father's retirement.

The Robersons created an environment that saw many campers come to faith in Christ. Today, a number of former campers serve as pastors, music ministers, church staff members and international missionaries.

"That's what camp was all about," Richard said. "Trying to win people to Christ."

While serving as camp director, Richard also pastored churches in western North Carolina and north Georgia. He still pastors Liberty Baptist Church in Murphy, N.C.

The conference center at Truett is named in the Robersons' honor.

"I think we left the camp in pretty good shape," Richard said. "That means campers will have a nice place to come for years to come."



DORIS ROBerson



RICHARD ROBerson

Biblical Recorder – Gerald G. Hodges

No volunteer has invested more passion, personal time and interest in the *Biblical Recorder's* ministry in recent decades than Gerald Hodges. Eight years ago, he was chairman of the *Recorder's* board of directors through a time of transition between editors. For five months, he worked tirelessly with the staff, spending many hours in the office, on the phone and on the road to serve the needs of North Carolina Baptists' news journal. At the same time, he led the search committee that called the current editor. Last year he concluded another four-year term on the board and was asked to chair the search committee for the next editor who will lead the *Recorder* beginning June 1.

All the while, Hodges has faithfully pastored the Westwood Baptist Church in Roxboro. Since 1990, he has led this congregation to be on mission for Christ in their community and around



GERALD HODGES

the world, becoming one of the top churches in the nation in gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. He has served on the board of directors and committees of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and serves on many levels in the Beulah Baptist Association. He has traveled to 12 countries around the world and several states to proclaim the gospel message, leading Westwood's members to experience hands-on missions.

He and his wife of 39 years, Susan, are from Boone, N.C. He is a graduate of Appalachian State University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. They enjoy spending time with their two sons and seven grandchildren.

Campbell University – Michael G. Cogdill

Michael G. Cogdill has lived and served in North Carolina for 52 years – his biggest impact and most lasting contributions during his 36 years in higher education as the founding dean and professor of Christian ministry at Campbell University's Divinity School.

Cogdill will retire in May, leaving the legacy of a school built on a strong mission-driven foundation to prepare ministers to serve the spiritual needs of underserved communities in North Carolina and beyond. As dean, he consolidated Campbell's deep relationships in surrounding communities to raise more than 300 endowed scholarships for the support of a well-educated ministry. These funds have helped graduates serve without the impediment of overwhelming student debt.

The Divinity School's enrollment grew rapidly from a charter class of 88 students in 1997 to more than 240 students by the end of his tenure as dean in 2010. Today, the Divinity School has 750 graduates serving around the world. Many are pastors in rural, small-town and urban communities, while others serve as chaplains in hospitals, correctional facilities and on military installations. They've all been profoundly influenced by Cogdill's conviction that excellence in ministry is based on the qualities of vital faith, solid intellectual preparation and an ethic of personal integrity. Throughout his career, Cogdill has been an active leader in communities across North Carolina as the interim pastor for 23 churches. For the last five years, he has assisted churches in the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina as a ministry transition coach, training and counseling churches in the process of calling new ministers.

He is married to Gail Brownd Cogdill, and they're the parents of two children and four grandchildren.

Chowan University – Edith "Edie" Vick Farris

Edith "Edie" Vick Farris grew up on a farm in Kelford, N.C., and was raised in the local Baptist church. She attended Chowan College's (now university) one-year business program before continuing her education through George Washington University, receiving a bachelor's degree in administration some 20 years later. Together, Edie and her late husband, Lt. Colonel Philip Farris, have three children and eight grandchildren.

From pianist to choir member to Sunday School teacher and beyond, Farris has always been an active part of her church community. She remembers her time at Sandy Run Baptist Church with particular fondness. Edie feels that her faith is the most important part of her life and endeavors to share that love with others.



MICHAEL G. COGDILL

entities honor 14 with awards



EDIE FARRIS

Farris is also an enthusiastic champion of Chowan – its mission, endowing multiple scholarships and supporting various renovations and landscaping projects – serving as a member of both the Board of Trustees and Board of Visitors. Most notably, she is the mind responsible for the Farris Prayer Room, a quiet space for students to explore their faith and further their relationship with God. With a divine calling to create and fund the project, Farris hopes it will become a place that quiets the noise of contemporary life so that the voice of the Spirit can be heard.

Professionally, she has worked for the U.S. Army; the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; the Office of Wage and Price Stability; and even the CIA.

Gardner-Webb University – Ronald R. Beane

After attending Gardner-Webb Junior College (now university) and graduating from Appalachian State in 1959, Ron Beane began his teaching career. He taught at three local schools and coached their basketball teams where he led them to the state playoffs eight times. Beane went on to become the first principal at West Caldwell High and then the associate superintendent for personnel of the Caldwell County Schools. He retired from the school system in 1994 after 35 years of service.



RONALD R. BEANE

In his retirement, he continued to serve as a Caldwell County commissioner and chairman of the Foothills Regional Airport Authority. He was appointed by Gov. Mike Easley as a member of the Clean Water Management Trust Fund Board. He has also served as a member of the Caldwell County Schools Education Foundation Board and he and his wife sponsor an annual scholarship for a senior at West Caldwell High School.

Beane has been inducted into the Caldwell County Sports Hall of Fame, the Gardner-Webb University's Gallery of Distinguished Alumni, and the Caldwell County Schools Hall of Honor. In 2012, Governor Perdue awarded him the Order of the Long Leaf Pine.

Serving on the board of trustees of both Caldwell Community College and Gardner-Webb University, Beane is a member of Mountain Grove Baptist Church.

He and his wife, Christine, have two children and four grandchildren.

Mars Hill University – Brenda G. Nash

Mars Hill University is proud to recognize Brenda G. Nash, a devoted wife, mother, grandmother and community volunteer. Nash does everything with passion and dedication, which is grounded in her faith in Jesus Christ. Her leadership and philanthropic efforts touch many lives here in western North Carolina and beyond, and one of her most cherished roles has been mentoring women in bible study for over four decades. Living in Asheville, Nash currently attends Arden First Baptist Church. She is a member of the Mars Hill College class of 1966. Brenda and her husband, Tom '66, are longtime supporters of Mars Hill University, and provided the initial funding for the very first graduate program at MHU (masters of education). The Nash family has also provided generous gifts for projects such as the



BRENDA G. NASH

renovation of Huffman Residence Hall, Renfro Library, and the Nash Education Hall, as well as support for the Athletics Department. Brenda served as a member of the Board of Trustees from 2010 to 2017, including one term as chair, and she was named Philanthropist of the Year in 2014.

Nash served as the chair of the Steering Committee for the "Building Our University" campaign, which concluded in 2018 and exceeded \$53 million in gifts (almost twice the initial goal. Because of her work over the year, Nash has received an honorary bachelor's degree in human services and an honorary doctorate of humane letters.

North Carolina Baptist Foundation – Dewitt "DC" and Shirley Thompson

DC and Shirley Dewitt exemplify the joyous and generous givers that we like to lift up as models in generosity. DC was raised on a cotton and tobacco farm in Johnston County, and one of his earliest memories is tithing a portion of the annual tobacco crop. His family, which included four boys and four girls, was involved in White Oak Baptist Church. Shirley and her sisters were also raised on a tobacco farm in Wendell. She has many fond memories of her family's involvement in Hephzibah Baptist Church.



DC THOMPSON



SHIRLEY THOMPSON

After entering the Navy at the age of 18, DC arrived at Camp Pendleton for basic training just as the Korean War started. He spent most of his four years in Hawaii supporting the war efforts. After the Navy he went to North Carolina State University on the GI Bill and graduated with a degree in parks and recreation, leading to a 32-year career which took him from Richmond, to Raleigh, to Durham, and then to Greensboro where they have lived since 1966.

Shirley worked outside the home except during the birth and early years of their two sons Cal and Ken. Once they settled in Greensboro, she began a 26-year career with IBM.

The Thompsons have been married for 64 years, have five grandchildren and have been faithful members of

First Baptist Church in Greensboro for 52 of those years. They have given of their time volunteering in many capacities: WMU, Missions Committee, teaching Sunday School, serving as Deacon, Baptist Men, Campers on Mission, NCBCH and BSC annual meetings. Their 30-year involvement with Campers on Mission has taken them to most U.S. states, with DC serving a term as president. They have been involved in the Camper's On Mission N.C. State Fair ministry for the past 25 years, ministering to and sharing the gospel with fair workers.

Wingate University – Elona Laisure Edwards

By the time she was 16, in 1955, Elona Laisure had lived in or visited 48 states and 13 countries. She had spent three years in China and two more in Germany. Then her stepfather, a serviceman like her late father, wanted to return to his roots to retire.

"They plunked me down in Marshville," Elona said. Trying to find her way in a tiny, rural community in North Carolina, Edwards found a home at Union Grove Baptist Church – "a sweet church full of humble people." She married Carroll Edwards. Together, in 1969, they founded Edwards Woods Products, Inc. where the involvement of their three children makes it a family business.

Influenced by the poverty she saw firsthand in Nanjing, China, as a little girl, Edwards has tried her best over the years to support mission work. She spent years serving and giving as a member of the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU). She toured Union County through WMU teaching book-study groups. "I had soaked up a lot of information about the way other people live outside of the country," she said. "It was easy for me to teach the books." For decades, she has taught Sunday School from the youngest children up to seniors. Edwards is the church's primary accompanist playing piano and organ. She has served on five pastor search committees at Union Grove.

For the past 12 years, Edwards has served three terms as a member of the Board of Trustees at Wingate University just a few miles down the road from her Marshville home. She is now a lifetime honorary Board member. "I want Wingate to continue to grow and flourish helping more young people get an exceptional education alongside Christian faith and values," she said.

Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina – Jan High

When she retired in 2011, Jan High was the longest-serving staff member of Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina (WMU-NC) in its first 125 years. During her 28-year tenure, which began in 1983, she served as Girls in Action consultant, WMU consultant, and missions education consultant.

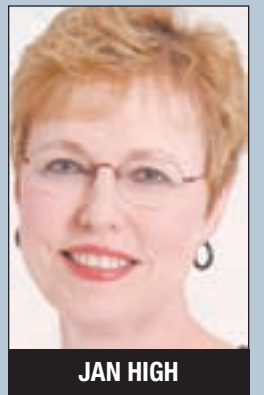
Prior to coming to joining the staff of WMU-NC, High served on the staffs of Kentucky WMU and Maryland WMU, working with Acteens, Girls in Action, Mission Friends. She also served as camp director for both. High is from Texas, but currently resides in Fuquay-Varina. Some of her most significant contributions to the work of WMU-NC were during the time she served as missions education consultant, 1995-2011.

She organized and trained a network of leaders from across the state to assist with state, associational and local church training. A resource team of 122 women was organized to conduct training sessions, teach mission books and support the work of WMU-NC. Recognizing that the WMU-NC staff could not respond to all the requests for assistance, she enlisted and trained five women as WMU Leadership Network Specialists who worked closely with a WMU-NC staff member.

Never one to ask others to do something she was unwilling to do; she led age-level organizations in her local church and provided leadership in her local association. She also served with the Baptist State Convention in mission partnerships, including the ones in New York and Brazil. High, who started out as a Sunbeam, has, even in her retirement, continued to influence missions and WMU-NC. **BR**



ELONA EDWARDS



JAN HIGH

Disaster

Continued from page 4

repairs, provide transportation assistance and anything else that helps NCBAM fulfill its mission.

Over the past several years as natural disasters have appeared to increase, NCBAM began to research how to help older adults be better prepared for emergencies.

Disasters of all kinds affect older adults disproportionately. For example, older adults were 15 percent of New Orleans' population, but accounted for 74 percent of Hurricane Katrina casualties.

However, the statistic that solidified NCBAM's resolve was found in the *Disaster Ministry Handbook* (Jamie D. Aten and David M. Boan, 2016). In 2011, Tuscaloosa-Birmingham was struck by an F5 tornado and 348 people were killed. Forty-six percent of those were over age 55; half of those were over 80. Ninety percent of those older than 55 were members of local churches – none of which had any preparation program or communication plan to assist people during severe weather.

Because of this sad and startling statistic, NCBAM saw an opportunity to help churches protect their most vulnerable members as well as the most vulnerable in their communities – those over 65. NCBAM rolled out its disaster preparedness workshop in 2018 to an unprecedented response from Baptist churches. Fifteen workshops were held and 366 attendees were trained.

Each participant of the workshop received a handout with detailed instructions as well as an NCBAM “Grab-and-



Go” bag to help them begin the preparation process.

NCBAM's Disaster Preparedness workshops train churches to plan, implement and maintain disaster preparedness ministries. Our focus is on older adults, but churches can, of course, choose to implement the program for all members as well as those in the community.

In December 2018, AARP-NC recognized NCBAM for “Outstanding Disaster Relief” for the role its call center played in assisting older adults affected by hurricanes Florence and Michael. One of our specialists, Shirley Carlson, was able to provide especially powerful ministry to callers because of her decades-long involvement with NCBM Disaster Relief prior to joining NCBAM. She knew firsthand that among the many needs of disaster victims, they sorely need someone to listen to what they've gone through.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Sandy Gregory is director of North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry. The original article appeared on the American Society on Aging website, asaging.org, and is used with permission.) **BR**

N.C. communicators bring home awards

Biblical Recorder

The Baptist Communicator's Association held their annual workshop and awards competition April 10-13 in Riverside, Calif. Four organizations with ties to N.C. Baptists received more than a dozen awards at a ceremony April 12. The honors were as follows:

Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina – The Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina and Credence Pictures won second place in the audio-visual category for a promotion more than five minutes long.

North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry (NCBAM) – Carol Layton, NCBAM director of communications, won second place in the audio-visual category for a miscellaneous video and four awards in the overall publication category, second place for promotions or advertising, second and third place for miscellaneous publications, and second place for a book.

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) –

Megan Chadwick, SEBTS graphic designer, won third place in the design category for direct mail promotion and advertising.

Emily Flowers, SEBTS graphic designer, won third place in the design category for a specialty item.

Rebecca Hankins, SEBTS photographer, won two awards in the photography category, first place for event coverage and third place for a single portrait.

Ryan Thomas, SEBTS graphic designer, won two awards in the design category, second place for a magazine cover and second place for a special display.

Biblical Recorder – The *Biblical Recorder's* design team won two awards in the design category, first place for a state Baptist newspaper front page and second place for a single issue.

The *Recorder* also won third place in the overall publication category for a state Baptist newspaper. **BR**

NEWS BRIEFS

Sexual abuse policy approved for SBTC affiliation

(*Southern Baptist TEXAN*) The executive committee of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention's (SBTC) Executive Board has approved a policy related to sexual abuse and affiliated churches, the *Southern Baptist TEXAN* reported April 4.

Based on an interpretation of the SBTC's faith statement, the Baptist Faith and Message 2000, the policy would disallow new or continued affiliation by a church whose senior pastor has been convicted of sexual abuse of a child. The policy also prohibits new or continued affiliation by a church that is found to be “indifferent in their response to child sexual abuse.”

The policy states, “indifference can be evidenced by, among other things, (a) employing a convicted sex offender in positions other than that of senior pastor, (b) allowing a convicted sex offender to work as a volunteer in contact with minors, (c) continuing to employ a person who unlawfully concealed from law enforcement information regarding the sexual abuse of any person by an employee or volunteer of the church or (d) willfully disregarding compliance with child abuse reporting laws.”

SBTC bylaws empower its Credentials Committee, a procedural committee of the convention, to review the qualifications of churches for affiliation. The committee then recommends appropriate action to the SBTC Executive Board or messenger body of the convention for final disposition.

Steve Horn nominated as Louisiana exec

(*Baptist Message*) Steve Horn is a leader among leaders in the Louisiana Baptist Convention (LBC) and someone who loves Louisiana Baptists, Waylon Bailey shared with the *Baptist Message* in announcing Horn as the candidate the search committee will present May 7 to the LBC Executive Board for a vote. If elected, Horn will replace David Hankins, who is retiring June 30 as LBC executive director.

“He lived in the northern part of the state early in his life and has served in the southern part of the state, so he understands the great uniqueness among Louisianans and has a deep appreciation for the great variety among the congregations that make up the fellowship we call a ‘Convention,’” said Bailey, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Covington and chairman of the search committee.

Horn has served as pastor of First Baptist Church in Lafayette since 2005. The database of the Annual Church Profile (ACP) shows the congregation has baptized 775 new believers since then and contributed more than \$2.9 million through the Cooperative Program in just the last six years. First Lafayette averages about 1,100 in worship and 1,000 in Sunday School, according to ACP records.

He was president of the LBC (2014-2015) as well as a member of the LBC Executive Board (2006-2011), serving as vice president (2009) and president (2010-2011). Currently, he is a trustee of Louisiana College, having joined that board in 2017.

He is in his second year as a trustee with the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife Linett have been married nearly 27 years and have two sons, Josh and Dru.

Douglas Sweeney to succeed George at Beeson

(Beeson Divinity School) Douglas A. Sweeney from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School has been named as the second dean of Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Ala., succeeding Timothy George, who will retire at the end of the academic year.

At Trinity, based in Deerfield, Ill., Sweeney is distinguished professor and chair of church history and the history of Christian thought department and founding director of the Jonathan Edwards Center.

Having served on Trinity's faculty since 1997, Sweeney was the founding director of the Carl F.H. Henry Center for Theological Understanding from 2000-2012, raising nearly \$4 million for the center. Sweeney previously served at Yale University, where he edited *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* and was a lecturer in church history and historical theology. Sweeney will become Beeson's dean effective July 1.

Sweeney holds Ph.D. and master's degrees from Vanderbilt University, a master's from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and an undergraduate degree from Wheaton College.

He is an active member of the Chicago-area St. Mark Lutheran Church, an evangelical Lutheran church affiliated with Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ, serving as both an elder and vice president. He is a longtime Sunday School and Bible teacher whose ministry extends beyond the Lutheran Church into Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Evangelical Free and many other churches. He and his wife, Wilma, have one adult son.

Full stories available online at BRnow.org.

Church

Continued from page 1

FABC began offering citizenship classes in October 2013, a few months after Brenda Forlines moved to the area from Florida. Forlines, who retired from the Florida Baptist Convention as the director of church and community ministries, intentionally pursued membership at FABC because of its preexisting outreach to the Karen population.

Three years before she retired, Forlines started directing an English as a Second Language (ESL) program at an apartment complex near her church that was home to mostly Karen refugees in Jacksonville, Fla.

“Once I retired, then I had time to get more involved in their lives,” Forlines said in an interview with the *Biblical Recorder*. “I ended up working 40-50 hours a week taking them to doctors, making appointments for them, helping them with their mail. ... We just helped them do everything – go to WIC, open bank accounts, birth babies.”

It was around that time that Forlines heard a conference speaker talk about teaching citizenship classes. The families and individuals she worked with in ESL were reaching the five-year mark at which they were eligible to apply for citizenship.

So when Forlines moved to North Carolina to be closer to family and met with FABC leaders about how she could get involved with ministry to the Karen community, she had citizenship classes on her mind.

Bryan Presson, FABC missions pastor, had citizenship classes in mind too.

A new class starts every September, with some students repeating the program until they are ready to meet with a lawyer to start the naturalization process.

Forlines said she, with help from three volunteers, spend the first three months teaching U.S. history and government structure and reviewing the questions included in the citizenship test. Applicants must answer six out of 10 civics questions correctly during their interview. They must be able to answer questions about their backgrounds, and read and write sentences in English.

“We just go at a pace that would fit them,” starting with five to seven questions per week then adding more as they progress, she said. By spring, students have usually learned all 100 questions that can be asked on the civics test.

Forlines teaches for about 20 minutes then divides the class into smaller groups.

“We practice, we practice, we practice every week,” she said. “Some of those who were young when they came here ... they can go through it pretty fast, [but for] some of these others, it’s very hard.”



Above, students practice the Oath of Allegiance during a class at Friendly Avenue Baptist Church. Below, Chuck Moy leads a review session, including Thur Dee, a Karen refugee who came to the United States six years ago. (BR photos by Liz Tablazon)

Seven students currently have open applications, and at least four have become citizens this year.

“Probably half of this year’s class will be citizens by the end of the year,” Forlines said. “There are four or five with limited English, and it will take them a while. ... I’ve had two to fail because of language.”

She shared a story of a 60-year old woman who never went to school but has been attending the class every week.

“Every day she listens to the CD that we have prepared, and she has memorized these 100 questions.”

Forlines keeps in touch with many of the students after their oath-taking ceremonies, often helping them apply for their children’s citizenship certificates. Some are members of the FABC Karen congregation that Presson, a missionary church planter, leads.

Although the class includes people of different religious backgrounds, Forlines said the students are regularly exposed to Christianity. She opens class with prayer, and Evelyn Frost, one of the volunteers, closes with a Bible story to practice comprehension and speaking. Frost, a retired missionary to Uganda, uses *The Story* to teach her lessons. This week it was about Lazarus.

“I take them to a lot of their appointments ... when we’re riding to take them to fingerprinting, I have some hours to just talk and hear their story and share. It’s an opportunity to share,” Forlines said about how the relationships she builds can lead to gospel conversations.



Frost and two other volunteers, Ola and Chuck Moy, lead the smaller practice groups. In addition to reviewing content, they encourage students to speak loudly and clearly. Two other FABC members serve as substitute teachers as needed, and another has contributed financially to help students with attorney and application fees.

The class isn’t the only activity in the building on Mondays. While elementary and high school students come for tutoring, a few of their parents stay for an ESL

class taught by another church member, Cathy Lohr. On Saturdays, Presson trains Karen pastors and leaders as part of the ADVANCE program of Gateway Seminary.

Over the past six years, about 50 refugees and immigrants have become U.S. citizens with the support and assistance of FABC ministries and volunteers.

“I put that under the heading of missions,” Lohr said about the programs. “We’re not on the field, but we’re helping people who are not from here and who need that kind of help.” **BR**

Ernie Myers, first Nevada executive director, dies at 93

Baptist Press

Ernie Myers, founding executive director of the Nevada Baptist Convention, died Tuesday, April 2, in Plano, Texas. He was 93.

Myers was elected as executive director when the Nevada convention was constituted in 1978 in Las Vegas during an Oct. 16-17 meeting at Red Rock Baptist Church.

He led Nevada Baptists until his retirement in June 1992.

He also served as the Southern Baptist Convention's second vice president, elected at the SBC's 1989 annual meeting in Las Vegas.

The convention grew from 65 churches and missions to 135 during the 13-plus years of Myers' leadership, with 17,341 baptisms. And he moved to establish partnerships for the 14,000 Baptists in Nevada with the former Home Mission Board (now North American Mission Board) and other state conventions.

At the time of his election to lead the Nevada convention, Myers had served as the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention's director of assemblies development and architectural consultant since 1975.

He also worked for the Arizona convention from 1956-1961 as training union (discipleship) secretary and, later, Sunday School secretary, recording Sunday

School growth from 29,000 to 45,000 in his five years on staff. He served concurrently as an architectural consultant, assisting more than 150 Arizona churches in their building plans.

From 1961-1975, Myers worked at the former Baptist Sunday School Board (now LifeWay Christian Resources) as a consultant in the church architecture department, serving more than 4,300 churches in states west of the Mississippi River, including Alaska and Hawaii. He helped develop the widely used "Together We Build" fundraising program for church construction.



ERNIE MYERS

Myers was a graduate of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Mississippi College.

During World War II, he served three years in the Navy in the Pacific Theatre, receiving a Purple Heart.

Myers is survived by his wife June, married since December 1950, his son Ernest and a daughter, Kay, an actress in Franklin, Tenn.

His son was a Southern Baptist missionary from 1983 to 1994, first in Belize and then with the then-Foreign Mission Board's Cooperative Services International. He also pastored churches in California, Nevada and British Columbia and retired from GuideStone Financial Resources as director of planned giving in 2010. **BR**

Woman

Continued from page 3

"Danger! Mr. __ is a pervert!" Soon all the girls in my Christian middle school knew who to avoid and why. We knew what he had done to our peer, and we closed ranks around her, while he lost no opportunity to paint her as a "wild child, a bad girl."

There was no #MeToo Movement back then. We had never heard the term "sexual harassment," and Anita Hill would not testify for another nine years. Mr. __ was a respected teacher and an active member in his church. What could a seventh-grade girl say against him? We had no power and no choice. What Mr. __ did became more water under the bridge.

I have seen a lot of water run under that bridge: the teacher at my public high school who rubbed his hands up and down girls' thighs, the resident adviser who pinned me to the wall in an empty stairwell and told me what he'd like to do to me, the employers at my part-time job who groped all the waitresses, and

so many other secrets I've kept over the years.

There's been a lot of water under the bridge, but today things are changing.

Women are moving their conversations about sexual misconduct and abuse into mixed company and into public spheres. Women – Christian women – are learning that secret-keeping has been a dangerous part of our culture.

I grew up among well-intentioned women who inadvertently aided abusers by keeping their secrets. I have been a party to secret-keeping. Evil triumphed for a time because good people did nothing, said Edmund Burke.

Today, however, light is exposing the things done in darkness, and even this quiet middle-aged Baptist woman is finding the courage to tell my brothers that sexual abuse and misconduct have always lingered in the shadows. I am also finding the courage to tell my sisters that the time of secret-keeping is over.

Sexual abuse is not new, not even in

CHURCH NEWS



Bladen Union Baptist Church, Fayetteville

Milton A. Hollifield Jr., center, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina executive director-treasurer, preached from Matthew 5:16 "Let your light so shine" April 6 during Bladen Union Baptist Church's 160th anniversary. Hollifield presented Gary Lucas, left, pastor of Bladen Union in Fayetteville, with a certificate of appreciation. Alan Taylor, right, serves as director of missions for Robeson Baptist Association. (Contributed photo)

AROUND THE STATE

Staff change

PAUL ARNOLD has been called to Cedar Grove Baptist Church, Lumberton. He previously served as pastor for Olive Chapel Baptist Church, Apex, for 6 years. Paul holds a master of divinity degree from Southeastern. He and his wife Denise have two grown children.

Submissions

The *Biblical Recorder* is pleased to publish staff changes, church news and events with a statewide interest. Send to dianna@BRnow.org or *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512. Call (919) 847-2127.

Empty

Continued from page 2

spoken the last word over His life. His resurrection proved otherwise. And for all those who die in Christ, the sting of death becomes a trifle. Because of the resurrection, the apostle Paul is able to look death in the face and mock it: "Death, where is your victory? Grave, where is your sting?" (1 Corinthians 15:55).

Billy Graham passed away last year. But years before his death, he uttered a profound statement that shows what trust in the resurrection means. He said, "One day you will hear that Billy Graham is dead. Don't you believe it. I'll be more alive than ever, I will just have changed addresses."

If Jesus went through death and emerged in resurrection, the last word in our lives no longer belongs to the powers of darkness. Neither guilt, nor injustice, nor addictions, nor pain, nor despair, nor death – nor betrayal, nor loss, nor poverty, nor shame, nor abuse – nor any other evil we can imagine, can separate us from the power of Christ revealed that first Easter morning.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – J.D. Greear is president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of The Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham, N.C.) **BR**

Baptist circles. Ask your mothers and grandmothers. Abuse is not new, but the symphony of "No more!" is new. The refusal to remain quiet is new. The reception women are receiving from those in power is new.

The posture of belief adopted by many church leaders, teachers, and school administrators, as courageous sufferers have come forward, is new. Protection within the church, not of the abuser but of the abused, is new.

Breaking the silence is new, and at last the water under the bridge is overflowing its banks, letting loose the long-awaited watershed of exposure, help and healing.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Adrienne Miles is assistant professor of English and linguistics at The College at Southeastern. Her research is in the intersection of literature and sociolinguistics. She lives in Wake Forest with her husband, Scott, and her two sons. She is an active member of her church and community. This column originally appeared at *Intersect*, intersectproject.org, and is used with permission.) **BR**

Allberry responds to criticism at MBTS, 9Marks event

By **SETH BROWN** | BR Content Editor

Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (MBTS) and 9Marks co-hosted a micro-conference April 1 during The Gospel Coalition's 2019 national conference that included a question-and-answer session with Jonathan Leeman and Sam Allberry to address recent concerns surrounding a ministry Allberry co-founded called Living Out.

Living Out was started by Allberry and two other Christians who experience same-sex attraction to help individuals like them “stay faithful to Biblical teaching on sexual ethics” and help churches better serve those who experience same-sex attraction, according to a statement on the organization's website.

Allberry is an author and speaker with Ravi Zacharias International Ministries. Leeman is an elder at Cheverly Baptist Church in suburban Washington, D.C., and editorial director for 9Marks, an organization that publishes and promotes resources for local churches.

Living Out has received criticism online recently for some of the content on its site, particularly articles related to how Christians should respond to feelings of same-sex attraction. Tom Buck, pastor of First Baptist Church in Lindale, Texas, was one of Allberry's critics. He wrote a series of blog posts outlining his concerns, which included a call for Southern Baptists who endorse Living Out to retract their support and partnership with Allberry.



Jonathan Leeman, left, and Sam Allberry, right, discuss recent concerns surrounding Living Out, a ministry to Christians experiencing same-sex attraction that was co-founded by Allberry. The Q&A was held during a micro-conference hosted by Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and 9Marks. (MBTS photo)

In the Q&A, Leeman asked Allberry about multiple articles and quoted extensively from a blog post about how Christians experiencing same-sex attraction should repent of sinful desires while accepting their “orientation.”

Allberry admitted some of the material on the site was either unclear or questionable in terms of conservative evangelical beliefs and practice.

“I share responsibility for that because I’m one of the leaders of the website,” Allberry said.

He said Living Out had already initiated conversations, prior to recent critiques, about undergoing a process of

auditing their content to ensure it represented the current positions of its leaders.

Allberry explained that he and the other two co-founders had been “in the trenches together,” serving both inside and outside the local church while facing “significant opposition.”

“When you read stuff by someone you know well, I think you subconsciously fill in the gaps, read with the benefit of the doubt, and think ‘I know him, and I know what he means,’” he said. “I’ve got to look at this through the

lens of someone who doesn’t know these people.”

Leeman asked Allberry if he disagreed with most conservative evangelicals about any topics related to homosexuality. “I don’t think so,” Allberry said. He briefly alluded to theological distinctions between “temptation” and “sin,” which affect the way Christians view same-sex attraction, but said he believes those nuances are part of “mainstream conservative theology.”

“My goal is holiness,” said Allberry. “I want to grow in my hatred of sin. I want to grow in my love of Christ. I want to be more like Jesus.”

Russell Moore, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC), has previously endorsed Living Out, but his statement of support on the organization's website was recently removed.

A spokesperson for the ERLC said the endorsement was taken down without Moore's prior knowledge.

“Having now had the chance to review some of the material under discussion, which did indeed raise some concern, we’re thankful for Allberry’s conscientiousness in removing Dr. Moore’s endorsement,” the spokesperson said in a statement to the *Biblical Recorder*, adding that Moore hopes “clarity will prevail” amid the current questions about Living Out.

“In every age, there are boys and girls, and men and women, who grapple with same-sex attraction,” the spokesperson said. “Many of them likely wonder whether Christianity has any answers for them. Some of them likely fear that the church would be a place where they would be met not with love but with scorn. [Moore’s] hope is for a great multitude of churches and ministries standing at the ready to walk alongside those seeking to stay faithful to the gospel and to a Christian sexual ethic – providing resources, community, gospel, and hope to address these particular struggles and all others.” **BR**

“I want to grow in my hatred of sin. I want to grow in my love of Christ.”
– Sam Allberry

Floyd Continued from page 6

local church and national convention levels.

“He is a man of prayer and a man of action; a man of prudence and man of boldness,” said Greear, pastor of The Summit Church. “He is a gifted leader who I believe will keep the [g]ospel above all.”

The EC search committee spent a year seeking a new president after former executive Frank Page's resignation. D. August “Augie” Boto served as interim president.

“Ronnie Floyd is one of the most

gifted and effective leaders I know,” said Danny Akin, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, in a statement of endorsement. “He is tireless, focused, wise, and visionary. He also is a man of impeccable integrity. I believe he is the right man to lead the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention in these challenging days that face our Convention.”

Floyd was named president of the National Day of Prayer Task Force in August 2017. He served a two-year term as SBC

president from 2014 to 2016. He previously served as chairman of the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force from 2009 to 2010, president of the SBC Pastors’ Conference in 1997 and chairman of the EC from 1995 to 1997.

Floyd and his wife, Jeana, have been married for 42 years. They have two sons and seven grandchildren.

He received a bachelor's degree from Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas, and a master's and doctorate from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Floyd is the author of 20 books. **BR**

OPPORTUNITY CORNER

FRUITLAND BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE, Hendersonville, invites you to its annual Founders Day celebration May 7 at 10 a.m. Guest speakers will be Don McCutcheon of Don McCutcheon Ministries and Herb Reavis, senior pastor of North Jacksonville Baptist Church. The Mud Creek Baptist Church Worship Band will provide music. Lunch is free, and pastors and alumni are encouraged to attend with groups from their churches or graduating classes.

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April 28

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

May 5

Sell Everything You Own

Focal passages: Matthew 19:21-30

The rich, young ruler comes to Jesus with an impressive résumé of outward obedience. He had followed God's commandments since he was a child, and he believed Jesus had important answers regarding eternal life.

But when he asked, "*What do I still lack?*" Jesus responded, "*If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me*" (Matthew 19:20-21).

Instead of being overwhelmed with joy and gratitude, having found his greatest treasure in Jesus, the young man walked away disappointed.

The Lord may call, and has called, some to sell all their possessions. But in these verses, Jesus addressed the rich man's heart by pointing out that the young man valued something more than our Savior. His allegiance to his earthly possessions was greater than his commitment to God.

After the scene unfolds, Jesus turns to His disciples and says, "*Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it*

is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God" (Matthew 6:23-25). The rich young man seemed to have it all; had he not done everything right and been blessed by God? If Jesus' words were true, how could anyone hope to be saved?

Being a good person isn't our ticket into heaven. Submission to Christ as Lord is the true path to salvation. Just as Christ told the young man to follow Him, He pointed the disciples back to a relationship with God.

"*With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible*" (Matthew 6:26).

Is there anything you're holding on to instead of obedience to Christ?

Is Jesus truly worth losing everything for? And if He asked us to, would we faithfully trade in all else to have Him?

"Being a good person isn't our ticket into heaven. Submission to Christ as Lord is the true path to salvation."



DANIELA SANCHEZ
Member, The Summit
Church, Durham

Focal passages: Luke 6:27-36

For many years I thought the most courageous things I could do were to speak up when others wouldn't, defend myself and make sure anyone who committed an injustice would know it.

However, God has shown me that it can take just as much courage to remain silent or take on what someone else deserves.

Jesus, Himself, remained silent as He was humiliated and didn't retaliate when He was accused, spat on and nailed to a cross.

Our Lord loved His enemies. "*But I say to you who hear:*

Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you" (Luke 6:27-28). We must have an attitude of love that is followed by loving actions.

Jesus' words in Luke 6:29-31 are both surprising and counter-intuitive. "*To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back. And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.*"

But isn't this the same amazing grace and incomparable love God has shown us? That "*while we were yet sinners,*" and outright enemies of God, "*Christ died for us*" (Romans 5:8).

It is easy to love those that love us back and anyone can do good to those who do good in return.

But the love of God calls us to loves those who betray us, commit crimes against us and who hurt us (Luke 6:32-36).

Jesus chose to love His greatest enemies: those who would love others before Him, who would betray Him and whose sins would ultimately put Him to death.

We were those enemies. Our sins cost Him his life.

And yet, He loved us then and loves us now. How, then, should we love?

April 28

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

May 5

Serves

Focal passage: Mark 10:35-45

We do not have to look far to find people that have demonstrated incredible service, all in the name of our Savior. If you are not familiar with North Carolina's Baptists on Mission (also called N.C. Baptist Men, NCBM), it is an auxiliary of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Their desire is to help Christians become involved "in missions and ministry in Jesus' name."

Paul and Carrie Fisher were just that type of family. Paul served in the U.S. Army in Afghanistan in early 2000s. After returning stateside, he came to accept Christ into his life. In 2012, he married his wife, Carrie, and later they felt called to volunteer in disaster relief. Pursuing God, they left their jobs. They became volunteer coordinators in Puerto Rico where they both were ready to serve Jesus and make a change in someone's life.

In Mark 10, Jesus reveals to His disciples a reordering of their lives (redemption).

First, Christ centers the focus and attention on Himself (v. 39). The Fishers understood that call and their service

came as a result of pursuing God.

Mark highlights two of the closest disciples of Jesus, James and John, emphasizing that even those near and dear to Him are susceptible to having a misplaced focus (v. 41). They are seeking worldly glory. Jesus shows true glory lies in serving, not being served.

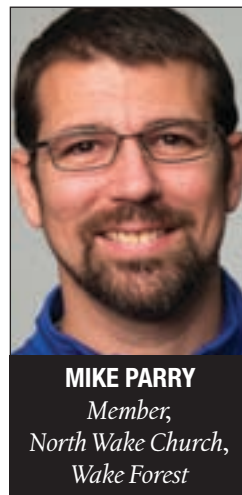
Christ redeems the moment of correction with James and John by revealing the proper order of things (v. 42-44). The way up is down in God's Kingdom.

If our focus on Christ is misplaced, then our service will follow. Christ provides the best example of service by redeeming the fallen world (v. 45).

The focus of the lesson even notes Jesus demonstrated humble service by His redemptive work for our sin. So, remember to chase after God, the serve part can start anywhere.

How will you serve?

(EDITOR'S NOTE – In memory of NCBM coordinator Paul Fisher, who passed away Feb. 28, 2019, while serving the Lord in Puerto Rico.)



MIKE PARRY
Member,
North Wake Church,
Wake Forest

Focal passage: Mark 11:15-19; 12:41-44

Have you ever discovered a tick on your skin? A simple walk through the woods or high grass can make you vulnerable and open to one latching on. Once they attach themselves, they can spread disease, some of which can lead to death if untreated. But if you catch them early, tick bites can be easily remedied.

We could say the same for the moneychangers in the temple. These "ticks" were spoiling the health of worship. As a result, they were selected and rejected by God so no theological disease could take root. Mark communicates to

his readers that Jesus commands pure, holy and genuine worship.

In the second story of the widow giving money, Mark conveys a discipleship moment Jesus gave to His followers. The emphasis here is placed on the widow

Purifies

giving – in poverty – everything she had. Using the illustration above, a person should give everything they can to pursue healthy worship with the Savior.

Pursuit of genuine worship can be observed corporately and individually. As for the former, the church should be actively practicing church discipline. Such a practice should be a mark of every healthy church. It demonstrates that because our God is holy, our churches are to be as well (1 Corinthians 5:11).

On an individual level, it is important to note that Jesus is the one casting out moneychangers. (v. 15). Christ does a work in us as we pursue Him, removing the spiritually unhealthy parts of our lives (Hebrews 12:1-2). We run after Him with the goal of presenting ourselves as pure sacrifices (Romans 12:1).

Jesus quotes from Isaiah 56:7 in Mark 11:17, and highlights whom the house is for, "*all nations.*" In other words, it does not matter what culture or ethnicity a person belongs to, Christ welcomes all.

How can you pray for your spiritual health or the health of your church?

Visit BRnow.org

Windows

Continued from page 5

stained-glass windows in MacGorman Chapel to those who played a major role in turning the convention back to a high view of scripture.”

In addition to the Pattersons and Pressler, those depicted in the chapel windows include O.S. Hawkins, director of Christian-based financial services company GuideStone; Harold and Dottie Riley, whose contributions helped build MacGorman Chapel; Jimmy Draper, former SBC president and president emeritus of Life-Way Christian Resources; several past presidents of the SBC, including Charles Stanley, W.A. Criswell, Adrian Rogers, Bailey Smith, Jerry Vines and Edwin Young; and many others. Retired Alabama Baptist pastor Jimmy Jackson and Rick Warren, founding pastor of Saddleback Church, Lake Forest, Calif., also were among those featured in stained glass. The original goal was at least

69 windows over a 12-year period, said Don Young, the artist/owner of Don Young Glass Studio, who designed and installed the windows, according to the *Star-Telegram*.

The seminary fired Paige Patterson May 30, 2018, following weeks of news reports about the “handling of an allegation of sexual abuse against a student during Dr. Patterson’s presidency at another institution and resulting issues connected with statements to the board of trustees that are inconsistent with SWBTS’s biblically informed core values,” according to a statement by the executive committee of SWBTS trustees.

The windows became a topic of controversy on social media during that time and in the weeks that followed Patterson’s firing, with many calling for their removal.

Thomas Wright, executive director of missions for

the Mobile Baptist Association and president of the SWBTS Alabama Alumni Association, noted that observers can only speculate about the reasons for the decision to remove the windows.

“Southwestern has not commented specifically why the McGorman chapel memorial windows are being removed,” Wright said. “It is appropriate for history to document the impact that individuals made during the crucial conservative resurgence transition. Perhaps some of the window subjects illustrate why institutions tend to memorialize those whom history has confirmed finished well. Some would contend we are best served remaining focused on biblical heroes of faith and practice.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE – This story was originally published at TheAlabamaBaptist.org. Used by permission.) **BR**

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Pastor

Smyrna Baptist Church in Whiteville, NC, is seeking a conservative, **bi-vocational pastor**. Parsonage available if needed. Seminary educated preferred but not required. Send résumé to smyrnastorsearch@gmail.com by April 30, 2019.

Providence Baptist Church in Shawboro, NC, is prayerfully seeking a **full-time pastor**. Due to the retirement of our pastor after 16 years, we are searching for a man of God to lead our congregation of believers into the future. Providence Baptist Church has an average attendance of 130 and is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. Please send résumés to providencebaptist@centurylink.net or P.O. Box 140 Shawboro, NC 27973, c/o Pastor Search Committee.

Stallings Memorial Baptist Church, Salisbury, NC, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Being a mission-minded Southern Baptist church, we are searching for the man God desires to lead His church into the future with an emphasis on evangelism and missions. Applicants should be SBC ordained with a seminary education from one of the SBC seminaries and affirms the 2000 Baptist Faith & Message. Send résumés to: smbcpastorsearchcommittee@gmail.com, or PO Box 438, Rockwell, NC 28138.

Church Staff

Elizabeth Baptist Church in Shelby, NC, is receiving résumés for the position of **Minister of Music**. This position is responsible for giving leadership and oversight for a fully comprehensive music ministry. For more information about Elizabeth Baptist Church, please go to the church’s website at www.elizabethchurch.org. This position will be a part of the ministerial team of the church. Persons interested should email a cover letter and current résumé to musicminister@elizabethchurch.org. Résumés will be received through May 31, 2019.

Children and Youth Director. Long Leaf Baptist Church of Wilmington NC is prayerfully seeking a part-time director who is passionate about serving our children and youth and helping them to grow in their relationship with the Lord. Candidate will be expected to lead and oversee children and youth ministries. For more information email ministryposition@longleafbaptist.org.

Small growing congregation near the NC/SC state line in Little River, SC, is looking to add two bi-vocational part-time ministers/staff members. We are looking for a Worship Director who has experience in developing a music program within the church. Must be able to lead and incorporate a variety of music into the worship experience. We are also looking for a **Youth and Children’s Minister/Leader** who has experience and can spend the time necessary to develop our program from the ground level. You can request a job description and/or submit your résumé to Rev. Michael R. Stewart, Pastor at RevMRStewart@outlook.com.

Quaker Gap Baptist Church of King, NC, seeks interested candidates for **full-time Minister of Youth/Children’s Director**, with primary responsibility for youth ministry (grades 6-12) and secondary oversight of our children’s ministry volunteers. Qualified candidates will hold at least a bachelor’s degree. Preference given to those with ministry experience. Résumés and correspondence accepted through April 30th to quakergapsearchteam@gmail.com.

Crossroads Baptist Church of Hickory, NC, is seeking a **full-time pastor of youth and children**. Responsibilities include discipleship, evangelism and administration. Interested candidates may send résumés to chrishuffman7@gmail.com.

Fellowship Baptist Church in Hudson, NC, is seeking an **Associate Pastor for Children, Families and Youth**. This is a full-time position that will focus on developing a dynamic children’s ministry and youth ministry. Interested parties should send a cover letter and résumé to pastorsheldongreen@gmail.com.

First Baptist Church of Mauldin, SC, is seeking to hire a **full-time Student Pastor**. Primary duties include overseeing the ministries of our students and their families from 6th grade through college. Applicants must possess a bachelor’s degree and 3 years of experience is preferred. Please submit résumés and/or questions to wleonard@fbcmauldin.org.

White Level Baptist Church, Louisburg, NC, is prayerfully seeking an **Associate/Youth Pastor** to minister and develop a close relationship with the youth of White Level. Duties include, but are not limited to plan, coordinate, supervise a comprehensive and active youth ministry. Please contact 919-495-3391 or ricky.r.batton@centurylink.com for more info.



Placing a classified ad in the *Biblical Recorder*

Choose one of three avenues:

- Send e-mail to: alison@BRnow.org.
- Purchase ads at BRnow.org/Advertise.
- Send a Fax to (919) 467-6180.

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

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

Ogden Baptist Church (OBC) in Wilmington, North Carolina, seeks a **full-time Director of Student Ministries** who will be responsible for leading students and families in alignment with the Church Purpose as stated in our Constitution, with a ministry focus on students and the multi-generation congregation-at-large. The director of student ministries will be supervised by the pastor and will be responsible for personally leading the student ministry and helping to develop and oversee programs to reach and disciple both students and their parents. Education/skills/experience: minimum of a baccalaureate degree (divinity school or seminary beyond the baccalaureate preferred); demonstrated commitment to Christian education; have a demonstrated calling to and experience in a similar ministry-related role; ability to deal effectively and tactfully with church personnel, church members and the general public; ability to recruit, train, support, evaluate and affirm others to teach students/families; ability to submit to the spiritual authority of the senior pastor. Submit: letter of interest and résumé in PDF format: Carol Atkins, Secretary, Student Pastor Search Committee at csatkins1952@gmail.com.

North Point Baptist Church (conservative SBC) in Weaverville, NC, is searching for a **full-time student pastor** (7-12 grades). Please send résumés to 119 Monticello Rd., Weaverville, NC 28787.

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

Miscellaneous

Share the Biblical Recorder – FREE. Order three months free. Contact liz@BRnow.org.

Trustees

Continued from page 1

Fund and faculty endowments.

Other business approved by BOT members included:

- The 2019-2020 \$31.2 million budget
- The election of Walter Strickland to the faculty as assistant professor of theology
- The election of Scott Pace to the faculty as associate professor of pastoral ministry and teaching
- The promotion of John Ewart to professor of missions and pastoral leadership
- The promotion of David Alan Black to senior professor of New Testament and Greek
- The promotion of Steve McKinion to professor of theology and patristic studies
- Curriculum changes to include an M.A. in ministry to women and biblical counseling, an M.A. in church revitalization, a certificate in student ministry, a certificate in ministry to women, a certificate in church revitalization, an M.Div. in church revitalization, a D.Min. specialization in Ministry to Women and a D.Min. specialization in pastoral care and counseling
- The creation of three new scholarship accounts to include the Catherine Hall Memorial Student Aid Fund, the

Arthur Lewis Brown Student Aid Fund and the Sweatman Missions Aid Fund

- The approval of Becky Gardner, Thomas Mach, Charles Cranford and Alex Gonzalez to serve another term in their respective offices

Outgoing BOT members included Erik Estep, Marty Jacumin, Doug Jividen, Sam Wheat and Don Warren, all of whom were honored for their service during Tuesday's chapel service.

During a Sunday gathering (April 7) for dinner and worship, SES and BOT members heard from Johnny Hunt, outgoing pastor of First Baptist Church Woodstock, Ga., senior vice president of evangelism and leadership at the North American Mission Board and former Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) president from 2008-2010. Preaching from 1 Corinthians 16:1-4, Hunt encouraged SES and BOT members to utilize their lives for kingdom purposes. He explained that believers should give away their possessions sacrificially, go to places where the gospel is needed and invest in those who need to be discipled, all for the glory of God.

"I want God to initiate some things in my life that will outlast me," said Hunt.

SES members heard an update about

the school from Akin Monday morning. He celebrated that SEBTS has continued to see growth as enrollment has risen to more than 4,500. Akin also noted the growth occurring in The College at Southeastern and The Global Theological Initiative at SEBTS.

"Training students and sending them out is what we're all about, both nationally and internationally," said Akin.

Jonathan Six, director of financial and alumni development, laid out the vision for the For the Mission campaign for SES members Monday morning.

J.D. Greear delivered the April 9 chapel sermon, preaching from Colossians 1:24-29. Greear, president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of The Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham, N.C., gave a sobering reminder to attendees of the call believers have on their lives to joyfully sacrifice so that others can know Christ, even if in death.

"Joyful sacrifice is when you give up something you love for something you love even more," said Greear, explaining that this is the way in which believers are spurred on to the mission of God.

Following Greear's sermon, Akin commissioned and prayed for students serving in the 2+2 program as well as those



J.D. Greear preaches April 9 in chapel at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. (SEBTS photo)

serving on short-term trips this summer.

SES members give at least \$1,000 to SEBTS each year and partner with the school to help train students in living out the Great Commission wherever they go. To learn more, please visit sebts.edu/ses.

The next BOT and SES meetings will be held Oct. 13-15.

To learn more about the For the Mission campaign or to make a gift, visit forthemission.com. **BR**

— HE IS NOT HERE —

BUT *He* HAS
Risen!

Luke 24:6a CSB

— HAPPY EASTER —
from the Biblical Recorder

