

**RALLY DEFENDS  
HB 2 AGAINST  
'PREPOSTEROUS'  
ALLEGATIONS**



**MCCORMICK  
DISCUSSES BEING  
FEMALE IN SPORTS  
BROADCASTING**

# BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

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## N.C. MISSIONS CONFERENCE:

*Be forgiven, offer redemption*

Author Rebekah Lyons shares about her “crippling” panic attacks and how finding her identity in God helped her through difficult times. (BR photo by Dianna L. Cagle)

By **SETH BROWN** | BR Content Editor

**B**right yellow shirts, hats and vests dotted the sprawling campus of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte as North Carolina Baptist Men (NCBM) staff and volunteers readied for their annual event. The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina’s auxiliary organization, which is also called Baptists on Mission, hosted the 2016 N.C. Missions Conference on Friday and Saturday, April 15-16, to encourage and equip Christians to live on mission.

More than 1,300 North Carolina Baptists heard speakers from across the world in a full schedule of events that focused on the theme, “Rescued and Redeemed.”

Headlining plenary sessions were Bob Goff, author and speaker; Bryan Loritts, lead pastor of Abundant Life Christian Fellowship in Mountain View, Calif.; and Gary Chapman, author and senior associate pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, N.C.

The conference featured TED-style “theme testimonies” from speaker and author Rebekah Lyons; Meredith Brunson, missionary and daughter of NCBM director Richard Brunson; and Cheryl Allen, founder and director of Door of Hope ministry in South Africa; and others.

Grammy award winning artist Laura Story led musical worship for the event.

A volunteer dinner kicked off the two-day meeting, featuring reports from more than 20 NCBM mission project leaders. The updates highlighted global disaster

relief incidents, North American church planting efforts, mobile medical clinics, Southeast Asian orphan ministries, U.S. college ministries and many more.

Main session speakers emphasized the need for Christians to remember their dependence on God for rescue and redemption, even as they pour out their lives for others.

“God does not just use people to accomplish tasks, but God uses tasks to accomplish people,” said Loritts.

He spoke from the book of James about the necessity for patience in ministry, referring to the process by which a pearl is formed through an oyster’s attempt to resolve the annoyance of a sand grain.

“You don’t get pearls unless you first go through life’s irritating, exacerbating and frustrating grains of sand,” Loritts said. “God is relentlessly trying to turn your life into a pearl.”

Lyons recounted a period in her life when she battled debilitating anxiety. Shortly after her family moved to Manhattan, she began to experience panic attacks, something she’d never encountered before.

“It was crippling,” she said. “The thing about despair is that you start to believe it will never change. I took on that identity, and I embraced it. I martyred-up for it.”

She found momentary relief from the anxiety in productivity, friends and family – all good things – until one night she came to a breaking point. Her head shot off the pillow during the pre-dawn hours of the night. In an all-too-familiar

**See Missions page 16**

**2016 SBC Annual Meeting**



**June 14-15 - St. Louis, Mo.**

Find event updates on page 8



# Mark Harris exposes Human Rights Campaign

In the 50 years since God called me to ministry I have never seen the extreme barrage of vicious deceit like that which has been organized against the legislators and citizens of North Carolina. After the passage of House Bill 2 (HB 2), a campaign of severe misinformation began flowing to corporate leaders, media outlets and other targeted groups. The media should know better, but most are blinded by their own depravity.

Christians should not fall into this trap of deception.

Scripture gives sufficient warnings including Paul's warning to Timothy. *"Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron"* (1 Timothy 4:1-2, NKJV).

At a rally in support of our governor and legislators on April 25, Mark Harris delivered a speech that I want to share with our readers.

Harris is the pastor of First Baptist Church in Charlotte and is running for N.C. Congress to represent the 9th district (see item below).

The text of Harris' speech expresses his views and his concerns over attacks against the state's leaders. He began with a question he is frequently asked. Where did the conflict surrounding HB 2 originate?

"That's an important question. You don't think the North Carolina General Assembly just decided to create HB2 for no reason. Do you think our legislators just awoke one morning and said, 'I think I'd like to ruin my Spring, threaten my reelection and draw the wrath of a bunch of misinformed CEO's and celebrities, see my name on the front page of biased newspapers, passing opinions for news

every day'? I don't think so. No, when you ask where this began, the answer is, all of this began in Washington, D.C., with a lobby group called the Human Rights Campaign. When they embarked on a strategy to take the nation city-by-city, pouring millions into elections and ad campaigns. This group has never been able to get traction statewide in North Carolina, and it is driving them crazy.

"North Carolina overwhelmingly defined marriage as the union of one man and one woman in 2012 despite the millions of dollars that was poured into opposition of the measure by the Human Rights Campaign. They then turned their attention to North Carolina's largest city, Charlotte. And just as they had done in Houston [Texas], the lobby group identified candidates friendly to their agenda and got them elected, which led to enough votes on the Charlotte City Council to enact the group's radical agenda of creating a special class of protections for certain sexual behaviors, as well as the infamous bathroom section of the ordinance.

"It is worthwhile to just take a moment and understand the degree to which the Charlotte City Council had to ignore the citizens it represents in order to pass the ordinance. The numbers will tell you the story. Over 250,000 emails were collectively received by the city council and the mayor in opposition of that ordinance. Over 20,000 people signed the petition in opposition to their ordinance. Over 700 people – reported by the *Charlotte Observer*, I might add – gathered in the driving cold rain and wind in a rally in opposition to the ordinance. And of the 140 speakers at the city council meeting the night of the vote, the vast majority opposed [the ordinance]. That's the true numbers.

"Last but certainly not least, Mayor Jennifer Roberts and the members of the city council who voted for the ordinance

ignored the fact that they were told their actions were not in line with the North Carolina constitution and would likely be overturned.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I beg you, do not be deceived by the claims now being spread by Mayor Roberts [saying] she had no idea that the state would overturn her bathroom bill. When the city council voted to approve the Charlotte ordinance in February of 2016, they did so knowing absolutely that the state would likely take action to overturn it.

"When people ask me – reporters and all – 'What do you think about the economic challenges being faced as a result of this?' I am quick to point out, any economic loss for North Carolina due to this issue must be placed squarely at the feet of Charlotte Mayor Jennifer Roberts and the members of the Charlotte City Council.

"So somebody has to ask, 'Why? Why, when the numbers tell such a story? Was it because gay couples were being denied accommodations at restaurants and hotels? Well, apparently not, since the *Charlotte*

*Observer* reported that the lesbians who filed suit against HB 2 stated that they had never been denied accommodations anywhere. So, Why?

"Was it because homosexual individuals were being denied employment? Not likely since asking about relationships and marital status is already illegal in job interviews under federal law. So, why then would they defy such amazing numbers?

"Because a powerful special interest group told them to. And because a powerful special interest group benefits from being able to call our state legislators and our leaders 'haters.' Because a powerful special interest group, above all else, no matter how much our state may suffer, wants Roy Cooper elected governor, because he advances their own narrow agenda. This group pumped nearly a million dollars into congressional campaigns in 2014, including nearly \$10,000 to Kay Hagan in her failed bid for re-election to the United States Senate. You see, today you need to know the facts.

"Because of a powerful special interest group that claims to be for tolerance and diversity is so intolerant and unmerciful that it celebrates as county clerks go to prison, family-owned bakeries go out of business and pastors sermons are subpoenaed for daring to live and work in accordance with their faith.

"I'm here today, in closing, to say to you, the members of the North Carolina State Legislature on the other hand, did what they were elected to do. They acted swiftly, they acted effectively and they acted constitutionally. They did not impede the right of any business to enact any policies it wants in regards to sexual orientation or bathroom use. They just protected us from the heavy-handed assault on religious liberty that always occurs when these special interest groups get their way.

"I am here today to ask you to join me in simply saying, 'Thank you to the legislature. Thank you to the lieutenant governor, thank you to Gov. McCrory. Thank you for standing strong.'" **BR**



**K. ALLAN BLUME**  
Editor



**MARK HARRIS**

## Coming in the next issue: Baptist candidates for Congress

The *Biblical Recorder* has identified six candidates for the U.S. Congress that are members of North Carolina Baptist churches. Three are ordained ministers; three are lay leaders in their church. In the May 21 issue of the *Recorder* we will let these candidates tell us why they are running for office and share their goals for serving the citizens of our state.

Our responsibility is to report news related to churches in the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina so our readers will be informed. We do not endorse candidates. The candidates are Powell Dew (1st District), Mark Walker (6th), David Rouzer (7th), Mark Harris (9th), Todd Johnson (9th) and George Holding (13th). The primary election is June 7. Please contact us if there are other Baptist candidates for the U.S. Congress that are not on our list.

– The Editor

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# IN FOCUS

A WORD FROM OUR LEADER

## Reflecting on associations – a time for giving thanks

**E**ach year, Southern Baptists take a special time to highlight our state associations and all of the great Kingdom work that they do on a local level. From May 15-22, Baptist Association

Emphasis Week, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) places a special emphasis on our associations.

I am appreciative of all that our 78 North Carolina Baptist associations have accomplished for the Lord. Just last month, I was blessed to attend the 2016 Associational

their unique strengths and weaknesses, the association is able to help draw local churches together to spur them on to make disciples.

These local Baptist associations are self-governing and their initial responsibility is to advance the Kingdom through their member churches, but I am also grateful that God unites all North Carolina Baptists to spread the gospel throughout this state, across North America, and around the world in fulfillment of the Great Commission.

In Acts 1:8, Jesus commands His disciples to share His Word throughout the world – He tells them, *“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*

Surely, this convention alone, without local Baptist leaders would not be able to function most effectively in impacting lostness in this state – but because of associations, we are truly able to share the gospel effectively throughout our very own “Jerusalem.”

Together, we are stronger than when we are separate. I pray that during Baptist Association Emphasis Week this year, you will take some time to think about the missions work that God has accomplished in our state through the associations’ faithful answer to His call. It is through the cooperative efforts brought about by the associations that we can become “the strongest force in the history of this convention for reaching people with the message of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

If you would like more information about the local Baptist associations of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, visit [ncbaptist.org/index.php?id=82](http://ncbaptist.org/index.php?id=82) or contact Abby Edwards at [aedwards@ncbaptist.org](mailto:aedwards@ncbaptist.org) or (800) 395-5102, ext. 5536. **BR**



**MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.**  
BSC executive  
director-treasurer

Missions Conference at Caraway Camp and Conference Center where I had the privilege of spending time with and addressing members of the staff from our N.C. Baptist Associations.

I would also like to take the time to extend my personal thanks to each and every director of missions, associational missionary and staff member who live and labor throughout the state. I am truly grateful for the leadership position into which God has placed each of you. Thank you for shepherding the associations as you strive to please the Lord. I know that your job is not an easy one, but your efforts do not go unnoticed.

In 2014, our convention launched the five-year strategy of “impacting lostness through disciple-making,” that was adopted by the messengers during our 2013 Annual Meeting.

I believe that our associations are incredibly important in implementing this disciple-making process. As an association works with local churches and sees

## The barren woman’s home on Mother’s Day

**W**e had intentionally shown up a few minutes late. As we made our way to the auditorium door, I noticed the celebratory handout on the table: carnations.

“Just breathe,” I thought to myself.

I had quickened my steps in hopes to slip through the door unnoticed when I was suddenly halted by a single carnation held out to me.

When my eyes shifted from the flower to the man who held it I began to shake my head “no,” but he insisted by nodding “yes!” This was a friend, a brother in Christ who had just learned from his wife our recent news.

I took the carnation with my head hanging low to hide the tears of gratitude. In that moment, this brother had honored the life of my baby, the baby I never met.

I was grateful. In a single moment my maternal grief had been validated.

As I crossed the threshold of the auditorium door a sense of shame quickly rushed over me. I felt a need to hide the carnation because I was not like other mothers.

To some, I was not a mother at all, and to others, this was just a regular Sunday morning worship service.

In the days, weeks and months following our miscarriage, my husband and I grieved deeply the loss of our baby. Honestly, I was surprised by my own grief – how could I love a person so much whom I would never meet? How could I be so deeply affected by the loss of the baby whom I only carried for a short time in my womb?

Psalm 139 sounded off like a broken record in my mind; *“For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb ... My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth... Your eyes saw my unformed substance.”*

I trust the Lord. I believe in His sovereignty. I know He is good.

However, the grief forced me to wrestle with the application of my beliefs in a way I had never experienced before.

Would I trust the Lord with my bro-

ken heart? Would I submit to His sovereign will in humility or with resistance? Would I promote His goodness in the midst of loss?

As Mother’s Day approaches each year, I am reminded of loss and pain, of barrenness and sorrow, and of the refining fire my faith has endured. The day of celebration is never separated from pain for me.

I find comfort, salve for my heart and my place in God’s Word.

The barren woman is often mentioned throughout scripture. The Lord opened Sarah’s womb, the barren woman. The Lord had compassion for Rachel, who was barren, and opened her womb. Samson was born to a woman who had been barren.

John the Baptist, of whom Christ said, *“Among those born of women there has arisen no one*

*greater,”* was born to a barren woman, Elizabeth (Matthew 11:11).

Ascribing praise to God because there is no other like Him, Psalm 113 says, *“He gives the barren woman a home, making her the joyous mother of children. Praise the Lord!”* I have found my home in Christ Jesus, my Lord, my Savior. Whether or not my womb bears fruit ever again, I know the barren woman is fruitful in Christ.

For the barren woman, for those who have miscarried, birthed stillborn babies, suffered from infertility, those who have lost children even into adulthood and for those who are single who have no prospect of bearing children, Mother’s Day is often accompanied by grief. It is a day that confronts our identity issues amid our pain.

In our humanity, we are inclined to rid ourselves of pain at its onset. Yet, this pain reminds us that things are not right in this world.

It steers our hearts in a direction away from loving the things this world offers toward a good Father who hurts more deeply over sin and death than we could imagine, so much so He sent His Son to give us hope and a future, our great High Priest who can sympathize with us in every way.

Christ died so we would no longer be

**See Mother’s page 11**



**LAURA THIGPEN**  
Guest Column

### Submissions for Tar Heel Voices

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

**Church news:** The *BR* is pleased to publish staff changes, church news and events with a statewide interest. Send information immediately following an event, or for opportunity corner, send at least two months in advance to [dianna@BRnow.org](mailto:dianna@BRnow.org) or to P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512; (919) 847-2127.

### CORRECTION

The April 23 edition of the *Biblical Recorder* mistakenly identified May 3 as the date for this year’s National Day of Prayer. The correct date was May 5. Please accept our apologies from the editorial staff.



# Heritage Awards honor some of N.C. Baptists' best

Each year North Carolina Baptist entities honor people who have contributed to the individual organizations in unique ways. The N.C. Baptist Heritage Awards Banquet was held April 26 at the Joseph S. Koury Convention Center in Greensboro. The annual event is co-sponsored by the Baptist State Convention of N.C. and the N.C. Baptist Foundation. Here are the organizations and their winners:

• **Baptist Children's Homes of N.C. Inc. – Betty H. Greene:**

Betty Greene of Boone can't remember a time when she wasn't a part of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina (BCH). Little Betty Hollar loved to ride in her daddy's truck. Nothing brought her more joy than accompanying him down the mountain with a truck load of food – apples, potatoes, produce and canned items – to Mills Home in Thomasville. It was the beginning of a life-long love affair between her and BCH.

When Betty married Dale Greene and they began their family and grew their business, her passion for children and BCH grew even stronger.

From her days in the Cradle Roll department at Mt. Vernon Baptist Church, and being baptized at age nine, Greene has worked tirelessly in missions. She has led every age group in WMU – serving as director for many years – as well as leading Mission Friends and Girls in Action.

Whether serving on the Crisis Pregnancy Board or taking part in a missions opportunity in Turkey, Greene gravitates to children. Her task in Turkey was to care for missionaries' children. Many of them had never interacted with strangers but Greene quickly embraced them and won their hearts. Greene's own five children, Gwen, Tony, Tim, Pam and Jeff, live nearby where she delights in them and their families.

Greene is a marvelous example of how one woman can make a difference in the lives of many. She is an exemplary trustee of Baptist Children's Homes.

• **Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) – H.**

**Kenneth Holland:** Ken Holland, 87, is still living out his life's mission statement, even since his "retiring" at age 62: "My goal has been to be faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ in all the days of my life in ways that are consistent with my age and my gifting."

Holland continues to train, equip and mentor pastors seeking to plant churches all across North Carolina.

Holland fell in love with the Carolinas while pastoring his first church – a church plant near Greer, S.C. Holland and his wife Dorothy retired to the mountains of North Carolina in 1992 after more than 30 years in ministry, which included stints as a pastor, director of missions and church planting consultant with the Home Mission Board (North American Mission Board) and the Florida Baptist

Convention.

After "retiring," Holland was approached by BSC to serve as a contract worker to assist with church planting efforts in the state. Holland has now worked with the BSC for nearly 25 years, which includes two stints as interim leader for the convention's church planting team.

During his tenure in North Carolina, Holland has travelled throughout the state to work with church planters. In recent years, he has focused on assisting church planters in the mountains close to his home. He still leads trainings for all English language church planters in the state.

A native of Wimauma, Fla., he answered a call to ministry after embarking on a career in retail sales. He graduated from Stetson

University and later earned his master of divinity from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Holland has been married to his wife Dorothy for 67 years, and he considers her his partner in ministry. The Hollands reside in Zirconia, and they have one adult son, Harvey K. Holland Jr.

• **Biblical Recorder – Greg T. Mathis:** Greg Mathis has served as the senior pastor of Mud Creek Baptist Church in Hendersonville since 1980. In that time, Mud Creek has grown from a small rural church to a regional fellowship of more than 4,000 members. Both he and his wife Deborah are native North Carolinians. They have three children and four grandchildren.

Mathis is greatly beloved by his congregation, highly respected by his staff and revered by fellow Baptists. He is a graduate of Gardner-Webb University and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. For 35 years he has taught the Bible and evangelism at Fruitland Baptist Bible College. The school honored him with the J.C. Canipe Teaching Award in 1997. He has led his church to support the ministry of the *Biblical Recorder*, and he has been a great personal encourager to the organization. The church carries one of the *Recorder's* largest group subscription plans.

History will record that Mathis was a strategic peacemaker and strategic influencer in the BSC. Twice elected as the convention's president from 1995-1997, he intentionally reached across the aisle to befriend many who differed with him on various Baptist issues.

He has written eight books and is the recipient of many awards including The Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award in 2000 by Gov. James B. "Jim" Hunt. Both Gardner-Webb and North Greenville University have granted him honorary doctorates. Campbell University gave him the Reavis Scholar Award in 1998. He has served many roles in denominational life including two terms on the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

• **Campbell University – Jack F. Coffey:** "You were born for just such a time as this," Jack Coffey quoted Esther 4:14 to college graduates at Campbell University's 1993 spring commencement. "What a time – a time of crisis, but also a time of change and a time of challenge."

They were words of inspiration that still ring true, just as they did 23 years ago. Coffey, the former minister who served nearly three decades at New Hope Baptist Church in Raleigh, has inspired generations both from the pulpit and through his philanthropy and service in higher education.

An alumnus of Mars Hill College (University), Wake Forest College (University), Duke University Divinity School and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Coffey spent 41 years as a pastor in North Carolina and northern Virginia and another 11 years as interim pastor before his retirement in 2007. He served on major committees for the SBC and BSC in the 1970s and '80s, and he was inducted into North Carolina's Order of the Long Leaf Pine by then Gov. Jim Hunt in 1995.

His legacy will live on through Campbell University, where he was a three-time trustee and recipient of an honorary doctorate of divinity. In 2013, Campbell Law School in Raleigh dedicated its chapel to him and his late wife, Sarah Buie Coffey. Coffey was also instrumental in the construction of Campbell's Butler Chapel, serving as chairman of the chapel's campaign committee. At 88, Coffey continues to serve on Campbell's Presidential Advisory Committee and continues to provide leadership in Campbell's mission of faith, learning and service.



GREG MATHIS

• **Chowan University – Ray Felton:** The size of Ray Felton's heart has little to do with his grand stature, but instead stems from his generous nature and the way he genuinely cares about his employees, friends and family. Felton is a man who gives back, renowned as a man of service with a heart for the community.

Married with three children and four grandchildren, Ray Felton of Eure, N.C., along with his son Brock, owns and operates Metal Tech in Murfreesboro. He and his business are major supporters of the annual Hertford-Gates Relay for Life and Felton has served as a N.C. ambassador for the American Cancer Society.

In addition to Metal Tech's lead corporate sponsorship of Chowan University Athletics, Felton is also an avid patron of fine arts and music at Chowan University, where he serves on the Board of Trustees. In recognition of their outstanding community service, selfless volunteerism and benevolent interest in others, Ray and Judy Felton were the 2007 recipients of Chowan's Community Service Award.

The compassionate couple supports area schools, churches, 4-H programs and fire, police and rescue departments. They are sponsors of All4Kids Hunting programs, the Gates County Wounded Warrior Turkey Hunt, the Josh Lane Juvenile Diabetes Golf Tournament, the Jefcoat Museum, the N.C. Watermelon Festival, Gates County Ducks Unlimited, and the National Wild Turkey Federation. They host regular Bloodmobile drives, support Muscular Dystrophy, the American Heart Association, the Helene Knight Scholarship, Committee for Education Excellence-Gates County Schools, and Partners for Education-Hertford County Schools. Felton also serves as a member of the Gates County Board of Education. The Feltons attend Eure Baptist Church.



RAY FELTON

• **Gardner-Webb University – Emmett Harvey Rogers Jr.:**

Emmett Harvey Rogers Jr. had begun a promising career as an automobile dealer when he sensed a call to ministry as a member of First Baptist Church in Shelby, N.C. Though he was past the traditional age of attending college, Rogers earned his bachelor's degree at Gardner-Webb University and later graduated with a master of divinity and a doctor of ministry from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He has pastored three Baptist churches in North Carolina, including Forestville Baptist Church in Wake Forest, Fallston Baptist Church in Fallston and Mooresville First Baptist Church. Always demonstrating what one friend called "a caring concern for others," he currently serves as a board member for Lake Norman Regional Medical Center in Mooresville. He has also served with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, concentrating on Baptist Hospital, Baptist Children's Homes and Baptist Retirement Homes of North Carolina. In addition, he is a member of the Mooresville Chamber of Commerce. He has held significant leadership positions with the BSC and South Yadkin Baptist Association.

Rogers remains devoted to Gardner-Webb, teaching as an adjunct professor and serving on the university's Board of Ministers as well as the Board of Trustees. In December 2012 he received an honorary doctorate from GWU's School of Divinity.

• **Mars Hill University – Ronald F. Martin:** Ron Martin of Morganton, N.C., has flunked retirement.

"When I retired," he shares, "I thought I had certain traits and qualities that would be beneficial for nonprofit organizations. I can't be still." Truer words could not be spoken.

Since "retirement" from Shadowline in 2003, Martin's faith has



EMMETT ROGERS



KEN HOLLAND



JACK COFFEY



# Rally defends HB 2 against ‘preposterous’ allegations

By **SETH BROWN** | BR Content Editor

**C**rowds of people from across North Carolina gathered April 25 on the open lawn outside the state’s legislative offices in Raleigh to show support for House Bill 2 (HB 2), also called the Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act. Speakers at the Halifax Mall rally denounced so-called “preposterous” allegations against the new law, which claim HB 2 is discriminatory, unprecedented, anti-Christian and responsible for economic backlash against the state.

The event coincided with the opening day of the legislature’s 2016 short session.

With roaring applause, approximately 4,800 demonstrators thanked state leaders who sponsored and voted for HB 2, despite harsh criticism leveled at the bill from pro-LGBT activist groups, corporations, music artists, the White House and United Kingdom.

Gov. Pat McCrory signed the bill March 23 to preempt an ordinance passed by the Charlotte City Council that would have opened restrooms to people based on the gender identity of their choice. HB 2 overturned that policy by requiring state buildings and public schools to designate bathrooms and changing facilities for use according to

the biological sex indicated on a person’s birth certificate.

Bill supporters said the Charlotte ordinance could have allowed sexual predators to exploit the non-discrimination policy, endangering women and children, and forced business owners to comply with behaviors contrary to their sincerely held religious beliefs.

Rep. Dan Bishop, one of the bill’s primary sponsors, said it “restored long-standing customary bathroom policy for government facilities and removed mandates that the city of Charlotte attempted to impose on over 20,000 businesses for a radically new management policy for bathrooms and private facilities.”

Bishop rejected the widespread notion that HB 2 is discriminatory, saying that idea comes from “a new form of activism that is virulent and dangerous.” He described backlash against the bill as a “dishonest, media-fueled, ideological carpet bombing.”

John Rustin, president of the North Carolina Family Policy Council, agreed: “Opponents of House Bill 2 have claimed that [it] is ‘the most egregious, sweeping, hate-filled, anti-LGBT legislation in this country’s history.’ This is absolutely preposterous. ... [fueling] a level of hysteria and deception that I have not seen in 25 years of work in the public policy arena.”

Some opponents cite religious reasons for overturning the law, according to Mark Creech, executive director of the Christian Action League.

Creech read aloud an email he received with the subject line, “Sad and outraged,” from a former colleague. The message said, “Under any theological interpretation I fail to see how this becomes the basis on which HB 2 is written, enacted and signed: *‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.’*”

He responded, “I, too, am sad and outraged – sad and outraged that you would interpret the greatest commandment to mean that women and young girls should be forced to undress or shower in the presence of men, denying their fundamental right to privacy.”

Online payment company PayPal announced April 5 that it is withdrawing plans to open a global operations center in Charlotte, allegedly costing the city hundreds of jobs. CEO Dan Schulman said the new law “invalidates protections” of LGBT rights in a statement on the company website.

Dozens of other large corporations – including Google, Bank of America and Apple – have openly criticized HB 2 or taken steps to restrict business activity in the state.

“When people ask me, ‘What do you think about the economic challenges being faced as a result of this?’” said Mark Harris, pastor of First Baptist Church in Charlotte and U.S. congressional candidate, “I’m quick to point out, any

economic loss for North Carolina due to this issue must be placed squarely at the feet of Charlotte Mayor Jennifer Roberts and the members of the Charlotte City Council who voted for [the sexual orientation and gender identity ordinance] in the beginning.”

Major retail chain Target announced a new bathroom policy April 19 that welcomes “transgender team members and guests to use the restroom or fitting room facility that corresponds with their gender identity.”

Rallies opposing HB 2 took place only blocks away in downtown Raleigh, which ended in 54 arrests after protestors interrupted proceedings in the House chamber. The Human Rights Campaign held a press conference showcasing 26 boxes of petitions against the new law, which they presented to the state Capitol.

The governor issued a press release later that evening which said alleged petitions only filled two of the boxes and the overwhelming majority of signatures were from out-of-state.

In addition to public outcry against the bill, HB 2 now faces strong opposition in both the judicial and legislative branches of government. A federal lawsuit was filed against the bill only days after it was passed for “singling out LGBT people for disfavored treatment.”

Democratic House members Darren Jackson, Grier Martin, Graig Meyer and Susi Hamilton introduced legislation (HB 946) that threatens a wholesale repeal of the law just hours before the pro-HB 2 rally in downtown Raleigh.

Full story online at [BRnow.org](http://BRnow.org). **BR**

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# Minister with lingering pain gets Mother's Day Offering blessing

N.C. Baptist Hospital/  
Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center

**A** former high school football player, Pastor Steve Ashley is no stranger to pain. But when the leg crushed in a teenage weight-lifting accident was still acting up 25 years later, with everything from troublesome circulation to painful ulcers, it was time to take action.

A surgery to correct the circulation problems resulted in what he calls, "100 percent perfection."

But, a new challenge, an infection months into the healing process, landed him in Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center for a week of costly treatment. A minister and father of five with a nurse for a wife, he knew his family was facing a mountain of medical bills. He also knew just what to do: ask, first, in prayer.

"I was concerned, not worried," he said. "I knew that God would take care of it. I didn't know how but I put my faith and trust in Him and had peace about it. We were praying for God to give us direction, crying out to Him for help, and the next day we received a letter in the mail saying our bill was paid in full by the Mother's Day Offering.

"We had no idea it was coming. We



Steve and Sami Ashley are thankful for N.C. Baptists giving to the Mother's Day Offering to help patients at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center with bills. (Credence Pictures photo by Randy Durham)

trusted that the financial burden would be made lighter and the peace of God that passeth all understanding got us through it."

Since 1924 North Carolina Baptists have given to the Mother's Day Offering to "extend the healing ministry of Jesus Christ, especially to the needy."

Pastor Ashley, who serves as associate pastor of Bald Mountain Baptist Church in West Jefferson, knows he need look no

further than his Bible to understand what happened: Nothing is impossible with God.

"We go through these things, we pray to God believing he will heal us," he points out.

"We have to trust even when it doesn't make sense. Even though we're going through trials and pain, He will direct our path."

Pastor Ashley understands the power of blessings, but, with a twist: Instead of praying to be blessed, he encourages people to pray to be a blessing to others. "Giving to the Mother's Day Offering makes you a blessing," he says.

"Thank you, N.C. Baptists, from the bottom of my heart, for being the hands and feet of Jesus Christ and sharing His love in my time of need, for being the answer to our prayers."

Visit [mothersdayoffering.org](http://mothersdayoffering.org) for more information about the offering. **BR**

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# McCormick discusses being a Christian female in sports broadcasting

**F**emale sports broadcaster Lindsay McCormick has hosted live events ranging from Super Bowl XLIX to one of the most anticipated boxing matches ever, Mayweather vs. Pacquiao. She's covered basketball, Sunday night football and even the AKC Eukanuba National Championship Dog Show.

McCormick graduated from Auburn University in Auburn, Ala. She is a great example of how trusting God, believing in your talents, chasing your passion and being committed to your goals can catapult you to success.



ROMAN GABRIEL III  
Sports Q & A



Lindsay McCormick, a sports broadcaster, discusses a variety of topics with Roman Gabriel III during Super Bowl XLIX media days earlier this year.

**Q:** How did you become interested in sports?

**A:** I grew up in a sports family, and I'm sure everybody says that. My family is full of huge sports fans. They're obsessed. It's really hard to comprehend how much we love sports.

My mom sends me play-by-play suggestions when I'm on the air covering a boxing match. My grandfather was a defensive end for the University of Illinois, and was drafted by the Washington Redskins. He was later involved with NASCAR. My brother got involved with Talladega (Speedway). I had to learn to love sports if I wanted to have anything in common with my dad, my brother and my grandpa.

**Q:** When did you realize sports broadcasting was what you wanted to do in life?

**A:** I really didn't know how God was going to use it in my future, but I knew I had a passion for sports. And I knew from a very young age that I wanted to be a broadcaster of some sort – whether it was news, entertainment or sports. I really didn't put the two together until I got to college at Auburn.

**Q:** Tell us about your first real break into sports.

**A:** I was working for the school newspaper and TV station, and our sports director had to go out of town one weekend. He said, "Lindsay you know a lot about sports will you fill in for me on the sidelines at the Auburn game?" I enjoyed it so much, that when he came back I would not let them take me off the sidelines.

I just told him, "Now I'm your partner, your co-host. This is what I'm going

to be doing for the rest of my career at Auburn!"

Later that year, I worked the Auburn versus Louisiana State University game. ESPN was on the sidelines while I was working. I asked if they were hiring. They were, so they put me through the process. I started as an intern. Someone saw my audition tape, and the rest is kind of history.

**Q:** Women make up 50 percent of the NFL Super Bowl audience. What is happening with so many women getting involved passionately in sports?

**A:** I was telling my mom that when I went to the Super Bowl this last February, normally it's guys that contact me or comment on my picks in dealing with their fantasy football team. Like, "Who should I draft this year?" But this time it was almost all women.

They would say, "My fantasy team did good this year. I took your advice." It's been really cool to see what women are doing in following sports today.

**Q:** You have worked for many sports networks, including ESPN. How has ESPN's 24-hour presence changed the mindset of today's players?

**A:** It's about being flashy now. Back in the day it was all about perfecting fundamentals and about winning. Guys like (Panthers quarterback) Cam Newton understand that it's more than a game.

He understands the entertainment

value of football is not just about a game anymore.

It's bigger than just winning or losing. You're affecting other people's lives.

**Q:** With the advent of Title IX protections years ago, that has opened the door for so many young ladies into sports. What are your thoughts about being in the broadcasting business regarding opportunities for women?

**A:** When I started about nine years ago, you had your staples in the business, such as Suzy Kolber (ESPN) and Pam Oliver (Fox Sports). There were a handful of women in the industry.

They had to work really, really hard to prove themselves. I feel like we still have to work to prove ourselves in this industry, but now you look around and see new women breaking into sports all the time.

It's cool. I like it. I'm not one of those women who feels competitive towards other women. I want us all to succeed. There is a place for everyone to succeed.

**Q:** What would you tell young ladies that are out there or students who are trying to break into the sports business?

**A:** Don't let criticism go to your heart. Do not take criticism personally.

There are going to be people on TV that don't like you, and some who love you.

As long as you're true to who you are, as long as I know that I am making God

happy, my dad happy, that my family is proud of me. At the end of the day that's all that matters to me.

**Q:** You are very visible on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. That can get interesting. How does that play out for you in this day of social networking?

**A:** I don't care if I have people that don't like me because of my fantasy picks for the NFL that weekend, or if I have haters on Twitter. As long as I know that I'm being true to myself. I can sleep well at night knowing that I'm serving God, and being useful to Him.

**Q:** You have had the opportunity to cover just about every sport: college and professional football, basketball, boxing and others. Is there a sport that you haven't covered that you would like to cover?

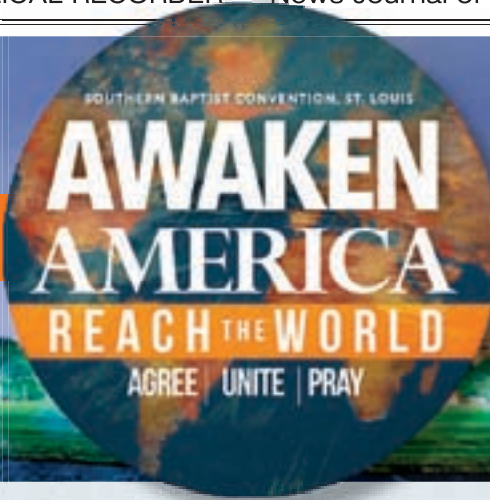
**A:** Wimbledon (tennis) would be fun, maybe World Series baseball. I have been on sports shows where baseball was a topic, but never covered it directly. So I think baseball would be something I would like to cover.

Visit [LindsayMcCormick.com](http://LindsayMcCormick.com).

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



## 2016 SBC Annual Meeting



June 14-15 - St. Louis, Mo.

As Ronnie Floyd wraps up his second and final term as Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) president in June, messengers will elect a new leader. At least three candidates are expected to be nominated for SBC president: North Carolina pastor J.D. Greear, Tennessee pastor Steve Gaines and Louisiana pastor David Crosby.

Illinois pastor Doug Munton will be nominated for first vice president, pastor John Marshall announced April 26.

Jason Duesing, provost and professor at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, will nominate John L. Yeats for a 20th term as recording secretary.

Visit [sbcannualmeeting.net](http://sbcannualmeeting.net) for more information, including how to register children and youth for activities.

### TUESDAY MORNING, JUNE 14

- Presidential address
- National Conversation on Racial Unity

### TUESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 14

- Executive Committee reports and recommendations
- Committee on Committees report
- Committee on Nominations report
- GuideStone report
- Election of SBC officers
- Committee on Resolutions report
- Other SBC business

### TUESDAY NIGHT, JUNE 14

- National Call to Prayer for Spiritual Leadership, Revived Churches, Nationwide and Global Awakening

### WEDNESDAY MORNING, JUNE 15

- LifeWay report
- Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission report
- Seminary reports
- Convention sermon by Ted Traylor
- Woman's Missionary Union report
- North American Mission Board (NAMB) report
- International Mission Board (IMB) report

### WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 15

- Panel discussion: The Pastor and Church in American Politics Today
- Panel discussion with SBC entity presidents and messenger questions from the floor
- Joint mission presentation (IMB & NAMB)

Messengers can download the SBC Annual Meetings mobile application for their mobile devices. Visit the Apple App Store, Google Play or [m.coreapps.com/sbc\\_am2016](http://m.coreapps.com/sbc_am2016). On Twitter follow @SBCMeeting, @BaptistPress, @SBCLife and @sbccp. Use #SBC16 on social media.

## OTHER EVENTS

There are a number of events and conferences leading up to and during the SBC meeting. Visit [sbcannualmeeting.net](http://sbcannualmeeting.net) for a more complete list.

- Crossover St. Louis (June 11) – Bring a mission team or join with a local church in St. Louis to reach various people with the gospel. Some groups are spending the entire week helping a particular church or community. Others plan to spend one day. Visit [stlbaptist.com/crossover2016/](http://stlbaptist.com/crossover2016/).
- Pastor's Conference (June 12-13) – [sbpc.net](http://sbpc.net); speakers include David Platt, Ed Stetzer, Greg Laurie, Jack Graham, James MacDonald, Byron McWilliams, Noah Oldham and Jimmy Scroggins. Theme: Live This. John Avant, pastor of First Baptist Concord in Knoxville, Tenn., will be nominated for president of the SBC Pastors' Conference, according to an April 27 announcement by fellow Tennessee pastor Steve Gaines. Use #LIVETHIS on social media. Follow @SBCEPpastorsconf on Twitter.
- Send Relief (June 13) – The North American Mission Board will officially launch Send Relief during the Send Luncheon held at noon on June 13 at The Dome at America's Center. To obtain a free ticket for the event, visit [namb.net/sendluncheon](http://namb.net/sendluncheon).
- GuideStone Wellness Center (June 13-15) – GuideStone Financial Resources will offer wellness screenings as well as seminars on retirement benefits, health care reform and younger participants.
- Pastors' Wives Conference (June 14) – Anita Renfroe will be the main speaker. There will also be a women's expo.
- Woman's Missionary Union (June 12-13) – Jeff Iorg, president of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, will speak, and missionaries will share of their experiences on the field. Visit [wmu.com](http://wmu.com).

This page highlights a number of items relating to the SBC annual meeting. Visit [BRnow.org](http://BRnow.org) for more stories and information.

## PROPOSALS

Messengers gathering in St. Louis will consider a variety of recommendations during the annual meeting. Among them:

- a recommendation amending SBC Bylaw 26 regarding questions to SBC entity leaders from the floor during the annual meeting. The recommendation is intended to provide consistency in the time allotted for messengers to ask questions. The Executive Committee (EC) will present the recommendation to messengers during the SBC's meeting.
- a one-time transfer of funds from the North American Mission Board (NAMB) to the International Mission Board to assist IMB personnel leaving the board during its "organizational reset."
- a new name for Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. If messengers give approval to the name change, the new name will be Gateway Seminary of the Southern Baptist Convention. To take effect, the bylaw amendment, which was approved during last year's annual meeting in Columbus, Ohio, must be approved again by messengers in St. Louis.



# Award

Continued from page 4

informed his service to innumerable organizations in his community including Burke County United Way, Blue Ridge Health Care Foundation, Exploring Joara Foundation, Burke Council on Alcoholism and Chemical Dependency, South Mountain Children's Home and Family Service and First Baptist Church. In recognition of his commitment to his hometown, Ron was selected by the Morganton Rotary as the Man of the Year in 2010.

Western Piedmont Community College, where Martin is the former president of the Board of Directors, has benefited greatly from his tireless efforts. The same can be said of Mars Hill University. As a three-term trustee, Ron has served as chair of the Board of Trustees, a member of the campaign cabinet, and as chair of the Trusteeship Committee. In this latter role he has been the individual most instrumental in identifying, recruiting and selecting new university trustees.

Last August Martin was awarded North Carolina's highest civilian recognition, the Order of the Long Leaf Pine. Martin is far from ready to curb his busy schedule. On the contrary, his goal is "to leave here tired," which means he will continue to impact the lives he encounters.

• **Meredith College – Justus "Jud" Ammons:** Jud Ammons grew up on a farm in the North Carolina mountains, where his work sharecropping and plowing gardens showed early signs of the entrepreneur he would become. At N.C. State University, he worked several jobs and his senior year he worked as an engineer for the State of North Carolina.

After graduation, he served in the U.S. Air Force, then worked as a department head with CP&L. However, when he started Ammons Construction Company, Ammons set his foot on a path that would change the face of Raleigh, and enrich the quality of communities far and wide.

Since that day, he has built, owned, and operated major subdivisions, day care facilities, golf course communities, industrial parks, and shopping centers across North Carolina. He has always gone above and beyond to create quality communities.

Ammons work on the Raleigh City Task Force inspired him to build Eagle Chase Subdivision to provide attractive, affordable housing, and recreational amenities in Southeast Raleigh. To increase investment and jobs, he developed EastPark, one of the largest industrial, business, and office parks in the Triangle.



RONALD MARTIN

Encouraged by seniors in his church, Ammons developed Springmoor Retirement Community, and has operated it for more than 30 years. Springmoor is an integral part of Greystone, where Ammons pioneered the concept of a planned urban development incorporating amenities that allow residents to live, work, play, worship, and go to school in a cohesive community.

He is a founder of Greystone Baptist Church and has served as deacon, Sunday School teacher, and trustee.

Last year a gift to Meredith College from the Jud Ammons family, in honor of his late wife, Meredith alumna Jo Ellen Ammons, will renovate the iconic Johnson Hall and add the Jo Ellen Ammons Welcome Center that will welcome prospective and current students.

• **North Carolina Baptist Foundation – Jack A. and Joan D. Cooper:** Jack and Joan Cooper are wonderful models in Christian stewardship. Jack is in his second term on the Board of Directors of the North Carolina Baptist Foundation where he has served on the Executive Committee and continues to serve on the Investment Committee. Joan has served two terms as Trustee for the Baptist Children's Homes. They are both active members of Corinth Baptist Church in Elizabeth City, where Jack has served as Deacon, Sunday School teacher and trustee. Joan has served her church as Sunday School teacher and Director of Woman's Missionary Union.



JACK COOPER

Before their retirement, they were both engaged in the work of the J.A. Cooper Insurance Agency and State Farm Insurance, while at the same time providing for their children Gary and Dawn.

Somehow Jack, with Joan's support, also found time to serve their community as president of the Rotary and Ruritan Clubs, director of the First Citizens Bank, and board member of the Elizabeth City Foundation. Today they also have four grandchildren to keep them busy.

Under Joan's leadership, the Corinth Baptist Church WMU Scholarship Fund was established to provide funds for church youth to continue their education beyond high school. Through Jack's leadership, the church also established a Missions Endowment to provide resources for members engaged in mission opportunities.

The Coopers have also set up a Charitable Remainder Unitrust that will ultimately benefit Baptist Children's Homes of NC, as well as provide the Cooper Family Scholarship at Wake Forest Health Services.

The North Carolina Baptist Foundation is honored to recognize Jack and Joan Cooper as our 2016 Heritage Award recipients.



JOAN COOPER

• **North Carolina Baptist Men/Baptists on Mission – Bobby & Betty Branson:** The world has been touched by the faithful service of volunteers like Bobby and Betty Branson. In 2000, they began working with NCBM/Baptists on Mission through the Mobile Dental Bus Ministry. Betty wrote most of the manuals and served as the hostess and assistant to the dentists. Bobby provided the bus maintenance, sterilized the equipment and they both kept the bus stocked with supplies.

They were a part of dental mission teams that transported the portable dental equipment to Vermont, Kentucky and Tennessee so they could minister to those in need. Bobby continues to support the ministry in any way possible.

As members of mission teams from Ephesus Baptist in Raleigh, the Branson's were participants in mission trips to West Virginia, New York, Spain and Brazil. They were happy to use their vacation time to travel the world to share their faith and provide medical care in Jesus' name. In 1991, they became charter members of Westwood Baptist Church in Cary. They were married for 60 years before her unexpected death on Dec. 20, 2015. They are the parents of two sons, one of whom preceded them in death on Aug. 15, 2015, and one daughter, in addition to four grandchildren and one great grandson.



BETTY BRANSON

Bobby joined the Marine Corps and served his country in Korea from 1951 to 1954. He worked for the United States Postal Service from 1964 until his retirement in 1991. Betty was a registered nurse and retired from Rex Hospital in 1993.

With servant hearts full of grace and generated by love, Bobby and Betty Branson served as the hands and feet of Jesus – not for money, fame, or personal gain but simply to give a helping hand to others. It is an honor for NCBM to recognize Bobby and Betty Branson as our 2016 Heritage Award recipients.

• **North Carolina Baptist Hospital, Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center – William C. "Bill" Warden Jr.:** Bill Warden is a Christian servant leader. Through his 18 years of service to North Carolina Baptist Hospital (NCBH) and Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center, Warden has embodied the directive of Acts 20:35 – *In all things I have shown you that by so tolling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'* Since 1922, NCBH has been a beacon of hope to the sick of North Carolina, particularly Baptists, and Bill Warden has given of his time, energy and talents to help ensure that the healing ministries of the Hospital and the Medical Center have endured and thrived.

Warden was first appointed as a Trustee of North Carolina Baptist Hospital in 1995 and has served five terms. He currently is chairman of the Board of the Hospital and previously served in that capacity in 2009 and 2010. He was instrumental in the integration of the Hospital and Wake Forest University Health Sciences (the Wake Forest School of Medicine) in 2010. Warden served as chairman of the Board of the Medical Center in 2011-2012.

Warden is a member of the Wilkesboro Baptist Church, where he has served as deacon. His commitment to health care is not limited to North Carolina Baptist Hospital and Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center. He has served on the Board of Wilkes Regional Medical Center for nine years.

Warden's family includes his wife, Carol, their three children and two grandchildren.

• **Woman's Missionary Union of N.C. – Beatrice "Bea" McRae:** Bea McRae's heart, even from her youth, has been devoted to missions and ministry. She has served in nearly every leadership position the church and Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) has, from Mission Action Chairman to WMU Director to Sunday School and Vacation Bible School, utilizing her zeal and enthusiasm to encourage others to become involved. As a member of First Baptist Church in Lumberton, she assisted in organizing a new mission, which became constituted as a new church.

WMU-NC tapped into her commitment, nominating her to serve on the Executive Board and she eventually became first vice-president and then president. This service included serving as a vice-president of national WMU, where she served in various capacities including Chair of the Centennial Committee for the Centennial Celebration held in Richmond, Va. She has led conferences at Ridgecrest and Glorieta Conference Centers, and written articles for Royal Service, Contempo, and Dimension magazines, for the WMU Planning Guide and WMU Year Book.

She has served on the General Board of the Baptist State Convention in various capacities including the NC/Togo Partnership Steering Committee. She was present at the Bridge Dedication and Pharmacy Dedication service at the conclusion of the NC/Togo Partnership. McRae is an amazing leader, very thorough in planning events and ministries. She is passionate about missions and supports WMU wholeheartedly with her spiritual and monetary gifts. Believing that "missions is a life style, not a trip," she continues to be involved in missions at her church, association and state levels.

She and Horace have two children and four grandchildren. **BR**



BILL WARDEN



BEA MCRAE



# SEBTS trustees elect 4 new faculty

By HARPER MCKAY | SEBTS

**S**outheastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) trustees elected four new faculty members during their April 18-19 spring meeting in addition to voting on curriculum revisions and approving the 2016-17 budget.

Southeastern's newest faculty members are:

- Keith Whitfield, SEBTS vice president for academic administration, elected as assistant professor of theology. Whitfield, who came to the seminary in 2014, has served as associate dean of The College at Southeastern (C@SE) and as associate vice president of institutional effectiveness. Whitfield holds a doctor of philosophy degree from Southeastern; master of divinity and master of theological studies degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.; and an undergraduate degree from Clemson University in South Carolina.

- Matthew Mullins, elected as assistant professor of English and history of ideas. Mullins holds a doctorate in English from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro; a master of arts in English from North Carolina State University; and an undergraduate degree in history of ideas and biblical studies from C@SE.

- Joshua Waggener, an SEBTS faculty member in music and worship education since 2008, elected as assistant professor of music and Christian worship. Waggener holds a Ph.D. in musicology from Durham University in England; a master's degree in music from the University of Georgia; a master's degree in church music from Southeastern; and an undergraduate degree in music from Trinity University in San Antonio.

- Benjamin Quinn, elected as assistant professor of theology and history of ideas. Quinn currently serves as the seminary's associate dean for institutional effectiveness and as C@SE program coordinator of general education. He holds a doctorate in theology from the University of Bristol in the United Kingdom; master of divinity in Christian ministry and master of theology in Christian ethics from Southeastern; and an undergraduate degree in biblical studies from Union University in Tennessee.

Four faculty members received promotions during the trustee meeting: Keith Harper to senior professor of Baptist studies, Kenneth Keathley to senior professor of theology, Larry Purcell to professor of theology and Alvin Reid to senior professor of evangelism and student ministry.

Trustees also reviewed and approved curriculum revisions and additions at the undergraduate and graduate levels. These actions created new bachelor of arts and science degrees; approved curriculum revisions in biblical studies, ministry studies and theological studies; and updated the seminary's advanced M.Div. degree.

A \$26.5-million budget was approved by trustees for the 2016-17 academic year, a 2.2 percent increase over the current budget.

To conclude their meeting at the Wake Forest, N.C., campus, trustees gathered around the newly elected faculty to commission them in prayer.

In addition to the trustee meeting, Southeastern hosted its biannual meeting of the Southeastern Society (SES) where donors and ministry partners receive an update on the happenings of the seminary and college.

SES members heard a report from President Danny Akin that overall student enrollment is up 123 students from last year, making 2016 the sixth year of record enrollment for SEBTS. They also had the opportunity to meet and pray for several 2+2 missions students and participate in a Skype call with an SEBTS student living in Prague, Czech Republic.

At the annual trustee and SES banquet, held at Richland Creek Community Church, Akin asked SEBTS ministry partners and donors to continue to pray, send and support the seminary's students, faculty and staff as a partnership in fulfilling the Great Commission.

"We consciously, intentionally say 'every classroom a Great Commission classroom, every professor a Great Commission professor and every student a Great Commission student' who we pray will become a Great Commission graduate who will go out and lead Great Commission churches," Akin said.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Harper McKay is a news and information specialist at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.) **BR**

## SOUTHERN BAPTIST SEMINARIES

### GGBTS board holds last meeting in Mill Valley

(GGBTS) Meeting for the last time on the Mill Valley campus April 11-12, the board of trustees of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary approved five new faculty members, heard progress on two new campuses, adopted the 2016-2017 budget and prayed for seminary personnel as they move toward the transition to Ontario and Fremont, Calif.

The board voted to approve five new faculty members, and President Jeff Iorg announced the presidential appointment of a new director of online education. The Mill Valley campus will be considered a commuter campus while buildings are being completed in Fremont. Iorg reported two apartment complexes near the Ontario campus had been purchased and are being renovated. The 58 units, which include one- and two-bedroom apartments, will be available for occupancy by July 1. For the first time, the seminary included proceeds from the \$40 million Land Sale Endowment in its regular operating budget.

### MBTS rejoices at record gift

(MBTS) Assembling for its spring meeting April 4-5, members of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's Board of Trustees celebrated the announcement of a significant gift to the school, received reports of strong enrollment growth, passed the upcoming year's budget and affirmed faculty elections and promotions.

Jason Allen, president, reported an anonymous gift of \$500,000 toward the institution's student center. Allen informed trustees about the development of a new Chinese Studies program to be launched next academic year.

The board re-elected its current officers to a second term for the 2016-17 year. From North Carolina, Bill Bowyer, pastor of Wake Cross Roads Baptist Church in Raleigh, will be second vice chairman.

### NOBTS celebrates president's 20th year

(BP) The chapel service March 1 at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS) broke from its routine to recognize Chuck Kelley's 20th anniversary as NOBTS president.

Kelley started at NOBTS in 1983 as an evangelism professor and director of the seminary's Leavell Center for Evangelism and Church Health, where he served until 1996 when he became president.

After the service, the campus community gathered on the steps of Leavell Chapel for a brief reception to honor Kelley and his wife Rhonda. The celebration was the first of several events planned to honor the Kelleys during their anniversary year at NOBTS.

### SBTS approves increased \$48-million budget

(SBTS) Trustees of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS) unanimously approved all recommendations in the board's April 18 meeting, which included the election of two faculty members, the budget for the 2016-17 academic year, and a \$14-million renovation plan for Fuller Hall.

In what the seminary is calling a "historic measure," trustees approved the recommendation of its Financial Board for the 2016-17 budget of \$48 million, an increase of 9.9 percent over the previous year. The board also approved a \$14-million renovation of Fuller Hall, which is the third phase of the 10-year Master Plan that began in 2012 to address deferred maintenance.

The board also elected without opposition the 2016-17 slate of officers, which included Clint Pressley, senior pastor of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C., as secretary.

### Trustees OK 'text-driven' M.Div at SWBTS

(SWBTS) Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's (SWBTS) board of trustees approved a new "text-driven" curriculum for the master of divinity (M.Div.); approved changes to the college's bachelor of arts and bachelor of science programs; elected a new dean of the School of Theology; passed a \$37 million budget; elected and promoted faculty members; and conducted other business at their annual spring meeting, April 13.

Trustees extended the "text-driven" curriculum for the M.Div. degree from 91 hours to 92. Among other changes, the revised curriculum will see an extra semester each of Old Testament, New Testament and systematic theology. Trustees also approved the incorporation of these three elements into all of the seminary's other master's programs. In the College at Southwestern, trustees approved the bachelor of arts in humanities and biblical studies to replace the current bachelor of arts in humanities and bachelor of science in biblical studies degrees.

Full stories available online at [BRnow.org](http://BRnow.org).

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## Pa. church shooter charged with manslaughter

Baptist Press

A member of a Philadelphia Southern Baptist church has been charged with voluntary manslaughter and reckless endangerment in the shooting death of a fellow church member during a worship service April 24.

Mark Storms, 46, allegedly shot and killed 27-year-old Robert Braxton during an altercation in the worship center of Keystone Fellowship's campus in North Wales, Pa., shortly after the 11 a.m. service began.

Keystone released a statement to Baptist Press

April 28 thanking Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin Steele's office "for its careful and thorough work in processing the evidence pertaining to this case."

The congregation also thanked "our community for the tremendous outpouring of support during this difficult time."

"It is the district attorney's job to administer justice, and it is our job to help those affected cope with this terrible tragedy. We have been 'weeping with those who weep' (Romans 12:15)."

Storms was arraigned April 28 and ordered held in lieu of \$250,000 bail. **BR**

## Mother's Continued from page 3

orphans, without family, without a home. We are now brothers and sisters, and fathers and mothers in the faith.

Motherhood is a high calling, but motherhood is not the ultimate identity of a woman.

My identity lies in what can never be taken from me: Jesus Christ crucified, resurrected and glorified. I still feel the sting of losing my baby and suffering infertility, but my hope is not shattered; my God is still sovereign; my future is secure; I have been given a home.

I will never forget the carnation I received that Mother's Day, the way in which my Chris-

tian brother honored me and the life of my baby.

In our brokenness and barrenness, it is my prayer that we, as brothers and sisters in Christ, will honor one another on Mother's Day and everyday, not by minimizing our grief, but by affirming our value, our worth and our identities in Christ alone.

Happy Mother's Day to the woman who finds her home in Jesus!

*(EDITOR'S NOTE – Laura Thigpen is a wife, adoptive mommy-to-be, preschool teacher, personal assistant and freelance writer. She and her husband are members of Imago Dei Church in Raleigh, N.C.)* **BR**

## AROUND THE STATE

### Obituary

**THURMAN ALFRED "AL" WOOLBRIGHT**, 94, of Mount Holly, died April 5.

He served with the United States Navy (1942-'44). He received a bachelor degree from Furman University in 1949, a bachelor degree from New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) in 1952; and a master of divinity from NOBTS in 1975.

He spent decades devoted to preaching the gospel, and using his hands to serve on home and foreign missions. He served in churches in North Carolina, South Carolina and Louisiana. He volunteered many years at the Billy Graham Library along with other acts of service.

He is survived by his sons, Wallace Woolbright of Morganton, and Michael Woolbright of Mount Holly; three grandchildren, five great-grandchildren; and sisters, Dorothy McClellan of Jacksonville, Fla., and Betty Kerby of Stanley.

Memorials to: Hospice and Palliative Care Charlotte Region to We Honor Veterans Program, 7845 Little Ave., Charlotte, NC 28226, or New Orleans Theological Seminary, Elijah Prophet and Edith Mae Woolbright Scholarship Fund, Institutional Advancement, 3939 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70126.

### Anniversary

**EAGLES BAPTIST CHURCH**, Macclesfield, is celebrating its 125th anniversary on May 29 during its 10 a.m. service. The church is located at 226 NC Hwy. 124-W. The pastor is Jeff Holden.

### Staff change

**MICHAEL SMITH** has been called as director of missions for the Carolina Baptist Association. He has served as pastor of Fruitland Baptist Church, Hendersonville, for 25 years and is currently on the *Biblical Recorder* board of directors.

☒ Joined a North Carolina Baptist church?

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The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina will pay for a one-year subscription to the *Biblical Recorder* for adults who join a N.C. Baptist church from a non-Baptist background.

Contact us today at [newBR@ncbaptist.org](mailto:newBR@ncbaptist.org) or call Liz Tablazon at 919-459-5693.

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The resources and assistance of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina are made possible by your gifts through the Cooperative Program and the North Carolina Ministry Offering.



# Should Christians abandon American culture?

By HARPER MCKAY | SEBTS

Fifty Christian leaders from across the country gathered April 19 for the Intersect Conference on the campus of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) to learn and discuss how faith impacts culture, vocation and economics. Event organizers invited a range of church planters, pastors, parachurch organization leaders and students to hear from SEBTS faculty and engage in a question-and-answer panel discussion.

To begin the conference, SEBTS Provost Bruce Ashford addressed the broad topic “Theology and Culture,” reflecting on his initial awareness of culture as a missionary. “It was a major awakening for me to figure out the relationship between God’s saving work on one hand and culture on the other hand,” he said.

Defining the notoriously vague term, Ashford said culture is what results when “God’s imagers interact with His good creation.”

## N.C. Baptists win communication awards

BR staff

Baptist communicators gathered for their annual meeting April 13-16 in Oklahoma for training, fellowship and ministry opportunities.

Members of the Baptist Communicators Association (BCA) met at Falls Creek Baptist Conference Center in Davis, Okla. On April 15, BCA members held its annual Wilmer C. Fields Awards banquet, which recognizes the top Baptists in various forms of communication.

From North Carolina, winners included the Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina, N.C. Baptist Aging Ministry, *Biblical Recorder* (BR) and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS).

In the News Writing division, Seth Brown, BR content editor, won first place in the single article of more than 1,000 words.

He wrote “Mission team hatches plan to care for Kenyan orphans,” which reports on a group’s efforts to take aquaponics to villages in East Africa. The article ran in the Nov. 7, 2015, issue.

Brown, along with BR Editor K. Allan Blume and production editor Dianna L. Cagle, placed second in the news writing division’s entry for a series or package. They wrote stories related to Hurricane Katrina’s 10-year anniversary in the Aug. 15 issue.

In the feature writing division, Jim Edminson of Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina and N.C. Baptist Aging Ministry, placed first and third in the first-person column entry. He received first place for his “Fresh Jelly Cake” entry

He explained that while many things in society are not God-honoring, human culture remains “structurally” good because it is God-given.

Admitting the controversial nature of the topic, Ashford said ministers of the gospel need to practice Christianity that redeems culture. “We engage culture and make culture better because Christ’s lordship is as wide as creation,” he said.

Ashford posed questions to help identify what God intends for every sphere of culture, what has gone astray in those areas and how Christians might reshape certain aspects in ways that honor Christ.

In an interactive presentation on vocation, Benjamin Quinn and Walter Strickland discussed material from their recent book, *Every Waking Hour*. Quinn serves as associate dean for institutional advancement and assistant professor of theology and history of ideas at SEBTS. Strickland is the SEBTS special adviser to the president for diversity and an instructor of theology.

and tied for third for “Washing Dishes.” These columns were published in *Charity & Children* in the October and January/February issues respectively.

In the Design category, Edminson won a first place award for his Fancy Finds logo in the print collateral category. Bailey Shoemaker of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) placed third in the special display for her “Interactive Go Map” in the print collateral area.

She also won second and third place in the booklet category. She won second for her “Seminary Viewbook” and third for her “College Viewbook.” In the annual report category, Shoemaker received a third place award for “A Year of Going.”

In the Publications section for state Baptist newspaper, the BR place third. The paper also placed third in the newspaper front page design category.

Ryan Thomas of SEBTS placed third in the magazine cover category for his “The Great Commission Magazine of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary – Fall 2015.”

In the billboard/banner category, Edminson placed third for his “Fill Up! Family Gathering-4” entry.

In Interactive Communications, SEBTS’ Maria Estes, Ryan Thomas and Sam Morris placed third for a social media single post entry for their “9Marks at Southeastern Instagram Triptych.”

Members also attended training sessions on communication strategies and techniques as well as toured the Oklahoma City bombing site and Hobby Lobby headquarters. **BR**

In the talk, they debunked the common notion that vocational ministry is the only career endeavor that truly matters in God’s kingdom, honoring 90-year-old SEBTS facilities management staffer Eugene Smith. For more than three decades Smith has emptied trash bins, rolled up water hoses and assisted people on and off the handicap elevator.

“He understands who he is as someone who has something to give to God’s world,” Quinn said. “This is who I want to be when I grow up.”

Beginning with a definition of work – “what creatures do with creation” – they said vocation is how people make themselves useful to others. “Work is the hand that animates the glove of our vocation,” Quinn and Strickland explained.

Pastors and leaders should teach all Christians the significance of their vocations, even in the nuts and bolts of every job, they said.

“How powerful a testimony would it be if we commissioned accountants before tax season every year?” Quinn asked. “What about commissioning teachers before academic years every year?”

Brent Aucoin, professor of history and associate dean of The College for Academic Affairs at SEBTS, gave an overview of the history of Christianity and economics.

He examined the spectrum of economic systems from capitalism to socialism, outlining how Christians from past

to present have understood wealth and poverty.

In a session on “Economics, Stewardship and the Common Good,” SEBTS professor of Christian ethics and associate dean for graduate program administration, David Jones, explained the importance of wealth or poverty is how people use it.

“God doesn’t care about whether you’re rich or poor,” Jones said. “But he does care what you do with it.”

Wrapping up the conference, Keith Whitfield, SEBTS vice president for academic administration and assistant professor of theology, led a panel discussion with the conference speakers where participants could ask follow up questions from earlier discussions.

The Intersect Project is a partnership between the Kern Family Foundation and SEBTS that seeks to educate people to engage the intersection of faith, culture, work and economics so that they can equip others and be empowered to glorify God.

Intersect also offers opportunities to learn from SEBTS faculty and other reputable speakers through free online classes, daily blogs, videos, books and special events.

Visit [intersectproject.org](http://intersectproject.org).

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Harper McKay is a news and information specialist at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Seth Brown, BR Content Editor, contributed to this story.) **BR**

## SHARE THE STORY APP, TOUCH THE WORLD

Hope Community Church in Cary participated in the national launch for the updated

The Story app in September. Three hundred people downloaded the app on a Sunday, and 48 hours later more than 1,700 people in approximately 30 countries had either received the gospel presentation or seen the video.

I personally downloaded the app on a Friday and within five days 119 people from multiple states and five countries had seen the gospel.

The new app has a discussion tool for engaging in spiritual conversation. It also has all The Story content, including sections on Creation, Fall, Rescue and Restoration. But most significantly it has a six-minute video with an overview of the Bible.

This app comes in multiple lan-

guages, including English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Russian, Swahili, and Arabic, with more to come.

One of the great features is the ability to share it on social media. It could quickly spread all over the world.

This app is the easiest evangelism tool that I have ever seen. Users can set up a group and monthly reports. Analytics tell you locations around the world where people are viewing this app.

Tools like The Story make it possible for every person to share the gospel with everyone everywhere. Matthew 24:14 is possible in our lifetime!

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Marty Dupree is the adult evangelism and discipleship consultant for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Contact him at (800) 395-5102 ext. 5565, or [mdupree@ncbaptist.org](mailto:mdupree@ncbaptist.org).)



MARTY DUPREE



# WMU-NC jumps ‘Both Feet In’

By DIANNA L. CAGLE | BR Production Editor

**F**rom early on, Amy Pardue Boone credits her parents as well as church leaders with her interest in missions.

The new executive director-treasurer of Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina (WMU-NC) discussed the importance of missions at her first Missions Extravaganza April 1-3 at Ridgecrest Conference Center in Black Mountain.



AMY PARDUE BOONE

"I come with great respect for the legacy of WMU North Carolina," said Boone. "I know the very long history that you have,

and I am very humbled to now be a part of that legacy, and I have great respect for the staff that you currently have and the ministries they are involved in. My goal is to come alongside them and encourage them."

The theme for the 125th annual meeting of WMU-NC – "Both Feet In: A Journey to Surrender, Sacrifice and Service" – was taken from a book title, written



University of North Carolina fans cheer their team during the semifinals of the NCAA basketball tournament. The group was catching the game after one of the Woman's Missionary Union of N.C. general sessions. (BR photo by Dianna L. Cagle)

by Bud Fray, who served in Africa for 28 years with his wife Jane. He was the missionary speaker for the weekend event.

Fray shared about surrender, sacrifice and service through three sessions over the weekend.

"Nobody took (Jesus') life from Him," he said. "He gave it willingly. He willingly laid down His life for our sin. He saved you on purpose, and He saved you for a purpose."

God didn't just save people to take them to heaven, Fray stressed.

"He did save you for somebody else to find heaven ... through you," Fray said.

"You're not exempt if you are a disciple."

Next, believers should offer themselves as a sacrifice to God. He urged ladies to surrender their all to God.

"Hearts are hungry around the world," Fray said. "Our world is the most winnable in history. There are opportunities that we've never had. We have to walk in obedient love."

Caroline Jones, a N.C. native who now lives in Birmingham, Ala., provided the theme interpretation in the general sessions.

Jones, who formerly served WMU-NC in a variety of capacities including president, discussed faith, family, failure and fear.

"When God calls us, He equips us to respond, but He lets us make the decision about whether or not to respond," Jones said.

She learned what surrender meant at Ridgecrest Conference Center in 1976. That was when her heart opened to "desire to be part of whatever God is doing wherever He is doing it."

Jones advised the women not to say "no" to God.

"Read the Old Testament," she said. "We have to trust Him with all that we are, all that we have, all that we love and jump in with both feet. Our faith has to include trusting God to be true to His Word and has to be real enough to pulse His strength through our veins when we feel faint of heart."

Most people's excuse of busy-ness keeping them from getting involved in missions is a poor one, Boone said during Sunday morning's service. "They make time for whatever they want to do," she said.

Fifty percent of N.C. Baptist churches have some WMU-NC organization, she said. Calling it a "sad statistic," she pledged to travel the state hailing WMU-NC as "one of the best-kept secrets."

She promised to highlight the ministry of Camp Mundo Vista as well.

"I know that numbers have been down lately," Boone said.

She cited societal trends away from sending children to camp. She also credited not having as many age-level groups like Girls in Action with the lower numbers.

While she considers raising money as one of her jobs, Boone said she doesn't want to be bound by not having money.

"The money that we do have, we are going to spend it as faithfully as we can spend it, and we are going to ask God to bless it like the loaves and fishes and ask that it will go farther than it could have gone on our own power," she said.

She stressed the need to make WMU-NC relevant to the next generation while "not in any way compromising our message or what we believe."

The WMU-NC staff is smaller than it has been in the past. That means the ones who are working are carrying the load for two or three positions.

"That is a difficult thing to ask of them," she said.

In her president's report April 2, Dee Dee Moody highlighted some key events in 2015 including the centennial commemoration of Fannie E.S. Heck at Historic Oakwood Cemetery in Raleigh. This year, WMU-NC worked with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) to provide gift baskets for returning missionaries who had taken the voluntary retirement incentive offered by the International Mission Board. The BSC provide a meal at Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem for the missionaries.

She raved over the generosity of the women who gave around \$21,000 in a matter of weeks to help put together baskets for the missionaries.

She also highlighted the Tar Heel Talk magazine as now being available online.

With 34 new age-level groups since Missions Extravaganza 2015, Moody shared that there are incentives for new starts, including discounted curriculum.

Officers elected were Dee Dee Moody, president; Deborah Taylor, vice president; Mary Ellen Bowman, vice president of development; Barbara Hill, recording secretary; and Beth McDonald, assistant recording secretary.

Approved members-at-large include: Mary Anne Croom and Claire Presley, Region 1; Becky Johnson Wroten, Mary Ann Hayes and Patricia Hagans, Region 3; Cathy Callahan, Region 4; Tiffany Brown Seaford, Region 5; Gail Reynolds, Region 6; and Ann Weaver, Region 7.

Ladies approved a \$953,122 budget. Mary Ellen Bowman, chairman of finance committee and vice president for development, emphasized the need for giving more than ever now that the executive director-treasurer position has been filled.

The largest amount of the budget (\$435,234) supports the administrative expenses (meetings, office expenses and payroll).

Last year's budget was not met, Bowman said, so "We're going to have to dig deeper."

See WMU-NC page 16



May 15

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

May 22

## Redeemed From Devastating Failure

**Focal Passage: Luke 22:54-62;  
Acts 4:8-13**

I've always had a bit of a soft spot for the apostle Peter. Perhaps it is because he often spoke without thinking; a bad habit that I share with him. Or, maybe it is because he drew back from associating with Gentiles for fear of the crowd; a tendency to avoid conflict that many of us can identify with. But, if I am honest, it is because he denied the Lord on the night he was arrested.

The soft spot is not for his denial, but for his humanity.

Peter was flesh and bone, just as we are. And he failed our Lord at a critical moment. Sadly, because of the connectedness of our world today, our failures can often be broadcast to the whole world in a manner of seconds.

Just as Peter's failure was very public and very painful, his failure was not final. Because of God's grace, our moments of failure do not have to be permanent. While it may be easy to think that we would never have done what Peter did, we need to remember that his failure is

a reminder that the strongest among us can fail.

It was, after all, Peter who made the glorious declaration that Jesus was *"the Christ, the son of the Living God"* (Matthew 16:16). And yet, later, he would call down curses on himself to prove he did not know Jesus (Matthew 26:74).

But, then, an amazing thing happened.

This same Peter who had called down curses on himself, had seen the risen Lord, been restored by Him, and received the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

His horrific failure was now a thing of the past.

The one who covered before a servant girl's questions now stood fearlessly before the most powerful religious body in Israel and boldly declared Jesus to be the Messiah (Acts 4:8-13). What a powerful reminder for us that failure does not need to be permanent. But, God's grace is sufficient to redeem us from our worst failure.



**ROB POCHEK**  
Pastor, First Baptist  
Church Park Street,  
Charlottesville, Va.

## Redeemed From An Unbelieving Past

**Focal Passage: Acts 26:9-20**

The name Jeffrey Dahmer still brings a shudder to many people. Dahmer was a serial killer in the Milwaukee area, responsible for the death of 17 men and boys between 1978 and 1991. His crimes were too unspeakable to recount here. What is noteworthy, however, is what happened shortly after his trial and imprisonment. Dahmer requested a Bible prior to his incarceration, and just two years after his trial concluded, he professed faith in Christ and was baptized. Just six months later, he was beaten to death by fellow inmates.

The reaction of many Christians to the news that Dahmer had made a commitment to Jesus Christ was disbelief.

I can recall hearing people question the legitimacy of his conversion and some going so far as to suggest that God could not (and would not) forgive someone like him. For those of us who are committed

to the gospel of Jesus Christ, such an attitude must not be allowed to take hold.

The testimony of the Apostle Paul reminds us that there is no one beyond the grace of God. Indeed, Paul's testimony is not unlike that of Dahmer. While he was not a serial killer, per se, Paul admits to having a hatred of Christ followers that resulted in his all out effort to destroy them (Acts 26:9-11).

We know that he oversaw the killing of Stephen (Acts 8:1) and that he was on his way to do harm to believers in Damascus when he was converted (Acts 9:1-3).

The Apostle Paul's conversion was so shocking that Ananias, the believer the Lord called upon to minister to Paul, was reluctant to believe it (Acts 9:13-14).

Only the Lord knows what happened in the heart and life of Jeffrey Dahmer. Did he repent and trust in Christ alone for his salvation? Only God knows for sure.

But, the story of the Apostle Paul reminds me that there is no one beyond the grace of God. That, after all, is what makes it grace. And, come to think of it, grace is exactly what you and I need too.

May 15

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

May 22

## Bold

**Focal Passage: Acts 9:36-43**

Have you ever noticed that many Christians seem to want to do big temporal things and small eternal things? If you check the average Christian's bucket list, you'll find many of the same endeavors included on lost peoples' lists. What is our obsession with skydiving, extreme mountain climbing, marathon running, travelling the world, and others? Most of our ancestors never did any of these things, yet they still lived full and meaningful lives. Aside from the experience and the adrenaline rush, do these challenges really change us? The answer depends on the kind of change we are seeking.

While Peter ministered in Lydda, two men from Joppa came to escort him, without delay, to the bedside of Tabitha, their deceased sister in Christ. When Peter arrived, he found a group of widows tearfully displaying the garments she had made.

He could have comforted them during the wake and proceeded to preach the hope of the resurrection at her funeral, but God had other plans.

The exhortation to come without delay revealed that the believers in Joppa

hoped for a miracle. Peter sent everyone out of the upper room (as Jesus did in Matthew 9:25), and proceeded to kneel and pray.

He then said, *"Tabitha, arise,"* and God brought her back to life.

Peter helped her to her feet and presented her alive to the mourners. The wake had become an awakening!

Although we live in a different time under different circumstances, God still calls His people to be instruments of His power.

If we desire to see our churches rejuvenated and God's glory put on display as we've never before seen it, then we must begin to take bold steps of faith. Consider a spiritual bucket list consisting of things that will bring glory to God.

Here are a few possibilities: witnessing to a lost person you keep avoiding, going on a mission trip, caring for neglected people, putting your money toward the Great Commission.

Wouldn't you rather meet Jesus with these experiences than a photo album and memories of an adrenaline rush?



**TROY RUST**  
Pastor, Florence Avenue  
Baptist Church, Oxford

**Focal Passage: Acts 10:9-15, 43-48**

I've raised and sold a lot of watermelons over the years. I've picked and culled them to decide their prices and destinations, and some melons haven't

made the cut. They simply didn't look good to buyers, even though they looked and tasted the same as picturesque melons on the inside.

We tend to accept the people who meet our minimum requirements and reject everyone else, even though God sees the same need on the inside.

God prepared Peter to share the gospel with Cornelius and his friends and close relatives (v. 24) by giving him a vision of something like a large sheet filled with all kinds of four-footed animals, crawling creatures and birds of the air being lowered from the sky to the ground.

God commanded him, saying, *"Get up, Peter, kill and eat!"* Peter, who had been a faithful Jew, replied, *"By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten any-*

## Accepting

*thing unholy and unclean."* God responded, *"What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy"* (vv. 10-14).

God was not merely giving Peter a lesson on acceptable foods.

While the world teaches us to pick and choose people for the sake of personal advancement, the gospel calls us to witness to every person in every tribe, tongue, people and nation. Until we see the beauty of the image of God in all people, we won't deem them worthy of our time and effort.

Although Peter had felt that way about the idolatrous and unclean Gentiles, God was going to show him the power of the gospel to break every barrier and save Cornelius and his friends and close relatives. Do you long to see God save people who seem beyond hope? We cannot pray for their salvation and refuse to witness to them. Either we will embrace

**We tend to accept  
the people who meet our  
minimum requirements and  
reject everyone else ...**

our comfort and forsake the Great Commission, or we will trust God for our security in every situation and take the gospel where He leads us. May He prepare us to say, *"By all means, Lord!"*



## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

### Denomination

Elizabethtown Christian Academy, a K-8 Christian school is accepting resumes for **School Administrator**. Mail resumes to: Elizabethtown Baptist Church, 1800 West Broad Street, Elizabethtown, NC 28337, Attention Rev. Nathan Morton.

Catawba River Baptist Association, in Morganton, NC, will be accepting resumes for **Director of Missions** through May 14, 2016. For more information see CRBA website, [www.crbanc.org](http://www.crbanc.org). If you have previously submitted a resume, please resubmit it to remain in consideration. Please send resume and cover letter to: DOM Search Committee, CRBA, 1812 US Hwy 70, East Morganton, NC 28655.

### Pastor

Southside Baptist Church of Greensboro is seeking a **Senior Pastor** to fill a vacancy since our Senior Pastor has been called for a new ministry. We are a diverse congregation seeking God's man to lead us in the coming days. If interested, please send resume to the attention of the Pastor Search Team at 1001 Greenhaven Drive, Greensboro, NC 27406, or [pastorsearch@sbcgreensboro.org](mailto:pastorsearch@sbcgreensboro.org).

Silver Creek Baptist Church, a conservative Southern Baptist church located in Mill Spring, NC, is seeking a **Full-time lead Pastor**. The congregation consists of a larger elder group with a growing children and youth group. Requirements are 35-50 years old with at least 5 years experience. You can email the resumes to [silvercreekbaptistchurch@yahoo.com](mailto:silvercreekbaptistchurch@yahoo.com) or mail them to the following address: Silver Creek Baptist Church, C/O Search Committee, PO Box 342, Mill Spring, NC 28756.

Pine Valley Baptist Church, located in Wilmington, NC, is seeking a **Senior Pastor** due to the retirement of our current pastor. Candidates should be a conservative Baptist and have at least 5 years experience as senior pastor of a Southern Baptist church and a degree from a certified Southern Baptist seminary holding at least a master's degree. A resume (with references) may be sent to PVBC, PO Box 15914, Wilmington, NC 28408, or emailed to [pinevalleypastorsearch@gmail.com](mailto:pinevalleypastorsearch@gmail.com).

Grace Baptist Church in Fayetteville, NC, is seeking an energetic **pastor** willing to work with all age groups. Send resume to Grace Baptist Church, 3901 Raeford Road, Fayetteville, NC 28304, or [gracebaptistfayetteville@yahoo.com](mailto:gracebaptistfayetteville@yahoo.com).

**SENIOR PASTOR.** FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, HARTSVILLE, SC. Thriving community with Coker College and Governor's School nearby. REQUIREMENTS: MASTERS and 5 YEARS experience AS SENIOR PASTOR or 7 YEARS AS AN ASSOCIATE. SEND RESUME and DVD to: FBC PSC, 104 E. Home Ave., Hartsville, SC 29550.

### Church Staff

First Baptist Church of Washington, North Carolina, is seeking a **Minister of Youth and Education**. This is a full-time position. College and seminary/divinity school degree preferred. Washington is located in eastern North Carolina (20 miles east of East Carolina University). See the church's website for more information about the church: [www.thefirstbaptistchurch.com](http://www.thefirstbaptistchurch.com). Send resume to Search Team, 113 N. Harvey St., Washington, NC 27889.

**Worship Leader, Part-Time Position.** First Baptist Church Kershaw, SC, is seeking a passionate, humble and experienced individual for the role of part-time worship leadership. For detailed information please go to [fbckershaw.org/welcome](http://fbckershaw.org/welcome). Email brief cover letter expressing your testimony and detailed resume to [personnel@fbckershaw.org](mailto:personnel@fbckershaw.org).

**Full-Time Minister of Music/Discipleship/Education** needed for blended worship services for a progressive and growing church affiliated with SBC in Western North Carolina. A Masters of Music, or equivalent experience, is required. Duties will include planning, developing and implementing the music program, as well as, discipleship/educational/ministry needs as directed by the church. Knowledge of current computer technology is required. Submit resumes to: Newfound Baptist Church, Attn: Search Committee, PO Box 6, Leicester, NC 28748, or reply electronically to [tomseals@att.net](mailto:tomseals@att.net). A complete job description is posted at [newfoundbaptist.com](http://newfoundbaptist.com) About New Position.

Macedonia Baptist Church, Raleigh, NC, is seeking a **part-time (16-20 Hrs/Wk) Minister to Children**. Responsibilities include leading and coordinating Bible study/discipleship/spiritual development opportunities with children, planning and facilitating children's activities and events, serving as a mentor and role model to children, recruiting and training volunteers, and developing and overseeing the children's program in general. The church is affiliated with SBC and CBF. Submit statement of faith and resume to [Ramey.Beavers@mbcnc.org](mailto:Ramey.Beavers@mbcnc.org).

**YOUTH LEADER/PASTOR.** Blackwelder Park Baptist Church seeks a part-time Youth Leader/Pastor. Send cover letter, resume, three references to Anne Corriher, Personnel, Blackwelder Park Baptist Church, 2204 Summit Ave., Kannapolis, N.C. 28081.

Mt. Elam Baptist Church, in Roseboro, NC, is seeking a **full-time Pastor for Youth and Music**. Responsibilities include leading worship on Sunday morning and weekly youth services. We are looking for someone who is willing to plant their lives in this community, in order to further the gospel work that has already been done. Mt. Elam is a family oriented Southern Baptist church located near the community of Spivey's Corner. We affiliate ourselves with the BSCNC and the New South River Baptist Association, as well as the BF&M 2000. We will be accepting resumes until June 30, 2016.

Swann Station Baptist Church (SSBC) is seeking a **part-time Music Director** to join our ministry team. We are seeking a musically gifted and mature follower of Christ with a desire to lead a cross-generational church in worship. The Music Director should possess the ability to create a diverse fusion of music including contemporary Christian, traditional hymns, and various other musical styles. Follow link to apply: <https://form.jotform.com/60218403288150>.

**Minister of Education and Youth.** First Baptist Church of Hamlet, NC, is seeking a minister to lead the educational and youth programs of the church. Seminary training and youth ministry experience are preferred but not required. The minister should be self-motivated, cooperative, creative and have a genuine love for youth of all ages. Send resume and ministry statement to [fbchamlet@yahoo.com](mailto:fbchamlet@yahoo.com) or Personnel Committee, First Baptist Church of Hamlet, P.O. Box 906, Hamlet, NC 28345.

**Children's & Youth Director.** Bunn Baptist Church in Bunn, NC, is looking for a part-time Children's & Youth Director. Duties include directing, teaching, planning and coordinating special children & youth events. Contact (252) 303-1069.

Macedonia Baptist Church, Raleigh, NC, is seeking a **part-time (16-20 Hrs/Wk) Minister to Youth**. Responsibilities include leading and coordinating Bible study/discipleship/spiritual development opportunities with youth, planning and facilitating youth activities and events, serving as a mentor and role model to youth, recruiting and training volunteers, and developing and overseeing the youth program in general. The church is affiliated with SBC and CBF. Submit statement of faith and resume to [Ramey.Beavers@mbcnc.org](mailto:Ramey.Beavers@mbcnc.org).

Green Street Baptist Church is seeking a **full-time Student Pastor** to provide leadership to 200+ middle and high school students. Seminary and at least 5 years ministry experience preferred. Submit resumes to [kristi@greenstreet.org](mailto:kristi@greenstreet.org) or 1701 Westchester Dr. Ste. 620, High Point, NC 27262.

Western Prong Baptist Church of Whiteville, NC, is seeking a **full-time Youth Pastor** to promote the spiritual growth of students grades 7-12. Duties would consist of the following: Primary duty to lead and plan a comprehensive youth ministry to include bible teaching, mission projects, recreational fellowship, and assist/support Pastor with administrative responsibilities. Ministerial degree preferred. Send resumes to Personnel Committee, 167 Peacock Rd, Whiteville, NC 28472.

### Miscellaneous

**Camp Smoky Christian Retreat, Sevierville, TN,** Rec. Field - Commercial Kitchen (no extra cost) 9 Hole Disc Golf - Sleeps 150 - Worship Center - Pool - Archery - Beautiful Campus - Great Prices!! Contact Robert Nichols at 865-603-0701 or [robert@seviercountybaptists.org](mailto:robert@seviercountybaptists.org).

**NCBAM needs handymen (or women!) for home maintenance projects.** Help aging adults enjoy quality life in their own homes. Call North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry: 877-506-2226.

**MOVED?** Don't forget to change your address with the *Biblical Recorder*. Contact Liz Tablazon at (919) 459-5693 or [liz@BRnow.org](mailto:liz@BRnow.org).

### Placing a classified ad in the *Biblical Recorder*

#### Choose one of three avenues:

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

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

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





# Missions Continued from page 1

experience, she struggled for breath as her heart raced uncontrollably. Broken prayers escaped through gasps for air.

"The living God came upon me and I found my voice and I said 'Rescue me. Deliver me. I cannot do that without you,'" Lyons remembered. "In that split second, my body broke and mid-panic attack, my body fell upon the bed."

God had answered her persistent prayers. She asked the crowd, "How many in this room need a rescuer?"

Goff offered similar encouragement in his talk, "Just receive forgiveness. Be forgiven."

His presentation, laced with humor, centered on a line from Phillipians 2:3, "*consider others as more important than yourselves.*" Repeating on numerous occasions the guiding principle of his life, "Love everybody always," Goff expanded on the idea.

He pressed attendees to love others in practical but unnatural ways.

"Find people that you just don't feel right about, you just don't understand them," he said. "And then start by getting to know their name. Even in your church there's one that's just a little odd."

"Love them and it'll change everything. They'll feel like they just met



Richard Brunson, right, president of Baptists on Mission (also known as North Carolina Baptist Men) presents Bob Stewart, center, with the 2016 Volunteer of the Year award. (BR photo by Dianna L. Cagle)

heaven."

Goff continued, "If following Jesus doesn't lead you to the poor, the hurting and the creepy people, you're not following Jesus! You're being popular. Stop it!"

Chapman's talk resembled his most popular book, *The Five Love Languages*, but he said the two were unrelated. He outlined five "languages of apology," based on another book he co-authored.

He explained different elements of remorse people expect to hear in order to accept an apology as genuine and meaningful. The essentials were expressing regret, accepting responsibility, making

restitution, genuine repenting and requesting forgiveness.

Hands-on service opportunities were offered during the conference, along with many breakout sessions that highlighted and expanded on specific aspects of ministry.

NCBM honored Robert (Bob) Stewart, member of First Baptist Church in Durham, as the 2016 Volunteer of the Year. Richard Brunson said Stewart was "instrumental in beginning our new Health Screening Ministry and getting the new Health Screening Bus."

In addition, he helped implement the International Indigenous Community Development (IICD) program in Guatemala, including the Good Shepherd Children's Home and medical center. Stewart has also worked in many other places around the world.

Visit [baptistsonmission.org](http://baptistsonmission.org). BR

# WMU Continued from page 13

Bowman highlighted some of the ministries that occur at Camp Mundo Vista and invited women to bring their church groups for retreats.

"Our camp needs you," she said. "If you want to see God; if you want to hear God; if you want to taste Him, smell Him, touch Him, be a part of the prison retreat. For those three days they have love, total, unconditional love. ... Your feet are exactly where you are on mission every single day."

Kenny Lamm, BSC worship consultant, led the music with worshipASIA band.

Some recent staff changes include:

- Jenn B\* has been added to WMU-NC staff as communications coordinator.

- Carrieanna Lohr will be the summer camp director for Camp Mundo Vista.

- Andi Wilson has been named associate for leadership development.

The ladies also collected items to fill Buckets of Hope for Baptist Global Response. Next year's meeting is March 24-25, 2017, at First Baptist Church in Greensboro.

More than 600 women participated in the weekend event.

\*Name changed because of security reasons BR

## NORTH CAROLINA BAPTIST HOSPITAL

# Mother's Day Offering

## Week of Prayer May 1-8, 2016



"Carry one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."

~ Galatians 6:2 (NIV)

The Grant Family

 Wake Forest  
Baptist Health