



ISLAM IN NORTH  
AMERICA EVENT  
URGES HOPE,  
NOT FEAR

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# BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

MAY 18, 2019 • News Journal of North Carolina Baptists • VOLUME 185 NO. 10 • **BRnow.org**

## Study: Many churchgoers make friends, not disciples

By **AARON EARLS** | LifeWay Christian Resources

**B**uilding relationships with other believers seems to come naturally to Protestant churchgoers. But a new study, released May 8, finds that for many, those relationships are built apart from Bible study and spiritual growth.

The 2019 Discipleship Pathway Assessment study from LifeWay Research found 78 percent of Protestant churchgoers say they have developed significant relationships with people at their church, including 43 percent who strongly agree.

Fewer than 1 in 10 disagree (8 percent), while 14 percent neither agree nor disagree.

The survey of Protestant churchgoers identifies building relationships as one of eight signposts that consistently show up in the lives of growing Christians. The survey, conducted Jan. 14-29, is part of the 2019 Discipleship Pathway Assessment, a larger study identifying traits of Christian discipleship.

“In an American culture in which significant relationships are hard to form, most churchgoers have had at least some success at making friends at church,” said Scott McConnell, executive director of LifeWay Research.

“But the majority aren’t as confident as they could be about the significance of those relationships.”

While there is no evidence of a gender divide in developing significant relationships at church, age does play a role in the likelihood someone has strong friendships at church.

More than 4 in 10 churchgoers 65 and older (46 percent) strongly agree they have significant relationships within the congregation compared to 38 percent of 18-34-year-olds.

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*Biblical Recorder*

**T**he 2019 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention is right around the corner. On June 11-12, and in the days preceding, Southern Baptists will gather to conduct business, be encouraged and link arms in partnership to take the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Inside this issue of the *Biblical Recorder*, readers will find practical information to aid messengers as they plan to attend the annual meeting. Page 8 contains a nearly exhaustive list of auxiliary events that occur in conjunc-

tion with the annual meeting. Many of them require registration, so follow the links provided to sign up. A program schedule for the SBC Pastors’ Conference is on page 9. There is also information about lodging and travel in an article by *The Alabama Baptist* and information about Crossover Birmingham, the SBC app and candidates who have announced reelection plans on page 9.

*Biblical Recorder* staff will be on site in Birmingham providing up-to-date coverage through our website ([BRnow.org](http://BRnow.org)) and social media accounts (@[@biblicalrecord](https://twitter.com/biblicalrecord), #SBC19). Keep an eye on those outlets for more information. We hope to see you there. **BR**

## ‘Retooled’ strategy anticipated for *Biblical Recorder*

*Biblical Recorder*

**T**he *Biblical Recorder* will launch a retooled content strategy and editorial staffing structure on June 1 in an effort to make the organization more efficient and effective in the years to come.

Seth Brown, elected by the *Recorder*’s board of directors in March to succeed Allan Blume as editor-president upon his retirement, will fill the lead role for the news journal under the new title executive editor. Brown has been content editor for the *Recorder* since 2015.

Liz Tablazon, who currently serves as circulation and social media manager, will step into the role of assistant editor and oversee the *Recorder*’s digital platforms, including the website ([BRnow.org](http://BRnow.org)), e-newsletter and social media accounts.

“News happens at a faster pace than ever, and the *Biblical Recorder*’s online tools are the tip of the spear when it comes to news coverage,” Brown said. “We have embraced a digital-first content strategy as a way to acknowledge the rapidly changing media landscape and position ourselves for success in the future.”

Dianna Cagle, the current production editor, will also bear the title assistant editor and continue to manage production of the *Recorder*’s historic print edition. Founded in 1833, the *Recorder* currently has the longest-running printed newspaper among Southern Baptist news agencies nationwide.

“Our goal is for the print edition to be the best it’s ever been,” Brown said. “While a bi-weekly print edition is no longer the fastest way to communicate with North Carolina Baptists, it continues to have immense value as a strategic communication tool.”

Brown cited a recent survey conducted by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina that found more than 72 percent of respondents receive information about the state convention through the *Recorder*’s print edition.

“Our job is to provide reliable information, because trust is what fuels our voluntary partnerships as North Carolina Baptists. Journalism is our process, but trust is our product. I pray all that we do here at the *Recorder* helps us fulfill that purpose, as we strive to be good stewards of our resources and faithful partners to our local churches.” **BR**



# Baptist associations: A valuable partner in ministry

Recently I had the honor and privilege of attending our annual conference for associational mission strategists (AMS) and potential associational mission strategists at Caraway Conference Center. The theme of this year's event was "Moving into a New Future: Sowing and Reaping."

You may know associational mission strategists by other names, such as directors of missions (DOMs) or associational missionaries. In conjunction with last year's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Dallas, the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders unanimously approved a recommendation to change the titles of directors of missions to associational mission strategists to better reflect the

nature and scope of their work.

No matter what they're called, associational mission strategists and the 77 local Baptist associations in our state have played and continue to play a vital role in our statewide strategy to impact lostness through disciple-making. We as Southern Baptists value cooperative ministry and missions endeavors at the local, state, national and international level, and AMSs and local associations are valuable partners in ministry.

Chances are the local association in your area sponsors a variety of trainings, outreach events and other opportunities for you and your church to get involved in missions and ministry. The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina also works closely with AMSs and associa-

tions to sponsor and facilitate events such as prayer gatherings, prayer walks, training events and consultations related to disciple-making, church planting, church health and revitalization, and more.

This year's AMS conference was well attended, and I was especially encouraged by the number of attendees who were interested in becoming or learning more about missions and ministry on the associational level. I was also encouraged by the testimonies of what God is doing in our local associations.

During this same conference two years ago, attendees spent time prayerfully developing a personal ministry plan and strategy for their association. At this year's conference, one associational leader reported that while developing his personal ministry plan, the Lord had impressed upon him to be more intentional



in the area of personal disciple-making with the pastors and leaders in the association where he serves.

Through this associational leader's obedience to the Lord, he has seen God grow and multiply five generations of disciples. To God be the glory!

If your church isn't connected or engaged with your local Baptist association, I would encourage you to get involved. The popular statement that we as Southern Baptists uphold is true — we can accomplish more together than we can apart.

*"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit ..."* — John 15:16a (NKJV). **BR**



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

## Why rest isn't optional for Christians on mission

By **MATTHEW HIRT** | Guest Column

I hate to rest. Rest is what lazy people do when they should be doing something productive. That was my perception, at least, when my wife and I prepared to go overseas as missionaries. I was very shocked, therefore, when we received instructions at our orientation for a spiritual retreat one afternoon.

The leader told our group, "Some of you need to go spend time in scripture." I was tracking with him on this point. He continued, "Some of you need to go spend time in prayer."

Again, that made sense. But then he said, "Some of you need to go spend time in your hammock."

I was confused. What does lounging in a hammock have to do with spiritual health?

### God's world and the rhythm of rest

For some people the perfect day might involve laying in a hammock, feeling the breeze blow and relaxing. But just thinking about that makes me anxious. There is simply too much I need to do.

That's why, in many cases, rest does not feel very relaxing. The problem is my failure to trust God's wisdom in making rest a requirement for His people.

In other words, God does not want us to go nonstop. He made this clear by building a rhythm of rest into the order of creation: "*God blessed the seventh day and declared*

*it holy, for on it he rested from all his work of creation*" (Genesis 2:3, CSB).

God also reaffirms the need for rest in the fourth commandment, which declared the Sabbath Day holy. It is a day dedicated to intentional rest from our labors (Exodus 20:8-11).

God is anything but casual about our need to rest. We do not need to fear that He will think us lazy for not working all the time.

Quite the opposite, in fact: God disciplined the Israelites when they did not rest as He had intended (Exodus 16:27-30). Why, then, do we struggle to do what God commands?

### Why we ignore what God commands

Most people understand well that laziness is a sin. After all, sloth is one of the seven deadlies, and the Bible is full of warnings against the sin of idleness and the sluggards who refuse to work.

At the same time, the Bible also warns that working harder and doing better is not the ultimate solution to our problems (cf., Isaiah 64:6; Rom. 4:4-5; 11:6; 1 Corinthians 15:10; Ephesians 2:8-9). And because we do not feel this sin with equal weight, we are prone to thinking of rest as laziness.

The trouble is that excessive work is a sin many cultures deem not only acceptable but even commendable. Someone who works eighty hours per week is consid-

ered "ambitious." Someone who never takes a vacation is considered "reliable." Someone who volunteers for every task on a mission trip or church planting team is "dedicated."

We need to be careful that we are looking at work and rest through a biblical lens, rather than our cultural lens.

### Disciples and the discipline of rest

For most people, and especially for workaholics, rest is a habit that needs to be developed. It is a discipline. Discipline comes from the Latin word meaning "instruction" and "training." It is also connected to the word disciple.

In that sense, a spiritual discipline is training necessary to be a disciple. It is training because it requires practice. But it is necessary training because resting rightly does not come naturally to us.

My first mid-term mission trip was to the Philippines. After arriving, I found out that the hour following lunch was a designated time of rest. No work could be done during that time because the people in the villages all rested simultaneously. The first few days of laying on a shaded bench were miserable for me. It was the longest hour of every day. I frequently fretted the thought of how much my family, friends, and church had spent for me to "do nothing" for an hour.

**See Rest page 15**

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# Friends

Continued from page 1

Unsurprisingly, those who attend worship services more frequently – four times a month or more – are more likely to confirm strongly they have developed such relationships than those who attend less frequently (47 percent to 33 percent).

## Relationships, not discipleship

Fewer churchgoers, however, are intentionally leveraging their relationships with other believers to help them grow in their faith.

Fewer than half of churchgoers (48 percent) agree with the statement, “I intentionally spend time with other believers to help them grow in their faith.”

This includes 19 percent who strongly agree. The same number (19 percent) disagree.

“There is a different element to relationships at church that the majority of churchgoers haven’t prioritized,” McConnell said.

“One of the ways a believer shows they have love for God is by investing in other believers. The relationship isn’t just about mutual interests; it is about proactively being interested in the faith of others.”

While older churchgoers (65 and older) are more likely to say they have significant relationships, they are less likely to strongly agree they intentionally spend time with other believers to help them grow (13 percent).

Young adults (18 to 34) are the most likely to strongly agree they are intentional about investing time in the spiritual growth of others (26 percent).

Hispanics (32 percent) are more likely to strongly agree than African Americans (22 percent), whites (17 percent) or churchgoers of other ethnicities (17 percent).

Black Protestants (24 percent) and evangelicals (21 percent) are significantly more likely than mainline Protestants (12 percent) to agree strongly they are intentional about spending time to help others grow spiritually.

While many churchgoers aren’t seeking to spend time with others to help them grow, they aren’t spending time with a small group that could benefit their own personal discipleship either.

According to the survey, 35 percent of churchgoers attend a class or small group four or more times in a typical month.

Fourteen percent attend two to three times a month. Nearly 4 in 10 (38 percent) Protestant churchgoers do not attend a class or small group in a typical month, while 13 percent attend once a month.

“For much of church history, small groups or classes have been one of the most effective ways churches offer for attendees to connect with others, study the Bible and serve together,” McConnell.

“This avenue of seeking God together is both relational and devotional.”

White churchgoers (41 percent) are more likely to say they never attend a small group of some kind than African Americans (35 percent) and Hispanics (26 percent). Mainline Protestants (48 percent) are more likely never to attend a small group than black Protestants (36 percent) and evangelicals (35 percent).

## Blessed are the peacemakers

In the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12), one group of



## Discipleship: Views on building relationships

Among U.S. Protestant churchgoers

Agree Disagree Neither

I have developed significant relationships with people at my church.



I intentionally spend time with other believers to help them grow in their faith.



I intentionally try to be a peacemaker at my church.



Note: May not equal 100% due to rounding.



LifeWayResearch.com

people Jesus described as “blessed” are the peacemakers.

Half of churchgoers (49 percent) say they intentionally try to make peace at church, including 24 percent who strongly agree.

Nearly 4 in 10 are noncommittal (38 percent), while 13 percent say they aren’t trying to be peacemakers.

“As Jesus prayed about His future followers, His priority was their unity,” McConnell said.

“It takes work to keep the peace among a group of people. Stepping in to make that happen benefits everyone in the church.”

Younger churchgoers (28 percent) are most likely to strongly agree they intentionally try to be a peacemaker.

Hispanic (34 percent) and African American churchgoers (32 percent) are more likely than white churchgoers (19 percent) to strongly agree they try to bring peace at church.

Black Protestants (32 percent) are most likely to strongly agree they try to be peacemakers followed by evangelicals (24 percent) and mainline Protestants (16 percent).

Building relationships is one of eight signposts measured in the Discipleship Pathway Assessment and addressed in LifeWay’s Bible Studies for Life curriculum. For more information, visit [DiscipleshipPathwayAssessment.com](http://DiscipleshipPathwayAssessment.com).

## Methodology

The online survey of 2,500 Protestant churchgoers was conducted Jan. 14–29. Respondents were screened to include those who identified as Protestant/non-denominational and attend religious services at least once a month. Quotas and slight weights were used to balance gender, age, region, ethnicity, income and denominational affiliation. The completed sample is 2,500 surveys. The sample provides 95 percent confidence that the sampling error does not exceed plus or minus 2.0 percent. Margins of error are higher in subgroups.

LifeWay Research is a Nashville-based evangelical research firm that specializes in surveys about faith in culture and matters that affect churches. For more information on the study, visit [LifeWayResearch.com](http://LifeWayResearch.com) or view the complete report. **BR**



# Day of prayer helps communities heal, ‘love one another’

By DIANA CHANDLER | Baptist Press

**P**rayer saturated America through tens of thousands of gatherings held on National Day of Prayer (NDP) May 2, many of them in communities healing from tragedy.

Participation estimates are being tabulated following the annual observance that included 56,000 events in 2018 and enjoys the support of NDP coordinators and volunteers in each state, according to the NDP Task Force website.

“Thousands of volunteers paid a great price to lead and serve National Day of Prayer observances all over the nation last Thursday,” NDP Task Force Chairman Ronnie Floyd told Baptist Press (BP). “They are the most important people in this grassroots prayer movement that happens one day a year for our nation. Thanks to all of them.”

“The more we involve people praying for America, the more people that will carry the burden of our nation on their heart,” Floyd said. “This will eventually move us to seeking God in extraordinary ways and doing all we can to advance the gospel across America.”

Events were held at churches, businesses, government offices and other venues.

In an 8 a.m. prayer gathering at the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee (EC) building, EC staff offered prayers for specific concerns in the nation, churches and communities. Hours later at noon, the EC building hosted an annual NDP prayer meeting sponsored by Operation Andrew Group.

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee, Nashville Mayor David Briley and Metro Nashville Police Chief Steve Anderson were among attendees. EC interim president Augie Boto prayed individually for each of the leaders during the event.

“Love One Another,” this year’s theme, resonated nationally.

## San Diego

In San Diego, NDP was observed just days after a gunman killed one and injured three others at Chabad of Poway synagogue in Poway, Calif. Southern Baptists were among those attending community and church prayer gatherings, said Michael Carlisle, San Diego Southern Baptist Association (SDSBA) director of missions.

“We had really great communication of churches that were participating with the regional events,” Carlisle told BP. “We actually participated with four different events in addition to our churches having National Day of Prayer activities.”

SDSBA worked in partnership with Unite San Diego to plan the independent events that were scheduled well in advance of the April 29 shooting at Chabad of Poway synagogue. But prayer concerns included the synagogue tragedy, Carlisle told BP.

“It’s an attempt to really bring the body of Christ together,” Carlisle said of the prayer gatherings. “We have so much more in common in a world of division.”

Darrow Perkins, pastor of Mesa View Baptist Church just two miles from the synagogue, hosted a 7 a.m. NDP prayer conference call.

“In that prayer call we were obviously praying ... to ask God to bring the community together so that we can in fact coexist,” he told BP, “and recognize each church and group’s individuality.”

The community is beginning to heal from the shoot-



A woman lifts her hands in worship during the National Day of Prayer observance May 2 in the U.S. Capitol. (Photo by Bud Sullins)

ing that killed 60-year-old Lori Gilbert Kaye and injured Rabbi Yisroel Goldstein and two others.

“I think the community is starting to bounce back,” he said of the synagogue shooting. “We’re starting to take the steps to heal with the family of the lady who was killed, and to come together as a community to work together through things like this.”

“Being a person of prayer, I do know that there’s power in prayer especially when the people of God come together and pray corporately,” Perkins said. “I wanted to make sure we had something to do with it as a church, so that we could see the power of God being manifested before our eyes.”

## St. Landry Parish, La.

NDP observances in St. Landry Parish, La., occurred just weeks after three black Baptist churches were destroyed by arson that authorities have termed a hate crime.

Nearby First Baptist Church of Opelousas lifted up

the churches during a prayer service from 9–10 a.m. that primarily focused on racial unity, pastor Perry C. Hubbs told BP.

“If there’s any day we can come together in prayer, [NDP] ought to be the day that we do that, regardless of race or even religion,” Hubbs said of NDP observances in the city that is 80 percent African American and majority Catholic.

“We want [these church members] to know that we support them ... and we want them to realize that whoever did those fires ... is not reflective of all of us in the community,” Hubbs said. “We’re together with them to support them 100 percent in their recovery.”

Hubbs’ pastorate, which averages about 300 in Sunday worship, has already raised funds to help the churches rebuild, he said.

Mount Pleasant and Greater Union Baptist churches in Opelousas and St. Mary Baptist Church in Port Barre lost their buildings in the fires in March and April. No deaths were reported. **BR**

*Biblical Recorder* readers are invited to join  
in celebrating the retirement  
of Rev. Allan Blume



Saturday, June 1  
2-4 p.m. (floating)

First Baptist Church dining hall  
218 S. Academy St., Cary, NC 27511



# Islam in North America event urges hope, not fear

By BRANDON ELROD | NAMB

**B**y the year 2050, the Muslim population in North America is reportedly projected to double. That figure might trouble some people in the United States, but pastor Micah Fries believes Christians have no reason to be concerned.

The North American Mission Board hosted an event on May 2, in Alpharetta, Ga., based on Fries' and Keith Whitfield's book *Islam and North America: Loving our Muslim Neighbors*.

Nearly 40 attended in person and roughly 300 individuals and locations joined by simulcast.

"If you ask the average American Christian to tell us what percentage of the U.S. is Muslim," said Fries, pastor of Brainerd Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tenn., "the vast majority give you a number from 10, 15, even 20 percent.

"The truth is, it's one percent. Projections estimate it will grow to 2.1 percent by 2050."

That statistic is one example of the misconceptions about Islam that tend to generate fear and confusion, preventing Christians from loving their Muslim neighbors well, Fries said.

The anxiety that regularly appears in the media spurred Fries and Whitfield, associate professor of theology at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS), to compile their book.

"Our desire is to create a conversation to help people see and become aware of an opportunity and encourage them to" seize the opportunity to reach their

Muslim neighbors, Whitfield said ahead of the conference.

The event included speakers who contributed to the book: Kambiz Saghaey, director of Persian studies at SEBTS; Ed Stetzer, director of the Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College in Chicago; Bob Roberts, pastor of Northwood Church in Keller, Texas; Andy DeFelice, director of Moriah International; Bart Barber of First Baptist Church, Farmersville, Texas; along with Whitfield and Fries.

Topics ranged from the benefits of more multi-faith dialogue, clearing up misunderstandings about Islam, the need for religious liberty for all faiths and methods for sharing the gospel with Muslims.

Stetzer shared about his experiences as a researcher and participant in inter-faith dialogue that led him to rethink how interactions between people of different faiths take place.

"For years, many people of various faiths have promoted 'interfaith dialogue' in order to discover common ground and work together for humanity's sake," said Stetzer. "That sounds good, until we start digging below the surface."

Stetzer and Roberts, in their respective talks, discussed the need for believers in different faiths to be honest about the distinctions.

"Pretending that we all believe the same thing does not foster dialogue but in fact prohibits it," Stetzer said.

Both Stetzer and Roberts described how honesty and genuine love has opened doors to build relationships with Muslims around the world and opened



Micah Fries, pastor of Brainerd Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tenn., spoke Thursday (May 2) during an event about Islam and North America, which focused on equipping Christians to love and share their faith with their Muslim neighbors. (NAMB photo by Micaiah Davis)

doors to share the gospel.

Fries, who has led his church to reach out to the Muslim community in Chattanooga, has seen several Muslims come to Christ. He also emphasized that Christians should not simply see the Muslim community as a project.

"We're not doing this just because we want people to come to Christ. We value individuals whether they come to Jesus or not," he said. "We want them to know that we value you as created in the image of God."

David Tucker of ChristWay Church in Chattanooga was among those who attended the event.

"What this [event] has been amazing

at is taking a concern that we know we should all have in terms of engaging with our neighbors, starting to make some of that real but making sure that, in doing so, we keep our theology where it needs to be," he said.

Meredith Ringwalt traveled from Rome, Ga., with a group from Three Rivers Church to participate in the conference. She said that she has several Muslim neighbors where she lives, and the event encouraged her in sharing God's Word and to trust that His Spirit will do the work.

The North American Mission Board will share video from the conference once it becomes available. **BR**

## Father barred from calling daughter 'she'

By DAVID ROACH | Baptist Press

**A** father in Canada has committed "family violence," according to a Canadian court, for referring to his teenage daughter as a female in spite of her desire to transition to a male gender identity.

The Supreme Court of Canada's British Columbia province issued a "protection order" barring the father from referring to his daughter publicly or privately by her birth name or female pronouns. He also was barred from "attempting to persuade [her] to abandon" her gender transition, according to an April 15 court ruling. The father and daughter both are referenced only by their initials in court documents, which apply masculine pronouns to the girl.

The teen "is an at-risk family member who is highly vulnerable," Justice Francesca Marzari wrote. "I find that [her] father's expressions of rejection of [her] gender identity, both publicly and privately, constitutes family violence against [her]. Finally, I find that [the father's] conduct in this regard is persistent and

unlikely to cease in the absence of a clear order to restrain it."

The daughter is 14 years old and has identified as a male since age 11, according to a previous British Columbia Supreme Court ruling in the case. With her mother's help, the teen sought medical assistance with a gender transition in early 2018. The parents are separated and have joint custody of the teen, according to media reports.

After a Canadian doctor said he would begin testosterone injections on the girl without parental consent, the father asked a Canadian court to intervene, the conservative publication *The Federalist* reported. In February, British Columbia Supreme Court Justice Gregory Bowden, rejected the father's plea, ordering that the teen receive testosterone injections. Bowden further ordered that "attempting to persuade [the teen] to abandon treatment for gender dysphoria; addressing [her] by [her] birth name; referring to [her] as a girl or with female pronouns whether to [her] directly or to third parties; shall be considered to be family violence." **BR**

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## Artist, truck driver calls offering a ‘blessing’

Wake Forest Baptist Health

**L**ife was looking black for Larry Hoskins ... literally. An ordinary summer day weed-eating the yard was cut short when a piece of broken cord flew up and sliced across his cornea. In a moment, he lost most of the sight in that eye.

A corneal transplant was followed by weekly check-ups, procedures and injections. A professional truck driver, Larry lost his income because he couldn't keep his commercial driver's license – he had to have both eyes to drive an 18-wheeler. An artist, he worried he would lose his ability to paint pictures. Then, he lost his financial footing.

While his wife worked to keep the family afloat, it was a dark time.

“It was a nightmare,” he said. “The bills were horrifying, so bad I thought I should just risk losing the eye because of the expense.”

But while his eyesight was weak, his faith was strong.

“Most of it was having the confidence that I could ask and He would help,” he said.

The Mother's Day Offering helped ease the burden of medical bills.

“Amazing is not a strong enough word,” Hoskins said. “It's a blessing from God that there is such an organization. The fear of losing my sight was a nightmare. You can have fear and be terrified because you don't have insurance, worried thinking you will be turned away. Not with Baptist Hospital. I am so glad I found out about the Mother's Day Offering.”

Today, Hoskins is seeing clearly ... and his eyes are firmly fixed on his goals. He's back at work, and he's



Larry Hoskins is thankful for North Carolina Baptists gifts to the Mother's Day Offering. (Screen capture)

back to expressing himself as an artist, painting oil landscapes on canvas and panels.

“I'm very excited about my blessings,” he said. “I can continue painting and they are getting better and better. My theme is painting God's creation. I do it because everything I see, He created, and I am blessed that I can

see it. Till I got this help from the Mother's Day Offering, I was willing to give up my eye. The offering is helping me keep my vision. Thank you!”

The Mother's Day Offering started in 1924 to help patients of the hospital.

Visit [mothersdayoffering.org](http://mothersdayoffering.org). **BR**

## Floyd names Upton as assistant to the president

By **ART TOALSTON** | Baptist Press

**R**onnie Floyd, who will assume office as president/CEO of the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) Executive Committee (EC) on May 20, has named Ed Upton as assistant to the president.

Upton, 38, has been president of the Cross Church School of Ministry in northwest Arkansas since May 2017. He served as campus pastor for Cross Church's campus in Neosho, Mo., from 2015-2017.

Floyd, elected as the EC's president/CEO April 2 in Dallas, has led Cross Church since 1986. He was SBC president from 2014-2016 and is a former chairman of the Executive Committee.

In a description of the role of assistant

to the president, Floyd said Upton will “forward and advance the vision, the values, the culture, and the priorities of the president to the Executive Committee staff team and members, as well as all of our partners in the Southern Baptist Convention.”

Floyd, in comments to Baptist Press, noted, “Dr. Ed Upton loves the gospel and loves the Great Commission. He wants to do all he can in his late 30s to help our convention be all we need to be today and in the future.”

Upton has excelled in leadership “by already investing in the generation around him and the generation behind him, building great leaders and teams of leaders,” Floyd said.

“Dr. Upton walked near me when I served as president of the Southern

Baptist Convention and, through his role as the president of our Cross Church School of Ministry, he has become highly connected with leaders in most of our SBC entities. Additionally, through his close work with me as president of the National Day of Prayer Task Force, he has also become highly connected with many evangelical leaders,” said Floyd, who has led the task force since 2017.

Upton, prior to his service at Cross Church, was minister to adults at Prestonwood Baptist Church's north campus in Prosper, Texas, from 2012-2015 and minister to single adults at Prestonwood's main campus in Plano from 2010-2012. In 2008-2009, he worked as special events project manager for Walmart's information systems division in Bentonville, Ark.

Upton earned doctor of ministry and master of divinity degrees from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., in 2014 and 2010, respectively, and an undergraduate degree in counseling from Freedom Bible College in Rogers, Ark. in 2007.

Floyd founded the Cross Church School of Ministry in 2013, now with 45 participants currently enrolled, and to date more than 100 graduates. According to its website, it is a “one-year residential ministry experience that prepares leaders for life, ministry, and gospel advancement globally,” complementing university and seminary education that participants have already received or may yet receive.

Upton and his wife Eleanor have four children ranging in age from 5 to 18. **BR**



# Sex abuse to be ERLC's national conference focus

By TOM STRODE | Baptist Press

**T**he crisis of sexual abuse in churches has convinced the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) to change the topic of its 2019 national conference.

The ERLC announced April 30 the theme of this fall's event will be "Caring Well: Equipping the Church to Confront the Abuse Crisis." The conference – offered in partnership with the SBC Sexual Abuse Presidential Advisory Study Oct. 3-5 at the Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center in Grapevine, Texas – will focus on preventing sexual abuse in churches and ministering to survivors of such abuse.

The ERLC had previously announced this year's conference would be on "Gospel Courage: Truth and Justice in a Divided World." News reports and developments within the convention in recent months regarding sex abuse persuaded the entity to alter the theme.

The ERLC "came to a realization" as it planned a conference on gospel courage, the entity's president, Russell Moore, said.

"That is, the scourge of sexual abuse in churches is the very embodiment of the need for gospel courage," Moore said in an April 30 news release. "Combating abuse takes clear eyes, resolute focus and a willingness to engage in painful, complicated questions. This is a critical season for churches seeking to address this crisis."

"As we thought about this, we realized if we want to talk about courage, then we owed it to our churches and the world around us to talk about courage in light of this area of great need," he said. "So that's what we're going to do. I look forward to this event with the hope that it will be one more step toward combating the satanic evil of sexual abuse."

Speakers at the sixth annual conference will include Moore and:

- Rachael Denhollander, attorney, advocate and abuse survivor who was the

first gymnast to go public with charges against USA Gymnastics team doctor and serial abuser Larry Nassar, who is serving life in prison.

- J.D. Greear, SBC president and pastor of The Summit Church in the Raleigh-Durham, N.C., area, who initiated the SBC Sexual Abuse Presidential Advisory Study.

- Beth Moore, popular Bible teacher with Living Proof Ministries and survivor of childhood sexual abuse.

- Gary Haugen, founder and chief executive officer of International Justice Mission, the world's largest anti-slavery organization.

- Diane Langberg, psychologist and speaker who is widely recognized for her 45 years of work with trauma and abuse victims.

- Jackie Hill Perry, poet, speaker and artist with Humble Beast Records.

- Jennifer Michelle Greenberg, writer, music artist and abuse survivor.

Other speakers will include experts on sexual abuse, survivors of abuse, advo-

cates for victims and pastors, according to the ERLC. Among the topics addressed by speakers, panels and breakout sessions will be sexual abuse and the SBC; listening to survivors; lamenting abuse; caring well for victims as a church; partnering with law enforcement and social services; church practices; response protocols; and theological and church polity issues.

Sexual abuse already was a significant issue in the SBC, but a February investigative series by the *Houston Chronicle*, joined by the *San Antonio Express-News*, revealed some of the extent of the problem in the convention. The investigation found 220 pastors and other leaders in Southern Baptist churches who had been convicted of or taken plea deals in sex crimes involving more than 700 victims.

A new curriculum – "Becoming a Church That Cares Well for the Abused" – will be unveiled at the SBC annual meeting June 11-12 in Birmingham, Ala., as a result of the partnership between the ERLC and the advisory study. **B3**

## ERLC's Moore launches YouTube channel

By TOM STRODE | Baptist Press

**S**outhern Baptist ethicist Russell Moore launched a YouTube channel May 7 to address a variety of theological and cultural issues.

The YouTube channel featuring Moore, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC), opened with a series titled "On the Issues," according to a news release from the entity. The series – which will offer a weekly examination of significant ethical, social, political and theological topics – went live with five short videos. The subjects include anti-Semitism, fake news, the video game Fortnite and the meaning of life. New episodes will be available on Tuesdays.

In a second series to kick off later in May, Moore will provide analysis of a recent, overlooked development in the

news on "One Thing You Missed." New episodes will appear on Fridays.

Moore said in a video introducing the channel he would be "answering your questions about everything from 'Do animals go to heaven?' to extraterrestrials." He also will address questions "about morality and ethics and politics, whatever is on your mind," Moore said.

The channel ([youtube.com/drmoore](https://youtube.com/drmoore)) is intended to help Christians see issues from a biblical perspective and to provide a means for non-Christians and skeptics to be introduced to Christian teaching.

"YouTube has consistently grown to be a place where important conversations are happening and, importantly, where more and more people are turning to for answers," said Daniel Patterson, the ERLC's vice president for operations and chief of staff. **B3**

## Moore's *Storm-Tossed Family* honored by ECPA

By TOM STRODE | Baptist Press

**R**ussell Moore's *The Storm-Tossed Family* has received another award – this time from the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association (ECPA).

The book by the president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) won the 2019 Christian Book Award in the Faith & Culture category, the ECPA announced April 30 at its awards celebration in Chicago. The ECPA – an international, non-profit organization consisting of publishers and distributors of Christian content – annually names its best book in 12 categories and one overall winner.

*Christianity Today* previously named Moore's book – fully titled *The Storm-Tossed Family: How the Cross Reshapes the Home* – as its 2019 Book of the Year. B&H Publishing Group, a division of LifeWay Christian Resources, released the book in September 2018.

Jennifer Lyell, B&H's vice president of book publishing and merchandising, said, "Dr. Moore is an incomparable writer, thinker and leader. Working alongside him on books that are culture-shaping and life-changing is an honor."

"Watching his efforts be so consistently recognized by readers and the publishing industry is exactly as it should be," Lyell said in an ERLC release. "We are very proud of *The Storm-Tossed Family* and the recognition it received by [the] ECPA."

Moore's book *Onward: Engaging the Culture Without Losing the Gospel* was *Christianity Today's* 2016 Book of the Year. *The Storm-Tossed Family* has gained a rating of 4.6 of a possible 5 stars at Amazon.

The book offers guidance on the family in the context of the atoning death of Jesus, spiritual warfare and the church, while it addresses the topics of marriage, sexuality, divorce, children, parenting, household tensions and aging. **B3**

### Annual HISTORICAL WRITING / MULTI-MEDIA COMPETITION

\$500 AWARDED TO WINNERS

recognized at BSCNC Annual meeting in November

#### CATEGORIES:

- Church History - Written and or Multimedia
- Association History
- Biography, Autobiography, Memoirs and Personal Reflection

Entries should be released in 2018 or 2019. All entries become property of the Baptist State Convention.

Mail 2 copies to:  
Baptist State Convention, Historical Committee  
PO Box 1107  
Cary, NC 27512-1107

The Deadline for submission is July 31, 2019  
Contact Penny Cozadd at  
(800) 395-5102, ext. 5618  
or [pcozadd@ncbaptist.org](mailto:pcozadd@ncbaptist.org)

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2019 SBC ANNUAL MEETING EVENTS

2019 SBC PASTORS’ CONFERENCE

June 9-10  
Legacy Arena  
Visit [SBCPC.net](http://SBCPC.net)

9MARKS @ 9

June 10 & 11, 9 p.m.  
BJCC Theater  
Registration: [bit.ly/9Marks9](http://bit.ly/9Marks9)

ACTEENS FOR LIFE

June 7, 6 p.m.  
WMU National Office  
Registration: [wmu.com/acteensforlife](http://wmu.com/acteensforlife)

BAPTIST 21 PANEL & LUNCHEON

June 11, 11:30 a.m.  
BJCC Concert Hall  
Registration: [bit.ly/Baptist21](http://bit.ly/Baptist21)

BIVOCATIONAL LUNCHEON

June 12, Noon  
BJCC Complex - Level 3, Forums G-H-I  
Registration: Visit the Bivocational & Small Church Leadership Network Booth in the Exhibit Hall.

CBMW PASTORS’ PANEL

June 11, 7 a.m.  
BJCC Concert Hall

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE PLENARY

June 10, 10 a.m.  
Sheraton Birmingham - Level 2, Forum Theater

FELLOWSHIP OF BAPTIST WORLD MINISTRIES

June 10, 8 a.m.  
BJCC Complex - Level 3, Forum H

FELLOWSHIP OF NATIVE AMERICAN CHRISTIANS

June 10, 10 a.m.  
Sheraton Birmingham - Level 3, Forum J

FILIPINO INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

June 11, 9 a.m.  
BJCC Concert Hall - Level 1, Ballet Rehearsal Hall

FILIPINO SOUTHERN BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP OF NORTH AMERICA

June 10, 1 p.m.  
BJCC Complex - Level 1, East Ballroom B

FOR THE CHURCH CONFERENCE

(Midwestern Seminary)  
June 11, 11:30 a.m.  
BJCC Complex - Level 1, South Exhibit Hall  
Registration: [bit.ly/ForTheChurch](http://bit.ly/ForTheChurch)

GATEWAY SEMINARY ALUMNI & FRIENDS

June 12, Noon  
BJCC Complex - Level 3, Forum J  
Registration: [bit.ly/GatewayAlum](http://bit.ly/GatewayAlum)

GATHERING OF CHINESE MESSENGERS

June 11, 3 p.m.  
BJCC Complex - Level 2, Forum E

CHILDCARE, CHILDREN & YOUTH

June 9-12  
BJCC Complex  
Registration: [sbcannualmeeting.net](http://sbcannualmeeting.net)

HISPANIC LEADERS/PASTORS CELEBRATION

June 10, 4 p.m.  
BJCC Complex - Level 3, Forums G-H-I

IMB DINNER

June 10, 4:30 p.m.  
Sheraton Birmingham - Level 1, Birmingham Ballroom  
Registration: [imb.org/events](http://imb.org/events)

LIFEWAY BREAKFAST

June 11, 6:30 a.m.  
BJCC Complex - Level 1, South Exhibit Hall  
Registration: [lifeway.com/SBCBreakfast](http://lifeway.com/SBCBreakfast)

LIFEWAY MOVIE SCREENING -

“Overcomer” by the Kendrick Brothers  
June 11, 6:30 p.m.  
BJCC Concert Hall

LUTHER RICE ALUMNI & FRIENDS

June 11, Noon  
BJCC Complex - Level 2, Forum B

MESSENGER ORIENTATION

June 10, 4:30 p.m.  
BJCC Complex - Level 2, Forum A

MID-AMERICA SEMINARY ALUMNI & FRIENDS

June 11, 11 a.m.  
Sheraton Birmingham - Level 3, Forums G-H-I  
Registration: Call 901-751-3031

MIDWESTERN SEMINARY ALUMNI & FRIENDS

June 12, Noon  
BJCC Complex - Level 1, South Exhibit Hall

MINISTERS’ WIVES LUNCHEON

June 11, Noon  
BJCC Complex - Level 2, South Meeting Rooms  
Registration: [bit.ly/WivesLuncheon](http://bit.ly/WivesLuncheon)

NAAF (NATIONAL AFRICAN-AMERICAN FELLOW-SHIP)

June 10  
6th Avenue Baptist Church

NAMB CHAPLAINS FELLOWSHIP

June 10, 3 p.m.  
BJCC Concert Hall - Level 1, Ballet Rehearsal Hall  
Registration: [bit.ly/NAMBchaplains](http://bit.ly/NAMBchaplains)

NAMB SEND LUNCHEON

June 10, 11:30 a.m.  
BJCC Concert Hall  
Registration: [sendluncheon.namb.net](http://sendluncheon.namb.net)

NATIONAL ASIAN-AMERICAN FELLOWSHIP

June 10, 7 p.m.  
BJCC Complex - Level 1, East Ballroom B

NOBTS ALUMNI & FRIENDS

June 11, 6 p.m.  
Sheraton Birmingham - Level 1, Birmingham Ballroom  
Registration: [bit.ly/NOBTSalum](http://bit.ly/NOBTSalum)

OUACHITA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY ALUMNI & FRIENDS

June 11, 4:30 p.m.  
Sheraton Birmingham - Level 2, Forum D

PASTORS’ WIVES SESSION

June 10, 9 a.m.  
BJCC Complex - Level 2, South Meeting Rooms

MESSENGER REGISTRATION/CREDENTIALS

Beginning June 9, 4 p.m.  
BJCC Complex - Level 2, East Exhibit Hall Lobby  
Pre-registration: [bit.ly/sbc\\_messenger](http://bit.ly/sbc_messenger)

SAMFORD UNIVERSITY ALUMNI & FRIENDS

June 12, 2 p.m.  
Sheraton Birmingham - Level 2, Forum A

SBC EVANGELISTS’ SOUTHWEST SUPPER SING-A-LONG

June 10, 4:30 p.m.  
Sheraton Birmingham - Level 3, Forum J

SBC OF VIRGINIA RECEPTION

June 10, 8 p.m.  
BJCC Concert Hall - Level 1, Green Room  
Registration: [bit.ly/SBCVA](http://bit.ly/SBCVA)

SBC WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP NETWORK EVENT

June 11, 8:30 p.m.  
Sheraton Birmingham - Level 2, Forum A  
Registration: [bit.ly/SBCwomen](http://bit.ly/SBCwomen)

SEXUAL ABUSE AND THE SBC PANEL (ERLC)

June 10, 9 p.m.  
BJCC Complex - Level 1, South Exhibit Hall  
Registration: [bit.ly/ERLC\\_sbc](http://bit.ly/ERLC_sbc)

SOUTHEASTERN SEMINARY ALUMNI & FRIENDS

June 12, Noon  
BJCC Complex - Level 2, South Meeting Rooms

SOUTHEASTERN SEMINARY WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP BREAKFAST

June 12, 7 a.m.  
BJCC Complex - Level 1, East Ballroom B  
Registration: [bit.ly/SEBTSwomen](http://bit.ly/SEBTSwomen)

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS OF TEXAS RECEPTION

June 10, 8:30 p.m.  
BJCC Concert Hall - Level 1, Lobby

SOUTHERN SEMINARY ALUMNI & FRIENDS

June 12, Noon  
Sheraton Birmingham - Level 1, Birmingham Ballroom  
Registration: [bit.ly/SouthernAlum](http://bit.ly/SouthernAlum)

SOUTHWESTERN SEMINARY ALUMNI & FRIENDS

June 12, Noon  
Sheraton Birmingham - Level 1, Birmingham Ballroom  
Registration: [swbts.edu/sbclunch](http://swbts.edu/sbclunch)

TENNESSEE BAPTIST MESSENGER FELLOWSHIP

June 10, 8:30 p.m.  
Sheraton Birmingham - Level 2, Forum B

UNION UNIVERSITY ALUMNI & FRIENDS TACO BUFFET

June 11, 5 p.m.  
Cantina Laredo Restaurant

WMU GENERAL SESSIONS & DESSERT PARTY

June 9, 3-5 p.m.  
The Church at Brook Hills  
Registration: [bit.ly/WMUgeneral](http://bit.ly/WMUgeneral)

WMU MISSIONS CELEBRATION

June 10, 9 p.m.  
WMU National Office  
Registration: [wmu.com/birmingham](http://wmu.com/birmingham)

WOMEN & WORK: STEPPING INTO KINGDOM PRODUCTIVITY

June 11, 7 p.m.  
Sheraton Birmingham - Level 2, Forum Theater  
Registration: [bit.ly/women\\_work\\_forum](http://bit.ly/women_work_forum)

YOUTH ON MISSION

June 11, 8 a.m.  
BJCC Complex - Level 3, East Meeting Room F  
Registration: [tinyurl.com/2019-YOM](http://tinyurl.com/2019-YOM)



## 2019 SBC PASTOR'S CONFERENCE TO PREACH 'KINGDOM CHARACTER'

Baptist Press

This year's Southern Baptist Convention Pastors' Conference June 9-10 will center on the theme "Kingdom character" and feature speakers who exemplify the character traits noted in Matthew 5:1-16.

Pastors' Conference President Danny Wood said, "We as a convention, and really Christian ministries in general, have had some real struggles with some character issues. We want this to be a needed reminder to all of us about the character of Christ-followers, because we know our conduct grows out of our character."

Wood is pastor of Shades Mountain Baptist Church in Birmingham.

Below is a schedule of speakers. Visit [sbpcpc.net](http://sbpcpc.net) for more information.

### Sun., June 9, 6 p.m.

- Robert Smith, Charles T. Carter Baptist Chair of Divinity, Beeson Divinity School, Birmingham, Ala.
- Jay and Katherine Wolf, evangelists, Atlanta
- Ed Litton, pastor, Redemption Church, Mobile, Ala.

### Mon., June 10, 9 a.m.

- David Platt, pastor, McLean Bible Church, Washington, D.C.
- Russell Moore, president, Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, Nashville

- Martin Young, senior minister, Rising Brook Community Church, Staffordshire, U.K.

### Mon., June 10, 1:30 p.m.

- Ben Mandrell, pastor, Storyline Fellowship, Denver
- Dhati Lewis, pastor, Blueprint Church, Atlanta; vice president of the Send Network, North American Mission Board, Alpharetta, Ga.

### Mon., June 10, 6 p.m.

- Andrew Brunson, American pastor imprisoned two years in Turkey on disputed charges of terrorism and espionage
- Jimmy Scroggins, pastor, Family Church, West Palm Beach, Fla. **BR**

## CROSSOVER BIRMINGHAM

TOBIN PERRY | NAMB

As Southern Baptists from across the country make plans for the SBC annual meeting in June, they're also preparing to engage more than 20,000 homes with the gospel through Crossover activities.

The North American Mission Board (NAMB) and Alabama State Board of Missions will mobilize 400 teams of volunteers to knock on 20,000 doors in the metro Birmingham area on Sat., June 8.

"This year we have a really simplified approach that will help us make as big of a concentrated push as we can make in one day," said Joel Southerland of NAMB's evangelism team. "We already have student pastors bringing students, and pastors who are bringing van loads of volunteers, because it can all be done in one day."

Teams interested in participating can arrive on Friday night, get trained on Saturday morning, and then go out on the streets to share the gospel that day, Southerland said.

Johnny Hunt, NAMB vice president of evangelism and a former SBC president, and Bill Fay, author of *Share Jesus without Fear*, will train volunteers June 5 in how to have gospel conversations. The training rally, simulcast at other local Alabama Baptist churches, will be held at The Church at Brook Hills. That same training will be available via video at seven "hub churches" throughout metro Birmingham on June 8. A hub church in each of seven associations in and around Birmingham will serve as a base of operations on June 8, said Sammy Gilbreath, Alabama Baptists' state director of evangelism.

Gilbreath noted that Birmingham has a metropolitan population of 1 million people, with 2 million living within

30 minutes of the city. As in previous Crossover events, Southern Baptist seminary students will partner with local churches for door-to-door evangelism in Birmingham throughout the week prior to the main outreach and will be a part of the 400 teams blanketing metro Birmingham on June 8.

For three decades in Crossover initiatives, NAMB has partnered with state Baptist conventions and Baptist associations to engage the communities hosting the annual SBC meeting. To register for Crossover Birmingham, visit [namb.net/events/crossover-birmingham](http://namb.net/events/crossover-birmingham). **BR**

## 2019 SBC CANDIDATES



J.D. GREEAR



JOHN YEATS

At press time, there were two announced candidates for reelection to offices for the Southern Baptist Convention, from left: J.D. Greear, president, and John Yeats, recording secretary. Check [BRnow.org](http://BRnow.org) for updates. **BR**

## SBC APP

DIANA CHANDLER | Baptist Press

Closed captions will be available in 21 languages during the 2019 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Annual Meeting live-stream and on the SBC mobile app, an expansion from three languages offered in 2018.

SBC Executive Committee President-elect Ronnie Floyd champions the language expansion as a major advancement in diversity and in spreading the gospel globally.

"I believe the Southern Baptist Convention must have the clear vision of becoming the most multigenerational, multiethnic, and multilingual denomination in the United States that is committed to presenting the gospel of Jesus Christ to every person in the world and making disciples of all the nations," Floyd said. "When our Executive Committee staff team heard this vision, they began to pursue a way to increase our capacity to offer closed captioning."

During all sessions of the SBC Pastors' Conference and the SBC annual meeting, closed captions will be available in Arabic, traditional Chinese, English, Filipino, French, German, Haitian Creole, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Thai, Ukrainian and Vietnamese.

"If we want to reach this nation and the world with the gospel, then we must do all we can to communicate with as many people as possible in the language they can understand," Floyd said.

The closed captioning services will all be available through the 2019 SBC Mobile App and directly by linking to [ccproductions.com/sbc/](http://ccproductions.com/sbc/). The app is available in online app stores.

"Users will be able to simply select the Closed Captioning Icon on the dashboard of the 2019 SBC Mobile App and when the closed captioning stream opens up," Townes said, "they will be able to select from 21 different languages ... ." **BR**

## 2019 SBC LODGING INFORMATION

GRACE THORNTON | *The Alabama Baptist*

Want to attend the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting in Birmingham this year, but you live just far enough away that you need a place to stay? Here are a few of options for how to stay in the Magic City if lodging has not already been secured.

### Book a convention hotel

The SBC annual meeting website lists 36 hotels that offered special rates through May 14. Hotels range in distance from adjacent to the convention center to 14 miles away. The convention management team is working to implement a plan for hotel shuttles and park-and-ride lots from local churches. More details are forthcoming.

Why are there so many options this year? The SBC Executive Committee discovered last year that the Sheraton downtown – set to be the convention hotel – would be renovating a tower of 300 rooms during the annual meeting. Parking

and transportation also became more of a challenge with the closure and rebuilding of I-20/59 over downtown Birmingham this year, but SBC leaders say the shuttle system should help alleviate that.

To check out the list of convention hotels, distances and prices or to make an online reservation, visit [sbcanual-meeting.net/sbc19/hotels](http://sbcanual-meeting.net/sbc19/hotels).

### Check out other options

If for some reason you can't find a convention hotel that works, you might try going a little farther up the road to Trussville or Leeds and exploring hotels in that area. *Hotels.com* pulls up several options for under \$100, and you could still take advantage of one of the park-and-ride lots at a church so you wouldn't have to deal with parking downtown.

### Try an AirBNB

If you aren't already familiar with AirBNB, it's an online site where people post photos of their home and allow you

to request to stay there for a standard rate like a hotel. Just like every person's house is different, every arrangement is different – you can rent a bedroom in someone's house, a detached mother-in-law suite or a whole house or apartment.

This option may be out of your comfort zone, but it's not as unusual these days as it sounds – 6 million people a year travel this way.

In fact, so many AirBNB hosts have gone out of the way to make their home a great place to stay that many people now prefer this to a hotel stay.

Interested in giving it a try? Each homeowner is heavily peer-reviewed, sometimes by hundreds of guests, and you can read what people have to say about their experience before you book.

Who knows? You might end up getting an opportunity to share Jesus with your host while you're here too.

To check it out, visit [airbnb.com](http://airbnb.com).

(EDITOR'S NOTE – This article originally appeared in *The Alabama Baptist*. Used by permission.) **BR**



# Women on ‘Unshakable Pursuit’

By DIANNA L. CAGLE | BR Production Editor

“We’re on an unshakeable pursuit of God and His mission,” said Sandy Wisdom-Martin, executive director-treasurer of national Woman’s Missionary Union (WMU) based in Birmingham, Ala., to the 479 Missions Extravaganza participants. “God’s best for us always lies just beyond our comfort zone.”

While the WMU leader served as the main speaker for Woman’s Missionary Union of North Carolina (WMU-NC) event April 26-27, Teresa Harmening, music minister at Leesville Baptist Church in Bagwell, Texas, led the music.

Based on 1 Corinthians 15:58, the theme for the 128th annual meeting was “Unshakable Pursuit: Stand Firm and Don’t Be Shaken.”

“God is drawing us to the future that He has for us,” Wisdom-Martin said.

“We do what we do because we believe the world needs to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ and we have a responsibility to take the gospel to the nations.”

There are three characteristics needed for believers: courage, passion and humility, she said.

“I believe, along with prayer and courage, I honestly believe that walking humbly will move us down the road,” she said.

Wisdom-Martin urged the women to pursue God “with everything we have” even when “we feel like we don’t measure up.”

While all are unworthy, Wisdom-Martin said the first step is to confess brokenness to God. Add to that, rethinking success and listening more to the voice of God than those around you.

“God is more concerned with your faithfulness and obedience than He is about your ambition and your accomplishments,” she said. “Stop comparing yourself to others.”

She thanked the women for their history and their future.

“We’re so proud of the legacy that North Carolina WMU has left at national WMU,” she said.

## Fannie Heck

Hunt spoke about her new book, *Out of Exile: Fannie Heck and the Rest of the Story*, on the life of Fannie Exile Scudder Heck.

Heck was instrumental in the beginning of WMU and missionary societies in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

“More than any other one woman, Fannie Heck has shaped Woman’s Missionary Union as we have it today,” Hunt said.

Heck created the idea of themes for annual meetings and the missionary prayer calendar.

“Plan not for the year but for the years,” Hunt quoted Heck, whose name is used for the Heck Jones Offering each year for WMU-NC. Sallie Bailey Jones is the other woman named in that offering.

## WMU-NC business

The WMU-NC business meeting occurred during the Saturday morning session of the meeting. Participants passed the 2019 budget totaling \$665,918.

The biggest difference from the \$935,031 budget of 2018 is in the Camp Mundo Vista operation costs, which made up \$291,798 in the 2018 budget.

With just one month of those expenses in January



Cheering for the Heck-Jones Offering got participants out of the pew during the 128th annual Woman’s Missionary Union of North Carolina Missions Extravaganza. The two-day event was held at Trinity Baptist Church in Raleigh. “We’re so proud of the legacy that North Carolina WMU has left at national WMU,” said Sandy Wisdom-Martin, national WMU executive director-treasurer. (BR photo by Dianna L. Cagle)

2019, the cost for WMU-NC was \$26,091.

On Feb. 1 WMU-NC returned operational control of the camp to the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), who owns the land the organization rented annually for 50 years.

Caraway Conference Center and Camp, also owned by BSC will operate and maintain the camp. WMU-NC owns the buildings on the land. Camp Mundo Vista took up one-third of WMU-NC’s budget. WMU-NC plans to continue to hold its board meetings at the camp as well as to support a variety of camps and retreats at the site near Sophia.

One of the major changes was to the by-laws allowing for current president Dee Dee Moody and vice president Deborah Taylor to be approved for a fifth year, a change suggested because of the expertise needed in the transition of the camp.

Moody is a member of First Baptist Church in Salisbury, and Taylor is a member of Great Marsh Baptist Church in Saint Pauls.

Other officers and board members include: Barbara Hill of Fairview Baptist Church in Statesville, vice-president of development; Beth McDonald of McDonald Baptist Church in Rockingham, recording secretary; Allison Markwood of Mercy Hill Church in Greensboro, assistant recording secretary; Corby Bunting of Pinetops Baptist Church, region 2; Faye Owens of Mill Creek Baptist Church in Roseboro and Missie Wells of First

Baptist Church in Polkton, region 3; Gina Smith of Buies Creek First Baptist Church, region 4; Sandy Simpson of University Hills Baptist Church in Charlotte, region 6; Susie Black of Westwood Baptist Church in Asheville, region 9; and Karen Burnette McCracken of Stecoah Baptist Church in Robbinsville, region 10.

In her executive director-treasurer report, Amy Par-due Boone recognized Julie Keith for her 20th anniversary April 1.

Boone also presented Keith and Margaret Harding a gift for 20 years of service. Harding’s anniversary falls on July 1.

Another special presentation was made to Bob Navey, camp manager for Camp Mundo Vista for 27 years.

Bob, along with his wife Julie and his family served the camp sacrificially, said Boone, who gave them a framed print of camp pictures and a monetary gift.

“Camp Mundo Vista wouldn’t be what it is today,” without the Naveys, said Boone.

During the meeting, the women collected \$7,606.89 to go towards the ministries of WMU-NC. The women also bought 267 copies of Hunt’s recent book about Heck. With the purchases of Hunt’s books, she was able to donate \$3,500 to WMU-NC. A children’s camp that was held on Saturday had 18 registrations.

The next meeting is April 24-25, 2020, at Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church in Charlotte.

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



## New BCH building

The Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina dedicated a new education facility May 7 at its Cameron Boys Camp in Cameron, N.C. The Ammons Education Center, named in honor of Judd and the late Jo Ellen Ammons of Raleigh, will serve children from both the Cameron Boys Camp and Camp Duncan for girls in Aberdeen, N.C. Dozens of current and former board members, donors and friends of BCH were in attendance for the dedication ceremony, which included a ribbon-cutting conducted by BCH president Michael Blackwell. Camps Cameron and Duncan serve at-risk youth through residential wilderness programs. In a single year, campers often progress academically by two grade levels, said BCH staff. (BCH photo)



# Panel addresses common myths about abortion

Biblical Recorder

**A**s part of this year's 4,000 Steps Experience, Human Coalition hosted a panel discussion about abortion April 27 at Imago Dei Church (IDC) in Raleigh. The annual event features training for pro-life advocates and celebrates Human Coalition's fundraising efforts.

Seth Brown, content editor of the *Biblical Recorder* and a pastor at IDC, moderated the conversation with Daniel Darling, vice president of communications for the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, and Jay Watts, president of Merely Human Ministries. Below is an edited transcript.

**Q:** Do you think it's accurate to say that abortion is merely a woman's health issue?

**JW:** They're assuming that the unborn are not human in the same way that you and I are, that they're operating at either no value or greatly diminished value in comparison to more mature human beings. By doing this, what they're doing is saying that a woman has no more need to get our approval from the state, or interference from the state or the community, in her right to have access to an abortion than she would to have access to a tooth extraction.

There's no moral component to it whatsoever. The single question that is most important in dealing with the morality of abortion, whether abortion is good or bad, is how we answer the question, "What is the preborn?"

**Q:** Pregnancy obviously affects women in ways that it does not

affect men – physically, to be specific. Some may say that presents an undue burden on women. Do you think the availability of abortion creates more equality for women in society?

**DD:** This is all based on a Darwinian premise that the flourishing of one group of people is an obstacle to the flourishing of another. ... The narrative through scripture is that we can all flourish together ... we don't need to press this group of vulnerable people down in order for us to rise. So women can flourish, and they don't have to destroy unborn human life to flourish. I think they can flourish together.

**Q:** Abortion is often described or presented as a no-hassle, outpatient procedure. How does abortion affect women emotionally, physically and spiritually after the event?

**DD:** It's something that, in my experience talking to post-abortive women, they've had to live with for the rest of their lives. It's a real weight on their conscience, a sense of guilt, shame over what they know instinctively is a moral decision.

This is where I think the church is really important, to come in and say the church is the exact place where people who feel shame and guilt for their sin can come and find hope and restoration in the cross of Jesus. ... We all come to the cross with shame and guilt that Jesus bore. Our pro-life conversations have to be coupled with the Good News of the gospel.

**Q:** As many women's care workers will attest, whether at Human Coalition or elsewhere, parents who have determined to abort often find themselves in very difficult and heart-breaking situations that are leading them down this path. How should we think about issues like rape or fetal abnormalities?

**JW:** We have to recognize the moral evil of rape. ... Even though we recognize that the evil of rape has put a terrible burden on another human being, we as a community are going to come alongside them and help them to make the life-affirming choice and to recognize that this is not their fault that this has happened to them. So it's our responsibility to help them to carry this burden as much as we possibly can.

**Q:** How should we think about issues like poverty and healthcare as it relates to abortion?

**DD:** We have to think about these

issues when we think holistically about communities. What are the factors that lead women to have abortions, and how can we help alleviate those, whether through economic policies or even through, in our churches, the way that we come alongside the most vulnerable?

At the end of the day, the least compassionate thing to do for a child is to kill it. So don't ever think that you're not compassionate because you want a child to live. Making an argument that a child's gonna grow up in poverty, so we might as well just kill that child – that's the least compassionate option.

**JW:** It imagines that our happiness is also tied to our financial prosperity, which simply isn't true.

**Q:** Roe v. Wade, Supreme Court decision from 1973 that legalized abortion nationwide, has been and continues to be one of the primary topics of discussion in the pro-life movement. Theoretically, tomorrow, if Roe v. Wade were overturned, what happens after that?

**JW:** There's a common misconception that if Roe v. Wade ends, suddenly abortion is illegal throughout the United States. That's simply not the case. ... If Roe v. Wade goes away, then it's your responsibility ... to equip [your-selves] to go into their community now and make the case, because for the first time since 1973, we can make a huge difference in the laws of our community.

**DD:** If Roe was overturned tomorrow, that's not the end of the pro-life movement, it's the beginning. Then it obviously goes back to the states, and what you're seeing right now is actually an acknowledgement by both sides that there's a chance it could happen with a more conservative leaning court.

**Q:** I would love to hear you guys address our posture and our tone as we speak to people that we disagree with on this issue.

**DD:** One, let's always remember, when we're talking with people, we're talking with people – with whole people. We're not talking with arguments, we're not talking with principles. ... The more we consider the humanity of even the people we disagree with, the more they are likely to listen to our arguments. Number two, the way we talk about other people groups has to be in a way that affirms their dignity. ... If I'm dehumanizing them ... I'm actually undermining my pro-life argument over here, and I lost my moral credibility.

Visit [youtube.com/brnowvideo](https://youtube.com/brnowvideo). **BR**



*"And His heart took delight in the ways of the Lord; moreover he removed the high places and wooden images from Judah"* (2 Chronicles 17:6 NKJV).

**W**hen Jehoshaphat *"took delight"* in the Lord's ways and was encouraged toward greater reforms in Judah, the first thing he gave attention to was the sin present in the camp. He knew the blessings and favor of God would not rest upon Judah if Baal worship continued to be tolerated and allowed.

How did he do this?

First, he removed the *"high places."* At the heart of the term *"removed"* is the idea of turning aside, taking away or departing from something. This first action was an intentional effort by Jehoshaphat to rid Judah of any locations that were set aside for worship of the pagan gods.

Second, Jehoshaphat also removed the *"wooden images"* which were man-made wooden images of Asherah, the female Canaanite goddess of fertility and life. By taking down the images, Jehoshaphat was seeking to remove any object of inspiration for God's people to worship or look to for spiritual and physical provisions.

What can the American church learn from Jehoshaphat's effort to deal with sin in Judah's camp? First, we must intentionally and genuinely exam-

ine our spiritual condition before God. As Joel 2:12 says, we must *"rend your hearts"* before God. This means that we must set God and His standard of holiness as our standard, rather than the standard of culture or the world. This needs to take place both personally and corporately as God's people encounter Him in conviction and repentance through His Word and Spirit.

Second, we must take away the occasion and inspiration for our sin. This means the high places and pagan images that provide any competing allegiances with the Lord need to be removed from our lives, homes and churches. If we remove any opportunity and the things that easily tempt us, then we are less likely to be enticed by the evil one and stumble in the faith.

Believers and churches all over America are struggling with apathy, complacency, self-centeredness and a lack of spiritual vitality. Could this be the result of sin in our camp?



CHRIS SCHOFIELD

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Chris Schofield is director of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's Office of Prayer. He can be reached at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5514, or [cschofield@ncbaptist.org](mailto:cschofield@ncbaptist.org).)



# Millie Wiggins, longtime matriarch of Campbell University, dies at 98

Campbell University Office of Communications

**M**ildred “Millie” Harmon Wiggins, 98, Campbell matriarch and wife of former president Norman Adrian Wiggins, died May 9 after a brief illness.

For 36 years, she defined the role of first lady of Campbell, leaving behind a career as a school teacher when her husband was selected as Campbell’s third president in 1967. She advised him during a time of rapid growth for the school, which included the launch of a law school in 1976 and a pharmacy school 10 years later.

“She was Campbell’s rock for 40 years. Her service to and the personal sacrifices she made for this University cannot be overstated, and they could not be celebrated enough,” said Campbell President J. Bradley Creed.

“The wonderful legacy of Norman Adrian Wiggins’ presidency simply isn’t possible without Millie Wiggins. She is already extraordinarily missed.”

A native of Coats, Millie Wiggins attended Campbell College in 1947 and 1948 after working at Fort Bragg dur-



“She was Campbell’s rock for 40 years,” said Campbell President J. Bradley Creed of Millie Wiggins, who died May 9 at age 98. (Campbell file photo)

ing World War II. She went on to earn a bachelor’s degree from Wake Forest College and a master’s degree from Columbia University.

Among her many honors are Campbell’s Alumni Service Award, received in

1998, and the honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, received in 2007.

She served as a teacher in the Rocky Mount and Winston-Salem school systems before coming to Campbell. She was by her husband’s side when Campbell

attained university status and supported him through the development of five professional schools and the often-intimidating accreditation process.

As a former teacher and a master-of-arts graduate, Wiggins was not only a hostess for innumerable university occasions, but an invaluable editor and adviser to the president.

She continued to support Campbell after Norman Wiggins’ death in 2007 and throughout the rest of her life. The tree-shrouded house she shared with her husband in Keith Hills remained her home for 50 years.

Survivors include nephews and nieces, extended family and two “adopted” grandchildren.

Memorials to: the Mildred H. & Norman A. Wiggins Endowed Fund at Campbell University, P.O. Box 116, Buies Creek, NC 27506, or online at [campaign.campbell.edu/give/](http://campaign.campbell.edu/give/), or to the Harnett County Animal Shelter at P.O. Box 940, Lillington, NC 27546.

A service celebrating her life was scheduled May 16 at 2 p.m. in Butler Chapel at Campbell, with a reception to follow in the University Alumni room. **BR**

## Norman Geisler retires from SES

Southern Evangelical Seminary

**S**outhern Evangelical Seminary (SES) in Charlotte has announced that one of its co-founders, Norman Geisler, 86, is retiring from his teaching duties at SES “due to health reasons.”

Geisler co-founded SES with Ross Rhoads in 1992. Geisler’s concern to defend the historic Christian faith and Pastor Rhoads’ burden for evangelism combined in the two-fold vision of the seminary to evangelize the world and to defend the historic Christian faith. Geisler was appointed the seminary’s first dean, and Rhoads, who passed away in May 2017, served as the first president.

A prolific author, veteran professor, speaker, lecturer, traveler, philosopher, apologist, evangelist and theologian, Geisler has been described as a cross between Thomas Aquinas and Billy Graham.

“Quite simply, Dr. Geisler has been the pre-eminent Christian apologist of the past half-century,” said Richard Land, SES president.

“If they ever construct a Christian apologists’ Mount Rushmore, they would unquestionably start with Dr. Geisler’s visage. He has truly been one of God’s great gifts to His church. Southern Evangelical Seminary would not exist without Dr. Geisler’s vision and dedicated service over the past 27 years. Dr. Geisler has assured me that he wants to continue to support SES in any way he can, as his health allows.

“We will be searching for innovative ways to continue to give our students the opportunity to benefit

from exposure to Dr. Geisler and his unique gifts in the years ahead.

“The entire Southern Evangelical family – administration, faculty, students, alumni and members of the Board of Trustees – express our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Geisler for his invaluable ministry both to SES and to the larger realm of Christendom for the past half-century and more,” Land added. “We join together in saying, ‘Thank you, Dr. Geisler, for your tremendous, God-honoring ministry, which has so positively impacted all of us in our walk with our Savior.’”

Geisler is the author of more than 125 books and hundreds of articles. He has taught theology, philosophy and apologetics at the college or graduate level for more than a half-century and has been a regular speaker at SES’s National Conference on Christian Apologetics for many years.

Geisler also served as a professor at some of the finest seminaries in the United States, including Trinity Evangelical Seminary, Dallas Theological Seminary, Veritas Evangelical Seminary and SES.

The renowned apologist was educated at colleges, university and graduate schools around the nation, including William Tyndale College, the University of Detroit, the University of Detroit Graduate School, Wheaton College, Wheaton Graduate School, Wayne State University Graduate School, Northwestern University and Loyola University, amassing bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees in philosophy and theology.

Several educational institutions were also privileged to welcome Geisler as a faculty member or administra-

tor, including Wheaton College, Detroit Bible College, Trinity College, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Dallas Theological Seminary, the Liberty Center for Research and Scholarship, and of course, Southern Evangelical Seminary.

In 2006, Geisler founded the International Society of Christian Apologetics, and in 2007, co-founded Veritas Evangelical Seminary, where he has served in leadership since then.

Over his career of service, several churches and ministries have also been honored to have Geisler either in leadership or servanthood: Northeast Suburban Youth for Christ (Detroit), Dayton Center Church (Silverwood, Michigan), River Grove Bible Church (River Grove, Illinois), Memorial Baptist Church (Warren, Michigan), Alumni of Detroit Bible College, Quest for Truth radio ministry and Southern Evangelical Church (Charlotte, North Carolina). Geisler has also served numerous interim pastorates in Michigan, Illinois and Texas, received numerous awards over his lifetime, and has been an internationally known speaker at churches, retreats, pastor’s conferences and universities, as well as on radio and television, since 1960.

Geisler has been married to his wife, Barbara Jean, for more than 60 years; they have six children, and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

During the school’s May 4 commencement ceremonies, Geisler was named president emeritus of SES. The school’s board of trustees also voted unanimously to rename its Veritas Graduate School “The Norman L. Geisler Graduate School of Apologetics.” **BR**

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# Warren Wiersbe, 'one of evangelicalism's giants,' dies

By DAVID ROACH | Baptist Press

**W**arren Wiersbe, an author and pastor credited with influencing thousands of preachers toward biblical exposition, died May 2. He was 89.

"I first heard Dr. Wiersbe at a Bible conference" in Chattanooga, Tenn., in the early 1960s, said Jerry Vines, a former Southern Baptist Convention president and long-time friend of Wiersbe's.

"What I heard him do with scripture that day changed my preaching forever. He changed me from a topical preacher to a text-driven preacher."

Author of more than 150 books, Wiersbe was called to ministry at age 16 under the preaching of evangelist Billy Graham, according to The Gospel Coalition (TGC) website.

He went on to pastor in Illinois and Kentucky as well as serve on the staff of Youth for Christ International before assuming the pastorate of Chicago's Moody Church, where his radio broadcasts gained a national following.

Wiersbe became known as "the pastor's pastor," the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Kentucky Today news service reported. His *Be* commentary series covered most books of the Bible and has

sold more than 4 million copies, according to series publishing company David C. Cook.

Ed Stetzer, interim teaching pastor at The Moody Church, noted that Wiersbe "was one of evangelicalism's giants, but to the people of The Moody Church, he was their beloved pastor."

"People regularly mention him, his preaching and his influence in their lives. The warmth of their love for Wiersbe is evident to this day," he said.

After leaving The Moody Church in 1978, Wiersbe continued his writing, radio and teaching ministries, serving at, among other institutions, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in suburban Chicago.

"He is, perhaps, best known for his *Be* series, a series of 50 books from *Be Real* to *Be Joyful*," Stetzer, executive director of the Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College, said via email.

"But it was his faithful preaching of God's Word that helped The Moody Church BE a church God called them to be. His impact is still felt at The Moody Church and it will be for decades to come. He will be missed at The Moody Church, but he will not be forgotten."

Among his contacts with Southern Baptists, Wiersbe spoke at the SBC Pas-



WARREN WIERSBE

## AROUND THE STATE

### Obituary

**SANDRA "SANDY" LEE MORRISON HARRISON**, 75, of Statesville, died April 29 at Autumn Care in Statesville.

A Bryson City native, she served alongside her husband at South Yadkin Baptist Association (SYBA). She was the church and communities ministries director.

She started ministries that continue today, such as the Toy Store for Jesus, Fair Ministry, and food and clothing pantries. Harrison worked with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in training and developing women's groups in their walks with and ministries for Christ. She also served on several state committees and was a respected speaker throughout North Carolina.

She is survived by her husband of 57 years, Ronald "Ron" H. Harrison, director of missions for SYBA; three children: Chris Harrison of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., Michelle H. Lourcey of Statesville, and Brad Harrison of Troutman; five grandchildren; and a great-grandson.

Memorials to: SYBA's Toy Store for Jesus, P.O. Box 5249, Statesville, NC 28687.

**JAMES CRAWFORD "J.C." RAPER SR.**, 96, died May 3 in Richmond, Va.

A native of Greensboro, N.C., and a pastor of Southern Baptist churches in Virginia and North Carolina over a lengthy career, was once a budding country musician.

He graduated from Bob Jones University in Greenville, S.C., and Southeastern Seminary.

He pastored six churches with his longest tenures in Danville, Va., at Calvary Baptist, Hillcrest Baptist and Stokesland Baptist. He also taught school for several years.

In his retirement in South Boston, Raper became very active at Ash Avenue Baptist Church – at times serving as a part-time, interim pastor.

He is survived by his wife of 70+ years, Jean Elizabeth Willick Raper; sons, Jim, Mark and Brent; daughters, Melanie Sterling and Elizabeth; seven grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

### Submissions

Have story ideas? Send to [editor@BRnow.org](mailto:editor@BRnow.org).

tors' Conference in 1977, when Vines served as president.

He also preached regularly at the annual pastors' conference hosted by First Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Fla., where Vines was pastor.

"He encouraged and taught, by example, thousands of pastors and multiplied thousands of laypeople in the convention to do biblical exposition," Vines said.

Humility and humor were among the hallmarks of Wiersbe's ministry, Vines said.

During a meeting one night at The Moody Church, Wiersbe spotted a woman sitting by herself toward the side of the auditorium, Vines said.

When he invited her to sit closer to the rest of the crowd, the woman said,

"Young man, I've been sitting in this same pew for 50 years."

Vines recalled Wiersbe's recounting of his response: "Before I caught myself, I said, 'My, you must be terribly tired by now.'"

"He really had quite a sense of humor," Vines said.

Reflecting on his own ministry, Wiersbe once said according to TGC, "I'm not an athlete, I'm not a mechanic. I can't do so many of the things that successful men can do.

"But I can read and study and think and teach. This is a beautiful, wonderful gift from God. All I'm doing is using what He's given to me to teach people, and to give glory to the Lord Jesus Christ." **BR**

## Jason DeRouchie to join MBTS

By T. PATRICK HUDSON | MBTS

**J**ason DeRouchie of Bethlehem College & Seminary in Minneapolis is joining Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's (MBTS) faculty as research professor of Old Testament and biblical theology.

MBTS President Jason Allen said DeRouchie is "another tremendous addition to a faculty already teeming with accomplished scholars and devoted churchmen."

"Not only is Dr. DeRouchie an accomplished Old Testament scholar, he's also a man of deep personal piety, has a pulsating heart for the nations, and is a generous, sacrificial churchman," Allen said. "In fact, in every way he embodies what it means to be for the church."

At Bethlehem College & Seminary, DeRouchie has been professor of Old Testament and biblical theology since 2009.

He previously was a biblical Greek and Hebrew instructor at Gordon College and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Massachusetts (1997-2000), an associate pastor in a Southern Baptist church in Indiana (2001-2005) and assistant professor of Old Testament and Hebrew at Northwestern College in Saint Paul, Minn. (2005-2009).

DeRouchie, who has been active in Bethlehem Baptist Church as an elder and

Sunday School teacher, has published a number of books, including *How to Understand and Apply the Old Testament: Twelve Steps from Exegesis to Theology*; *For Our Good Always: Studies on the Message and Influence of Deuteronomy*; *What the Old Testament Authors Really Cared About: A Survey of Jesus' Bible*; *A Modern Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*; and *A Call to Covenant Love: Text Grammar and Literary Structure in Deuteronomy 5-11*. He also has several forthcoming books.

DeRouchie said he is called to train future and current church leaders to faithfully handle the Old Testament (OT) and to help them articulate how the whole of Christian scripture progresses, integrates and climaxes in Christ for the glory of God and the good of His church.

He added that, Lord willing, this goal will be accomplished through three commitments: teaching OT and biblical theology, mentoring students and writing clear, compelling, and faithful works that can serve the church worldwide.

DeRouchie holds a Ph.D. in Old Testament literature from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.; an M.Div. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary; and an undergraduate degree in biblical studies from Taylor University.

He and his wife Teresa, married since 1994, have six children, three of whom have been adopted from Ethiopia. **BR**

## Horn unanimously elected to lead La. Baptists

Baptist Message

**T**he Louisiana Baptist Convention (LBC) Executive Board voted unanimously to elect Steve Horn as the 19th executive director of the organization during the entity's spring meeting at the Tall Timbers Baptist Conference Center in Woodworth May 7.

He was nominated by a search com-

mittee composed of board members and led by Waylon Bailey, president of the Executive Board and the senior pastor of the First Baptist Church in Covington. Horn will succeed David Hankins, who retires as executive director June 30.

Horn has served as pastor of the First Baptist Church in Lafayette since 2005. Before that, he led three other Louisiana congregations. **BR**



May 26

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

June 2

## Exploit Your Friends

**Focal passages: Luke 16:1-12**

**J**ust as we are accountable to the way we love our neighbors, God also cares about how we use our resources and opportunities.

Jesus shared a parable about a man who was given the responsibility over a rich man's possessions.

The rich man hears that his steward is not being responsible, so he calls upon him to give an account as to why he is being wasteful. The master warns the steward that his wastefulness will cost him his stewardship.

*"Then the steward said within himself, 'What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me ... I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses'"* (Luke 16:3-4).

The steward gathers those who owe his master and asks them how much they owe. He then tells each debtor to pay a fraction of what they owe immediately,

so that when he is found guilty he will at least have friends among the debtors.

Although his actions were unjust, the steward was dedicated to having his way. Are we as persistent in serving God with our resources and opportunities as this steward was in serving himself?

Regardless of the amount, size or capacity of our skills, resources and opportunities, we are simply stewards of what first belongs to our Lord.

*"He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is also unjust in much. Therefore, if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?"*

*And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own?"* (Luke 16:10-12).

Let us be faithful when we have little and when we're afraid of running out.

And let us be faithful when our cup overflows so that Christ will always be our true confidence and security.

**"Let us be faithful when we have little ..."**



**DANIELA SANCHEZ**  
Member, The Summit  
Church, Durham

## Rahab: Courageous Faith

**Focal passage: Joshua 2:1-14**

**P**erhaps you have heard the adage, "The same sun that melts wax hardens clay." I thought about that statement as I read Joshua 2, considering the radically different response of Rahab as compared with the people of Jericho. They had been confronted with the same awesome force – the obvious power of the Almighty God of Israel. And yet, their responses could not have been more different.

The hearts of the people of Jericho melted within them, like wax in the noonday sun, like chocolate on the dash of a hot car. The heart of Rahab, however, galvanized into confident courage. What was the difference?

On the one hand, the people of Jericho didn't respond with faith in the God of Israel. They were simply overcome with paralyzing fear because of His mighty power. They knew they had no hope of overcoming this one who had the power to part the Red Sea and they were terrified. On the other hand, Rahab saw

the same power of God on display and responded with reverential fear (awe) and faith – recognizing Him as *"God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath."* And this fear (reverence) of God and faith in God led Rahab to action.

Rahab's faith in the one true God overflowed with courageous action. She was not crippled with fear regarding what the men, or even the king, of Jericho might do to her. Whatever fear she could have had toward them paled in comparison to her fear of, and faith in, the true God of Israel. Rahab's courageous response was not simply a demonstration of human boldness in a trying situation. It was an

overflow from a heart of faith in the one true God. The writer of Hebrews leaves no doubt when he includes Rahab in the famous "hall of faith" chapter, noting that she acted *"by faith"* in God.

Do others see you walking with confident courage because of your faith in the one true God? Ask God to help you flee from the fear of man and to walk in courageous faith for His glory.



**RANDY MANN**  
Pastor, Central Baptist  
Church, Henderson

May 26

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

June 2

## Lives

**Focal passage: Mark 15:42-47; 16:1-8**

**H**ow would you react if someone presented you with the opportunity to do something you have always wanted to do? I imagine you would be speechless. Some people would be overwhelmed or even uncontrollable.

I love adventures. If someone provided the opportunity to go and trek some of the highest peaks in the world, I would be surprised. A part of me would be afraid, but I would still be filled with amazement.

In our focal text, an angel delivers a message that provides three women with wonderful news.

Mark reveals that Jesus died for all and yet He is alive. As much as this news would fill them with joy, the women are left with *"trembling and astonishment"* (v. 8). And with the command of *"go"* given, they were *"afraid"* and *"said nothing to anyone."*

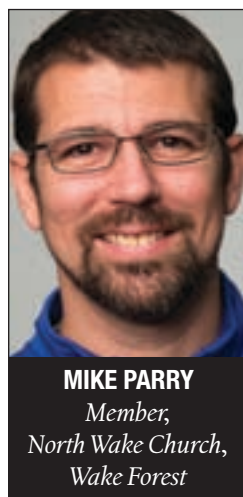
While the ending in Mark may seem abrupt, more context is provided in Matthew 28:8. We can say that while they left the tomb *"afraid,"* (Mark 16:8) they were yet *"filled with joy"* (Matthew 28:8).

However, Mark does not place focus on joy. Instead, he places emphasis on their astonishment.

The angel told them three things: He has risen; He is not here (v. 6), go tell the disciples (v. 7), and they will see Christ again (v. 7). These things are exactly what Joseph of Arimathea was looking for in Mark 15:43 – the Kingdom of God. Here, the reader can appreciate how Mark ties the end of his book to its beginning.

Mark refreshes the mind of the reader that the Kingdom of God is connected to the gospel (Mark 1:15). Christ is the Good News. As we observe throughout the book of Mark, people were continually amazed or astonished at Jesus' work, so let us remember that we serve an amazing God.

**"... the Kingdom of God is connected to the gospel ..."**



**MIKE PARRY**  
Member,  
North Wake Church,  
Wake Forest

## Entrusted

**Focal Passage: 1 Timothy 1:3-17**

**I**'ll never forget those first few hours with our firstborn son. My wife and I were eagerly anticipating the birth of a child we had been praying for and preparing for. We hoped we were ready. In the hospital room it hit me. I'm responsible for the well-being and development of this little boy. God entrusted me with him.

Being entrusted is not the same as being given a gift. When we receive a gift, it is ours, but when we are entrusted with something, we remain responsible to the giver. We remain responsible because the gift still carries value for the one who gave it. In a similar, yet astoundingly more important way, we as followers of Jesus have been entrusted with the gospel.

Paul shared the gospel with Timothy, mentored him and appointed him an elder in the church. Then he entrusted Timothy (1:18) with the gospel. This meant that the gospel was not Timothy's possession, nor was it Paul's possession.

The gospel belongs to God. Yet, we've been entrusted with it, and we are responsible for what we do with it.

What we do with the gospel reflects not only on us, but on the true owner of the gospel – Jesus Christ.

In the first chapter of Timothy, Paul reflects on our responsibilities that flow from the entrusted gospel. The entrusted gospel makes us responsible to love others with a pure heart. A failure to love is a failure to reflect the gospel. The entrusted gospel makes us responsible to sound doctrine. Timothy faced the challenges of people who would major on minors, get bogged down in speculative arguments and minimize the Old Testament

law. Without the foundation of the law and sound biblical doctrines which underscore human sinfulness, the gospel cannot be good news. The entrusted gospel makes us responsible to our Savior. Jesus saved us from our sins and privileged us to serve him. As His followers, we are now responsible to the One who entrusted us with His Good News.



**CHRIS HEFNER**  
Pastor,  
Wilkesboro Baptist  
Church



# Rest

Continued from page 2

As the summer progressed, however, I gained an appreciation for that mandatory time of rest. For one thing, I soon discovered that a short time of rest made work later in the day both more fruitful and more enjoyable.

More importantly, I came to see that I had been resting wrongly.

At the start of the summer, I would spend the hour thinking about what I was going to do next. I wasn't really resting; I was mentally working while sitting still.

Real rest as a spiritual discipline, however, requires that we set the reins down.

It reminds us that God is God, and we are not. And it forces us to depend on God and His provision.

## How to practice rest

The need to rest is not up for debate. The physical sciences tell us that we need it. The Lord Jesus taught

us to do it (Mark 6:30-31). And the Son of God Himself even rested when He needed it (Mark 4:38).

Because rest is a discipline, however, it can take practice. Here are a couple of suggestions from what I've learned along the way.

First, **we must intentionally disconnect from sources of distraction.** I remember meeting with a South Asian man when his phone started ringing. He continued chatting with me while he sipped his tea, and he never answered his phone.

He valued our face-to-face conversation more than a phone call.

Of course, if you lack the discipline to ignore a ringing phone or an email notification, then you may need to remove yourself from those objects by silencing them or physically distancing yourself from them completely for a time.

Second, **those in ministry must learn to empower**

**their teammates.** Whether you are a pastor in the U.S. or a church planter on the foreign mission field, you will find it impossible to rest if you do not trust those you work with. To get to that place of trust, you need to clearly communicate vision and strategy with your partners, and you need to empower them to make some decisions without you. Yes, they may sometimes make a decision that you would not make, but that is part of the discipleship process for both of you. You are modeling rest for them. They are learning to practice the discipline of rest for themselves. And above all, you are both learning to trust that God is at work even when you are not (Mark 4:26-28).

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Matthew Hirt is a doctoral student at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in applied theology. He is also the pastor of North Henderson Baptist Church in Henderson, N.C. This article first appeared at IMB.org. Used by permission.) **BR**

## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

### Denominational

The Pee Dee Baptist Association located in Richmond/Scotland counties is seeking the man that God has prepared to be our next **DOM**. This man will be one who is relational with our churches, people and pastors. He will possess integrity and be a leader to guide us to fulfill Jesus' Great Commandment and Great Commission. Please submit résumés before July 31 to [peedeebaptist@bellsouth.net](mailto:peedeebaptist@bellsouth.net).

### Pastor

Zoar Baptist Church, Shelby, NC, is currently seeking a **full-time pastor** who God is calling to serve our church and community. We are a traditional Southern Baptist family of believers and are a community and mission-oriented church that was established in 1837. We have traditional Sunday School and blended worship services with average attendance of 90-100. The pastor will lead three services each week (Sunday morning, Sunday evening and Wednesday evening). Effective communication is required to direct and collaborate with church staff and collaborate with committees and church members. Our pastor will be a man of the highest godly character with God-guided servant leadership and vision. He will be biblically balanced and a believer in Jesus Christ, His church, work and mission, and we prefer some pastoral experience with a master's degree from an accredited association of theological school seminary. We support our local Greater Cleveland County Baptist Association, the NC Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. After prayerful consideration, please submit your résumé including details of your salvation experience and calling by God to be a pastor and at least two audio/video files of recent sermons to: Pastor Search Committee, Zoar Baptist Church, 1740 S. Lafayette Street, Shelby, NC 28152. Résumés should be received by June 3, 2019.

Southern Baptist Church in Ruth, NC, located in the foothills of NC is seeking **full-time pastor**. Due to the retirement of our pastor after 37 years, we are searching for the man God will send us to lead our congregation into the future. We are a small semi-moderate church with traditional music and average attendance of 83. Submit résumé to Anita Tessnear at Southern Baptist Church, 140 Church St., Rutherfordton, NC 28139, by June 15, 2019.

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Trinity Baptist Church in Newton, NC, is seeking the **full-time pastor** that God has been preparing to lead our church. We are looking for someone who is interested in ministering to all age groups, as we are a multi-generational congregation. Trinity is a welcoming church that loves to worship God through beautiful music, Christ-centered messages, Bible study, fellowship and community outreach. We are dually affiliated with the CBF of NC and the BSCNC. We have an average attendance of approximately 120 for Sunday morning worship. Located in western NC, in the heart of Catawba County, we are a diverse, safe, family-oriented community that offers good schools, many cultural activities, sports and business opportunities. Our ideal candidate will have a theologically sound education from an accredited seminary or divinity school. Salary commensurate with experience. Please send résumé to our search committee email address: [trinitynewtonresumes@gmail.com](mailto:trinitynewtonresumes@gmail.com). Résumés accepted through July 15, 2019.

### Church Staff

Hebron Baptist Church, Statesville, NC, is seeking a **part-time Children's Ministry Coordinator**. The main function of this position is to plan, administer, coordinate, supervise and evaluate a comprehensive and active children's ministry. Candidates should be willing to participate in worship services, other activities of the church and duties as assigned by the Pastor. Previous experience is required. Contact the church or Jesse Bragg for more information 828-514-0378. Submit résumés to [jbragg@solutionsinsynergy.com](mailto:jbragg@solutionsinsynergy.com).

Seeking **Part-time Music Minister** who can develop and promote music/creative arts programs which aligns with the vision and mission of the church to make growing disciples of Jesus. Primary responsibilities include worship music selection, rehearsals and Sunday worship. Also responsible for directing age group choirs, holiday presentations and wedding/funeral services. For more information email: [paul@jilcpa.com](mailto:paul@jilcpa.com). To apply, send résumé to Pittsboro Baptist Church, PO Box 696, Pittsboro, NC 27312.

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# NCBAM encourages seniors to 'Be Bold!'

By CAROL LAYTON | NCBAM

**N**orth Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry (NCBAM) held its fifth annual statewide event in Charlotte on May 6-7. This year's Senior Adult Celebration, themed "Be Bold," focused on Joshua 1:9 – the command to live boldly and courageously for the Lord at any age.

The event was hosted by Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church in Charlotte and was planned by "Aging Adults Innovating Ministry." AAIM is an NCBAM leadership network comprised of senior adult leaders across the state. These leaders work with NCBAM to support and strengthen senior adult ministries throughout North Carolina. AAIM Chair, Stan Heiser of Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church in Charlotte, served as master of ceremonies.

The two-day event began Monday evening with a dinner provided by the host church and was followed by the world-class entertainment and spiritual encouragement of Mark Cabaniss and Diane Earle.

In "Confessions of a Shameless Name-Dropper," Mark Cabaniss wove together songs, anecdotes, and video clips from his years in the music business where he connected with entertainers like Bob Barker, Andy Griffith, Shirley Jones,

Steven Allen and more. With credits in Nashville, Hollywood and Broadway, Cabaniss' rich tenor enthralled the audience with classics such as Edelweiss, Trouble in River City, and Try to Remember.

Cabaniss was accompanied by international touring pianist Earle, who has performed in nine European concert tours, 31 states, and extensively throughout China. Earle also provided background dinner music prior to the concert.

Cabaniss gave a strong testimony to God's hand in his life – blessing his music career and providing opportunities beyond his imagination. His closing song, an original work, followed the Be Bold theme – "Don't be afraid to open new doors, and to find what each one shows."

Mark Cabaniss grew up in Shelby, N.C., where his youth pastor was Glenn Davenport, an AAIM leader for the west region.

Davenport remembers the young Cabaniss as a talented young man who never met a stranger. "It's a joy to me have watched Mark grow into adulthood and see him continue to share his faith. I'm so thankful that God continues to use him and his talents."

NCBAM regional directors Samantha Allred (north central region) and Yvetta Smith (east region) delighted audiences both days with performances as "Mild Millie" and "Bold Betty." Over the course



NCBAM's director, Sandy Gregory, recaps the ministry's first 10 years of providing "help for the journey" to North Carolina's aging. (NCBAM photo)

of the event, Bold Betty taught Mild Millie, by word and example, that living boldly for Christ gave purpose, meaning, and value to her life. Attendees cheered in the closing skit as Mild Millie's character boldly renamed herself "Mighty Millie."

Tuesday morning's session included songs from Pritchard's Sunago Singers Choir and a presentation from NCBAM's director, Sandy Gregory. Providing an overview of NCBAM's first ten years, Gregory recounted how the Lord's hand

had been on the ministry to bring staff, partners and volunteers to provide "help for the journey" to North Carolina's aging.

David Hailey, pastor at Hayes Barton Baptist Church in Raleigh, provided the keynote address that capstoned the theme of event, which appeared in each song, skit and performance. In "We Have This Treasure," based on 2 Corinthians 4:7, Hailey examined the perspective of "past, present, and future" years, and challenged attendees to make the most of all of them. Hailey's encouraging address is archived at [ncbam.org/resources](http://ncbam.org/resources).

Jerry Anderson, minister to senior adults at Woodlawn Baptist Church in Conover, enjoyed the event with others from his church. "The Be Bold celebration was exciting and encouraging. Mark Cabaniss was both inspirational and entertaining, not to mention a great singer! It was definitely worth the time!"

NCBAM and the AAIM network will hold three senior adult ministry regional leadership gatherings this fall in Blowing Rock, Asheboro and Wendell. The gatherings will strengthen and support senior adult ministries and address social isolation and loneliness among older adults. For more information, call 877.506.2226 or visit [ncbam.org/aaim](http://ncbam.org/aaim). **B**

## Asia Bibi exits Pakistan, joins family in Canada

Baptist Press

**P**ersecuted Christian mother Asia Bibi has joined her husband and children in Canada, months after her acquittal of false blasphemy charges and her release from Pakistan's death row.

Bibi's attorney Saif-ul-Malook told several news outlets of her safe arrival in Ottawa within the past two days, first reported May 8. "It's a big day," the *Guardian* quoted Malook as saying.

Pakistani authorities had secured Bibi in secret since her October 2018 acquittal

and subsequent January victory against an appeal by her accusers.

The 54-year-old Catholic mother is not well, having suffered from depression. **B**

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