

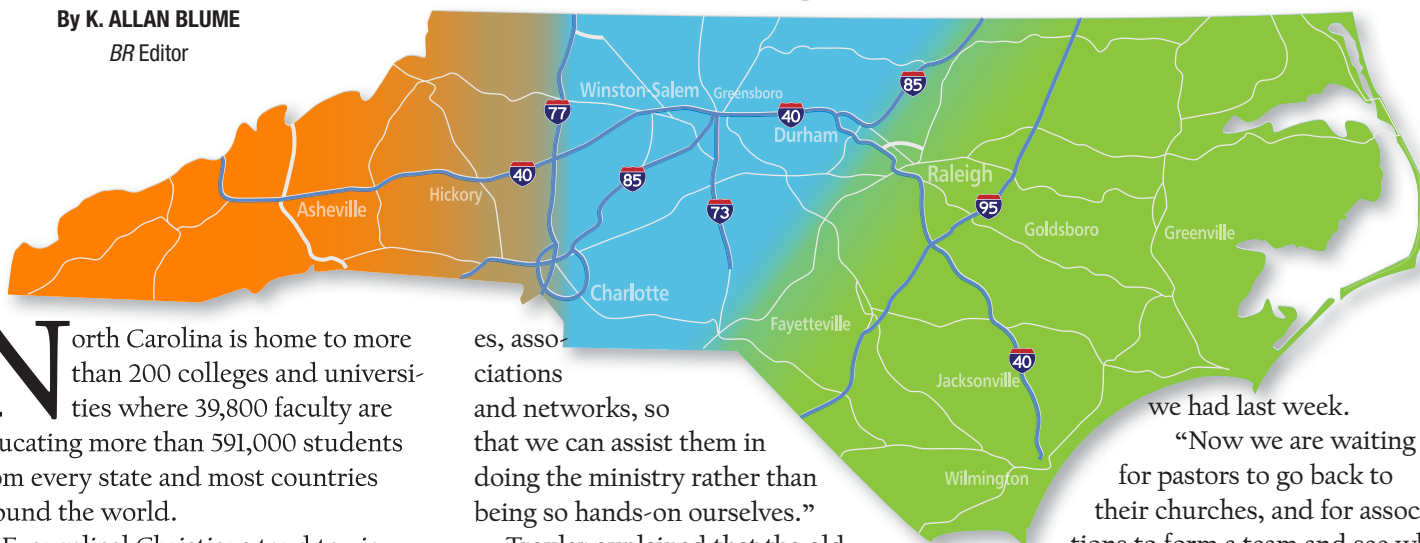


BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

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COLLEGIATE MINISTRY ACROSS THE STATE

By K. ALLAN BLUME
BR Editor



North Carolina is home to more than 200 colleges and universities where 39,800 faculty are educating more than 591,000 students from every state and most countries around the world.

Evangelical Christians tend to view university campuses as greenhouses for the indoctrination of secular world views, causing churches to distance themselves from that environment. But the collegiate partnerships team of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) believes the campus is a ripe mission field. They also believe reaching those students requires a completely different strategy.

Rick Trexler, team leader for BSC's Collegiate Partnerships, says there is some merit in the Baptist Campus Ministry (BCM) model most state conventions have followed. But the great weakness was lack of ownership by churches closest to the campuses.

"Collegiate partnerships is totally different than what Baptist Campus Ministry was. It's a totally different concept for us," he said. "Before, [BSC staff was] directly involved in a campus or campuses. Now we are consultants with church-

es, associations and networks, so that we can assist them in doing the ministry rather than being so hands-on ourselves."

Trexler explained that the old model gave too much ownership to the state convention and the BCM groups on campus, and not enough ownership by local churches. "That's part of the conversation we want to have with folks. The hands-on ministry is no longer at the BSC," he added.

The new structure divides the state into three regions. Evan Blackerby is the consultant for the central region. "What's great about this new model is that it allows for [church] ownership," he said. He admitted the process is slow, but the collegiate team believes it is working. "We are seeing fruit through the process of relationships we have built."

It is not something that is an overnight success, Blackerby said. "Campus ministry has been immediately measurable in the past. The numbers were easy to see. We could say, we had 50 in our campus event last night, and that's double what

we had last week.

"Now we are waiting for pastors to go back to their churches, and for associations to form a team and see what they are going to do. That takes time, but we are seeing it work," he said. And the number of people involved has the potential to far outpace the fruit of the old model.

There has been much concern over another weakness in the old model. The BSC was able to staff less than a dozen campus ministries. That means 190 campuses had no ministry funded by N.C. Baptists. Local ownership means every campus in the state could potentially have the witness of a Baptist church.

The new collegiate team has five consultants. Trexler is not only the team leader, but covers the eastern region also. Blackerby works primarily in the central region and Jonathan Yarbboro in the western part of the state. Two other key players are Tom Knight, regional international student consultant who works from the Charlotte area, and Sammy Joo,

See Collegiate page 20

Task force addresses declining baptisms

By JOE CONWAY | NAMB/Baptist Press

A task force designed to address declining baptisms among Southern Baptist churches released its full report May 12.

An urgent, immediate call for spiritual renewal and personal commitment to evangelism and discipleship are the common threads among five recommendations made by the Pastors' Task Force on Evangelistic Impact and Declining Baptisms.

The national task force, aimed at addressing the continued decrease in baptisms among Southern Baptist churches, was convened last year by the North American Mission Board (NAMB). Most task force members are pastors.

"Southern Baptists' downward spiral in baptisms is the fruit of our spiritual lukewarmness," said task force member Ted Traylor, pastor of Olive Baptist Church in Pensacola, Fla.

"I am greatly encouraged by the stirring I see among us toward spiritual awakening and the need for the resurgence of the Great Commission.

"This task force work and report gives me hope."

The group was formed, in part, because the 2012 Annual Church Profile (ACP) reported a drop of 5.52 percent in the number of baptisms in Southern Baptist churches, confirming a two-decade downward trend.

Al Gilbert, vice president for evangelism at NAMB facilitated the group's meetings.

LifeWay Research president Ed Stetzer assisted the task force with research support.

"Recognition and ownership of the

See Baptisms page 14

 TOM KNIGHT	 SAMMY JOO	 JONATHAN YARBORO	 EVAN BLACKERBY	 RICK TREXLER
<small>Title: Consultant Team: Charlotte International Campus Ministry Group: Church Planting and Missions Partnerships Phone: (704) 819-0355 Email: tknight@ncbaptist.org</small>	<small>Title: Consultant Team: Triangle International Campus Ministry Group: Church Planting and Missions Partnerships Phone: (800) 395-5102, ext. 5562 Email: sjoo@ncbaptist.org</small>	<small>Title: Consultant Team: Western Region Collegiate Partnerships Group: Church Planting and Missions Partnerships Phone: (828) 264-7641 Email: jyarbboro@ncbaptist.org</small>	<small>Title: Consultant Team: Central Region Collegiate Partnerships Group: Church Planting and Missions Partnerships Phone: (336) 209-5774 Email: eblackerby@ncbaptist.org</small>	<small>Title: Team Leader Team: Eastern Region Collegiate Partnerships Group: Church Planting and Missions Partnerships Phone: (800) 395-5102, ext. 5560 Email: rtrexler@ncbaptist.org</small>

Back from the dead

Michael Moore began his chapel message saying, “My name is not Lazarus, but I am back from the dead, and I want to tell you about it.”

He recently spoke to the employees of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in their weekly chapel.

He is a well-known pastor, director of missions and Baptist statesman. Moore has served churches in the state since 1971 including First Baptist Mooresville, Friendly Avenue Baptist in Greensboro and Hocutt Baptist in Clayton. He retired as the director of missions for the Robeson Baptist Association.

His story is unusual in one sense, but not unusual for those who know the sovereign power of God to act as He pleases.

Reading from Ephesians 3:20-21, Moore shared his miraculous 10-year story of physical pain and uncertainty. The passage says, “*Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*”

“Now unto Him who is able to do ... I like that word ‘do’ I have circled it in red in my Bible,” he said.

“Our God is not a ‘sit around and talk about it’ God. ... our God is a God of doing. His ability outruns our disability. His ability to answer outstrips our ability to ask.”

He told the Baptist staff, “This is not about me. It’s about the glory of God. It’s about the providential healing power of God, lost somewhere in His mystery of why He heals some and does not heal others.”

Ten years ago Moore was living in terrible pain, he had been to three doctors and ended up in a wheel chair.

He visited several cemeteries as he considered his burial place.

The tombstones of many children caught his attention.

“My heart was filled with sorrow and joy and questions,” he said. “I wrote

down the names and dates on some of those tombstones.”

One of the children only lived one day; another lived one month; one only lived six months.

“I fell to my knees and asked, ‘Lord, why did these die and I lived? ... Have I fulfilled the purpose for which you have made me? Why did I live and not these children?’ That question still pounds in my head, lost in the mystery of the sovereignty of God. I still don’t know, but I might know.”

A few weeks later his mystery illness was diagnosed as multiple myeloma, cancer of the bone marrow. Moore asked the doctor, “How long before I get better?” The answer was, “If everything goes well, about

a year.”

In the spring of 2005 he began a chemotherapy regimen and grew strong enough to have a bone marrow transplant. He responded well to the treatments and for several years was preaching in churches and carrying on his ministry.

Moore said, “Then a few years ago I started back on chemo. I took one kind of chemo and that would fail; then another that would fail; then the latest drug would come out, and I would take that.

“The whole time I was serving churches and preaching around. ... God gave me strength; it’s not easy to do but it’s doable. You don’t whine, you just go on and live life.”

On the first day of January this year, he conducted the funeral of a special friend in Lumberton. Moore came home with pneumonia. In a few days, an ambulance carried him to the hospital. “They took me straight to the critical care unit. I began to go downhill very quickly. I got into deep, deep medical trouble,” he said.

Emphasizing the seriousness of his situation, Moore identified five medical

testimonies, He said, “One physician can be wrong, but it is hard for five to be wrong when they all agree.”

The oncologist came to his bed and said, “Mr. Moore, you’re going to die in about 10 days. I can’t do another thing for you.”

His family physician, who is a believer and a Bible teacher, told his wife, “Judy, I can’t do a thing for him. There is no medicine we can give him. Mike’s going to die.”

The critical care nurse told his wife, “Mrs. Moore, you need to make other arrangements. One of our staff will hook you up with hospice. He needs to go home, and he’ll be dead in a few days.”

He said in a few days the Hospice nurse told his wife, “Mike will likely die today. He’ll be dead in two or three hours.”

Judy Moore called the doctor at Duke Hospital who cared for her husband through the transplants.

The doctor said, “If you can get him to Duke, maybe I can do something for him, but he may not survive the trip.” They did not go.

Lynn Bullock, his pastor in Lumberton, visited Moore at his house. He said from his experience as a pastor, he was sure Moore was going to die that day.

Moore described something he experienced in what was sure to be his final days of life. It was “... a diffused, bright light. ... I concluded I was moving toward it. ... until it filled my entire vision. I have never had a more contented, sweeter, more loved feeling in all of my life.

“I want you to know that I did not see the face of Jesus. I did not see mom and daddy. I did not see streets of gold,” he said.

“I’m not sure exactly what was happening in that period of time, but I know

“Our God is not a ‘sit around and talk about it’ God. ... our God is a God of doing. His ability outruns our disability. His ability to answer outstrips our ability to ask. ... It’s about the glory of God.”

– Michael Moore

this. I know that strong intercessory prayer was made on my behalf.” Hundreds were praying for him.

His wife and children went to a funeral home to make arrangements and select a casket. When she returned, she said, “Why pray for comfort in dying? Let’s pray for Mike to live.”

People prayed and “God has let me live and preach again, and I’ve come here to say ‘Thank you,’” he said.

He’s been through rehabilitation to learn how to feed himself and use his hands and legs again. He has had no chemo since December and the cancer is getting weaker. Today he is driving to preaching engagements.

His oncologist was astonished. His doctor at the beach called it a miracle. “I have no idea why God let me live,” Moore said. “My doctor said, ‘Mike, it might be for some big thing, but I don’t think so. It probably is for some small thing. And you may never even know.’ I think that’s it!”

Moore said he knows he will die. “Even Lazarus died again – we’re all going to die. But I’m not in a hurry. I’ll go to heaven soon enough.”

“All glory belongs to God,” he said. “This kind of thing just makes us stronger disciples. We don’t know the outcome, but I hope my story encourages someone, especially those who are perplexed.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Michael Moore currently serves on the board of directors of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. He has served on the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention. His wife, Judy, is a cancer survivor.) **BR**



K. ALLAN BLUME
Editor



MICHAEL MOORE

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(919) 847-2127
Fax (919) 469-1674
B3now.org

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

Michael McEwen, Content Editor
michael@brnow.org

Dianna L. Cagle, Production Editor
dianna@brnow.org

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

Emily Blake
Editorial Aide

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

Kelly Hunter
Graphic Designer

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Crossover participants seek power in prayer

SEBTS Communications

More than 130 students and four faculty members from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) are preparing to go serve the city of Baltimore.

Crossover Baltimore is a weeklong mission (June 1-7) of intense personal witnessing in Baltimore, Md., the week prior to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting June 10-11.

Stephen Eccher, assistant professor of church history and reformation studies at Southeastern, is originally from the Baltimore area and a leader for the mission.

“Despite the governmentally subsidized external veneer of economic advancement, cultural awareness and historical preservation, Baltimore maintains a poverty-stricken reality, complete with all the trappings of such an oppressed environment,” he said.

SEBTS students are eager to partner with the North American Mission Board (NAMB) to reach one of its 32 Send cities. According to NAMB, 2,729,110 people live in metro Baltimore and 9.9 percent are affiliated with an evangelical church.

“A city once known as one of the most dangerous cities in the nation remains trapped in its past,” Eccher said. “Into that seemingly enslaved culture, students from SEBTS are preparing to bring the freeing gospel of Jesus Christ to the city; to support church planters already laboring to advance Christ’s Kingdom.”

A highlight of the pre-trip training was an evening of prayer held on May 2. Approximately 65 students and faculty members attended the vigil.

Scott Hildreth, director of the Center for Great Commission Studies at Southeastern, said, “We have a very missional summer planned but we know that success does not depend on our



skills and talent; it depends on God.”

The seminary community joined together to pray for spiritual awakening on the campus and around the world. A focus of the prayer was on students and faculty participating in the Baltimore mission trip. “When Dr. [Alvin] Reid and I saw the number of students signing up for Crossover Baltimore, we felt compelled to do something more,” Hildreth said.

Chuck Lawless, vice-president of graduate studies and ministry centers at SEBTS, supported and attended the event. “I am deeply mindful of the fact that most seminaries do far too little in calling the community to prayer or even teaching students to pray,” he said.

Students gathered to seek the Lord for personal renewal and then to pray for their churches, city, state, nation and the lost around the world. “We long to see the Lord do something on our campus that cannot be explained by our planning, organization and effort,” Hildreth emphasized. “We are praying that this is the beginning of a spiritual awakening on our campus.”

For additional information about Crossover Baltimore, go to: <http://embracebaltimore.com/crossover/>. **BR**

N.C. nominees for various committees

Baptist Press

There were a few North Carolina men and women named to Southern Baptist Convention Committees.

The Committee on Committees will assemble in Baltimore just prior to the SBC’s June 10-11 annual meeting to nominate members of the Committee on Nominations who, in turn, nominate trustees for the boards of SBC entities.

SBC Bylaw 19 also provides that the Committee on Committees “shall nominate all special committees authorized during the sessions of the Convention not otherwise provided for.”

The Committee on Committees has 68 members, two from each of the 34 states and regions qualified for representation on boards of SBC entities.

The N.C. representatives are Bobby Blanton, senior pastor of Lake Norman Baptist Church in Huntersville, and J. Bartley Wooten, pastor of Beulaville Baptist Church in Beulaville.

Nominees to serve on the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, the four denominational boards – International Mission Board, North American Mission Board, LifeWay Christian Resources and GuideStone Financial Resources – the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, the six seminaries and the Committee on Order of Business will serve if elected by the messengers to the annual meeting.

● **Executive Committee:** Terry H. Montgomery of Charlotte was nominated for a second term.

● **International Mission Board:** Michael C. Cloer, pastor of Englewood Baptist Church in Rocky Mount, has been nominated to replace Robert H. Jackson of Mooresville when his term expires in 2018.

● **North American Mission Board:** Cynthia E. “Cindy” Bush of Raleigh was nominated for a second term.

● **Southeastern Seminary:** Both Charles M. Jacumin of Raleigh and Donald L. Warren of Gastonia have been nominated for a second term.

● **Golden Gate Seminary:** Arthur A. “Rally” deLeon, layperson and member of Providence Baptist Church in Raleigh will replace R. Shawn Dobbs of Winston-Salem, who resigned. DeLeon’s term expires in 2019. **BR**

SBC annual meeting app

SBC Life

Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting can stay up to date with a smartphone app, which will include more than a dozen features, including schedules, maps, alerts, speakers, newsfeeds, the Book of Reports, the Daily Bulletin and much more.

The free app is available for iPhone, iPad, Android and Blackberry users and can be downloaded by typing in “SBC Annual Meeting 2014” in the smart-

phone’s app store. Developed by CoreApps, the app will include:

- Push alerts that give users up-to-date news, such as changes in the meeting schedule should the posted schedule change.
- The programs for the SBC Pastors’ Conference and the SBC annual meeting.
- An alphabetized list of Pastors’ Conference and SBC annual meeting speakers, including their scheduled speaking times.
- A newsfeed of Baptist Press news stories and photos covering Crossover,

the SBC annual meeting and related meetings that take place during the week.

- PDF versions of the Book of Reports, the Daily Bulletin and SBC LIFE.
- Scheduled times for seminary luncheons and other affinity groups meeting in conjunction with the SBC annual meeting.
- Twitter stream discussions about the SBC annual meeting. Use #sbc14 to join the conversation.
- An interactive map of the exhibit hall and messenger-friendly local restaurants.
- A list of exhibitors, including contact information for each exhibitor and the exhibitor’s floor location.
- A list of Baltimore Baptist Association churches and church-type missions, with a map showing where each congregation is located.
- A “friends” icon where users can keep up to date with their friends and send them notes (users are required to fill out a brief profile).
- Downloadable copies of Meet Southern Baptists and The Southern Baptist Convention: A Closer Look, two brochures produced by the SBC Executive Committee for use in church member training classes. **BR**

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J.D. Greear, forefront, introduces church planters and their families to The Summit Church in Durham during a recent service. The Summit has made planting churches a priority. (The Summit Facebook photo)

Summit started multi-site ‘almost by accident’

Part of a series

By DIANNA L. CAGLE | BR Production Editor

Choosing to have multiple sites was not an obvious decision for The Summit Church in Durham (summitrdu.com).

Even though the church now has eight locations in the Raleigh-Durham area, “we sort of backed into multi-site,” said J.D. Greear, lead pastor.

“We spent three years searching for property to build a much larger facility near our original location. We had actually already sold our building and begun meeting in a high school.”

Because they couldn’t find land in the area, they relocated 30 minutes away.

“We did own a small church building near our original location, and it seemed like a good idea to provide worship services there as well for people who had lived

in that community for so long. So, almost by accident, we became multi-site.”

It was only after they added the services at the church building that the leaders began to realize what having multiple sites meant and might mean for the future of the church.

“We’re still learning all the time,” Greear said.

Early in his ministry at what was then known as Homestead Heights Baptist Church, Greear said he was praying for revival in Durham.

“In the midst of that prayer, I felt the Spirit of God whisper in my heart, ‘And what if I answer this prayer ... and send a revival into Raleigh-Durham beyond all you’ve asked or imagined ... but I choose another church through which to do it? What if that church grows, and yours stays the same?’” Greear said.

The pastor would love to be able to say he had an emphatic “Yes” for God and that he rallied behind John 3:30 (“He must increase, but I must decrease”), but the answer that bubbled up from Greear’s heart was “No.”

“Somehow ‘thy Kingdom come’ had become all jumbled up with ‘my kingdom come,’” he said. “I’ve had to learn, again and again, that many of the most important elements of ministry are also the most costly. But they’re also the most rewarding.”

Some concerns about multi-site churches turned out to be strengths for The Summit.

“We’ve found that the pastoral care and leadership is very strong because it’s local, closer to where people live and worship,” he said.

“The pastors and staff who serve at each campus have the opportunity to know the congregation and be involved in their lives.”

Greear credits this local emphasis as the reason why the church starts campuses in the local region and not in cities across the nation.

The Summit’s leadership takes unity seriously and

doesn’t want to lose the sense of being one church.

“We concluded that we would lose the local flavor if our campuses spread out too far, so we limit ourselves to the [Raleigh-Durham] metropolitan area,” Greear said.

“Besides our geographical unity, we are also united around our common call to Jesus and His mission.”

The Summit only starts sites where its members already are.

“We believe God has The Summit Church here to reach and bless this area,” Greear said. Because of the central location of its sites, the church can come together like it did in the fall for a worship service at the Durham Bulls Athletic Park. They also held Christmas services at the Durham Performing Arts Center.

Just because the church has multiple sites does not mean it is not involved in church planting. Since 2010, The Summit has planted churches in Denver, Tennessee, Indianapolis and Baltimore, and it plans to plant four churches this year in Washington, D.C., Wilmington and two in the Triangle.

“Planting churches and being multi-site go hand-in-hand for us,” Greear said. “The Church is God’s ‘Plan A’ for the world, and we believe all Christians are sent by Jesus to be a part of that plan.”

The church has a goal to plant 1,000 churches worldwide by 2050.

With The Summit’s help 19 churches have been planted in North America, 12 in Central and South America, 11 in South Asia, six in southern Africa, four in Central Asia, three in east Africa and one in East Asia, Western Europe and Eastern Europe.

For The Summit, moving to a multi-site church has helped its church planting vision. Greear said the church’s plants have taken a higher priority because of the congregation’s growth.



Volunteers take part in a service project for The Summit Church. (The Summit Facebook photo)

Mapping the darkness for the mission of light

By **MICHAEL MCEWEN** | BR Content Editor

A.W. Milne was a “one-way missionary.” This early 19th century Christian and his wife, Rachel, packed up a few belongings – not in suitcases but in coffins. Hence, “one-way missionary.”

The Milnes sailed to New Hebrides in the South Pacific where they would live 35 years with indigenous people and also die there. Like any missionary, their goal was to share the love of Christ and to offer the gospel of light in the midst of a dark world.

As a 21st century missionary in Guinea, West Africa, Keelan Cook, assistant to associate directors of North American and international missions at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS), was visited by a church from Virginia that came every year to do mission work among the Susu people.

Keelan Cook, assistant to associate directors of North American and international missions at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, is working to map lost people groups in North Carolina and beyond. (BR photo by Michael McEwen)

Cook said, “One night by the fire, I asked a question, ‘So, there are about 10 people here, and about how much did it cost to get all of you here?’ They said somewhere between \$25,000-\$30,000.”

“And I replied, ‘Do you realize that if you wanted to work with the Susu people, you could’ve put the same volunteers in a 15-passenger van, driven 35-40 minutes to Washington, D.C., and worked with them there with a much smaller budget?’”

Cook shared that this conversation was a great paradigm shift for his visitors, and because of this experience, the church is now looking for and interacting with Susu peoples in D.C.

Noting the fact that America has always been a melting pot of cultures, Cook said there has been a great shift in the past 20-25 years.

“A number of factors are in play concerning a massive explosion of a plurality of cultures, languages and people groups in American cities. Because of this shift in urban centers, it has fundamentally impacted the way we will church plant in those centers,” he said.

The burden to reach international peoples

from within American borders is also a passion of Mike Dodson.

Dodson, assistant professor of church planting and evangelism and associate director of North American church planting for the Center for Great Commission studies at SEBTS, was invited three years ago to a meeting with North American urban strategists hosted by the International Mission Board (IMB).

“One of the conversations brought up [at this meeting] was that people group research is significant internationally, but on the North American side ... the research was a ‘black hole.’ ... My immediate thought was, ‘It doesn’t have to be that way,’” said Dodson.

In response, he has piloted a program at Southeastern called, “The Peoples Next Door: Mapping and Engaging People Groups in North America” (PND).

This program utilizes what is called, “Narrative Mapping.” Teams spread out across America’s urban centers to interact with local businesses, shops and everyday citizens to generate a “map” of both a city’s places and its people. In looking for districts or landmarks in an area, teams naturally build relationships with people by asking simple questions about a person’s life.

From these encounters, a team creates “points of interest.” These are places connected to a specific people group that build a foundation of what becomes a people group map. Also a part of this “Narrative Mapping” process is “points of engagement.” These are neighborhoods, communities and apartment complexes where a cluster of international peoples live.

The goal for PND is to move from “points of interest” to “points of engagement,” where deeper relationships with a people group are made for the purposes of gospel proclamation, Bible studies and ultimately, church planting.

Zac Lyons, an independent ethno-demographic researcher for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), is helping map the areas of Raleigh-Durham, Greensboro, High Point, Winston-Salem and Charlotte. He works with associational and strategy coordinator leaders in those particular areas.

The information Lyons collects is uploaded to peoplegroups.info, which is a joint project of the North American Mission Board and IMB of the Southern Baptist Convention.

A similar mapping project was piloted in 2013 called “The North Carolina Metropolitan Areas People Identification Project” (NCMapID). This is a partnership among the Metrolina and Piedmont Baptist associations and the BSC.

NCMapID volunteers will talk with people in these metropolitan areas to try to learn who they are and where they are from. Information is then collected and entered into a database.

When the project is completed around December 2015, local churches will be able to access the people group data. The goal is to take this data and create an effective model that can be used in the other six North Carolina metropolitan areas.

“We are trying to locate where international people groups are and then attempting to mobilize local churches to begin church planting amongst these internationals,” said Lyons.

The 2010 U.S. Census reported that 74.79 percent (7.1 million) of North Carolinians live in the eight metropolitan areas of the state with 77.82 percent (1.7 million) of non-Anglo North Carolinians living in these eight areas.

Acknowledging these large numbers in need of engagement, Lyons said he is in need of “outward-focused churches rooted in the Word of God and are willing to sacrifice themselves for the Great Commission. We also want churches that are thinking long-term and not short-term. ... We don’t necessarily need ... professional missionaries.

“We just need believers who know the gospel and want to share it.”

Cook said mission-sending agencies such as NAMB and IMB and institutions like SEBTS are great for equipping individuals, “but ... God gave the Great Commission to the local church.”

He also added that any church could do this mapping project. “It’s reproducible,” Cook said. “If you have churches in an area that care about who these people are, they can engage them with the gospel. Churches are in a position to develop real relationships through mapping that allows them to move seamlessly into church planting work.”

Legend has it that when A.W. Milne died, the villagers buried him and inscribed these words on his tombstone: “When he came there was no light. When he left there was no darkness.”

Southeastern’s “The Peoples Next Door” and the BSC’s NCMapID programs are more than tools for describing where international peoples work and live. They’re tools designed to map the darkness for the mission of light.

To learn more information or for upcoming trainings in Southeastern’s “People’s Next Door” project, email kcook@sebts.edu. Also, for more information about the NCMapID project, email msowers@ncbaptist.org or call (800) 395-5102, ext. 5654. **BR**



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Heisman winner Tim Brown talks faith & new book

Tim Brown played college football for the Notre Dame Fighting Irish, where he became the first wide receiver to win the Heisman Trophy. He spent 16 years with the Los Angeles/Oakland Raiders, during which he established himself as one of the National Football League's (NFL) most prolific wide receivers. His success with the Raiders organization earned him the nickname, "Mr. Raider."

Currently Brown is a college football analyst for ESPN, as well as a co-host on a Dallas CBS affiliate. He continues to be involved in business, Christian and charity ventures. He and his wife, Sherice, have four children.

In this interview I had the opportunity to talk to him about his new book, *The Making of a Man: How Men and Boys Honor God and Live With Integrity*, where Tim shares the triumphs, heartbreaks and early struggles of his journey. We also

discussed the principles and priorities that made him the man he is today.

Q: Why did you decide to write *The Making of a Man*?

A: As I traveled around the country I had a lot of people stopping me and complimenting me on how I handled myself off the field. It got me to thinking that this didn't just happen overnight. It was only by the grace of God that I was trying to do the right things off the field then, and continue today to try to live my life by God's principles.

I talk in the book about my early days in Los Angeles and some of the struggles I had, but I did experience a real transition in my late 20s. Since that time, I've tried to not put myself in bad situations. Consequently I have, to the best of my ability, lived by God's principles.

Q: In the book, you talk a lot about those influential people in the game

of football who impacted you greatly. One of them was your college coach at Notre Dame, the great Lou Holtz.

A: Lou blessed me and wrote the forward of my book. I do not want to sound like I am overstating this, but without Lou Holtz I am not a Heisman winner. When he came to Notre Dame I was on time to graduate and playing on a regular basis. I was happy with my situation at that particular time. I knew our offense would be high powered when he came, but had no idea the plans he had for me. After two days of spring ball, Lou pulled me over and asked me why I wasn't playing more than what he had seen me play in 1986. And then said I could be the best player in the country. After two weeks of hearing I was the best in the country I started to believe it.

Q: We just had the NFL Draft. For those people out there that wonder about this life-changing experience, tell us what it is like to be a Heisman Trophy winner and be drafted to the NFL in the first round? Why is it difficult for young men to make that transition?

A: First off, your life totally changes. Six months before the draft I won the Heisman, and my name changed. I was no longer "Tim Brown," I'm "Heisman Trophy winner Tim Brown." Then you're put into a financial category that you've never dreamt of. My first check was for more than my dad had made in his 20 years of working. It is a challenge. You want to have fun and enjoy yourself, and you want to live the way God wants you to live, but there are so many things that can draw you away from that. Early on I had to struggle through some difficult things. Thankfully for me, Roman, I was very blessed to grow up in a spirit-based home and in a spirit-based church. I had been taught very well.

Q: It sounds like your upbringing and parents played a big role in keeping you on track.

A: There's no doubt. I think the spiritual background that I received literally saved my life, especially with everything I was exposed to in college and in the first years in the NFL at Los Angeles. There's no doubt that without being raised the way I was and having

such a strong father, I could have been involved with some things that would have been very harmful to my life and career.

Q: The relationship with your father is a real focal point in your life as it is with many men. You chose to be very transparent about this in your book.

A: My father and I did not always have the strongest relationship. When I was 13-years-old my father came home after drinking, and he thought I was coming after him. He threatened to kill me, and because of that incident we went 12 years without having a decent conversation. There was no real connection. After 12 years, I asked for forgiveness and told him that I forgave him. And for the next 20 years of his life we had a great relationship. Out of that situation when I was 13 [I made] the decision to never drink alcohol. If alcohol can make a person do these things, then I will never touch it. I don't know if I could play 17 years in the NFL and have the longevity I had if I was a guy who was out drinking and doing all that kind of stuff.

Q: Like me you are involved with a lot of great youth initiatives in Dallas and around the country. What is your advice for success to young people today?

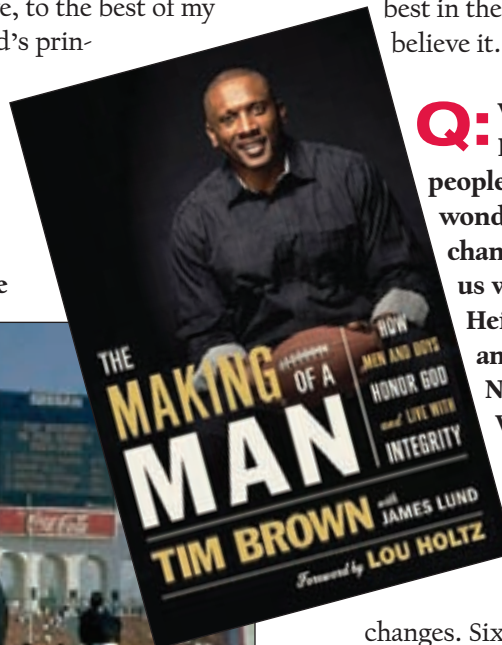
A: First of all, the most important relationship we need to have is a relationship with Christ. It is hugely important. Actually one of the chapters in my book is about surrounding yourself with good people. You have to find people who encourage you. Thankfully I had coaches, a big brother and a pastor who were always trying to push me in the right direction. When you're young it's tough, because kids want to be around the cool group. They used to call me an "L7" – you put an L and a 7 together and you get a square. Thirty years later those same guys are asking me why I didn't make them do what I did. Many of those guys are currently struggling and looking for a way through life. It's worth it, and it certainly pays off in the end.

Visit barnesandnoble.com/w/the-making-of-a-man-tim-brown/1117260736?ean=9780849947575 for Brown's book.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Roman's Sold Out Sports Talk Radio program on American Family Radio can be heard in 200 cities nationally or streaming live at afr.net. He is an evangelist and motivational speaker. Visit his website: soldouttv.com; Facebook: Roman Gabriel III Fan Page; connect on Twitter: [romangabriel3rd](https://twitter.com/romangabriel3rd). Contact at (910) 431-6483 or email: soldoutrg3@gmail.com.) **B3**



ROMAN GABRIEL
Sports Q & A



Life is a university: Mission:Dignity offers hope, help

GuideStone Resources

Noel Edwards and his wife, Sue, have been well educated by God during Noel's 55 years of service as a pastor.

"Life is a university and God is always teaching us things," Noel Edwards said. "Sacrifice was at the center of our ministry."

Sue shared that Noel was always giving of his time.

"If someone needed him at one o'clock in the morning because of sickness or death, he would just go. God sent him there to minister and that's what he did," Sue said.

"There were times that required sacrifice – where we had to do without – because the money just didn't go far enough," Noel said.

"But we found out in our ministry that as we ministered to people, and then as we had needs, they ministered to us," Sue said.

One of their fondest memories from their days in the ministry was the kindness of a local grocer when they were down to their last \$2. Noel 'tells that when the store owner was dying, he'd called his sons together and asked for a promise.

"I want you boys to promise me something," he'd said, 'I want you to promise you'll never see a school teacher or a minister want for anything they need.' And those boys did promise."

It wasn't too long until one son had the opportunity to make good on that promise.

"We'd had a lot of illness and Sue had nearly died when our baby daughter was born and we just — we had just run out of money. I was up, really just praying, talking to the Lord about what we were going to do because we didn't have any money, and we didn't have any groceries," Noel remembered.

The next morning, Noel and Sue scraped together \$2 and he headed off to the store.

As Noel came in the front door, one of the grocer's sons approached him and



Noel and Sue Edwards are thankful for the help they receive through Mission:Dignity. Sunday, June 22 is Mission:Dignity Sunday. (GuideStone photo)



Mission:Dignity
Assisting Retired Ministers and Spouses

asked him to join him in the back of the store.

"The grocer said, 'Brother Edwards, first of all, I want to tell you what you've meant to us and to this community. I feel you have needs that aren't being

met,' he said, 'you're not buying much. Are times hard for you?'" Noel replied that they were.

"And the grocer said, 'I want to tell you that until times get better, anything that you need, you come down here and you get it. If you ever get to the point where you can pay for it, that's fine. If not, that's fine too,'" Noel continued.

God has seen the Edwards through some tough times over the years, but they don't complain.

"We've been able to minister to others

because we've been there. So tragedy — those things that hurt — can also become a blessing," Noel said.

"His ultimate goal was, not only to help us, but then to let that be a part of our learning experience so that we could know how much it means to bless other people. God blesses us in order that we can in turn bless others," he added.

Keeping food on their shelves hasn't always been easy, but today the Mission:Dignity program is helping the Edwards with groceries and other essential needs.

John Ambra, director of development for the Mission:Dignity program, said, "We are grateful to all the donors who make it possible for people like the Edwards to not only survive, but to also continue their ministry to others."

"Words just don't express how much we appreciate the people who help us through Mission:Dignity," said Noel. "It's a life saver for us."

Mail gifts to: Mission:Dignity, GuideStone Financial Resources SBC, 2401 Cedar Springs Rd., Dallas, TX 75201-1498. Visit missiondignitysb.org. ■

GuideStone expands participation

By ROY HAYHURST | GuideStone/Baptist Press

Southern Baptist and evangelical church members can now invest with GuideStone Funds. Since its 2001 inception, GuideStone Funds has limited participation to pastors, missionaries and employees of Southern Baptist and evangelical churches and ministries, as well as their immediate family members. The Southern Baptist Convention's 2013 amendment of GuideStone's ministry statement to allow the entity to offer its investments, insurance and services to like-minded individuals helped make the change possible.

GuideStone described the change, which went into effect May 5, as an important next step in supporting the company's long-term growth and fulfilling its mission.

"So often, people wonder whether they have to choose the performance they hope to achieve for their investments or the values they strive to live out today," Rodric E. Cummins, senior vice president and chief investment officer of GuideStone Capital Management, said. "We believe that the many industry recognitions GuideStone Funds has received help give evidence that investors don't have to compromise their values to obtain industry-leading performance."

Ron Dugan, chief strategic investment officer for GuideStone, said, "We believe that the time is right to make these funds available to a wider Christian audience.

"Having successfully weathered financial storms after

September 2001, as well as the economic downturn of 2008-2009, we believe our funds are battle-tested and offer a good approach for values-based investors who want to invest in accordance with their values.

"Our commitment to our investors, whether they are the pastors we were founded to serve over nine decades ago, church members or financial advisors, is the same: to help them achieve their long-term goals," Dugan said. "On each desk at GuideStone is a little sign that reminds us of our guiding vision as we seek to be a lifelong partner in enhancing the financial security of our participants. We will not waver from that as we seek to work each day with integrity and skill on behalf of our investors."

GuideStone president O.S. Hawkins echoed those sentiments.

"Each expansion GuideStone has undertaken helps provide additional economies of scale, allowing us to continue to provide quality services at competitive prices to our pastors and all participants," Hawkins said. "Our core commitment — part of the very fabric of GuideStone Financial Resources — is to those SBC pastors at the crossroads. Every time we consider an opportunity to grow, our first and foremost question remains whether we are able to do so while honoring the Lord in being those pastors' lifelong partner in enhancing their financial security. We are convinced this step enhances our ability to partner with those participants."

GuideStone Funds is a controlled-affiliate of GuideStone Financial Resources, a 96-year-old entity of the Southern Baptist Convention. Originally founded as a

relief organization, GuideStone has transitioned into providing employer-sponsored retirement plans, life and health products and property and casualty coverage. In the mutual funds group, GuideStone launched the first Christian-based target-date fund lineup in 2006.

GuideStone enjoys award-winning success. Five of its 11 Select Funds, as of March 31, have 4- or 5-star Morningstar ratings. In 2012, Lipper named GuideStone Funds its Best Overall Small Fund Group in the U.S. — the first Christian-screened fund family of its kind to receive this award. Lipper recognized performance over the three-year period ending November 30, 2011, and ranked GuideStone No. 1 out of 182 eligible fund families with up to \$40 billion in assets.

In 2013, GuideStone's MyDestination 2025 Fund was ranked No. 1 out of 92 similar funds for its performance over the three-year period ending Nov. 30, 2012. Lipper honored GuideStone's Extended-Duration Bond Fund as the Best Fund Over 3 Years and the Best Fund Over 5 Years in the Corporate Debt A-Rated Funds category, for period ending Nov. 30, 2013. In each category, the Extended-Duration Bond Fund beat out more than 50 eligible funds.

For more information about GuideStone Funds or to obtain a prospectus with important information on the funds, please call 1-888-GS-FUNDS (1-888-473-8637) or visit www.GuideStoneFunds.com.

(EDITOR'S NOTE — Roy Hayhurst is senior manager of editorial services at GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.) ■

GuideStone
Funds

Book stirs controversy in Watauga County

By **RICK HOUSTON** | Special to the *Recorder*

Despite a county board of education vote to keep author Isabel Allende's book *The House of the Spirits* in a sophomore honors English class at Watauga High School in Boone, the controversy that erupted over its use may not be over according to Chastity Lesesne. She is the parent who first protested the book.

The Watauga County Board of Education voted 3-2 Feb. 27 to allow veteran teacher Mary Kent Whitaker to teach the book, which contains more than 60 graphic portrayals of sexual activity and deviancy.

Lesesne, who attends Alliance Bible Fellowship, insists that she is not against having the book in the school library or its use as an alternate reading selection. But, it is required reading, forcing its volatile content on impressionable students, she said.

"We're not finished yet, and [we're] considering legal and political recourse," Chastity Lesesne, a local parent, wrote in an e-mail. "No decisions finalized. We are praying about next steps."

Lesesne says that while she and other supporters were told by one board member that he hated the book and would not want his 28-year-old son to read it, he turned out to be the deciding vote in favor of *The House of the Spirits*.

"He voted for the book because some parents wanted their child to read it," Lesesne said in an e-mail. "He knew what was best for his own son but did not want to do what [was] best for all the other students. Yet, this is [this] board member's responsibility. This is now his legacy."

The issue began when Lesesne's son expressed concern over the book. An

initial meeting with Whitaker left her with little satisfaction. While an alternate selection of *Moby Dick* was offered, that would likely have meant reading it outside of class and little or no in-person instruction from the teacher.

Lesesne's son was one of six who requested an alternate – two of the students remained in the classroom; three went to the library; and one chose to sit in the hallway to read. Other options were also eventually presented, including taking the honors class online.

Still, Lesesne felt her son was being isolated from his peers in Whitaker's classroom.

"This is the only high school in our county, and this is the only sophomore honors English class in our county," said Lesesne, the daughter of a Baptist pastor who homeschooled her son until the current school year. "So you can't take another class unless you chose to opt out of the honors class. There was a feeling of feeling trapped, unfairness and not a lot of choices."

Whitaker has been a teacher and educator for 37 years, and was the Watauga County Teacher of the Year in 2010-11 and one of 16 regional finalists for the statewide honor. She was not available for comment for this story, but instead provided a copy of one of her presentations on the matter.

"I do understand ... I honestly do ... that as a parent, you have personal guidelines as to what you want your child exposed to at age 15 and 16," Whitaker wrote in the presentation. "*The House of the Spirits* does have content that deals with rape and torture. I do understand that you do not want your son exposed to this book."

"I also understand that other parents not represented here have objections to

material that you consider acceptable. We are a diverse world. As an educational community, it is impossible to anticipate every objection that might arise from a parent. Since I've taught [more than] 3,000 students, I've interacted with at least that many parents – and they are all unique."

The presentation noted that students who chose to leave the room during discussions of *The House of the Spirits* were outside the classroom for an average of 20 minutes during each 90-minute class period. Whitaker's two children graduated from Watauga High School, and she appeared proud of the education they received there.

"I love my children, and I respect them, and I still sometimes want to shield them from the harshness of the world," Whitaker added in her presentation.

"But honestly the education they received from Watauga High School, especially from the English department, has prepared them for dealing with the world – the beauty and the harshness."

Lesesne felt a sense of urgency over the book's introduction into the class, and within a week's time not only read it but lined up meetings with the school principal, vice principal and county superintendent.

She went before the board of education to file a formal challenge, and that led to a three-tiered process of deciding the book's fate.

First, the book was approved for use by a committee comprised of teachers, school officials and a student.

"I became aware at that first meeting that this was about, unfortunately, no one could hear the actual issues that I was stating, because if they did say that they agreed with my concerns, they would be

going against the teacher," Lesesne said. "It became pro-teacher, anti-teacher, about the teacher, about the school."

Second, a group appointed by the board of education also voted to keep it.

The third, last and most recent round took place Feb. 27 at a highly charged meeting of the five-member Watauga County Board of Education. The American Civil Liberties Union organized demonstrations in support of the book, while Lesesne had her own large contingent of supporters.

"The problem we have with it is that there doesn't seem to be any standards in play that filter out inappropriate literature in the school system," said Molly Northern, a member of Mount Vernon Baptist in Boone. "It's almost as if the teacher has the say-so, and she is not accountable to anybody, doesn't have to answer to anybody. I have a huge problem with that."

Cliff Baldwin, another Mount Vernon member, was also concerned about the influence of the equally as controversial Common Core state standards. *The House of the Spirits* is included as an exemplar text in Common Core Curriculum Maps for English Language Arts, a 2011 book recommended by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction as a resource for meeting those standards, but not in an appendix to the standards themselves.

"The Common Core is the gateway that's allowing this stuff in," Baldwin said. "I don't study Common Core in particular, but that's come up several times when we parents object to the material they're expecting our kids to read. They say, 'Well, it's all in keeping with the Common Core.' The fact is, they're still my kids, and I don't think they should be reading it." ■

Explore the Bible expands curriculum

Baptist Press

Beginning this fall, LifeWay's Explore the Bible ongoing curriculum line will expand to include young adults, students and kids.

"Until now, Explore the Bible has been a book-by-book study only for adults," Toby Jennings, managing editor of the study, said. "With this expansion, it will become the only curriculum we know that provides book-by-book Bible study for groups of all ages."

Adults and students will study the same passage of scripture every week. The material for kids will focus on the same concept within the same book as adults and students. They may, however, cross-reference a connected story in

scripture that elaborates on the primary message to make challenging concepts more kid-friendly.

Jennings explained that each study session is developed to help groups understand the Bible passage within its larger biblical context.

Well-known pastor, author and radio teacher David Jeremiah will serve as general editor for this fall's study of Hebrews.

LifeWay offers three distinct ongoing group Bible studies, each with a different starting point.

Explore the Bible starts with the scriptural text and a plan to walk people through all the books of the Bible. Bible Studies for Life starts with real-life issues that people face every day, and brings



the scripture to bear on those issues. And, The Gospel Project begins with a systematic plan to show people how all scripture points to Jesus.

Churches can register to preview Explore the Bible free for one month, which

includes full access to four sessions of each adult, young adult, student and kids resource, at LifeWay.com/ExploreTheBible. ■

Marriage Amendment supporters celebrate second anniversary

By L.A. WILLIAMS | Christian Action League

Approximately 300 supporters gathered May 8 in Raleigh to celebrate the two-year anniversary of the passage of the Marriage Protection Amendment (MPA) on the same day that nine same-sex couples took part in protests to reverse the amendment which affirmed voters' belief in marriage as the union between one man and one woman.

"Make no mistake. Gay activists are not simply asking for marriage equality, as they claim," said Mark Creech, executive director of the Christian Action League, to the crowd gathered on the old Capitol grounds in Raleigh.

"What they want is a new national policy that legally declares that gender is irrelevant to marriage – that gender is irrelevant to the raising of children. And a policy of that kind turns nature itself on its head."

He was among half dozen or so speakers who called on Christians to remain strong in their stand for biblical marriage even in the face of lawsuits and bullying.

"It is not hatred to agree with the God



Mark Harris, Tami Fitzgerald, John Rustin, Mark Creech, Patrick Wooden and Steve Nobles participate in the May 8 event in Raleigh where Marriage Protection Amendment supporters gathered on the second anniversary of the passing of the amendment. (BR photo by K. Allan Blume)

of the Bible," said Patrick Wooden Sr., pastor of Upper Room Church of God in Christ of Raleigh.

"It's just right."

John Rustin, director of the North Carolina Family Policy Council, focused his remarks on the effects of same-sex marriage legalization in other states. Highlighting residents' loss of freedom of speech and freedom of religion, he

warned that defenders of the faith will ultimately face intense pressure "to submit, be silent or to stand."

"We are not here merely to protect a word. We are here to honor and defend the God-ordained institution of marriage that serves as the building block of our culture and, folks, of our human existence," he said.

Picking up where Rustin ended, Ron Baity, president of Return America, said, "Any nation that deviates from God's acceptable marriage signs their own death warrant."

He said there is "not one verse of scripture from Genesis to Revelation in which God looks with favoritism upon any other type of marriage."

Tami Fitzgerald, director of the N.C. Values Coalition, gave a snapshot of the legal landscape of marriage in America, outlining the basis for three lawsuits pending against North Carolina's Marriage Protection Amendment and reiterating the importance of a case argued May 13 before the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals in Virginia.

She said 33 states have laws recognizing that marriage is between a man and a woman, and that of the 17 that have legalized same-sex marriage; only three have done so via the ballot box.

Fitzgerald told the crowd that even as they rallied for marriage, the Campaign for Southern Equality was leading an ef-

fort to bully registers of deeds by asking for illegal marriage licenses.

Just blocks away from the MPA celebration, three same-sex couples applied for marriage licenses at the Wake County Register of Deeds office, and six other same-sex couples had their out-of-state marriages recorded amid land records.

Laura Riddick, the county's Register, issued a press release saying that her office "is not the proper forum for either a public policy debate or a political protest."

Fitzgerald called the stunts a waste of taxpayer money and said the election of Mark Chilton in Orange County, who has promised to issue licenses to gay couples against state law, may lead to a test of the North Carolina statute that allows those who refuse to uphold the law to be removed from office.

Beyond the legal wrangling, Fitzgerald said the heart of the issue hasn't changed.

"Our support for traditional marriage is not hatred for homosexuals. We are not anti-gay, we are pro marriage," she said. "We can identify with the struggle against sin, but we cannot legalize it, sanctify it and celebrate it."

Stressing that support for traditional marriage is "foundational to every civilization known to man," Mark Harris, pastor of First Baptist Church of Charlotte and founding member of Vote for Marriage NC, called on attendees to rebuild a strong America by electing leaders willing to stand and by being willing themselves to lead in their communities and churches.

Steve Noble, radio host for Called2Action Today, led the rally's closing prayer asking the Lord to forgive "the times we have not prayed, the times we've chosen comfort over conflict and the times we've chosen popularity over truth."

Creech said afterward that the event was a wonderful testimony to God's mercy and protection and to the people of the great state of North Carolina who continue "to resist the madness of the current hour."

(EDITOR'S NOTE – L.A. Williams is a correspondent for the Christian Action League.) BR

Searching for Silver

A couple of years ago I lost a pair of earrings. They weren't valuable or even fancy, but they matched about 40 percent of my wardrobe, and I really liked them. I spent months searching for these \$12 earrings. I cleaned out my car, dug through every bag I owned and combed through my jewelry box as though I lost my inheritance. This was all to no avail. Close friends around me knew about the missing earrings, and one even gave me a gift card to a jewelry store to find a similar pair. But, nothing replaced those magenta earrings with the silver undertones that dangled.

About seven months after losing my earrings, I was moving things around in a spare closet and a flash of silver caught my eye. I followed after the flash with my hand, and my fingers landed upon some stones.

I thought, "This feels sparkly!" and lo and behold, I pulled out a missing earring. A bit more searching unearthed its twin, and I began contacting friends via text messaging with a picture of my lost treasure.

As I have reflected on this, I can't help

but think of Proverbs 2:1-5. Solomon tells his son to call out for insight, to lift his voice for understanding, to seek wisdom like silver and search for wisdom like hidden treasure. Solomon notes that in so doing the young son would "understand the fear of the Lord and discover the knowledge of God" (v. 5, HCSB).

We claim we want to hear from the Lord in the matters and affairs of life, but are we willing to spend the necessary time seeking His voice within the pages of scripture? We hear the Lord's voice as we spend time in prayer and in His Word. The Lord is faithful – He promises He will give wisdom and understanding if we spend the time searching and seeking His voice. So, why not spend the time necessary seeking the Father's wisdom until you hear Him speak? He promises He will answer.

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



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Strategy coordinators discovering, raising awareness

by C. Walter Overman



"From the beginning there has been a feeling of being in this together"

January 2014 marked the beginning of the implementation of the new five-year strategy of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC): "Impacting Lostness through Disciple-Making." The strategy calls for churches to penetrate darkness through disciple-making in North Carolina and around the world.

In North Carolina, that involves engaging the estimated 5.8 million lost people in the state with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"That is a big number," said Russ Conley, BSC team leader for the Strategic Focus Team. "It's a hard number for me to even conceptualize."

The strategy calls attention to lostness across the entire state. The strategy challenges churches across the entire state to engage the concentrated areas of lostness.

The Strategic Focus Team is taking a lead role in assisting churches and associations in the eight population centers of North Carolina fulfill the strategy.

The eight population centers include Asheville (Blue Ridge), Charlotte, Fayetteville, Greenville, Hickory (Unifour), Wilmington (Coastal), the Triad area (Greensboro, Winston-Salem and High Point) and the Triangle area (Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill).

Research has identified the eight population centers as having the most concentrated number of lost people in the state. The Strategic Focus Team is currently comprised of seven strategy coordinators who are assigned to seven of the eight population centers.

Strategy coordinators work with associational missionaries, local pastors, lay leaders, leaders of ethnic and cultural people groups and others to develop

strategies to impact lostness tailored to local areas.

"They are catalysts for the local areas and churches to hopefully motivate, equip and resource them to reach the unreached and unengaged people groups in their areas," Conley said. "They are there to raise the flag to say 'Here's a group. Who will accept responsibility for reaching this group and planting the gospel and making disciples?'"

Just the beginning

Less than six months into implementation, the strategy is progressing as designed. During this early phase, the coordinators are primarily in the mode of discovery.

"We are learning a lot in terms of who is living among us and who needs the gospel," Conley said. "Each of the population centers is progressing in its own direction and at its own pace."

The strategy coordinators are also assessing where and how churches in their areas are currently reaching the lost.

"As the strategy coordinators are talking with people and moving throughout the population center, they are seeing instances where God is already at work," Conley said.

The coordinators will use the data they collect during the next phase of the strategy, which is to assist in the development of comprehensive and strategic disciple-making plans based upon identified needs and priorities.

Until then, the Strategic Focus Team will continue to gather information, build relationships with pastors and associational missionaries and raise awareness of the depths of lostness and the need for disciple-making.

"We need to elevate the awareness of lostness in North Carolina, and we need

to elevate the understanding of disciple-making as the means of advancing the Kingdom by pushing back lostness," Conley said.

A team effort

Michael Boarts, strategy coordinator for the Fayetteville population center, said he has been encouraged during his first months in the field by the willingness of everyone, including BSC colleagues, pastors and directors of missions, to work together as a team.

"From the beginning there has been a feeling of being in this together," he said. "Having that team spirit centered on God; I think that is what it should be."

Boarts said that while 5.8 million lost people is an important statistic, it is just as important for every believer to understand they have a personal responsibility to engage in disciple-making.

"My challenge is for every North Carolina Baptist to count how many people they have discipled," he said.

"Too many believers have never discipled anyone."

He said the fulfillment of the strategy will require North Carolina Baptists to take an honest assessment of their disciple-making efforts and commit to making disciples.

"If we are not going to look and honestly admit that we've been failing at making disciples then we'll never get anywhere," he said.

"If we can get every North Carolina Baptist to be discipled and to disciple someone else, who knows what God can do with that."

For more information about the BSC five-year strategy, visit ncbaptist.org/srategy.

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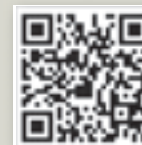
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North Carolina Missions Offering



Choose Now

 ncmissionsoffering.org

Every September North Carolina Baptists give to the North Carolina Missions Offering (NCMO), which helps support a number of ministries across the state. The NCMO funds the mission and ministries of N.C. Baptist Men, provides training, coaching and other support to more than 100 church planters across the state each year and assists mission activities in 78 North Carolina Baptist associations.

The theme for the 2014 NCMO is “Choose Now,” based on Luke 21:10-12. Choose now to give to the NCMO as a testimony to the world of the grace of God and help expand the Kingdom.

The goal for the 2014 NCMO is \$2.1 million.

Please promote the NCMO in your church. More information about the offering is available at www.ncmissionsoffering.org, including information about online giving, and free resources such as bulletin inserts, posters, DVDs and more.

For more information, visit www.ncmissionsoffering.org



The Story Regional Training

June 24

ncbaptist.org/thestory

BiVocational Ministries Conference

July 11-12

ncbaptist.org/bivocationalconference

Church Weekday Education Conference

August 1-2

ncbaptist.org/cwe

Hispanic Youth Retreat

August 29 - September 1

ncbaptist.org/hyr14

Women’s Prayer & Evangelism Retreat

September 5-6

ncbaptist.org/wper

Embracing New York City

September 18-21

ncbaptist.org/embracingnyc

Converge Collegiate Conference

September 26-27

ncbaptist.org/converge

Upcoming Events



Summer Camps

Thousands of youth are greatly impacted each year by their experience at one of the many summer camps sponsored by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Whether they spend a week at Fort Caswell for Youth Weeks, or serve at one of a dozen locations for Deep Impact, every camper is challenged to grow deeper in their relationship with Christ and to serve others in His name.

Youth Weeks at Fort Caswell features personal quiet times, small group studies, recreation, worship, large group celebrations

and church group devotions. Youth who attend Deep Impact participate in morning devotions, evening worship and a variety of mission opportunities in nearby communities.

There is still time to register for one of our camps. For more information about Youth Weeks, visit bedotell.com and more information about Deep Impact, visit baptistsonmission.org/DeepImpact.

Learn more at



bedotell.org or baptistsonmission.org



Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School (VBS) is an opportunity for churches to teach children the Bible and share with them the gospel of Jesus Christ. On average, the number of professions of faith reported from VBS is about 25 percent of the annual baptisms recorded by the Southern Baptist Convention.

The theme for the 2014 LifeWay VBS is “Agency D3: Discover. Decide. Defend.” The 2014 curriculum is designed to help children discover, decide and defend the truth about who Jesus is

and why He came to earth.

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina provides a number of VBS resources for churches on the Convention’s website. The resources include downloads for this year’s VBS LifeWay curriculum, information about VBS link-ups, plus church and associational report forms.

Learn more at



ncbaptist.org/vbs



Annual Meeting: ‘Greater Things’

The 2014 Annual Meeting will be held Nov. 10-11 at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro. This year’s theme is “Greater Things,” based on John 14:12. In this verse, Jesus promised His first disciples that they would accomplish “greater things” after His impending death and resurrection. Our hope is that North Carolina Baptists will embrace the promise of John 14:12 and come together in the power of His Spirit to achieve greater things for His Kingdom.

Messengers to the 2014 annual meeting will be able to stay at the headquarters hotel, the Sheraton Four Seasons/Koury Convention Center in Greensboro at the discounted rate of \$99 per night.

Reserve your room online or call the Sheraton at (800) 242-6556 and mention you are with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

Learn more at



ncannualmeeting.org

NCMO benefits Red Springs Mission Camp

By EMILY ROJAS | BSC Communications

As North Carolina Baptists give to the North Carolina Missions Offering (NCMO), they support the missions and ministry efforts of the Red Springs Mission Camp in Robeson County. The NCMO provides the funds necessary to further efforts to impact lostness through disciple-making in Red Springs and the surrounding communities. This mission camp is one of two in North Carolina – the other is in Shelby.

Larry Osborne, director of the Red Springs Mission Camp, said he enjoys seeing volunteers grow in their understanding of what mission work actually is.

“They come here with one idea of what a missionary is but go home with a whole different aspect of missionary life,” Osborne said.

Osborne’s wife, Teresa, is the office manager, and Windell Hunt is the assistant director.

The Red Springs Mission Camp, a ministry of North Carolina Baptist Men (also called Baptists on Mission), opened in 2008. The missions and ministries of the camp depend on the NCMO for support. As local churches give to the NCMO, 15 percent of their gifts are used to support the efforts of the two mission camps in North Carolina.

Volunteer groups staying at the Red Springs Mission Camp engage the surrounding communities in a variety of ways. Some of the camp’s many ministries include visiting and ministering to elderly people in the area, doing yard work, repairing homes and even helping with house cleaning. The camp also holds prayer walks every three weeks, during which staff and volunteers pray with people they meet on the street.

Osborne said these acts of service present an opportunity to share the gospel with the people who live in Red Springs – they provide a way to establish relationships, which is essential for disciple-making. He said volunteers always pray with the people they’ve served after the work is done, and the people in the community are grateful for the love shown through their work.



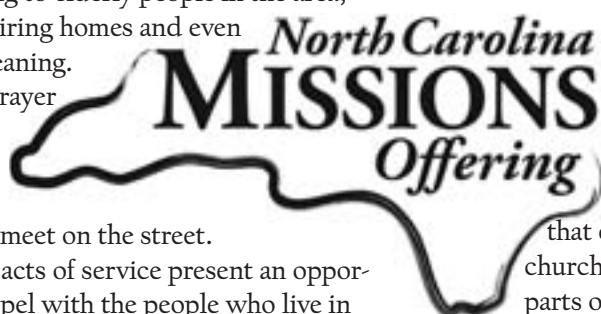
Boiling Springs Baptist Church in Purlear brought a team to work at Red Springs Mission Camp in April. Here, part of the group repairs bleachers at the park next to the mission camp in Robeson County. (Red Springs Mission Camp Facebook photo)

recently began holding fire safety and smoke alarm training classes, and it will host its first block party later this year.

Volunteers can also get involved in projects regarding the camp’s facilities. The camp needs volunteers to build additional shower and bathroom facilities for visiting teams to use. There are also additional plans to add a conference room to the back of the existing building. Osborne said that keeping the facility updated in this way is important in creating an environment in which volunteers can prepare themselves for missions work: “We’re set up to go out in the community, serving the community. But before that ever happens, we’ve got to provide a nice place for the volunteers to feel at home,” he said.

While the camp seeks to minister to those who live in Red Springs, Osborne said that the camp’s mission work often impacts the volunteers more than the people they serve. He said he has seen God work in mighty ways through the volunteers’ interactions with each other and with the people who live in Red Springs.

For more information about how you can support the Red Springs Mission Camp through the NCMO, please visit <http://www.ncmissionsoffering.org>. For more information about how you and your church can participate in the mission and ministry endeavors at the Red Springs Mission Camp, please visit <http://www.baptistsonmission.org/Camps/Red-Springs-Mission-Camp>. Visit and like <https://www.facebook.com/RedSprings>. **BR**



“They are so in disbelief that people would come out and travel and help them free of charge,” Osborne said.

Osborne said the camp’s goal is “to be a ministry that’s outside of its walls;” to engage volunteers in efforts that express God’s love beyond the walls of churches and ministry buildings and into all parts of daily life. To do this, the camp provides volunteers with opportunities to meet the specific community-based and practical needs of the people. Volunteers can reach out to the entire community by assisting with Christmas and school supply giveaways and serving free Thanksgiving dinners. The camp also

Students look to make Deep Impact

BSC Communications

What missions experiences will your congregation provide your youth this summer? It’s not too late to make plans for life-changing experiences for the youth in your church as registration for the 2014 Deep Impact weeks is now underway.

“Rejoice, Proclaim, Be Glad” is the theme for this year’s Deep Impact. It comes from Psalm 97:1-6 where David praises God for His righteousness and His power over all things.

The goal of Deep Impact is to instill two essential truths in students: The necessity for a deep relationship with Christ and the unmistakable impact this relationship must have upon their lives

and the lives of others.

This summer, Deep Impact will be conducted at 12 different locations: nine in North Carolina and three outside of North Carolina. In addition two mini-weeks will be available at Shelby and Red Springs Mission Camps.

Each week will provide students opportunities for engaging in various ministries for that specific location, including but not limited to: construction, senior adult care, children’s ministry, servant evangelism and sports evangelism.

“One of the unique aspects of Deep Impact is that we try to put people on



projects where their gifts are maximized,” said Tom Beam, mobilization consultant for student missions at N.C. Baptist Men.

“Each individual is going to choose which project they would like to serve on and then at night, you get to hear those opportunities of how God is working through those ministries.”

Deep Impact weeks at the following locations are full:

North Carolina Baptist Assembly at Fort Caswell, Honduras and Cuba.

The three new locations in North Carolina this year are in Pittsboro (June 16-21), Washington (June 23-28) and

Wilkes County (also June 23-28). For a complete list of locations and dates, see www.baptistsonmission.org/DeepImpact.

For all North Carolina locations, excluding the mini-weeks at the mission camps, registration is \$200 per person. The mini-weeks at the Shelby and Red Springs mission camps are \$100 per person.

The fees for teams participating in Deep Impact experiences outside of North Carolina may also be found at www.baptistsonmission.org/DeepImpact.

For more information on Deep Impact and how your youth group can get involved, contact Tom Beam at tbeam@ncbaptist.org. To register, visit www.baptistsonmission.org/DeepImpact. Visit and like Deep Impact on Facebook. **BR**

National Day of Prayer observed across state

By MIKE CRESWELL | BSC Communications

More than 80 groups across North Carolina gathered for prayer as they observed the National Day of Prayer on May 1.

The 2014 theme, “So that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” was based on Romans 15:6, with the theme of “One Voice, United in Prayer.”

North Carolina Baptists led or took part in many of these services, held both inside church buildings and in public places. The staff of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina gathered for a time of prayer and Bible reading at the Baptist Building in Cary.

In Jefferson, David Blackburn, director of missions for Ashe Baptist Association, led a service at the Ashe County Courthouse which included patriotic music by a local high school chorus and band, plus prayer led by several local pastors and political leaders. Veterans also were honored and a wreath was placed before a memorial honoring those who have served in the U.S. military.

A prayer walk was held through downtown Charlotte from the Metrolina Baptist Association office.

In Wake Forest a service including multiple prayers and music was held in front of the town hall before a giant American flag suspended from a fire truck ladder. The keynote message was given by Danny Akin, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, whose campus is a few blocks from the gathering.

Scott Graham with the Wake Forest Police Department led the event and gave a clear gospel witness. He also read a prayer written by North Carolinian Anne Graham Lotz for the day: “We choose to stop pointing our finger at the sins of others, and examine our own hearts and lives. We choose to acknowledge our own sin – our neglect and defiance and ignorance and even rejection of You. This day we choose to repent.”

Her prayer cited 2 Chronicles 7. Lotz is a popular speaker, conference leader, author and daughter of evangelist Billy Graham. She served as the honorary chairman of the 2014 National Day of Prayer.

A national day of prayer was declared by President Harry S. Truman in 1952, but in 1988 the day was



Daniel Akin speaks during the National Day of Prayer observance in Wake Forest. (BSC photo by Mike Creswell)

set as an annual observance the first Thursday of May by President Ronald Reagan. Proclamations by presidents and all 50 state governors have encouraged Americans to pray on this day.

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory issued a proclamation which noted that the Continental Congress declared a national day of prayer in 1775 as the nation was being founded: “Leaders of our state and nation throughout our history have relied on prayer during times of thanksgiving,” and “during times of uncertainty in our nation and beyond, prayer helps to express our sorrow as a people.”

McCrory urged North Carolinians to join the nation in prayer, calling on them to gather in their homes and places of worship to pray.

At the Wake Forest service Akin advocated biblical marriage. Citing Ephesians 5, he said, “There’s something magnificent which gives the world a picture of God’s relationship to His church and to His people that He bought with His blood, when a man and a woman rightly relate to one another in that wonderful gift of covenant marriage.”

Akin said the United States has been blessed, “but I fear we have forgotten the Lord. We need to pray for our nation, but our nation will only be as strong as its families.”

Mike Lawson, Southeastern’s director of security who serves as chaplain with Wake Forest police, led a prayer for safety of the town’s police, fire and EMS first-responders. ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Strachan appointed to CBMW

The Council on Biblical Manhood & Womanhood (CBMW) has announced Owen Strachan as president of CBMW. He is the eighth and youngest president of the organization. Strachan has served as executive director since fall 2012. The CBMW is a non-profit organization located in Louisville, Ky. Founded in 1987 by John Piper and Wayne Grudem, it is the world’s largest theological resource center promoting biblical teaching on sexuality and gender.

SEBTS Spurgeon Center trains pastors to make disciples

The Charles Haddon Spurgeon Center for Pastoral Leadership and Preaching at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) offers assistance, resources and training to students, as well as to pastors and churches, to equip them to serve in the crucible of real life ministry. Chuck Lawless, vice president for graduate studies and ministry centers, created the Center when he came to SEBTS in 2012.

Those attending the 2014 Southern Baptist Convention in Baltimore, Md., are encouraged to join the Spurgeon Center’s breakfast on Tuesday, June 10 at 7 a.m. Register at <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/sebts-spurgeon-center-breakfast-tickets-10939970747>.

Thomas Nettles retires

Thomas J. Nettles, professor of historical theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary since 1997, is retiring from full-time teaching after 38 years in the classroom.

Before joining the faculty at Southern nearly 17 years ago, Nettles spent 21 years at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Mid-American Baptist Theological Seminary and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He attended Mississippi College, a Baptist school, and then moved on to Southwestern Seminary. He completed a doctor of philosophy degree in historical theology.

In 1976 Southwestern hired him to a teaching position in the history department. In 1980, Moody Press published the landmark study by Nettles and Russ Bush on the historic Baptist view of scripture, *Baptists and the Bible*. He also has written important books on Baptist ecclesiology, catechisms and the place of Calvinism in Baptist history.

Pastor’s child killed in crash

Cal Gailliard, Jason Britt and Dennis Battle were killed May 16 in an early morning vehicle crash. Cal, 27, is the son of James Gailliard, pastor of Word Tabernacle Church in Rocky Mount. Investigators have not said whether the crash, which remains under investigation, is weather related. Cal Gailliard controlled the soundboard at Word Tabernacle, a Baptist State Convention of North Carolina congregation.

As James Gailliard looked to the balcony while preaching May 18, he said, “[T]his is a huge loss for us as a ministry but especially for me as a father.

“I serve a lot of people here and they’re going to lose their jobs and they’re going to have children die and spouses that leave them and they’re going to go through a lot of stuff in life, and when that happens they just have to be faithful,” he said. “So, I thought it was important for me to model the behavior.”

Group to host events to mobilize pastors

The newly formed North Carolina Pastors Network (NCPN, ncpastors.net) and its affiliate organization, the American Pastors Network (americanpastorsnetwork.net), announced its statewide initiative to inform N.C. pastors of the mission and vision of NCPN, encourage them to form area chapters to mobilize and support local pastors and advise them of critical issues facing the state and nation.

“The North Carolina Pastors Network exists for the purpose of encouraging pastors to speak the truth boldly so they can equip their congregations to be salt and light in our culture,” said NCPN President Dave Kistler.

“Our prayer is that the network

we are building through NCPN will bring together biblically faithful pastors who will courageously speak truth on biblical, social, and policy issues, with the result that thousands of biblically minded believers across the state will step out and impact the culture for Christ.”

NCPN will also be joined by several partners including Bobbie Meyer from Carolina Pregnancy Care Fellowship, Mark Creech from the Christian Action League, Tami Fitzgerald from the North Carolina Values Coalition, John Rustin from the North Carolina Family Policy Council and Randy Wilson from Watchmen on the Wall (Family Research Council).

The three-day initiative, which

will take place May 27-29, includes eight regional meetings at churches across the state:

● **Tuesday, May 27** – 9 a.m. at Mt. Vernon Baptist Church, Boone; 2 p.m. at Pole Creek Baptist Church, Candler; and 6:30 p.m. at Tri-Cities Baptist Church, Conover

● **Wednesday, May 28** – 9 a.m. at First Baptist Church, Charlotte; and 2 p.m. at Calvary Baptist Church, Winston Salem

● **Thursday, May 29** – 9 a.m. at Crossroads Fellowship, Raleigh; 2 p.m. at Village Baptist Church, Fayetteville; and 6:30 p.m. at Memorial Baptist Church, Greenville

Advance sign-ups are requested: contact Betty Cotton at ncpn2013@gmail.com or (828) 390-1964. ■

Baptisms

Continued from page 1

issue are keys to reversing the decline,” Gilbert said.

The task force identified five key areas, described as problems, that pastors and churches must address to reverse the baptism decline:

Spiritual – “With urgency, we must join together in fervent and effective prayer for spiritual awakening in our churches and our nation.”

Leadership – “As pastors we must intentionally model and prioritize personal evangelism while providing clear pathways for our congregations to follow.”

Disciple-making – “As pastors we must create a disciple-making culture – focusing on multiplying disciples who know how to grow in Christ and lead others to Christ.”

Next generation – “As pastors we must leverage our influence, activity and resources to reach and make disciples of the Next Generation.”

Celebration – “As pastors we must celebrate new life in Christ as people publicly profess their faith through baptism. We must establish an ethos of joy that celebrates the practice of personal evangelism and its fruit.”

Task force member Manpoong “Dennis” Kim, pastor of Global Mission Church in Silver Spring, Md., said, “I am grateful for this endeavor’s commitment to renew the passion for evangelism that ultimately begs the question, ‘How then should we proceed?’”

Task force member Roger Spradlin, pastor of Valley Baptist Church in Bakersfield, Calif., summed up the conviction of the group.

“I think all Southern Baptists were aware that our baptisms were declining, but seeing the actual stats was both shocking and heartbreaking. Continuing as we are yet expecting a different result is not an option. We must address this issue now,” Spradlin said.

From 1950-2011 Southern Baptists baptized an average of 379,711 people annually.

Only twice during that time did the numbers dip more than 10 percent below that average. But in 2012 the decline was 13 percent off the average – the worst drop in 62 years.

The report itself takes an even more sobering view of the issue. The report states: “SBC baptisms reached a plateau in the 1950s, peaked in the 1970s, and have stayed fairly constant since that time ... The problem is even greater than these numbers indicate. Considering how the North American population has increased substantially between the 1950s’ baptism peak and today, these figures indicate how much ground we have lost and are losing.”

Gilbert said, “The recommendations are unanimous, but more than that, these men have made this a personal statement of action and they are hopeful that every pastor will review the list and see if they can identify with it. Our hope is that pastors will join us to make these recommendations personal and take action to affect change.”

Task force members include: Ted Traylor, pastor, Olive Baptist Church, Pensacola, Fla.; Jay Wolf, pastor, First Baptist Church, Montgomery, Ala.; K. Marshall



North American Mission Board church planter Patrick Coats, right, baptizes Andrew Fellas, a new member of Miami’s Kingdom Covenant Baptist Church, where Coats pastors. A task force of mostly pastors convened to address the issue of declining baptisms in the Southern Baptist Convention. (NAMB photo)

Williams, Sr., pastor, Nazarene Baptist Church, Philadelphia, Penn., and president of the African American Fellowship; Manpoong “Dennis” Kim, pastor, Global Mission Church, Silver Spring, Md.; David Galván, pastor, New Life Hispanic Baptist Church, Dallas; Carlos Navarro, pastor, Iglesia Bautista de West Brownsville, Brownsville, Texas; Andy Addis, pastor, CrossPoint Church, Kansas; Roger Spradlin, pastor, Valley Baptist Church, Bakersfield, Calif.; Jeff Lovingood, Next Generation pastor, Longhollow Baptist Church, Hendersonville, Tenn.; Benny

Wong, pastor, First Chinese Baptist Church, Los Angeles; Keith Wieser, pastor, Resonate Baptist Church, Pullman, Wash.; Doug Melton, pastor, Southern Hills Baptist Church, Oklahoma City; Alvin Reid, Bailey Smith Chair of Evangelism, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary; Wayne Jenkins, Evangelism Church Growth Director, Louisiana Baptist Convention; Milton Hollifield, Executive Director-Treasurer, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Joe Conway writes for the North American Mission Board.) 

Summit

Continued from page 4

“Multiplying campuses is not the alternative to church planting, but the alternative to building an enormous building,” he said.

When looking at starting another site, Greear said they look for a person, place and people. They begin by having meetings for those interested in launching a new location.

“Once we determine that we are going to start a new campus, we’ll call a Campus Pastor to start leading even before the campus is launched,” Greear said. “He will focus on building and organizing a core group.”

The church would like to have 150-200 willing adults to be part of a new campus.

“This core group is vital as they are the ones who will serve in ministry at the new location,” he said. “Our people see this as part of their mission to reach their community, so they are really committed. Once we find a facility to meet, we’re ready to go. Well, it’s not really that simple, but those are the basic ingredients.”

Campus pastors meet weekly to discuss campus leadership, ministry ideas, vision and strategy.

“We will also go over the sermon for the coming

week and what elements of worship will be common at all campuses,” Greear said.

Each campus has a team of pastors, staff and lay leaders. There is a central team “that develops excellent training and curriculum for making disciples of all ages,” Greear said.

Greear said he has found that the multi-site church “is better at developing leaders than a single-location large church.”

Some of Greear’s favorite leaders are no longer staff members he sees on Sunday.

“They are serving at one of six campuses I don’t usually get to on Sunday,” he said.

“These were guys I raised up, trained and depended on. Now, as campus pastors, they have the opportunity to lead in ways they didn’t when we were all at one place.

“And, in their wake, new leaders have emerged at the original campus.”



Opening a new site stems from growth and building capacity. The Summit looks at adding more services but when that site is running three or four services, the leadership begins to look at starting a new campus.


“The other reason for starting a campus is to better reach people in an area where Summit members already live,” he said.

“It’s not uncommon for Christians to be willing to drive 30+ minutes to attend a church they love. But it’s un-

likely the unchurched friend you just met at Starbucks is excited about a long commute on Sunday.

“If we are able to bring the church closer to where they live, we know it gives us an opportunity to reach a new community of people.

“So we will look for a location in an area from which people are already coming.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE – More stories about multi-site churches are available at BRnow.org.) 

Operation Inasmuch: Ramp efforts continue in spite of storm

By JIM EDMINSON | NCBAM Communications

This year's Rampin' Up! was nothing like the inaugural event two years ago. On the eve of this April 26 biennial wheelchair ramp-building event, multiple tornadoes touched down in eastern North Carolina. Early assessments of the destruction confirmed a total of seven tornadoes had left wide-spread damage during the April 25 storm. Some winds reached 125 mph.

Within hours after the storm, North Carolina Baptist Men (or Baptists on Mission) disaster relief teams were activated to help with clearing debris – many of these teams were set to be at the homes of ramp recipients early on April 26.

But what appeared to be a deterrent to many receiving needed ramps has turned out to be an exhibition of the commitment of North Carolina Baptists and Baptist Men to be the hands and feet of Jesus serving the frail aging and their neighbors statewide.

Rampin' Up! is produced by North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry (NCBAM) and N.C. Baptist Men in conjunction with N.C. Operation Inasmuch. The first Rampin' Up! in 2012 resulted in more than 300 wheelchair ramps built.

This year as NCBAM began to publicize the event, the ministry was inundated with requests for needed wheelchair ramps – more than 400 requests have been received since Jan. 1.

NCBAM Call Center specialists tackled the arduous task of processing each of the requests. It can take two days to four weeks from receiving an initial request to do research, find funds and put building teams into place.

Requests for wheelchair ramps continued to come in after an April 25 news report by High Point's Fox 8 urged people needing help to call before May 3. The

next morning 29 phone messages left by people who had seen the report were waiting for NCBAM's Call Center staff.

North Carolina Baptists build more wheelchair ramps than any other religious or nonprofit group in the state. Since its inception in 2009, NCBAM has coordinated the build of nearly 2,000 ramps.

That's just a portion of all the ramps built statewide because not all Baptist ramp projects are coordinated through NCBAM. Some are coordinated by Baptist Men and others by local churches. Almost every week, somewhere in North Carolina, a Baptist ramp-building team is constructing a wheelchair ramp.

The large number of wheelchair ramp requests and the April 25 storm left a distinctive imprint on this year's Rampin' Up! What was to be a one to two weekend event is spreading over multiple weeks and many Saturdays.

The teams involved are determined to meet the needs. Those who have helped with disaster relief have rescheduled their builds and are now adding new builds to accommodate the needs. The total calls attributed to the Fox 8 story resulted in 35 new wheelchair ramp requests the week before the May 3 deadline.

"The mission of NCBAM is to help aging adults keep their independence," said Sandy Gregory, NCBAM's director.

"Wheelchair ramps are often the piece of the puzzle that allows them to do just that – to remain independent and safely living in their homes."



A HillSong Baptist Church group works on a ramp in Chapel Hill. (NCBAM photo)

For Marthenia Fearington of Chapel Hill, her new ramp built by members of HillSong Baptist Church of Chapel Hill brings greater independence. The 83-year-old says being able to safely go outside her house is not only a necessity, but offers her greater peace of mind.

"It's been difficult getting me in and out of my home," she said. "I've had to wait for help because I couldn't do it on my own. I've fallen several times, and it can make you scared."

The congestive heart patient can no longer plant flowers in the beds she tended for nearly 38 years. But she says having more opportunities to just sit outside and enjoy the sunshine on warm days will bring her much joy.

"I appreciate getting my wheelchair ramp,"

Fearington said. "I appreciate NCBAM and everyone who built it. I thank them, and I thank God for sending them to help me." **BR**



Kentucky pastor is second SBC president nominee

Baptist Press

Jared Moore, pastor of New Salem Baptist Church in Hustonville, Ky., will be nominated for president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) during the June 10-11 annual meeting in Baltimore.

In a May 5 blog post announcing his willingness to be nominated, Moore, the current SBC second vice president, stated he wants to represent rural Southern Baptists. Moore will be nominated by Paul Sanchez, pastor of Willow Baptist Church in Brooksville, Ky.

"I was saved in a rural Southern Baptist Church, and I've primarily served rural Southern Baptists ever since," Moore wrote.

"Where I live now, the nearest gas station is 7 miles away. My church is a small church made up of about 60 people. They're a loving, caring, godly group of people. Some of the godliest people I've met in my ministry worship here ... I want to represent Southern Baptists like

the ones I serve on a daily basis who may not have the opportunity to attend the convention or serve at the convention level."

Moore is the second announced nominee for SBC president, joining Arkansas pastor Ronnie Floyd.

The 33-year-old Moore noted he will accept the nomination because of his desires to serve Southern Baptists, promote unity in the convention and promote the Cooperative Program (CP).

New Salem, by a congregational vote, gives 16 percent of its undesignated receipts to CP and another 3 percent to its local association.

"Apart from cooperating with other SBC churches through the Cooperative Program, our small church could not support as many ministries on our own," Moore wrote. "I realize the Cooperative Program and the ministries it supports are not perfect, but New Salem Baptist

Church believes in the Cooperative Program. I hope to encourage churches to begin, continue, or increase their support of the Cooperative Program. It's still the best way available for supporting the equipping of Southern Baptist ministers

to take the gospel locally and abroad, and to train other Southern Baptists to do the same."

Regarding his goal of promoting unity in the SBC, Moore wrote, "I think Traditionalists, Calvinists, and everything in between in the SBC can work together. Since the founding of the Southern Baptist Convention, Southern Baptists of different stripes have been able to work together."

"There's no reason to divide beyond the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. I believe we'll accomplish far more together than we will if we're divided."

"In order to accomplish such unity, we must accurately represent what one



another believe, lovingly debate and line up behind scripture. Our disagreements should not be ignored, but they also should not divide us. Hopefully, this year will be one of renewal as Calvinists and Traditionalists reach across the aisle for the sake of the gospel, and for the sake of the future of the SBC," he stated.

Moore holds a bachelor of arts from Trinity College of the Bible, a master of arts in religion from Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary and a master of divinity from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is a doctor of philosophy student at Southern majoring in systematic theology.

He has authored *10 Sacred Cows in Christianity that Need to Be Tipped* and *The Harry Potter Bible Study: Enjoying God Through the Final Four Harry Potter Movies*.

Moore and his wife Amber have three children, Caden, Ava and Ian.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Compiled by David Roach, chief national correspondent for Baptist Press, the Southern Baptist Convention's news service.) **BR**

Huntersville pastor's book explores transforming faith

The Trail of Transforming Faith: When God Calls You to Leave Everything Behind by Bobby Blanton
(2B Publishers, 2013)

Bobby Blanton, pastor of the Lake Norman Baptist Church in Huntersville, has released his first book entitled *The Trail of Transforming Faith: When God Calls You to Leave Everything Behind*. This book takes the reader through the faith life of the Old Testament patriarch Abraham as he journeys from obscurity in Mesopotamia to becoming the father of many nations.

Beginning at Mount Moriah, the well-known test of Abraham's faith, Blanton takes us from Abraham's calling to his preparation to offer his son back to God on the side of a mountain.

Blanton's work is a pastoral reminder of the often high cost paid by the disciple of Jesus Christ.

His personal stories capture the reader as we see Blanton's own trail of faith woven throughout the book. He takes great care in journeying with his readers down the path Abraham took in his journey with God.

Starting blocks of faith

The initial chapters of *The Trail of Transforming Faith* explore Abraham's call out of the land of Ur and to the land that God would later show him. Blanton shows his readers that the journey of faith has to begin with a step of trust. Abraham follows "the Voice" and at 60 years old sets out on a journey of obedience to God.

To make this journey, Blanton points out, Abraham had to put some things behind him.

He writes, "In order for God to use Abraham, He needed to separate him from the things that would pose a threat to their new relationship." We are reminded that "the farther you're willing to go with Him, the

greater the sacrifice that is required." There are many things that we must separate from if we are to take the journey of faith that God calls each one of His children to. Though Abraham did not have the smoothest start in his journey, God was able to use him and lead him toward the land of promise.



MICHEAL PARDUE
Book Review

Tests of faith

The second part of *The Trail of Transforming Faith* walks us through the various tests that Abraham faces on his journey with God. From his family's unfaithfulness, his insecurity, his inadequacies and struggles with God's silence, Abraham does not have an easy journey.

Blanton's insight in each one of these situations is very helpful. He shows us how Abraham's tests of faith are common ones that we all will endure.

Abraham's family, for example, is a source of great sorrow for him. Much of it can be contributed to his leadership deficiencies, but he is facing problems that even the most skilled leader must navigate. Even his "ill-advised detour" into Egypt, which years later seemed to be long in his past, came back to bite him in his relationship with Hagar.

Abraham, Blanton points out, was to be faithful to

God even if his wife did not understand all that was happening. Abraham's faith was tested, and he was not always up to the task.

Even in Abraham's success, he was faced with choices – just like us – that would test his faith and determine which trails he traveled down in the future. Blanton is quick to remind us to carefully navigate those trails. He writes, "The greatest challenges to our faith will usually come not from vicious attacks, but victories; not from pain, but from popularity." This stands as a wise warning for all Christians, but especially those of us who have the distinct privilege to lead Christ's churches.

Walk the trail

The Trail of Transforming Faith is a good book that can encourage us as we take this trip we call faith. We often need encouragement because as Christ reminds us, the way is hard that leads to life (Matthew 7:14). It is a journey.

There are ups and downs. There may be no one who exemplified that reality more than Abraham. His trail of faith was a long and difficult one. Bobby Blanton's book can help us learn from Abraham's life, avoid many of the pitfalls that he did not and praise our Creator who walks with us down our trail of transforming faith.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Micheal Pardue is pastor of First Baptist Icard in Connelly Springs.) **BR**

Submissions for Tar Heel Voices

Please send no more than 300 words, along with contact information (name, address, phone and email; please also include church or association), to editor@BRnow.org or *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512-1185.

Only one letter from the same writer will be published in a 90-day period. Each letter is subject to editing for style and grammar as well as to shorten for space constraints. Have questions? Call (919) 847-2127.

BCM college students in summer missions

For some college students, the summer break is really not a break at all. Will you join me in praying for the college students who have chosen to serve God through missions this summer?

Summer break allows college students to engage in missionary activities that impact lostness here in North Carolina and beyond. Rick Trexler, leader of the Collegiate Partnership Team, works with members of his staff to connect students with summer missions opportunities.

Trexler said that college students will make a big impact on the mission field this summer: "Over 200 North Carolina students will be engaged through numerous Convention ministries, including, but not limited to: Baptist Campus Ministry (BCM), BeDoTell, Camp Caraway, Deep

Impact and Fort Caswell. These students will be working alongside church planters, organizing backyard Bible clubs, serving in social relief ministries (particularly dealing with homelessness, hunger relief, and human trafficking), as camp staffers and as youth ministers," he said.

Trexler also noted that college students will have a missions presence abroad this summer.

Through Convention partnerships with churches and BCM groups, 19 students will go overseas to various locations in Asia, including Thailand, India and Senegal to assist International Mission Board

missionaries. Others will serve alongside North American Mission Board missionaries in Canada, Texas and New York.

Indeed, these summer mission oppor-

tunities do more than aid existing missionaries; for a number of students, they can be a time of recognizing God's call on their lives. "Many of our current missionaries and professional ministers have realized their vocational calling through student missions," Trexler said.

Merrie Johnson, the Baptist State Convention's senior consultant for youth evangelism and discipleship, directs the BeDoTell youth camps at Fort Caswell each summer.

Hundreds of students surrender their lives to Christ and answer God's call to missions and ministry during these weeklong camps. College students comprise the BeDoTell worship team and band. They also serve as small group discussion leaders and fulfill numerous other duties.

The Convention also employs college students in other Caswell camps each summer. The same is true at Camp Caraway, where the Convention conducts

camps that depend upon the leadership of college students.

Tom Beam, consultant for North Carolina Baptist Men, coordinates Deep Impact Missions Weeks for middle and high school students, where college students can serve as summer staff. Workers are divided into two teams and travel to different locations in North Carolina, New York City, Honduras and Cuba to work with more than 1,800 youth and leaders who participate in Deep Impact mission projects.

You may have fond memories of summer missionary experiences as a college student.

I hope that you will take some time to thank God for the work He did in your life then, and also that you will pray that He will work in the lives of college students this summer in wonderful ways. We want to help college students impact lostness through disciple-making, and in so doing, glorify our Lord and Savior. **BR**



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BCM executive
director-treasurer

Are you a published author?

The *Biblical Recorder* will print a list of books published by North Carolina Baptists in the July 19 edition. We invite you to tell us about your published work. Whether the writer is a pastor, director of missions or member of a North Carolina Baptist church, we welcome your submission. We believe your work may be an encouragement to others, so tell us about your book.

Who can participate?

- The author must be a member of a Baptist church in friendly cooperation with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.
- The book must have content related to Christian ministry, biblical theology or Christian growth.
- The book must have a print date of 2012, 2013 or 2014.
- All submissions must be received by July 1.

The author must submit the following information:

- What is the title of the book?
- What is the author's name?
- Where is your church membership?
- What is the publication date?
- Who is the publisher? (Self-published companies are allowed)
- Is the book fiction or non-fiction?
- What is the purchase price of the book?
- Where can the book be purchased?
- Is the book available in e-book format? If so, where?
- Please provide a summary of the book in 325 characters or less (including spaces).

Please send all information by email in a Word document attachment to editor@brnow.org. Include your contact information in case we have a question.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – If a significant number of submissions are received, the BR reserves the right to extend the list to other issues.) **BR**

OPPORTUNITY CORNER

Gardner-Webb hosts Pastor's School

Gardner-Webb University's (GWU) annual Pastor's School is open for registration. This is a three-day educational retreat for pastors and students of ministry and theology, May 26-28 at GWU. The goal of the annual event is to offer ministers the chance to learn, converse and reflect on topics related to church ministry, and to hear from leading thinkers on pressing current issues.

Event speakers are: Kyle Matthews, Dove Award-winning singer and songwriter; Kathy Naish, pastor of First Christian Church, Lincolnton; David Blanton, pastor of Fallston Baptist Church; David Smith, retired pastor of First Baptist Church, Lenoir; Kent Cranford, pastor of Loray Baptist Church, Gastonia; and Tracy Jessup, GWU vice president for Christian life and service and senior minister to the university.

Registration is \$60 for participants, \$30 for additional church staff or spouses and free for students. The cost of meals (five meals) is \$30. Lodging in campus apartments is available for \$60 per night. For more information about the Pastors' School, visit gardner-webb.edu/pastors-school or call John Bridges at (704) 406-3008.

N.C. Baptists aspire to renew churches through worship boot camp, summit

North Carolina Baptists are holding two events to help churches further understand and improve worship. Both events will take place at First Baptist Church of Richlands near Jacksonville.

The Worship Summit will be Saturday, May 31 from 8:30 a.m.-12:30, and the Worship Leader Boot Camp will be held May 30-31 from 6:30-9 p.m. Friday, and 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday. The Worship Summit, together with the Worship Leader Boot Camp, offer a total package of training and foundation for worship renewal in the local church. It is recommended that churches send the senior pastor and worship team to the Worship Leader Boot Camp, and several other people interested in worship or instrumental in leading worship renewal in the church, to the Worship Summit.

Please register by Thursday May 29, or email Kenny Lamm at klamm@ncbaptist.org to pay at the door. Visit the sites below for price options.

For Worship Leader Boot Camp visit <http://www.ncbaptist.org/index.php?id=969>.

For Worship Summit visit <http://www.ncbaptist.org/index.php?id=740>.

Group plans ministers' wives retreat

The 52nd Annual North Carolina Baptist Ministers' Wives Retreat is scheduled July 14-16 at Caraway Conference Center in Asheboro. Check-in will be at 2 p.m. on Monday, and the event will finish with lunch on Wednesday. The guest speaker will be Donna Millsaps and worship will be led by the Littles family. Price for double occupancy registration is \$165 per person, and \$182 for single. Commuter pricing is available. For more info contact Becky Blakely at (828) 757-0878 or visit <http://www.ncbaptist.org/index.php?id=1704>.

CHURCH NEWS



First Baptist Church, Morganton

Bill Rotan, left, was honored May 4 at First Baptist Church of Morganton with the title Minister of Music Emeritus and a hymn commissioned in his honor was presented by the adult choir under the direction of David Thayer, interim music minister. The hymn, "God of Harmony and Beauty," was composed by David Schwoebel, minister of music and artist in residence at Derbyshire Baptist Church, Richmond, Va. The words were written by Bill's colleague for 33 years at First Baptist, Fred Schuszler, right, minister of education. (Contributed photo)

AROUND THE STATE

Obituary

GENE LEE WATTERSON, 84, of Birmingham, Ala., and Shelby, N.C., died May 5.

Watterson was a veteran of the U.S. Navy and served in the Atlantic theater during World War II. Following his military service, he graduated from Samford University in Birmingham and pursued graduate studies at the Richmond Professional Institute of the College of William and Mary in Richmond, Va. He also received advanced training in clinical counseling at Central State Hospital in Petersburg, Va. He graduated from Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest.

Watterson served as pastor of Woodlawn Baptist Church, Colonial Heights, Va.; First Baptist Church, Crestview, Fla.; Murray Hill Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla.; and for 26 years as pastor of First Baptist Church in Shelby. He was president of the Council of Christian Higher Education and served as first vice president and president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

He is survived by his wife, Dorothy Camp Elliott of Birmingham, Ala.; two siblings, Douglas Watterson of Stuart, Fla., and Mrs. Richard Dunkle of Winchester, Va.; three children, Pamela Watterson Runyans and Lisa Watterson Johnson, both of Raleigh, and Gene Watterson Jr. of Birmingham; two stepchildren, Sharon Viegas of Birmingham and Bruce Elliott of Jasper, Ala; eight grand-

children; four step grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Memorials to: Gene L. Watterson Scholarship Fund at Gardner-Webb University.

Retirement

JAMES "JIM" POLLARD has announced his retirement from the Pilot Mountain Baptist Association effective June 30. He has been the associational missionary since 2006.

While earning his master of divinity degree at Southeastern Seminary he pastored Amis Chapel Baptist Church, Oxford. Upon completion of his degree Pollard became pastor of First Baptist Church, Jonesville. In 1985 he was called to international missions with what is now the International Mission Board. He spent a year in Costa Rica in language school and five years in Chile as a field evangelist and church planter. He has a doctorate in Christian counseling from Bethany Theological Seminary in Dothan, Ala. He has also pastored Camp Creek Baptist Church, Taylors, S.C., and First Baptist Church, Sparta. In 2002, Pollard was became associational missionary for the Chowan Baptist Association.

He and his wife, Sandra, will continue to live in Winston-Salem and can be reached at (336) 793-6404 or splash129@gmail.com. Pollard will still be available as a consultant for Transformational Church as well as revivals and pulpit supply.

June 1

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

June 8

God is Holy

Focal Passage: Psalm 99:1-9

If someone were to ask you to name three characteristics of God, chances are that “holy” would be one of those characteristics. Why? Holiness is one of the most well-known characteristics of God, and is in fact, the most important. If God is not holy, then the gospel would be null and void. There would be no need for the cross because God would not be separate from sinners or sin.

Despite holiness being one of the most well-known and important characteristics, it may also be the least understood. As sinners it is hard for us to grasp what is sacred, consecrated, hallowed and set apart. And with the desire to be relevant and relatable in a lot of our American churches today, we seem to bypass the concept of holiness. Yet, God calls the church to “*be holy as I am holy*” (1 Peter 1:15-16). Jesus prays for His disciples in John 17 that they would be set apart and sanctified in truth.

Therefore, what should be the proper Christian response to God’s holiness? His holiness calls for reverence, awe and fear. All of these should culminate in worship.

In Psalm 99 we see “*the peoples tremble*” and “*the earth quake*” because “*Holy is He!*” In Isaiah 6, we read about the prophet Isaiah’s vision of the Lord on His throne where the seraphim are repetitively calling out, “*Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts!*” He even notes that the foundations of the thresholds tremble at the voice of the Lord. And we get another glimpse of the One who is enthroned above through John, the author of Revelation, where the living creatures never cease saying, “*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty!*” These examples show us how to respond to God’s holiness.

How can you live out reverence, awe and fear of our holy God? Remember His holiness causes Him to be separate from our fallen world. Yet, in His great love, He has allowed us to approach His throne not because of our holiness, but because of the righteousness imparted to us through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Let us worship the Holy One, who through grace makes us holy before Him!



HILARY RATCHFORD
Writer, Carmel Baptist Church, Matthews

Focal Passage: 1 John 4:7-12

Our society is in love with L-O-V-E. We dedicate an entire day to a holiday that equates love with teddy bears, boxes of chocolates, cards and flowers. We recognize loved ones on anniversaries, birthdays and days dedicated just to them like “Mother’s Day.” We’re infiltrated with shows, movies, novels and poems all about love! And that isn’t necessarily a bad thing. After all, we are created in the image of a loving God.

As we learn in this week’s passage, 1 John 4, God is love. We were created to be in relationship with Him and one another. The thing is, we can get too tied up in L-O-V-E, as we’d define it – romance, kisses, hugs, ooey-goey feelings, dating, relationships – that we become man-centered. That’s when drama and breakups and bitterness come into play. Because it’s a known fact: sinners will let sinners down.

When we focus solely on that physi-

cal, passionate, romantic love as the Greeks would refer to as eros then we lose sight of the pure, godly and selfless love known as *agape* in our passage. God demonstrates His selfless agape in this: “*while we were still sinners, Christ died for us*” (Romans 5:8).

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the apostle Paul gives us an incredible definition of God’s *agape* in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8: “*Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails...*” [NASB]

Agape love is not short-lived. It does not seek the best for oneself. It does not rejoice in immorality or any pursuit of unrighteousness. It is selfless. What a contrast to the kind of love that we see portrayed on the big screen of our culture.

As Christians, we can be counter-cultural because we worship a God who is love. How can you demonstrate God’s *agape* to someone in need of it this week?

June 1

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

June 8

When Your World Crumbles

Focal Passage: Ezekiel 1:1-3; 1:28; 2:1-5; 6:7-10

I recall hearing my pastor once say, “nothing grows on a mountaintop.” I did not really understand what he meant when he said that. Of course, I was only 12-years-old and had never seen a mountain. In 2013, however, I made a cross-country trip on my motorcycle. While riding through the mountains in Colorado I understood his illustration much better. A mountaintop offers a tremendous view and is awe-inspiring. But very little growth happens there.

In Ezekiel 1:1-3 we are introduced to the prophet while he is in exile. But he is not there alone; the Lord is there with him. Often when we face times of crisis we think the Lord has abandoned us. Yet, these verses in Ezekiel remind us God was still with him, and He was still using him.

Ezekiel learned that not only was God using him there in exile, but that God’s glory is not limited by national boundaries. Indeed, in Ezekiel 1:28 we learn that God’s glory was so radiant that the only response Ezekiel could give was to fall facedown on the ground. We really

shouldn’t be surprised. After all, God’s glory shines the brightest when it is revealed in the darkest moments of our lives. Ezekiel was going to speak to a people that God referred to as “*obstinate and hard hearted.*” Ezekiel had a challenging mission that required the power of the Spirit (v. 2) to accomplish. His experience is a great reminder to us that we can do nothing apart from the Spirit’s empowerment. More than that, it is a reminder that tangible results are not always indications of obedience.

Ezekiel’s message is very challenging because he has to share bad news with suffering people. He has to inform them that they are suffering because of their own disobedience. Yet, it is this suffering that will ultimately drive them back to the Lord (Ezekiel 6:7-10).

Too often we value the “mountaintop experiences” in life. These passages from Ezekiel are reminders that God is with us in the valleys. Indeed, God often uses the experiences in the valley to teach us to depend upon Him all the more.



ROB POCHEK
Senior Pastor, Raleigh Road Baptist Church, Wilson

Focal Passages: Ezekiel 8:3b-4, 10-12; 14:1-6

It is hard to believe that “American Idol” has been around since 2002, but it has. And the show has done remarkably well. A 2011 edition of TV Guide said that for an unprecedented eight consecutive years the show had been ranked number one in U.S. television ratings. If nothing else, the show is responsible for returning the word “idol” to contemporary lingo.

When most of us think of an “idol” we either think of the aforementioned TV show or maybe a little wooden or metal image in a far off pagan culture. In other words, few of us actually think that we may be guilty of worshipping an idol.

Yet, if we examine the scriptures we may be surprised to learn that idols are not limited to musicians or pagan trinkets.

In Ezekiel 8:3-4 the Lord transports Ezekiel to the temple in Jerusalem in a vision. While there Ezekiel sees the “*of-fensive statue that provokes jealousy.*” What

When Idols Tug at Your Heart

does that mean? An idol. An idol had been placed in the temple of the living God. Worse, the leaders in Israel were all engaging in the worship of these false idols. According to Ezekiel they reasoned, “*the Lord does not see us.*” They thought that since God had allowed captives to be carried off and because he was not immediately judging their actions, they could get away with it.

But God is not unaware. He knows not only our actions, but the motivations and intentions of our hearts. In Ezekiel 14:1-5 we learn that it is our hearts that are most affected by idols. God tells the prophet that he would give the Israelites over to their idolatry. The goal, according to v. 5, was that they would realize the emptiness of their idolatry and the Lord would “*take hold of*” (or, “*recapture*”) their hearts. God wanted them to repent and turn from their idols (v. 6).

We learn from the rest of scripture (e.g. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; Matthew 22:3-38) that anything that comes before Christ – your spouse, children, career, retirement account, hobby, church, tradition, material possessions – is an idol. Christ must be first. Anything less and we are worshipping an idol.

Mental Health Advisory Council named

BR staff

Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee President Frank S. Page has named a 23-member volunteer advisory body of local church leaders and professionals in the mental health field to advise him on possible ways of better communicating with Southern Baptists about mental health ministry needs in their churches and communities as well as ministry resources to address those needs. Tony Rose of LaGrange Baptist Church in LaGrange, Ky., will chair the Mental Health Advisory Council. Four from North Carolina were named to the group:

- Danny Akin, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest and member of Wake Cross Roads Baptist Church in Raleigh
 - Doug Carver, interim pastor of First Baptist Church in Matthews and executive director for chaplaincy at the North American Mission Board
 - Brad Hambrick, pastor of counseling at The Summit Church in Durham
 - Sam Williams, an elder at North Wake Church in Wake Forest and professor of counseling at Southeastern Seminary
- In keeping with the advisory nature of other advisory groups named by Page, the mental health advisory group

is designed to assist him and other SBC entity leaders by first, reviewing current mental health ministries offered through SBC ministry entity, state convention, associational and local church initiatives; second, assessing the best practices of such ministry initiatives; and third, suggesting ways in which these ministry initiatives can or should be formalized through other means.

“The group’s goal is to consider ways to assist SBC entity leaders and local church leaders in their common task of reaching all people with the transformative gospel of Jesus Christ,” according to *SBC LIFE*, journal of the Executive Committee.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Full story available at BRnow.org.) **BR**

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Pastor

Trinity Baptist Church in Trinity, NC, is seeking a **full-time pastor** for our SBC affiliated church. We prefer college/seminary with not less than five years experience. Send resumes to: Trinity Baptist Church, PO Box 9, Trinity, NC 27370.

Mt. Elam Baptist Church, Roseboro, NC (Spivey’s Corner community), is seeking an experienced **full-time senior pastor** who will faithfully serve the Lord and provide pastoral care for our church family consisting of 250 members with full-time youth minister in place. We are affiliated with the SBC, BSCNC and the New South River Baptist Association. Please send resume, references and contact information by July 1, 2014, to: Mt. Elam Baptist Church, 2211 Mt. Elam Church Rd., Roseboro, NC 28382; or e-mail information to brandybarbour@mtelam.org. Additional info see link <http://www.mtelam.org/782718>.

Baldwin Baptist Church, Baldwin, Georgia, is prayerfully seeking our next **pastor**. Looking for a pastor who is biblically grounded and mission-minded to provide us pastoral leadership, a clear vision, and an understanding on how to grow a church. Baldwin Baptist Church is a member of the Habersham Association. Send resume to pastor search committee: Baldwin Baptist Church, 200 Shore Street, Baldwin, GA 30511, or email to desanders49@gmail.com.

Church Staff

Antioch Baptist Church in Lumberton, NC, is seeking a **full-time Children’s Minister** in charge of the ministry to preschoolers through sixth grade. Submit resumes to Search Committee, 5089 Old Whiteville Road, Lumberton, NC 28358, or email Kevin Davis at kevindaviscreations@gmail.com.

Central Baptist Church in Winchester, Ky., is seeking a **full-time Associate Pastor of Family Life/Outreach**. Candidate needs to have a passion and calling for families and family ministry. If you feel God is leading you to apply for this position, please send your resume to searchcommittee@cbcwinchester.com by June 15th, 2014. For additional church information and job description see our website at www.cbcwinchester.com.

Associate Pastor/Minister to Youth and Children. Taylorsville First Baptist seeking minister who will relate well to all ages and lead outreach opportunities; desires a dynamic leader, gifted in building youth/children program from the ground up. A seminary degree, previous ministry experience desired. Worship style is blended with contemporary, traditional elements. FBC ordains men, women; both hold church leadership positions. Affiliation is with both NC-BSC and CBF. Church sponsors 43 year Child Development Center and 40 year AA Meeting site. Contact office 828-632-4225. Interested persons respond: Associate Pastor/Minister of Youth, Children Search, First Baptist Church, PO Box 305, Taylorsville, NC 28681.

Corinth Baptist Church, located in North-eastern North Carolina, is prayerfully seeking a **full-time Minister of Students (Youth & College)**. Applicant must possess a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university and have served one year full time as a ministerial staff person or 2 years part time. For a detailed job description, visit <http://corinthbaptist.com/church-forms>. Serious candidates please submit a detailed resume with references to Laurie Kaiser, Attn: Minister of Students at laurie.corinth@gmail.com or 1035 US Highway 17 South, Elizabeth City, NC 27909 or 1-252-338-9256.

First Baptist Church of the Islands in Savannah, Georgia, is seeking a **full-time Children’s Pastor**. This person will lead the Children’s Ministry (Kindergarten-5th grade) in a growing, contemporary church setting which averages 575 people in overall worship attendance. The ideal candidate has a sense of God’s specific call to reach and minister to grade school-aged children. Strong personal skills in relating to children and families will be expected. Desire to invest life and time in the lives of children is also expected. Ability to oversee a variety of facets of Children’s Ministry is a must. The current Children’s Ministry impacts over 150 children weekly in a variety of ministry settings (Sunday School, Worship, AWANA) and utilizes 75 volunteer leaders with potential for incredible growth. Please send resumes with cover letter and references to kidlife@fbcislands.com or to: Search Team, FBC Islands, 6613 Johnny Mercer Blvd., Savannah, GA 31410.

Corinth Baptist Church, located in north-eastern North Carolina, is seeking a **full-time minister** who will provide leadership for our Praise and Worship Music Ministry and Children’s Ministry for Nursery through Grade Six. Applicant must possess, at minimum, a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university and have served at least one year full time or two years part time as a ministerial staff person. Please visit corinthbaptist.com for complete job description. Submit a detailed resume with references to Laurie Kaiser at laurie.corinth@gmail.com or Attn: Praise and Worship/Children’s Minister, 1035 US Highway 17 South, Elizabeth City, NC 27909.

Flemings Chapel Baptist Church is seeking a **Part-Time Associate Minister of Youth**. This position will work with our students in middle and high school and will have minimal involvement with our college students. Please send resumes by email to: pastorscott@flemingschapel.org; or mail to: 4430 Littlejohn Church Rd., Lenoir, NC 28645; Attention Dr. Scott Shoffner, Senior Pastor.

Flemings Chapel Baptist Church is seeking a **Part-Time Children’s Director**. This position will work with our students from kindergarten through sixth grade. Both men and women are welcome to apply. Please send resumes by email to: pastorscott@flemingschapel.org; or mail to: 4430 Littlejohn Church Rd., Lenoir, NC 28645; Attention Dr. Scott Shoffner, Senior Pastor.

Miscellaneous

HOUSE MOTHER. Capstone Recovery Center, Salisbury, NC, a one year, faith-based, residential transition house for women coming out of prison, substance abuse and other life-controlling issues, housing up to 12 ladies. The ideal candidate must be a spiritually mature woman with experience or knowledge of substance abuse or trauma. Must be able to climb stairs, a non-smoker and cannot take prescription narcotic/psychotropic medications. Responsibilities include a willingness to be a role model and involved in the residents’ lives. A small stipend, private furnished room, meals and amenities provided. Contact Miriam Ramirez: 704-749-0797 or Capstonerecovery@aol.com.

BEACH OR SMOKIES. Accommodations @ reduced rates for Christian families – Myrtle Beach or Pigeon Forge. Call: 865.210.1118.

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

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

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

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

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Collegiate Continued from page 1

regional international student consultant who works primarily in the Triangle area.

Trexler is quick to say the regions “are not hard boundaries, because all consultants cross over to serve in all regions. The international consultants are based in two metropolitan areas, but reach to all areas where they are needed. We are a collaborative team all over the state.”

He gave an example that if churches in Greenville want help reaching the students at East Carolina University, Trexler is not the only one who will meet with church leaders. “It will be all of us at some point, because each of us comes with a different set of strengths,” he said. Team members agreed that one of the team is stronger as an “idea man,” one is a stronger analyst and one is a better communicator.

Blackerby said he talked with Hal Bilbo, associational missionary for the Stanley Baptist Association, last November at the BSC annual meeting. Bilbo was exploring ways to reach students. Blackerby began a conversation with Bilbo, but brought Knight into the discussion at the next meeting. Other consultants will likely join the conversation as it expands.

Yarboro, western regional consultant for collegiate partnerships, said, “We work with church leaders who are in turn working with college students – but not just with students. The landscape has changed for us, and we’re not just focused on the students on campus. We are trying to mobilize churches to reach entire collegiate communities. That’s no longer just 18- to 22-year-olds.

“We have neglected the community colleges. Even volunteers want to serve on what is perceived as the big campuses – actually they’re not bigger – they’re just residential. The mission field is just as great on the community colleges as it is in the residential campuses.”

Blackerby said the collegiate team learned something significant from Kelton Hinton, associational missionary at Johnston Baptist Association. “[Hinton] took a group of people and prayer-walked a community college campus. They began to look at the jobs of their church families. They saw there was a police officer in the church and the college had a ‘Basic Law Enforcement Training’ program. Pairing the two puts a chaplain from one of their churches in the training program on campus. They asked the

college administration if they would like to have a chaplain, and they said, ‘absolutely.’

“Community colleges were way off of our radar,” Blackerby said. “But we’ve been able to see how community colleges are so entwined in the community. These students live in that community, work in that community, their families live there, and they stay there when they have completed their degree. That’s a game changer.”

Blackerby said we have to open our eyes to the fact that community colleges may be larger than residential universities. “While 34,000 students are at N.C. State, about 69,000 go to Wake Tech,” he said. “In the past we didn’t know how to

deal with it. We looked at a community college and said, ‘they work full time, they’re going to school, they’ve got kids, they babysit ... but when Hinton showed us how to do this, we looked again at these campuses.

“We have this nurse, she is from one of our local churches, she wants to be on mission, she is a believer, she is great at discipling people, so she entered the nursing

program and now leads a Bible study and has taken nursing students on medical mission trips.”

Hinton had a part-time campus minister who tried to do “the traditional BCM thing,” Blackerby said, “and the most they could gather was 10 students because of the culture of community colleges. Now under a different ministry model the work has grown to reach more people.”

“This is probably the most exciting kind of stuff we get to see,” Yarboro said. “When we sit down with a group of people, and we’re talking about collegiate ministry, and they say, ‘We really only have a couple of college students, so how can we have a college ministry?’ We turn that around and say, what if instead, you say, ‘We have two students that we have brought in front of our church, placed our hands on them and prayed for them, commissioned them and sent them to the



campus as missionaries.”

“Then you don’t have two students to form a group, you have two missionaries that are sent to a campus. That’s a game changer for people. You see the lights come on in people’s eyes. Where they thought it was the convention’s job to reach the campus, now they see it is their responsibility, and they are empowered to do that.”

Church ownership is at the core of the strategy. Blackerby said, “The concept of church ownership is difficult to grasp. We have a tendency to get our hands in the church’s ministry, but we’re here to serve the churches. We want to wash their feet. For us to do anything that the churches could do on their own would be taking something out of their hands that God intends for them to have.”

“We left one strategy, model or paradigm. But we are building a new one,” Knight added. “There wasn’t one there to pick up and run with. We’re blazing a new trail.”

Blackerby said, “One of the goals of

the past 365 days has been to change the conversation. It’s not about where campus ministry was; it’s about where campus ministry is going and the potential of all of the churches to be involved.”

That potential will be examined through an “idea conference” to be held Sept. 26-27 at N.C. Central University in Durham. It is called Converge365.

“We are bringing in seven people to give short presentations of collegiate ministry ideas. All of them come from different models of ministry and none of them agree,” Yarboro said. “After they make their presentations the audience gets to ask them hard questions. Then everyone is gathered in affinity groups to work out strategies.”

The collegiate team’s goal is to learn the best strategies for moving collegiate ministry forward. Yarboro added, “While we don’t all agree on methodology, we are on the same team of reaching students. All of us have the same goal. It’s all about reaching those nearly 600,000 college students in N.C.”

Contact Abby Edwards at aedwards@ncbaptist.org or (800) 395-5102, ext. 5536, for more information. **B**

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– Tom Knight

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