

LOTTIE MOON OFFERING HITS RECORD HIGH

SPANISH DEVOTIONAL TO AID CROSS-CULTURAL DISCIPLESHIP

BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

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N.C. BAPTISTS LAUNCH 2016 ANNUAL MEETING SITE

By **CHAD AUSTIN** | BSC Communications

November is still five months away, but N.C. Baptists can begin making plans to attend this year's annual meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) via the recently launched event website.

The website, ncannualmeeting.org, officially launched June 1 and includes registration and hotel information, as well as the event schedule, speaker information and more. Additional information will be added to the site up to beginning of the meeting, which is scheduled for Nov. 14-15 at the Joseph H. Koury Convention Center in Greensboro.

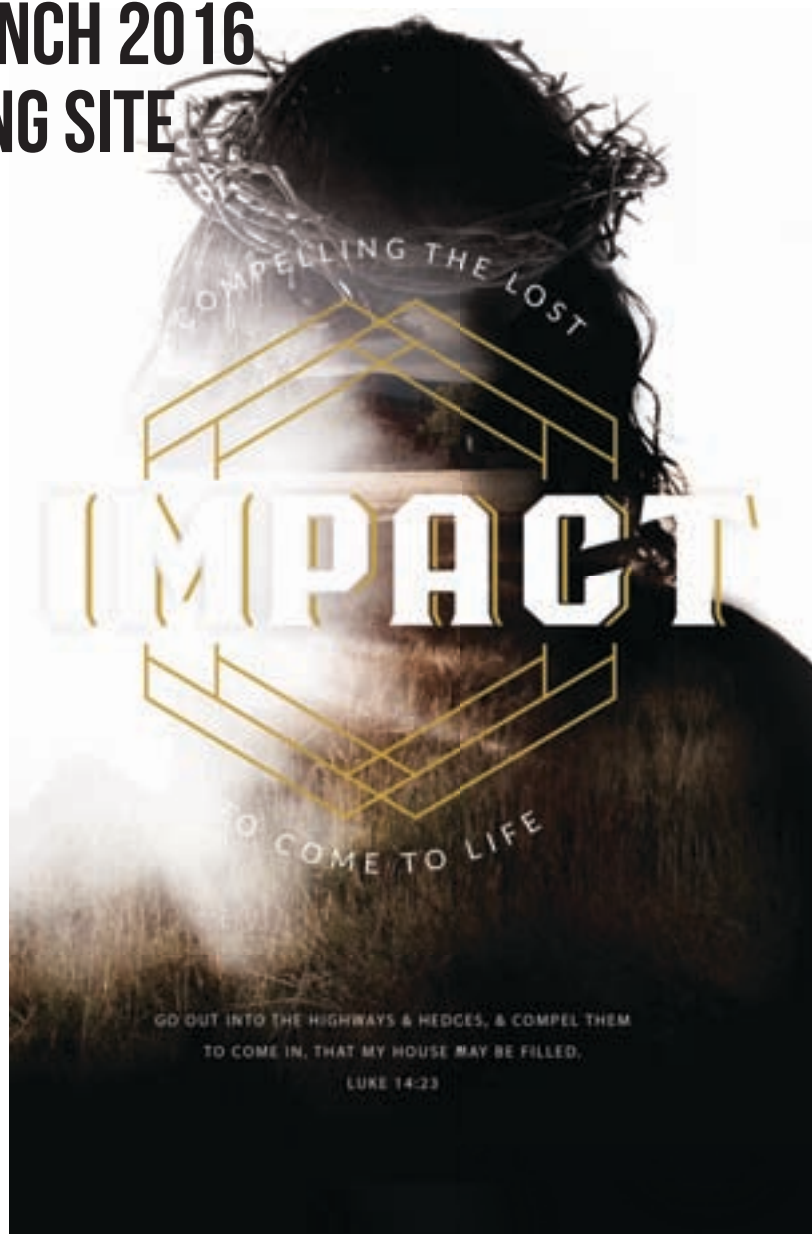
Attendees at this year's annual meeting will be challenged and encouraged to impact their world for Christ.

The event theme is "Impact: Compelling the Lost to Come to Life," taken from Luke 14:23, "Then the master said to the the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.'"

The meeting features worship, ministry reports, exhibits, business sessions, break-out sessions, and resources for churches, pastors and church members.

All sessions are free and open to

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AWAKEN AMERICA LOOKING FOR SBC ANNUAL MEETING NEWS?

The *Biblical Recorder* is covering the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting June 14-15 in St. Louis, Mo. However, our print deadline landed on June 13, making it impossible to include the annual gathering's news in this edition.

If you want to stay up-to-date with the latest information, look for stories about the event online at BRnow.org and through social media. You can also keep an eye on our next print edition, which will feature SBC annual meeting news.

Follow us on Twitter: @brnow, @biblicalrecord, @diannacagle, @kablume and @dsethbrown. Use the hashtag #SBC16. Look for us on Facebook too! Send in any photos of the event to editor@brnow.org. You can also find us on Instagram: @biblicalrecord.

Keith and Kristyn Getty song dedicated as SEBTS hymn

By **HARPER MCKAY** | SEBTS

In their latest album "Facing a Task Unfinished," Christian music artists Keith and Kristyn Getty have dedicated their song, "For the Cause" to Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) and President Danny Akin. It will now serve as the official hymn for SEBTS and The College at Southeastern.

"We're so excited to be involved with helping train the leaders of the next generation ... and are particularly excited about Southeastern's missional and global view," said Keith.

"Facing a Task Unfinished" is an album focused on congregational singing and missions that was inspired by the original 1931 hymn of the same name – a song that urgently calls Christians to be witnesses around the world.

The new SEBTS hymn, which includes the line "For the cause of Christ we go," captures the heart of the SEBTS community and will be an inspirational song to encourage students to make Jesus known around the world.

"Keith and Kristyn Getty are dear friends to Charlotte and me and the

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Is civility dead?

The theme of election politics in 2016 seems to be “Voters are angry.” According to media reports, the results of the alleged high levels of anger are the three leading presidential candidates: Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders. If this is what public anger produces, we need a better source of civic motivation.

A case can be made that anger is fertile ground for uncivil talk. Is civility dead? As citizens we should be concerned.

Christians should be even more troubled by the stark absence of civil discourse – not just in politics, but in every layer of human relationships.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Colossae, “*Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person*” (Colossians 4:6).

I recently discussed the subject with two leaders who share my concerns. This editorial introduces one of them. The next edition of the *Biblical Recorder* will carry the second part of this discussion.

Mark DeMoss is the founder of DeMoss, a public relations firm that specializes in faith-based organizations. Based in Atlanta, Ga., he is an experienced public relations executive who works with ministry leaders around the world.

In 2009 DeMoss launched The Civility Project. Two years later, he closed down the website and ceased the effort.

Five years after the project fizzled, I asked him why he began a public conversation about civility and why he stopped talking about it.

DeMoss said there were several triggers for him. The first came in 2009 when he worked with the Mitt Romney presidential campaign. “As an evangelical (who was) working with a Mormon presidential candidate, I was on the receiving end of lots of pretty vitriolic rhetoric, ironically mostly from fellow evangelicals, and that troubled me,” he said.

The second trigger came as he observed the hostile settings of town hall meetings. “Members of congress were going home and holding town hall meetings where they were being disrupted by shouting matches,” he said.

“Then you had the state of the union address where a South Carolina congressman shouted out ‘You lie!’ while the president was speaking about the health care bill,” he added.

Whether one agrees or disagrees with another person’s statement is not the central concern – it’s how the argument is made.



K. ALLAN BLUME
Editor

“The other thing that motivated me to launch The Civility Project was that, on a spiritual level, if we claim to be followers of Christ, civility is not an option,” he said. “It’s woven throughout scripture.” DeMoss pointed to some scriptural examples. “The idea of preferring others above myself, and a soft answer turns away wrath, and there are dozens of scriptures that prohibit uncivil behavior, or casting insults.”

If Christians practiced evangelism the way they practice politics, DeMoss said, “we’d never see another convert. You don’t convert anybody by yelling at them, or insulting their religion, or shouting them down, or protesting at their meeting. ... Incivility is quite unchristian.”

Feeling that the tone was getting uglier, DeMoss purchased the web domain for The Civility Project. He did not want the effort to look like a conservative was lecturing the left, so he looked for a “liberal counterpart” to join him.

He recalled a conversation earlier in the year with Lanny Davis, former special counsel to President Bill Clinton. “I remember one night watching Lanny on TV and I found myself saying, ‘There’s a liberal guy I really like. He’s respectful; he’s pleasant; he doesn’t interrupt people.’”

So DeMoss wrote him a letter that said, “Dear Lanny, I’m a conservative, Republican, Southern Baptist, evangelical who spent the last two years trying to elect Mitt Romney as president. I suspect that politically we have very little in common. However, as I’ve watched you conduct yourself in the public square, I’ve admired how you handle yourself and your civility. I just want to encourage you in the heat of a tough battle.”

Davis responded by sending a book he had written with a note on the first page, “Mark, thank you for your kind words. Best wishes, Lanny Davis.”

DeMoss was a bit let down, thinking, “I wrote him a pretty special letter, and just got that short response.”

Months later as he contemplated the launch of The Civility Project, he sent Davis an email that read, “Lanny, I wrote you a letter back in the summer commending you for your civility, and I’m launching a civility project, I’d love to talk to you about it. Could I come and see you?”

Davis replied the next morning. “Mark, I would love to meet with you. Your letter sits in a frame on a bookshelf in my office. Call my assistant.”

DeMoss traveled to Washington, D.C. “When I got to [Davis’] office, he’s on the phone but he motions for me to come in. I’m looking around the office. I wanted to see if my letter was actually on his bookshelf. Sure enough, in an office filled with framed pictures of him with presidents and heads of state and other significant people and hand-written letters from President Bush and President Clinton, there is my letter in a frame on his bookshelf.”

When Davis ended the phone call he pointed to the framed letter and said, “That’s the nicest letter I’ve ever received.”

From that simple exchange DeMoss and Davis sealed a friendship. “He’s a liberal, Democrat, Jew, and I’m a conservative, Republican, evangelical [but we] became fast friends, and he said ‘I’ll be glad to join you in this civility project.’”

The Civility Project was launched by the two men with an op-ed piece in *The Washington Times* on the eve of President Barack Obama’s first inauguration.”

They crafted a very simple pledge that, in their opinion, anybody should be able to agree to regardless of political affiliations. It read,

“Certainly calling people who disagree with you morons, losers and sleazy is not only uncivil, it’s unintelligent to belittle your political, philosophical or theological adversaries.”
– Mark DeMoss



Mark DeMoss addresses Brigham Young University about his civility project during a January 2012 address. (screen capture)

1. I will be civil in my public discourse and behavior.
2. I will be respectful of others whether or not I agree with them.
3. I will stand against incivility when I see it.

They mailed a personal letter to every member of Congress and every sitting governor – 585 people. The packet included a letter, a certificate copy of the pledge and a few articles about civility. No governor replied. Only three members of congress responded: Senator Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut, Frank Wolfe of Virginia and Sue Myrick of North Carolina.

“I thought it was revealing that more people couldn’t agree to those three simple things,” DeMoss said. “One of the ironic things I encountered was that some people equate civility with

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A place for state conventions in SBC life

State conventions serve a valuable role in the cooperative partnerships of missions and ministry life within the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). In North Carolina, our purpose and our mission as a state convention is to assist member churches in fulfilling God's mandate to evangelize and disciple the lost for His glory in local and global missions. This is how we partner together in our marching orders of fulfilling the Great Commission. Working together through voluntary relationships and combining manpower and financial resources is what has enabled the SBC to become the largest Protestant Christian mission force in our world. Individual churches cannot fulfill all the missions needs here or abroad by working alone, but we can make a difference by cooperating together.

A state convention is a group of diverse churches within a state or states that voluntarily choose to cooperate in obedience to an Acts 1:8 model for missions. The SBC has not assigned the responsibility of reaching and discipling the lost in North Carolina as a primary task to any of its entities – that is our responsibility.

There are some who may feel that the SBC would function better financially if local churches did not choose to channel their mission dollars through their state convention in supporting missions through the Cooperative Program.

I respectfully disagree.

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) is a leading convention in the financial support of SBC missions through the Cooperative Program, in addition to the Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong special mission offerings. I believe this level of support from our churches has been impacted positively because our

convention staff strongly encourage North Carolina churches to support these mission offerings in their work with individual churches.

Cooperating together, the churches of the BSC have created missions-based ministries that are not operated by the SBC, but are instead operated by our state convention. North Carolina Baptists decided that these ministries were necessary, appropriate and beneficial for our state, and therefore, they decided to cooperate together and launch, adopt, cooperate with and help fund them.



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive
director-treasurer

This includes the *Biblical Recorder*, Fruitland Baptist Bible College, Baptist Children's Homes, N.C. Baptist Foundation, Baptist Hospital and North Carolina Baptist Men who are primarily funded by the N.C. Missions Offering. In the history of the BSC, other institutions were started or adopted by this convention and funded for a period of years. Most of

them continue to work in a relationship with the BSC and our member churches, even though they no longer have to rely on financial support from this convention's budget.

Each year, messengers from N.C. Baptist churches consider and adopt a budget that has been prepared by a budget committee made up of individuals from our churches. This means our churches determine what they want to do in continuing financial support for these ministries and also how much they want this convention to forward to the SBC in our partnership.

Some of the BSC's 4,300 Baptist churches do not have sufficient means to carry out some aspects of missions and ministry alone. The convention acts almost as auxiliary staff for the churches, providing them vision and information about how we can help them get started in developing and conducting these ministries. This is

a unique model of cooperation without control – the convention preserves the autonomy of the individual churches.

The desire of many North Carolina Baptists to receive assistance from the BSC becomes obvious when you consider how many local congregations contact the BSC for assistance or counsel. During the month of April, we received 154,354 emails. We average 5,000 incoming phone calls per month. This number does not include cell phone calls that our staff receive from church leaders. In addition, convention and entity employees drive thousands of miles each year to preach, teach and lead many meetings in N.C. Baptist churches and associations.

Some of our medium size and smaller churches do not have the means to plant churches by themselves. This convention has a church-planting and evangelism focus, and helps existing churches plant an average of one church every 4.3 days. No other church or organization has matched that statistic – it is only made possible through local convention work.

North Carolina Baptist people – whether ministers or lay leaders – can take part in convention affairs by becoming part of various committees and boards that direct the work we do. They can also represent their church as a messenger to our annual meeting and cast their vote in our decision-making process.

The convention is a great funnel, a distributor, a vehicle and network for doing missions and carrying out Christ's mandate by partnering and cooperating together. Local churches can always turn to the convention and their local Baptist association when they need assistance. We are here to serve as strategic partners in church strengthening, church planting and church revitalization. Our commitment is to help churches advance the Kingdom of God to their fullest potential in North Carolina, North America and the world. **BR**

CORRECTION

A retirement announcement in the May 21 issue of the *Biblical Recorder* included information that Glenn D. "Dan" Sellers was pastor of First Baptist Church in Wallace.

He and his wife, Faye, served as volunteer youth directors at the church for five years and were not in the pastorate there. We apologize for the error. Email editor@BRnow.org.

Submissions for Tar Heel Voices

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

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Launch

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messengers and guests. Registration is required for messengers from N.C. Baptist churches who will be voting during the business sessions.

David Platt, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's International Mission Board (IMB) will deliver the annual convention sermon during the special worship service scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 15 at 6:30 p.m.

Platt has served as president of the IMB since August 2014 and previously served as senior pastor at The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Ala. He has authored several books, including *Radical*, *Radical Together*, *Follow Me* and *Counter Culture*.

In addition to Platt, BSC President Timmy D. Blair Sr., pastor of Piney Grove Chapel Baptist Church in Angier, will deliver the annual president's address on Monday, Nov. 14 at 8 p.m.

Milton A. Hollifield Jr., the BSC's executive director-treasurer, will give an update on the convention's strategy of "impacting lostness through disciple-

making" during a business session at 9:15 a.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 15.

During the meeting, messengers will also elect a new BSC president, adopt a budget for 2017 and conduct other convention business.

Once again in 2016, N.C. Baptists are invited to join in a 30-day prayer emphasis in October during the month leading up to annual meeting. A devotional guide and other prayer resources will be available at ncannualmeeting.org later this fall.

Individuals may sign-up to receive daily prayer prompts during the month of October by texting ImpactNC to 313131. Prayer prompts are also available in Spanish by texting ImpactarNC to 313131.

Also, for the third consecutive year, the N.C. Pastor's Conference will also be held at the Koury Convention Center prior to the annual meeting on Sunday and Monday, Nov. 13-14. The pastor's conference is free and registration is not required. More information on the pastor's conference is available on the "events" tab of ncannualmeeting.org. **BR**

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering tops record

By JULIE MCGOWAN | International Mission Board

In a year when International Mission Board (IMB) and Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) leaders expressed a compelling drive to fulfill the Great Commission, Southern Baptists responded to the charge with resounding support through the 2015 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions.

Finalized in early June, the 2015 Lottie Moon offering totaled \$165.8 million. While this was the highest total in the 127-year history of the offering, the amount still fell short of the goal: \$175 million. The offering surpassed the previous all-time record of \$154 million in 2013 by \$11.8 million. The 2014 Lottie Moon offering totaled just over \$153 million.

"Southern Baptists have exhibited their commitment to God's mission through these gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering," said IMB President David Platt. "Especially after a year in which we have walked through many challenges together, the support Southern Baptists have shown through this offering will not only sustain but also encourage the thousands of missionaries sent from Southern Baptist churches who are spreading the gospel right now. As an IMB family, on behalf of unreached people around the world, we are deeply grateful for the generosity of Southern Baptists who have given for God's glory among the nations."

"In addition, we as an IMB and Southern Baptist Convention family look forward to exploring in the days ahead how our cooperative giving can fuel an ever-increasing mission force taking the gospel to those who have never heard it," Platt said. "Our times are too urgent, our opportunities are too great, and our gospel is too glorious to settle for anything less than whole-hearted abandon as a convention of churches to seeing Christ proclaimed in every place and among every people group in the world."

Wanda Lee, executive director/treasurer of WMU, which promotes the offering in partnership with IMB, expressed her gratitude for the gifts.

"With the inception of the first offering for international missions in 1888," Lee said, "Southern Baptists were challenged to pray and give sacrificially so those who had not heard the gospel might have that opportunity. When Lottie Moon saw the depth of lostness in China and pled for help, churches responded with increased giving and prayer support. This year, we are grateful Southern Baptists responded once again at a critical time when increased resources are needed for our international outreach. How thankful we are for every person who gave and prayed, proving that together we can accomplish so much more than any one church or individual can alone."

IMB leaders have deliberated and dreamed about the possibilities that lie before Southern Baptists to partner together to empower limitless missionary teams who are making disciples and multiplying churches among the unreached for the glory of God. That vision for the future includes "limitless" missionary teams, with the core of the IMB remaining "missionary teams" – healthy groups of "sent ones" who meet together regularly, care for each other selflessly, and partner with one another faithfully and fruitfully in the missionary task. The goal of each team is to make disciples and multiply churches. Ultimately, IMB's work is focused on the unreached, "doing all of this because we love the glory of God more than our own lives," Platt said.



International Mission Board (IMB) missionary Kevin Baggett, center, takes advantage of time spent on the Buenos Aires subway to build relationships with Argentines around him. He's there because of the support Southern Baptists gave through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions and the Cooperative Program. (IMB file photo)

Full-time missionaries are essential as leaders who continue to be the key strategic workers in some of the most difficult places on earth. More than 3,600 IMB missionaries depend on the Lottie Moon offering and regular missions giving by churches through the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program for missionary salaries, housing, medical care, children's education, field transportation and other expenses. Supporting one fully funded missionary overseas costs an average of \$141 per day, or about \$51,000 per year.

Every penny of the Lottie Moon offering, named for one of Southern Baptists' most famous missionaries, goes to the IMB overseas budget, which directly supports missionaries and their work. The 2015 offering will account for more than half of the total 2016 IMB budget of \$278,755,000, said Rodney Freeman, IMB treasurer and vice president of support services.

Counting the cost

Through their 2015 Lottie Moon offering gifts, Southern Baptists have acknowledged that the cost of reaching the lost is great – but the idea of not doing their part to reach them is unfathomable. Of the world's 11,000 people groups, more than half – billions of people – are unreached with the gospel. This means there are those among whom Christ is largely unknown and the church is relatively insufficient to make Him known in its broader population without outside help. More than 3,000 unreached peoples are also unengaged, which means there is no one working to share Christ or plant churches among them.

The Lottie Moon offering enables missionaries to make a difference. Consider the refugee crisis in Northern Africa and the Middle East. It's hard to imagine anything but a continued descending darkness closing in on Syrian and Iraqi refugees. While images and reports of cruelty and pure evil continue to shadow refugees – numbering in the millions – from any light of hope, there is hope in the good news of Jesus Christ.

Only a loving God Who cares deeply for all who are fleeing violence can push back that darkness. Christian worker Peter Matheson* works tirelessly to bring God's hope to refugees. But his work comes at great cost to the many he serves and to him, personally, as he ministers in the midst of tremendous suffering. Through the sup-

port of Southern Baptists, Matheson has been able to work along the Syrian border, distributing boxes of food and other critical necessities.

"We are able, through the Cooperative Program and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, to focus 100 percent on the ministry that God has given us as workers ... as laborers in the field," Matheson said. "We're able to give all of our attention to people who are hurting by ministering to their physical, emotional and, most importantly, their spiritual needs."

Across the ocean, missionary Liesa Holeman

found an unlikely inroad into difficult-to-access indigenous communities in Mexico right where she lives in the city of Oaxaca. During years of volunteering at the Casa Hogar children's home in Oaxaca, Holeman has met dozens of families from indigenous villages that would have been too difficult for an outsider to access. Many of the families travel as many as 12 hours over steep, winding hills by bus to bring their children and sometimes adult family members to the children's home for physical and emotional care.

Southern Baptists' gifts enable Holeman to purchase the ministry supplies she uses at the children's home, where partnering U.S. churches, including her home church, First Baptist Church of Oxford, Miss., send groups to share the gospel. There are still at least 10 unengaged, unreached people groups in Mexico alone, totaling more than 300,000 people who don't have continual access to the gospel. And there are more than 30 unreached people groups in the country, representing nearly 1.5 million people. The faithful service of these obedient servants, and thousands more, is sustained by Southern Baptists' commitment to work together through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Cooperative Program. Millions – billions – of unreached lives are counting on it. For more information about the missionaries supported by the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, additional financial information and other questions related to IMB, visit IMB.org/FAQ.

*Name changed

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Julie McGowan is IMB public relations leader. Rolan Way and Kate Gregory contributed to this story.) **BR**

Four N.C. Baptists win primary congressional bids

Biblical Recorder

Four out of seven N.C. Baptist candidates won bids for U.S. congressional seats in the June 7 primary election: H. Powell Dew Jr. (1st District), George Holding (2nd District), Mark Walker (6th District) and David Rouzer (7th District). Dew and Rouzer were untested. Todd Johnson (9th District), Mark Harris (9th District) and Albert Wiley Jr. (10th District) lost their primary races. **BR**

Billy Graham statue coming to North Carolina mountains

LifeWay Christian Resources

LifeWay Christian Resources is moving a larger-than-life statue of Southern Baptist evangelist Billy Graham from its downtown Nashville location to a LifeWay retreat center in the North Carolina mountains, a few miles from Graham's home.

The move is prompted by last year's sale of LifeWay's 15-acre Nashville campus. The iconic bronze sculpture was scheduled to be dismantled June 8 but problems with grout delayed the move until June 25.

Once the statue is dismantled, a new site will be prepared at the entrance to Ridgecrest Conference Center in Black Mountain. Ridgecrest is the sole Southern Baptist Convention conference center.

Organizers will announce a debut date for this fall. Graham lives in Montreat, which is near the conference center.

LifeWay sold its 15-acre site in downtown Nashville in 2015 prompting the need to relocate the statue. **BR**

New overtime pay rule could affect church staff

By **SETH BROWN** | BR Content Editor

Salaried church employees making less than \$47,476 annually will likely be eligible for overtime pay if they work more than 40 hours per week, according to new federal labor protections. Although, some human resources experts believe the full scope of how the stipulations will apply to churches and religious institutions is still unclear.

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) recently updated the overtime regulations of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) to "simplify and modernize" the rules, which take effect Dec. 1.

The regulations will probably not entitle pastors to the time-and-a-half pay requirement, based on judicial and regulatory precedents, but many support staff may qualify.

Most non-profit organizations, including churches and other ministries, are exempt from blanket overtime pay regulations.

Yet, many non-profits have employees that qualify for individual coverage, which is based on "the nature of the particular employee's work activities," according to one of the department's supplemental documents. The so-called

final rule will apply to employees whose primary job activities include interstate telephone calls, invoicing, shipping or transportation.

Organizations often affiliated with churches such as preschools, institutions of higher education, hospitals and elder-care facilities are covered by FLSA protections.

Salaried "white collar" workers may be exempt from overtime pay regulations if they make more than \$47,476 per year and their primary job duties are considered professional, administrative or executive.

The salary threshold will be updated every three years based on wage growth, according to the new rule.

Employers have three options for complying with overtime regulations: raise an individual's salary above the threshold, offer appropriate overtime pay or reallocate duties to reduce the amount of overtime work.

Ryan Hutchinson, executive vice president for operations at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, offered additional clarifications about compliance in a blog post.

He said employees cannot volunteer their time for the same duties for which they are paid. Employers cannot offer

time off in a future week to make up for overtime – commonly called "comp time."

In addition, time calculations must be done in a single work week (seven consecutive days), not averaged over a larger period of time.

The DOL's action came in response to a memo issued by President Barack Obama in March 2014, directing Labor Secretary Tom Perez to revise overtime regulations.

The president said regulations "have not kept up with our modern economy" and "millions of Americans lack the protections of overtime and even the right to minimum wage."

Current rules set the salary threshold at an outdated \$23,660, covering an estimated 7 percent of full-time salaried workers, said the DOL, down from 62 percent in 1975. The new expansion covers 35 percent, according to Perez.

In a statement to the *Biblical Recorder*, Tim Head, executive officer for denominational and public relations for GuideStone Financial Resources, said their attorneys are "studying the regulations and determining the scope of the impact on churches and ministry organizations and will be communicating more details throughout the year." **BR**



NEW CHURCHES NEEDED IN DURHAM AND ACROSS STATE

There are many churches in Durham, yet many more are needed.

That's because many evangelical churches are not engaging some people groups or neighborhoods have just been missed by area churches.

Dan Johnson and his team are working hard to start a new

church in downtown Durham, a few blocks from Duke University. He is one of more than 100 church planting missionaries N.C. Baptists are supporting to plant new churches and reach more of the estimated 5.8 million lost people who live across the state.

On Sunday, May 22, thousands of N.C. Baptists will pray for Johnson and his ministry through the 52 Sundays missions prayer initiative.

Want your church to join in this prayer? Go to ncbaptist.org/cpresources and download the PowerPoint with images like the one above.

Spanish devotional to aid in cross-cultural discipleship

By LIZ TABLAZON | BR staff writer

Imagine an old bed, said Greg Mathis, senior pastor of Mud Creek Baptist Church in Hendersonville. After years of routine use, it becomes soft in the middle but firm on each end. The same is true of many Christians' understanding of salvation.

"When it comes to initially getting saved – the idea of justification – most people are pretty firm on that," he said. "When it comes to the end, and they die or when Jesus comes again – this whole thing of glorification – they want to be firm on that."

"Where most [people] struggle is in this day-to-day process of sanctification," Mathis explained. That's why he wrote *Jesus is Mine: A 31 Day Devotional Guide to Understanding Salvation*.

Mathis has taught evangelism at Fruitland Baptist Bible College for 35 years. It was through his experience as a professor that he realized the need for a resource that would help believers fully understand the doctrine of salvation. He structured it as a 30-day devotional, so readers could process a little bit each day.

One of the ministries at Mud Creek is a Spanish worship service led by Alberto Berrio. Less than one year after *Jesus is Mine* was published, Mathis decided to publish it in Spanish with the title *Soy de Jesús*. The combination of the large Hispanic population in his community and his experience with the Hispanic congregation at Mud Creek prompted him to raise the money needed to make the resource available to Spanish speakers.

"I realize that Christians differ on the issue of immigration, but to me, it's not

a political issue," Mathis said. "It's a gospel opportunity."

He wanted something that would help disciple new Christians who speak only Spanish and that could be used by non-Spanish speakers as a witnessing tool.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 9 percent of North Carolina's population is Hispanic, totaling around 900,000 people. That number is projected to increase more than 100 percent – 1 million people – by 2025, said Antonio Santos, Hispanic strategy coordinator for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC).

Most of them work service industry jobs in the metropolitan areas of Charlotte and Raleigh, but many are moving to more rural areas, Santos said. For example, 50 percent of Siler City's residents are Hispanic.

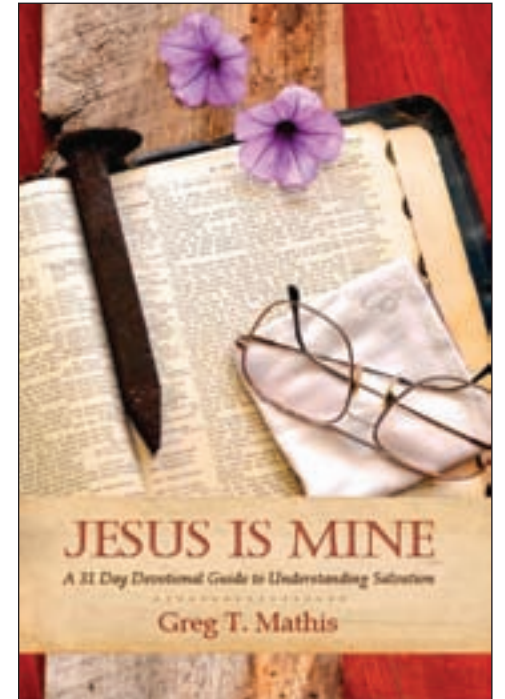
People can effectively reach out by learning their culture, said Santos. "Talk to people. Understand their background, where they're coming from."

Churches can sponsor medical buses to meet the needs of those without insurance. For many undocumented immigrants, Santos said, this kind of tangible community outreach is highly valuable and opens opportunities to build trusting relationships.

Hispanics are "friendly and open, but the pressure of being undocumented is very heavy on them," he added.

Guillermo Soriano, consultant for Hispanic evangelism and discipleship for the BSC, said offering ministries such as English classes should go beyond simply teaching a language. They should be an outlet for disciple-making.

"Too many times they might say, 'Well, my English is not good.' The other



says, 'Well, my Spanish is not good.' With whatever little each one may know, there is a process of praying together and getting to know each other," said Soriano. "That's a key element for what happens in the future regarding evangelism and discipleship."

Soriano emphasized that *Soy de Jesús* is a good resource to share through one-on-one discipleship.

While the book is not currently available in other languages, Mathis hopes it will be in the future. "It blows me away how many languages are spoken in North Carolina," he said.

A four-week Sunday school study accompanying the original "Jesus is Mine" is available for download at mudcreek-church.org. The free study is written in English. **BR**

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Family's piano story becomes real

By **TIM STEVENS** | Special to the *Recorder*

Ray Moore of Garner had heard “the piano story” as part of his family lore for years, but the facts were always hazy until he visited the Billy Graham Training Center at The Cove.

Moore was part of a drama-music mission team from Aversboro Road Baptist Church in Garner to the Appalachian region of North Carolina, Tennessee and Kentucky.

The team was presenting a play about famed hymn writer Fanny Crosby and between shows made a quick trip to The Cove, a retreat established by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association near Asheville.

The tour of the facility included a visit to the chapel, which was originally used for the seminars offered at the retreat.

The guide explained the background of the podium, the pews, the chandeliers, the massive doors, the wrought iron sconces and the organ (one of a half dozen once owned and played daily by famed Graham soloist George Beverly Shea).

But Moore's attention picked up when the guide told the story of the five-foot grand piano.

Suddenly childhood stories had a new meaning.

“I had heard the stories, but I didn't know the full story,” Moore said.

In 1989, The Cove received a designated gift to pur-

chase a piano for the chapel. Executive director Jerry Miller spotted a classified ad for a piano in Hendersonville. He didn't know much about pianos and asked Shea to go with him to check it out.

“Imagine the surprise of the owner when she opened the door and saw George Beverly Shea standing there,” the guide said.

Shea, who was then 80 years old, played the piano, looked it over and even crawled underneath it.

He also fulfilled a request from the owner to sing a song.

The association paid the full asking price for the piano, but Shea liked to say the piano, made of oak with a spruce sound board and maple hammers, was of such great quality that it had been purchased for a song.

Moore wasn't sure the two stories meshed, but when he approached the piano he saw a small plaque dated 1964, “To Velma from Mother and Daddy.”

Velma Huggins Ramsey Thelen was Moore's distant relative. Moore's mother was the sister of Thelen's father, Roy A. Huggins.

“I remember seeing the piano many times when we visited her in Hendersonville,” Moore said.

To confirm the link, Moore called a cousin and told her that he was visiting The Cove. His cousin's first words were asking if he had seen Aunt Velma's piano.

“I had heard the story, but I never knew where the piano was,” Moore said. “It was quite a surprise.”



Story of family's piano tracked to The Cove. (Contributed photo)

The Cove's Jill Gottenstrater said the piano is maintained in playing condition, although the chapel isn't used for worship services on a regular basis anymore. Designed by Ruth Bell Graham, Billy Graham's wife, the chapel is open as a retreat, a place of quiet and peace and of prayer.

“People sometimes come in and play,” Gottenstrater said. “That piano has brought a lot of joy into the world.”

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Tim Stevens was a reporter for the Raleigh News & Observer for more than 40 years. Used by permission.) **BR**

NEWS BRIEFS

BR names new editorial aide

(*Biblical Recorder*) Laura Crowther began working as editorial aide for the *Biblical Recorder* on June 6.

She is a member of Mount Olive Baptist Church in Pittsboro, N.C., where her husband David serves as pastor.

Crowther brings writing, editing, graphics and web skills to her position at the *BR* that she has demonstrated through women's ministry and web management roles at Mount Olive, along with blogging experience at *crowthercafe.com*.



LAURA CROWTHER

Kevin Smith elected to Mid-Atlantic Baptist Network

(*Western Recorder*) Kentucky Baptist Convention President Kevin Smith was unanimously elected as executive director of the Mid-Atlantic Baptist Network June 7. The network, also known as the General Mission Board of the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware, voted to call Smith, assistant professor of church history and Christian preaching at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and teaching pastor at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, during a special called meeting in Columbia, Md.

So. Bapt. Disaster Relief receives national award

(NAMB) The National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (National VOAD or VOAD) conference May 20 in Minneapolis awarded Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDR) with its National Member of the Year award. Visit namb.net/SendRelief.

Golden Gate closes Mill Valley campus

(GGBTS) Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary closed its main campus in the San Francisco Bay Area on June 3 to prepare for its 400-mile move to Southern California. The Southern Baptist seminary had been located in the Bay Area since its founding in 1944.

Employees at the new 150,000-square-foot facility in Ontario, Calif., will report for work June 20 to prepare for its official opening on July 5. The first group of students is expected to move into new student housing in late June.

Full stories available online at BRnow.org.

Getty

Continued from page 1

entire Southeastern family. They share our passion for the Great Commission and [for] the peoples and nations who have yet to hear the name of Jesus,” said SEBTS President Danny Akin. “We have been talking for several years about them writing a new school song for us that captures our heart for the nations.”

Keith said the song ties perfectly with the whole album's focus on global missions. “In conversations with Danny and Charlotte ... we discussed a hymn that would be about mission,” said Keith. “The song is a very natural connection to Southeastern ... It's about fulfilling the Great Commission, and that's what Southeastern is all about.”

He envisions the hymn being part of graduation ceremonies and commissioning services where SEBTS students are sent off into ministry with the call of the Great Commission propelling them onward.

“We imagined a thousand young leaders standing and pledging their commitment to go out with the Great Commission,” Keith said.

The song is a great fit for SEBTS, according to Akin, who is thankful for a new school hymn centered on mission. “[The Gettys] have given Southeastern Seminary a great gift that I pray our school will honor in spirit and action until King Jesus returns,” he said.

“Facing a Task Unfinished” is set to



Keith Getty holds the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary “GO” sign as he explains the meaning behind the Gettys' new album, “Facing a Task Unfinished.”

release on June 17, 2016, and SEBTS will give away special edition singles of “For the Cause” during the 2016 Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis, Missouri, at both the SEBTS exhibit and alumni luncheon.

SEBTS will host the Gettys in concert on October 21, 2016, at 7 p.m. as part of the “Facing a Task Unfinished” tour. Visit sebts.edu/gettyconcert to order tickets.

“Facing a Task Unfinished” is available for pre-order at gettymusic.com. **BR**

David Moore: a bearer of hope

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

David Moore has seen a lot of changes in cultural trends, churches and denominational life since he began serving in campus ministry fresh out of college. On May 31 he retired after 38 years on the staff of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), a rare service record for anyone.

Changes within BSC have led to ministry roles with students, single adults, married adults, senior adults, pastors and church leaders. For the last decade Moore has enjoyed serving on the pastoral ministries team, helping pastors and churches rediscover their purpose and vision. Often he helps pastors and churches work through seasons of conflict.

“There’s a lot of discouragement in churches and in pastors. The whole church culture has taken hits,” he said. “There’s a hopelessness out there. I talk to a lot of pastors who say, ‘This is not what I thought it was going to be.’ I try to be a bearer of hope to these people.”

He estimates that around 100 pastors and church leaders call his office looking for help every year.

“At least every week I get another call asking for our help – at least one a week,” Moore said. “I get as many calls from congregations as I get from pastors. Sometimes the call comes from the director of missions who is trying to help a church in conflict. They call, obviously in pain.”

Church members take sides and issues becomes personal.

“They have forgotten what the real issue was,” he said.

Moore said if the pastor and church don’t want to work on the deep issues that led them into conflict, his work is not going to be very effective. The pastor and the church have to admit there are serious problems and have a strong desire find healing. “I can’t fix it for them, but I can help them pray through the possibilities.”

He’s learned that if a church is experiencing a downturn in offerings and attendance, it’s easy to blame it on the pastor. “In my opinion the church doesn’t have the wider view of all that is going on in the culture, so they default to taking care of it by blaming the pastor. But it’s not that simple,” Moore added.

Some conversations reveal a lot of anger. “People don’t know how to differ very well. So when conversations don’t work with a church, and they are at the fork in the road, we have to ask if they have done everything possible on this



David Moore speaks to new pastors at a training event in May at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Moore retired at the end of May after 38 years. (BR photo by Dianna L. Cagle)

side of the fork to work on the problems.

“You want it to work, so you do everything it takes. If a separation is in the works, then we need to ask how we can do this with dignity and integrity, and what are the lessons learned?”

Moore’s work in the field of church health was not in his original plan for ministry.

A native of Durham, he grew up at First Baptist Church in Durham. After graduating from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, he felt a strong connection with campus ministry.

Moore played an active part in the ministry of the Baptist Student Union at UNC, which was one of the “crucible places” in his spiritual journey. He regularly spoke on college campuses across the state recruiting students for summer mission work.

A detour out of North Carolina led him to a three-year ministry as an associate minister to youth at Manassas Baptist Church in northern Virginia. Then he was invited to return to BSC for a full-time position with campus ministry.

“The call that campus ministry provided had been so important to me; there was that sense that I wanted to ‘pay it forward,’ as they say in student work.”

Later, the death of his sister in an automobile accident “put a lot of stir in my life,” he said.

He left BSC and became the human

resources director for a heating/air conditioning/fire protection company in Raleigh.

“It was a great experience, but I knew that’s not where I needed to be. ... So I got the call to come back to the convention to work with Christian Life and Public Affairs in 1991.” The new assignment was to educate, inform and inspire Baptists about critical issues of the day.

He stayed in that work for 18 years.

When BSC re-organized in 2008 Moore was assigned to leadership development and pastoral ministries.

Through the experience of job adjustments and retooling Moore said the single constant thread was “my call to engage people where they are, and help them become all they are wired to be – all that God has made them to be, to help birth vision and action.”

Earlier in ministry when he was working with students, Moore said Frederick Beuchner’s book, *Wishful Thinking*, had an impact on him. “A few things jumped out and grabbed my attention. [Beuchner] said ‘vocation’ comes from a Latin word that means ‘voice.’ Our job is to figure out of all the voices that are calling to us – some are good, some are not so good – but where is the voice of God in all of that? [Beuchner] ends up saying the place where God calls you is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meets. That’s been just a powerful, personal ministry statement for me.

“Frankly, the BSC has been a place that has allowed me to do that. There’s not an employee here that agrees with everything the BSC is and does – nobody does, anywhere – but the thing I am most grateful for is that [BSC] has given me the freedom and trusted me to pursue that kind of vision for myself, allowing me to be all I can be.

“Not every place will do that. In spite of differences over the years and some

See Moore page 15



David Moore has played Bob Cratchit in “A Christmas Carol” in Raleigh for about 20 years. He has been with the production even longer, serving in smaller roles. (Photo courtesy of “A Christmas Carol”)

Baptist Children's Homes alum tapped to bring cheer

By JIM EDMINSON | Baptist Children's Homes

America's Santa, Kennedy Home alum Jim Dyer, enters the Manhattan hotel as heads turn. Dressed in an authentic Santa costume, the "real bearded santa" captures attention everywhere he travels. Stopping at the grand, mahogany check-in counter, he introduces himself.

"I'm Jim Dyer. I have a reservation."

"I'm sorry sir," comes the reply.

"We do not have a reservation under Dyer, but we do have reservations for Santa Claus. Welcome to The Plaza Athenee."

Jim Dyer was honored by being selected as the The Spirit of Liberty Foundation's 2015 America's Santa.

America's Santa is the spokesperson for the Foundation's annual "Operation Christmas Miracle: The Believe in Santa Tour."

The Foundation's Santa is a goodwill ambassador visiting U.S. military troops around the world.

This year Dyer was to visit with the Mayor of Paris, lay wreaths at the November 15 terrorist bombing site in the city, and travel to military hospitals in Germany to visit soldiers – both patients and personnel.

The next day, Dyer was live on the set of the weekday morning news show "Fox and Friends" with the show's hosts Elisabeth Hasselbeck and Steve Doocy.

A quick trip to Rockefeller Center and photos with ABC's Good Morning America's Robin Roberts and NBC TODAY's Hoda Kotb and Kathie Lee Gifford was followed by engagements where Dyer was Santa to adoring crowds.

"Everyone wants a picture with Santa," Dyer muses.

The highlight of his tour was visiting with troops. Dyer, a decorated Vietnam veteran, committed to being America's Santa to encourage U.S. military personnel and their families.

"Every soldier I met was given a heartfelt 'thank you' on behalf of all of us safely stateside," Dyer asserts.

Dyer lived at Kennedy Home in



Above, Jim Dyer loves visiting with troops as Santa. A Vietnam veteran, Dyer knows how important it is to hear words of support and encouragement when far from home. As The Spirit of Liberty Foundation's 2015 America's Santa, Dyer had the opportunity to not only visit soldiers serving overseas, but he was in France, below left, to lay wreaths at the Nov. 15, 2015, bombing site and to appear on "Fox and Friends," below right. (Contributed photos)



Kinston from age eight to 16 (1954-1962). Today, he is a Baptist Children's Homes (BCH) Trustee and has been a faithful ambassador for BCH having spoken at



more than 100 churches across North Carolina.

Visit Santa's website: santawakeforest.com.

(EDITOR'S NOTE –Jim Edminson is editor of Charity & Children, a publication of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina. Visit bchfamily.org.) **BR**

AROUND THE STATE

Staff changes

PHIL ADDISON has been called as pastor of Friendship Baptist Church, Bunnlevel. Previously, he was senior pastor of Stony Point Baptist Church.

Lake Wylie Baptist Church, Charlotte, has called **JONATHAN HOMESLEY** as senior pastor.

RICK MILLER has been called as missionary to Stanly and Montgomery Bap-

tist associations. Miller previously was a missionary to Japan with the International Mission Board. He also was pastor of Central Baptist Church, Okinawa, Japan.

Do you have staff changes, church

anniversaries or homecomings or events with a statewide interest? Send to dianna@BRnow.org or call (919) 459-5698. The *Biblical Recorder* tries to publish items in a timely manner, but our editorial staff relies on you to make that happen.

Muhammad Ali heard gospel from Billy Graham

By DAVID ROACH | Baptist Press

Billy Graham, Adrian Rogers and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary administrator Dan Dumas are among the Christians who have told of gospel conversations with the late heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali.

Ali, who died June 3 in Scottsdale, Ariz., at age 74, grew up in a Christian family but converted to Islam in the late 1960s. Initially, he was a member of the black nationalist group the Nation of Islam, but in the mid-1970s he, along with the Nation of Islam, converted to more orthodox Sunni Muslim beliefs, NPR reported.

According to The Associated Press (AP), Ali occasionally attended King Solomon Missionary Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., where his family worshiped, even after his conversion to Islam. However, he was honored in a Muslim funeral June 9 and a public memorial service led by an imam June 10.

The late champion said of religion according to AP, “Rivers, lakes, ponds, streams, oceans all have different names, but they all contain water. So do religions have different names, and they all contain truth.”

“When we approached (Billy Graham’s) home, I thought he would live on a thousand-acre farm, and we drove up to this house made of logs.” – Muhammad Ali

Concern over Ali’s religious beliefs once led his father to take the boxer to visit evangelist Billy Graham at his home in Montreat, N.C., Graham’s son Franklin wrote in a June 4 Facebook post.

Ali’s father, Franklin Graham wrote, “was concerned over Ali’s faith in Islam and was afraid that his son had been led astray.” Graham and Ali “had a great visit, and my father had prayer with him.”

Billy Graham wrote of the 1979 meeting in his autobiography *Just As I Am*, “I autographed a Bible for him. He accepted it graciously, but when he looked at my unreadable scrawl, he asked (longtime Graham associate) T.W. (Wilson), ‘What does that say?’”

Graham responded, “It says ‘God bless you,’ and it’s signed ‘Billy Graham.’”

Ali handed the book back to Graham and said, “How about printing ‘Billy Graham’ under that. I want people to know it’s you when I show it to them.” As Graham recounted, “I laughed and printed my name in big letters.”

Ali said of the encounter according to Russ Busby’s 1999 book *Billy Graham*:

God’s Ambassador, “When I arrived at the airport, Mr. Graham himself was waiting for me. I expected to be chauffeured in a Rolls Royce or at least a Mercedes, but we got in his Oldsmobile, and he drove it himself. I couldn’t believe he came to the airport driving his own car.

“When we approached his home,” Ali continued, “I thought he would live on a thousand-acre farm and we drove up to this house made of logs. No mansion with crystal chandeliers and gold carpets, it was the kind of a house a man of God

would live in. I looked up to him.”

Franklin Graham said the two men “met together again several years ago in Louisville, Ky., when my father was there to preach.”

Adrian Rogers, a former Southern Baptist Convention president, told in at least three sermons between 1986 and 1994 of sharing the gospel with Ali. Rogers died in 2005.

In a 1994 sermon, Rogers, longtime pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn., said Ali had asked him, “How can you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the unique Son of God? Just because He was born of a virgin? Why, Adam didn’t have a father or mother.

See Ali page 15

The difference between servants and volunteers

I firmly believe that a person’s commitment to their role in the worship ministry or any other ministry of the church is strongly connected to the person’s sense of calling.

In his book *The Heart of the Artist*, Rory Noland discusses the difference between those who volunteer out of obligation to serve in the church and those who feel called by God to serve.

Noland writes, “There is a deeper level of commitment, joy, and reward with those who know their calling is from God.”

He then lists 10 differences between volunteers and those called of God.

They are:

1. Volunteers see their involvement at church as community service, but people called of God see it as ministry.

2. Volunteers whine about what it’s going to cost to serve, but people called are committed to serving.

3. Volunteers shrink back from resolving relational conflict, but people called of God seek to resolve relational conflict for the sake of unity in the church.

4. Volunteers look upon rehearsal/practice/meetings as another commitment they’re obligated to fulfill, but people called of God look forward to rehearsal/practice/meetings as another opportunity to be used by God.

5. Volunteers do no outside practic-

ing or preparation, but people who are called of God come ready to serve as prepared as possible.

6. Volunteers are not open to constructive criticism; they get defensive about it.

But people called of God are grateful for feedback because they want to be the best they can be.

7. Volunteers feel threatened by the talent of others, but people called of God praise Him for distributing gifts and talents as He chooses.

8. Volunteers want to quit at the first sign of adversity or discouragement, but people called of God dig in and persevere.

9. Volunteers find their main source of fulfillment in their talents and abilities, but people called of God know that being used of God is the most fulfilling thing you can do with your life.

10. Volunteers can’t handle being put in situations in which they’re going to be stretched, but people called of God respond to God’s call with humble dependence on Him.

As you reflect on these statements, would you say that you are called or a volunteer?

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Kenny

Lamm is a consultant for worship and music with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Contact him at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5638, or klamm@ncbaptist.org. Visit his blog at renewingworshipnc.org.)



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Southeastern
Baptist Theological Seminary

SBC leaders oppose Ga. editor, defend religious liberty for Muslims

Baptist Press

Baptists and other Christians should defend religious freedom for non-Christians, including Muslims, because it is morally right, as well as helpful to their own cause, says Southern Baptist religious liberty leader Russell Moore.

Moore, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC), advocated for religious freedom for people of all faiths in a blog post June 8, which came two days after a Baptist state editor questioned providing such liberty for Muslims.

Religious freedom is not a government benefit “but a natural and inalienable right granted by God,” Moore wrote. “At issue is whether or not the civil state has the power to zone mosques or Islamic cemeteries or synagogues or houses of worship of whatever kind out of existence because of what those groups believe.”

“When someone makes such a claim, that person is not standing up for Jesus and his gospel, but standing against them,” he said. “To empower the state to command or to forbid worship is not fidelity to the Bible.”

Applying religious liberty to Christians alone is “self-defeating,” Moore said. “A government that can tell you a mosque or synagogue cannot be built because it is a mosque or a synagogue is a government that, in the fullness of time, will tell an evangelical church it cannot be constructed because of our claims to the exclusivity of Christ.”

Those professing Christians who desire to limit religious freedom “are perhaps unknowingly on a campaign to destroy religious liberty,” he wrote. “They would set the precedents that will be used to destroy churches, and they will give the opponents of religious liberty the charge that the issue isn’t about freedom at all but about seeking government approval of one’s religion.”

In May, the ERLC defended religious freedom for all in a friend-of-the-court brief in support of a Muslim community in New Jersey that has been prevented by the local government from building a mosque. The ERLC and the International Mission Board joined 16 other organizations in a diverse coalition urging a judge to find the government had violated a 2000 federal law protecting religious freedom in the area of land use.

Gerald Harris – editor of *The Christian Index*, the Georgia Baptist newspaper – questioned the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) entities’ involvement in the brief, suggesting in his June 6 editorial Islam is “more of a geo-political movement than a religion.”

In his post, Moore did not name Harris but said he was surprised a “Baptist writer” would question the defense of religious freedom for non-Christians. Such an assertion is a “direct contradiction” of the Southern Baptist Convention’s statement of faith and “all of its predecessors,” he said.

Bart Barber, Southern Baptist blogger and pastor of First Baptist Church of Farmersville, Texas, also responded to Harris’ article in a lengthy blog post June 8. He said any argument by a leading Southern Baptist against universal religious liberty is “unprecedented in Baptist history.”

He continued, “I don’t think that any moment in the past five centuries features any prominent Baptist leader’s arguing against universal religious liberty.”

“And now we can’t say that ever again.”

A trio of Southern Baptist professors – Jason Duesing, provost at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; Thomas White, president of Cedarville University; and

Malcolm Yarnell, professor of systematic theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary – issued an open letter June 9 deeming it “inappropriate to question whether Muslims should retain the right freely to practice their religion” even though “granting such rights to some forms of Islam might one day lead to the threatening of Christians in our worship.”

Duesing, White and Yarnell, editors of *First Freedom: The Beginning and End of Religious Liberty*, wrote that they “agree with [Harris’] effort to inform readers of teachings within Islam that are not fully known in the public square.” But they said they “disagree” with the specific manner in which some of Harris’ concerns were expressed.

Among the arguments offered by the three professors:

- “We believe, as Americans, that our Constitution guarantees the ‘first freedom’ among all human freedoms, the freedom of religion with all of its benefits. For Christian Americans to question whether Muslim Americans qualify for religious freedom is essentially a question about whether all Americans are under the protection of the First and Fourteenth Amendments.”

- “We believe, as Baptists, that questioning whether Muslims deserve religious liberty is foreign to the historic Baptist understanding of biblical faith and practice.”

- “We believe, as Southern Baptists, that universal religious liberty is a nonnegotiable aspect of our denomination’s theology.”

Ultimately, they wrote, “any attempt to inhibit religious liberty will only prove to be a hindrance to reaching these precious men and women, created in God’s image, with the saving gospel of Jesus Christ.”

In its statement on religious liberty, the SBC’s confession – the Baptist Faith & Message 2000 – says, “The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. ... A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and

the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.”

Moore cited the example of 17th Century preacher Roger Williams, who stood up for the liberty of Baptists, then “an unpopular minority” in New England, but also “explicitly said such freedom ought to extend to ‘the most paganish, Jewish, Turkish’ consciences as well.” The application of religious liberty to people of all religions is not suggesting “there are many paths to God, or that truth claims are relative,” Moore wrote. “We are fighting for the opposite. We are saying that religion should be free from state control because we believe that every person must give an account before the judgment seat of Christ.”

The government can only coerce, not regenerate, Moore said. “By shutting down houses of worship, or by any other act, the state cannot make a person a Christian,” he said. “All the state can do is make people pretend-Christians, one birth short of salvation. ... If you want to see people come to Christ, though, you do it by openly preaching and debating the claims of Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, not by forcing people into hiding through the brute force of Uncle Sam.”

Religious freedom “is never an excuse for violence and crime,” Moore wrote. “The United States government should fight, and fight hard, against radical Islamic jihadism. But the government should not penalize law-abiding people, especially those who are American citizens, simply for holding their religious convictions, however consistent or inconsistent, true or false, those convictions are.”

The state not only should defend its citizens against religiously motivated terrorists, but “the state also has an obligation to protect citizens from the state itself,” he said. “Stripping a religious community of civil liberties is an act of aggression by the state against its citizens.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Compiled from Baptist Press reports by Tom Strobe and David Roach. Seth Brown, BR content editor, contributed to this story.) **BR**



Baptists on Mission work in South Carolina, Canada

Volunteers help homeowners with a roof in Johnsonville, S.C., where Baptists on Mission or North Carolina Baptist Men (NCBM) have a base to help with flood recovery efforts. Volunteer at baptistsonmission.org/carolinarebuild. There are also 14 NCBM teams (chaplaincy, feeding and recovery) in Fort McMurray, Alberta, Canada, to help homeowners returning to burned out homes from catastrophic fires five weeks ago. (NC Baptist Men and Women Disaster Relief Ministry Facebook photo)

ACP: More churches reported; baptisms decline

By CAROL PIPES | Baptist Press

Southern Baptists may find cause for hope in the latest Annual Church Profile (ACP) report. The Southern Baptist Convention added more churches in 2015, due mostly to church planting efforts. Churches also experienced an increase in total giving.

However, according to the ACP report compiled by LifeWay Christian Resources in cooperation with state conventions, other key measures declined. Those included membership, average worship attendance, baptisms and missions giving.

A bright spot in the ACP data was the increase in churches. The number of churches affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention grew by 294 to 46,793, a 0.63 percent increase over 2014. This is the 17th year in a row the number of SBC churches has grown.

While the number of SBC-related congregations increased, reported membership declined more than 200,000, down 1.32 percent to 15.3 million members. Average weekly worship attendance declined by 1.72 percent to 5.6 million worshippers.

Southern Baptists also experienced a decline in baptisms, down 3.3 percent to 295,212. Reported baptisms have fallen eight of the last 10 years. The ratio of baptisms to total members decreased to one baptism for every 52 members.

“God help us all! In a world that is desperate for the message of Christ, we continue to be less diligent in sharing the Good News,” said Frank S. Page, SBC Executive Committee president and CEO.

“May God forgive us and give us a new passion to

“God help us all! In a world that is desperate for the message of Christ, we continue to be less diligent about sharing the Good News.”

– Frank Page

reach this world for Christ.”

“The ACP report shows many faithful Southern Baptists continue to worship, share the Gospel, give generously, and live in community with other believers,” said LifeWay President and CEO Thom S. Rainer. “We praise God for these efforts every year.

“While a decrease in baptisms is very disappointing, we don’t take for granted 295,000 baptisms,” he said. “We should rejoice with each of those individuals who chose to follow Christ.”

An increase in the number of churches, aided by Southern Baptists’ church planting efforts, is also something to celebrate, Rainer said.

“People underestimate the importance of momentum,” he said. “It only takes a few people in each church, being intentional about sharing their faith, for some new momentum to build.”

Giving and mission expenditures

Southern Baptists increased giving in 2015. Total and undesignated church receipts reported through the ACP increased 3.51 percent and 4.64 percent respectively.

Total missions expenditures declined by 2.03 percent to \$1.2 billion, but the report shows four Baptist state

conventions did not ask churches for this data – Alabama (for the first time), California, Georgia and Oklahoma. Great Commission Giving, which represents total giving to denominational causes, was down 3.81 percent to \$613 million, with five state conventions not reporting that data – Alabama, Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Southern Baptists of Texas (for the first time).

Giving through Southern Baptists’ Cooperative Program (CP) mission initiative is not included in the ACP annual report. Those totals are more accurately available through Baptist state conventions and the SBC Executive Committee, which processes the mission gifts. CP gifts forwarded from state conventions for SBC causes in fiscal year 2014-15 were 1.39 percent more than the previous year. CP gifts received by the SBC Executive Committee for the first eight months of the 2015-16 year were reported to be 6.13 percent above the year-to-date budgeted projection.

Individual congregations report statistics for the national ACP to their local associations and/or state conventions. National totals are compiled and released after all cooperating state conventions have reported.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Carol Pipes is editor of Facts & Trends at LifeWay Christian Resources.) **BR**

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OPPORTUNITY CORNER



The North Carolina Baptist All-State Youth Choir will present concerts July 20-24. This year's theme is "Act Justly, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly."

The director for the 2016 tour is Nana Wolfe-Hill, associate director of choral activities and assistant professor at Wingate University where she conducts two choirs and teaches both choral conducting and music education courses.

The free concerts will be performed at the following times and locations: July 20 – OASIS event at Campbell University, 7

p.m.; July 21 – Oakmont Baptist, Greenville, 7 p.m.; July 22 – Winter Park Baptist, Wilmington, 7 p.m.; July 23 – First Baptist, Cary, 6 p.m.; July 24 – Cedar Falls Baptist, Fayetteville, 11 a.m.; and July 24 – Hayes Barton Baptist, Raleigh, 6 p.m.

Visit ncbaptist.org/asyc.

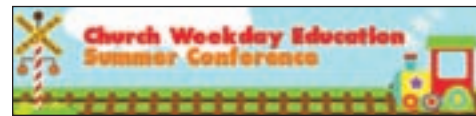


Building Powerful Ministry Teams is a "biblically based" team development process that utilizes "hands on" learning tools, multimedia presentations and interactive exercises that stimulates learning and application.

Bert Ross will lead this training Aug. 4

at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in Cary.

The cost is \$25 including a meal and materials. For more information or to register visit ncbaptist.org/index.php?id=1842.



The Church Weekday Education Summer Conference Aug. 12-13 at the Embassy Suites in Cary will cover topics such as effective ministry teams, safety, self-care and leadership. Friday is for the directors, and all staff can join in Saturday for breakout sessions. The cost ranges from \$65-\$160 depending on North Carolina

Baptist Church Weekday Education Association membership and position. Retreat pricing does not include hotel accommodations, but spacious suites with one or two beds and a sofa bed have been reserved at the Embassy Suites Raleigh-Durham/Research Triangle in Cary for \$119 per night. Complimentary made-to-order breakfast is available to overnight guests of the hotel. These rates are available on a first-come, first-served basis until July 12. For registration or more information visit ncbaptist.org/index.php?id=992.



The Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina is offering a free Military Wives Retreat Aug. 20-21 at Camp Mundo Vista in Sophia. Participants are invited to spend one or two nights focusing on renewing their hearts and souls. Come meet other military spouses, hear stories, play games and leave feeling refreshed. Retreat begins Saturday at 9 a.m. and concludes Sunday at 11 a.m. The cost, which is refundable if you stay until the retreat concludes on Sunday, is \$20 for one-night stay or \$40 for two-night stay. Contact Margaret Harding at mharding@wmunc.org or (919) 882-2344, ext. 209. To register visit wmunc.org/#!military-missions/hn19i.



Join North Carolina Baptist evangelism and discipleship consultants for an intensive training with equipping sessions in Sunday School and small groups, children's and youth ministry, worship and music ministry, women's ministry, evangelism, special needs ministry, pastoral leadership and more! The event takes place Aug. 20 from 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Western Avenue Baptist Church in Statesville. The early bird cost is \$15 before Aug. 5; it's \$20 before Aug. 17; and \$30 for registration at the door. To register or see more information visit ncbaptist.org/index.php?id=1724.

Submissions

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

CHURCH NEWS



Burkemont Baptist Church, Morganton

Burkemont Baptist Church, Morganton, is celebrating their 100th anniversary all year long with multiple events that began Jan. 16, which is the official anniversary date, and includes the release of a new book on the church's history in October. Bivocational pastors served the church for many years, but only four pastors have served the church full time. All four are still living: Johnny Tiller, Robert Tenery, Marshall "Mark" Pridgen Jr. and the current pastor, David Mills, pictured at right. The church bell was purchased and moved from the train depot in 1917. Today it is mounted on a tower in the church yard. A large crowd gathered (see above) before the June 5 homecoming celebration to ring the bell 100 times. Families with ties to the church's past were assigned to ring it 10 times. In the morning sermon Mills listed some milestones and contrasted some of the changes the church has experienced over the last 100 years. He said we often wish we could go back to Grandma's day. "But that won't happen. We have been transported to a world where people redefine God and design God to be what they want Him to be. ... But we have been called by Almighty God for such a time as this. God has placed us here. Standing for the truth of God's Word is a lot harder than it was in 1916. But God is here now and until Christ returns. He loves us, and we're going to have to rise to the challenge like no other generation has risen before." Learn more about the church at burkemontbaptist.org. (BR photos by K. Allan Blume)



June 26

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

July 3

Transformed in My Plans

Focal passage: Matthew 6:25-34

Even as you read this paragraph, someone I love is fighting for his life.

The situation is heartbreaking, and I have cried many tears as his story has unfolded.

I have worried about his physical well-being. I have worried about his future. I have worried about his family.

At times, my worry has felt paralyzing. And yet, in the midst of what has seemed like despair, God has used this week's passage to convict me of sin and give me hope.

In Matthew 6:25-34, Jesus commands his followers not to worry three different times. (I wonder if He repeats Himself because we fall into this sin so easily!) Jesus describes the kindness with which God cares for birds and wildflowers and then gently reminds His hearers that God's love for people far exceeds His love for mere plants.

How can we worry about our circumstances if we truly believe God cares for us, knows our deepest needs, and will

always provide for us?

You see, it is impossible to worry and trust God at the same time. Each day we must choose to let go of control and trust that God can and will provide everything we need.

Sometimes you and I worry about the little mundane aspects of our lives just as much as we worry about the larger, more painful ones.

And yet, any time we worry we are not trusting the God who created us and loves us. I am so thankful that even in this season of sadness, Jesus is transforming me into a woman who trusts Him more each day.

My prayer is that we all would be able to echo the words of 19th century missionary to China, Hudson Taylor, who wrote, "Let us give up our work, our plans, ourselves, our lives, our loved ones, our influence, our all, right into [God's] hand; and then, when we have given all over to Him, there will be nothing left for us to be troubled about."



EMILY ANTHONY
Member, Imago Dei Church, Raleigh

Focal passage: Matthew 7:1-12

The way we treat others should reflect the way we're treated by God.

I believe Friday mornings are meant to be celebrated, and as part of my weekly festivities, I often purchase my favorite latte from the drive-thru of a local coffee shop.

One morning a few months back, I pulled up to the window ready to pay for my treat and was told I owed nothing. According to my barista, the customer in line ahead of me had paid for my order.

As you might imagine, I was excited.

It's not every day someone gives me free coffee.

And yet, in that moment I had a decision to make.

I could drive off into the sunrise gleefully sipping my caffeine, or I could pass on the favor by paying for the order of the stranger in line behind me. It is almost a

no-brainer, right? Why wouldn't I want to reflect the simple kindness that had been shown to me just moments before?

Jesus never spoke about early morning coffee, but He does address the way we view and treat others in Matthew 7:1-12.

In these verses Jesus begins by challenging his followers to humbly repent of their sin before helping those around them, saying, "Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye but don't notice the log in your own eye?" (Matthew 7:3).

As the sermon continues, He encourages us to keep seeking God, describing Him as a faithful Father who gives "good things to those who ask Him" (Matthew 7:11). Jesus calls us to reflect on the gracious way we have been treated by our good Father and then commands us to treat others the way we wish to be treated.

Something so small as the gift of coffee transformed the way I treated a stranger that Friday morning.

How much more should we allow the wonderfully redeeming love of God to transform our actions, causing us to love those around us in the way He has loved us?

June 26

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

July 3

King?

Focal Passage: 1 Samuel 8:4-9; 19-22

C.S. Lewis writes in *The Chronicles of Narnia* of the need to follow the path God sets before us. In one story Aslan (who represents Jesus) instructs young Lucy and her brother to follow the way he will show them. He also warns them that at times there will be roads that may appear easier but they won't be – always go the way he will show them. They agree.

But after Aslan has gone, there comes a time when the road Aslan has pointed out seems too difficult and the siblings decide it won't hurt to take what appears to be the easier path.

It is not long until the supposed shortcut has led them far astray and Aslan must save them.

In our study this week, we find that the people of Israel have come to the position that they want what everybody else has, a king. Sounds almost like us today, how often do we want what "everybody" else has or is doing? Samuel became very discouraged at this; he had tried to teach them about God and following Him.

Samuel had been faithful to God, yet he felt so discouraged, had his work all been in vain?

Do you sometimes feel that all your faithfulness to God is not accomplishing what it should?

One day, the late Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn., felt discouraged that people were not responding to his invitations. He felt so distraught that he asked God to give him a verse for encouragement.

Rogers opened his Bible and pointed at a verse. It read, "They are not rejecting you, but Me."

After that he no longer worried about the results from his invitations knowing that people were not rejecting him or his teaching, but God and His word's invitation. That took all of the pressure off of him to see success. Understand that our responsibility is to present the truth. And, if we do this, those who reject it are not rejecting us, but God.



THOMAS MARSHALL
Member, Spring Hill Baptist Church, Wagram

Focal Passage: 1 Samuel 12:12-22

Aren't you glad for God's love, mercy and grace? I'm glad that God's love for me never changes. He doesn't love me any less when I fail Him miserably, yield to temptation and run from His presence to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

His grace is always there, reaching out to bring me back to Him and to do all that He can to convince me to restore my relationship with Him.

Some people think that living in "the fear of the Lord" is like driving down the street while watching the policeman in your rearview mirror. But let me give you a better picture for the fear of the Lord.

It's like a teenage driver who suddenly spots her father's car in her rearview mirror.

Seeing him back there reminds her to be on her best behavior – to use her blinkers, stop at the yellow light, and to

Feared

keep both hands on the wheel. But it also tells her that her father cares enough to follow her.

It tells her that she's safe.

Her father isn't trying to trap or trick her. He's trying to help her develop good habits; not just to be careful on this trip, but also to obey the laws and stay safe until she gets home. She's driving on her own, but yet not completely on her own.

So it is with us.

The fear of the Lord means we live our lives with our Heavenly Father always in that rearview mirror.

We glance up and see his brilliant holiness but also his care and love. Our response, the fear of the Lord, is a mix of reverence, trust and love.

We also become more aware that when we do mess up, He isn't there to "ticket" us, He is there to provide grace, to instruct us in the way that we should go. His love carries that balance between judgment and grace.

"The Lord will not abandon His people, because of His great name and because He has determined to make you His own people" (1 Samuel 12:22).

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Ali Continued from page 10

Wouldn't that make Adam more son of God than Jesus?"

Rogers replied according to a sermon transcript provided by Love Worth Finding Ministries, "Champ, Jesus was not the Son of God because He was born of a virgin. He was born of a virgin because He was the Son of God."

Dan Dumas, senior vice president for institutional administration at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, tweeted following Ali's death, "In 1992 in NYC, I spoke the (g)ospel to Ali & gave him a tract. In kind, he gave me a signed tract for Islam."

On the tract, called "Understanding

Islam and the Muslims," Ali wrote, "To Dan from Muhammad Ali."

Dumas told Baptist Press Ali "seemed hostile to the gospel" during their encounter, which took place at LaGuardia Airport while Dumas was on his way back home from a mission trip to Ukraine.

Dumas noted, "I could only hope he responded somewhere along the way, if not on his deathbed, to the gospel." Ali will be buried at Cave Hill Cemetery in Louisville, where Southern Seminary's plot includes the graves of Southern founders James Boyce and John Broadus among others. **BR**

Moore Continued from page 8

real deep personal and professional valleys, there have been an awful lot of good peaks and upward movement, too. At the end of the day, for me it's been a place that has encouraged, trusted and allowed me to do that kind of ministry."

His latest work in pastoral ministry involved assisting pastors in reassessment of their ministry, dealing with failures in their ministry, coaching through conflict between pastors and churches and trying to prevent conflicts within church leaders. It does not focus only on pastors, he added. It's also ministry to the church as an organization.

A church needs to own its congregational identity, according to Moore. They need to know who they are called to be, what the vision has been and what it can be.

"That's been really energizing to me. I've loved that part of my work."

Moore sees himself as an encourager, a coach and a "midwife, helping people

to birth the new." Some think that is a strange analogy, but he explains, "Midwives don't have the babies. They help people to have the babies. ... [I'm] helping churches birth what they need to birth – renewal, revitalization and a new kind of vision."

Retirement is somewhat of a reluctant step for Moore.

"I'm 69 years old and I still have great energy. I still feel like I'm going wide open. I'm naming this re-calibration rather than retirement." Moore will continue to serve as a part-time contract worker for BSC.

Eddie Thompson succeeded Moore as a pastoral ministries consultant. He is certified in peacemaking and has broad experience as a pastor and family counselor.

He will continue to assist ministers and churches with church health and conflict resolution. Email ethompson@ncbaptist.org. **BR**



CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Pastor

Union Grove Baptist Church is prayerfully seeking a **full-time senior pastor** to faithfully preach and teach the Word of God and shepherd the flock. We are a mission minded Southern Baptist church located in Salemburg, North Carolina, a rural community in Sampson County. We will be accepting resumes until June 30, 2016. Please send to: Union Grove Baptist Church, 395 Vander Road, Salemburg, North Carolina 28385.

First Baptist Church of Black Mountain, NC, is seeking to fill its position of **Senior Pastor**. We are a dually aligned, traditional, moderate and missional congregation with supportive relationships with local and state Baptist entities. Please send cover letter and resume to Chair Bill Walker fbcbkmtnc@bellsouth.net.

Tolarsville Baptist Church of St. Paul's, North Carolina, is seeking an energetic, compassionate **bi-vocational pastor** to lead all ages as well as strive to develop the next generation of believers. We would prefer the pastor to have or be in the process of obtaining a Seminary/Divinity degree. We are accepting resumes through June 30th, 2016. Please send to tbcsearch@yahoo.com.

Temple Baptist Church is currently seeking a **Senior Pastor**. Temple Baptist is a traditional moderate Baptist church located in a beautiful, residential section of historic Wilmington, NC. The church has excellent facilities at its main campus and a modern Christian activity center on a 10-acre site 3 miles from the main church campus. We are seeking an energetic pastor who leads by consensus, shares a collective vision with the congregation, places a priority on evangelism, pastoral care and visitation. We desire a pastor that has strong leadership skills and proven experience. Resumes along with references welcomed through July 15, 2016, to RandSMoore36@TWC.COM.

Church Staff

First Baptist Church in Elkin, NC, a CBF congregation, seeks a **full-time Associate Pastor** whose focus will be in youth and children's ministries. For more information, visit www.elkinfbcc.com/associatepastor.

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

Memorial Baptist Church (SBC affiliated) in Norwood, NC, is seeking a **full-time youth minister**. College degree required; seminary degree preferred. Feel free to visit www.memorial4norwood.com to read about our church. Submit resume to pastorjeep@gmail.com or 873 Pee Dee Ave., Norwood, NC 28178.

Mt. Elam Baptist Church, in Roseboro, NC, is seeking a **full-time Pastor for Youth and Music**. Responsibilities include leading worship on Sunday morning and weekly youth services. We are looking for someone who is willing to plant their lives in this community, in order to further the gospel work that has already been done. Mt. Elam is a family oriented Southern Baptist church located near the community of Spivey's Corner. We affiliate ourselves with the BSCNC and the New South River Baptist Association, as well as the BF&M 2000. Send resumes to Mt. Elam Baptist Church, 2211 Mt. Elam Church Road, Roseboro, NC 28382, or email to brandybarbour@mtelam.org. We will be accepting resumes until June 30, 2016.

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

Elizabeth Baptist Church of Shelby, NC, is seeking a **part-time Media Team Leader**. Responsibilities include providing sound, video, lighting, and recording of multiple worship services each week. Thorough knowledge of digital mixers, in-ear monitoring, broadcasting on-line, and video projection software is required. This candidate will also need skills in training and building a team of volunteers for the weekly operations of the ministry. Submit resumes to the attention of Minister of Music, 301 N. Post Rd., Shelby, NC 28152, or email to mike@elizabethchurch.org.

Miscellaneous

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Martha Bullard stands in front of the "sunburn trailer" at Surfside Beach. (Contributed photo)

'Sunburn trailer' offers gospel witness

By BUTCH BLUME | *The Baptist Courier/Baptist Press*

Headed to the Carolina coast this summer for some sun and surf but also looking for a missions opportunity? Martha Bullard has just the job for you.

This summer, as she has for the past seven summers, Bullard, along with volunteers from churches of the Waccamaw Baptist Association, will be manning a "sunburn trailer" in Surfside Beach, S.C.

Volunteers at the trailer dole out free sunscreen, aloe gel and water, and they look for opportunities to share the gospel with visitors from all over the world. Often, youth groups from churches outside the area will coordinate with Bullard to utilize the trailer as a staging area for their missions activities on the beach.

The trailer, normally used for disaster relief operations by Waccamaw Association in Conway has wide panels on both sides that can be raised to create an open-air setting conducive to having relaxed

conversations with families on their way from the public parking lot to the beach, Bullard said.

The trailer is open during the summer months from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Saturday, and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Sundays.

Over the course of the summer, 50-75 people, many of them senior adults, will help man the trailer, Bullard said.

The ministry was started by the Baptist Nursing Fellowship many years ago, and Bullard, herself, spends three or four days a week helping man the trailer.

"I'm a people person," said Bullard, a member of First Baptist Church of Surfside Beach, "and I love to tell people about the Lord."

For more information about the sunburn trailer ministry this summer, contact Martha Bullard at (843) 995-1320.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Butch Blume is managing editor for *The Baptist Courier*, the news magazine of the South Carolina Baptist Convention.) **BR**

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Civility Continued from page 2

capitulation of your values and convictions. Others equate it with unilateral disarmament, meaning 'If I agree to be civil and you attack me, then I can't attack you back.' That's essentially what Bill O'Reilly said one night on his show. He had Lanny Davis on the show and O'Reilly said, 'I wouldn't sign it if I was running for office.'

DeMoss said they weren't against debate, disagreement or dissension. Rather, they believed arguments should be won on the strength of ideas, not decibels, antics or disruptive behavior. "We seem to have lost the ability to carry the day on the strength of our ideas, so we've resorted to shouting, name-calling and now you see with a guy like Donald Trump, the most uncivil behavior we've ever seen maybe in public life – certainly among candidates for the office of president. I'm troubled by it. This is not a good trend."

According to DeMoss and Davis, civility is politeness, respect, common decency and courtesy. "It's what we might have called good behavior in the old days," he said. "Certainly calling people who disagree with you morons, losers and sleazy is not only uncivil, it's unintelligent to belittle your political, philosophical or theological adversaries."

**"... on a spiritual level, if we claim to be followers of Christ, civility is not an option."
 – Mark DeMoss**

Political incivility gets good ratings in the press, DeMoss said.

"I can get a lot more attention calling somebody a bad name than I could making an articulate, intellectual case for why I think their position is wrong."

He continued, "Civility should permeate our marriages, our businesses, our neighborhoods, our highways, our legislatures – it almost doesn't matter who you are or what you believe, it should be a universal quality we should desire. I don't see any encouraging signs that very many people feel this way. It seems like we reward incivility. Donald Trump's incivility has been rewarded with the Republican presidential nomination.

"A lot of people will be looking at me saying, 'Good luck with your civility, but we gotta do what works, and this apparently works. So the tide seems to be going the other way.'"

In the second installment of this article we will hear DeMoss' thoughts about the long-term consequences of incivility. I welcome your thoughts about the state of civility in our culture. **BR**

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