



# BIBLICAL RECORDER

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## Faith celebrates Fourth

BR staff

For more than 10 years Faith Baptist Church in Faith has been helping its town celebrate independence.

The small town — population 600 — hosts a weeklong celebration each year, a tradition born during World War II when a parade was organized to celebrate returning veterans.

“All of that brings thousands of people into our small town,” said Ann Barton via email.

Barton, along with other church members, set up a booth in Faith Legion Park.

The church planned to give away 600 Bibles along with patriotic brace-

lets, pencils, coins with the 10 Commandments, fans, etc.

“We also have a Prayer Request basket where people can write prayer requests and leave them and our church members pray over those requests each night before leaving,” Barton said.

Members gathered recently to stamp Bibles and to pray over the materials that will be distributed. Various classes and groups in the church volunteer nightly — except Sunday — to give away these “trinkets” as well as water.

What does your church do to celebrate July 4 or to share the gospel? Share your news with *Biblical Recorder* readers: (919) 847-2127 or [dianna@biblicalrecorder.org](mailto:dianna@biblicalrecorder.org).



**SORTING** — Libby Malpass, Jean Little, Phyllis Beck, Karon Goble, Charlene Shoemaker, and Bobbie Huneycutt (seated) stamp Faith Baptist Church information in pamphlets for free giveaway during a weeklong celebration of July 4. See photos online at [www.BRnow.org](http://www.BRnow.org); click “Photo Gallery.”

## Transformational church helps association move forward

By Melissa Lilley  
BSC Communications

If numbers told the whole story the projected outlook wouldn’t be very good for Transylvania Baptist Association.

Eighty percent of churches in the association are plateaued or declining, according to Associational Missionary Chuck Campbell.

With the help of a new concept called Transformational Church, the future is looking much brighter for this association.

Campbell is helping churches in the association take the results from LifeWay Christian Resources’ latest study and apply them to a process of transformation.

“Becoming more missionary-minded is what Transformational Church is all about,” Campbell said. This process has helped churches in his association, “quickly see how they can re-cast the vision.”



Campbell

As a church health consultant Campbell is familiar with working alongside churches. Transformational Church is different than any other approach he has tried.

He said it gives churches a “look in the rearview mirror” and helps them understand where they will end up if the direction doesn’t change.

Churches in Transylvania are looking for answers, and through this process, are asking hard

(See Transformational Page 7)

## IMB & NAMB partnership to transcend borders

By Erich Bridges  
Baptist Press

RICHMOND, Va. — Recently planted seeds of a new partnership between Southern Baptists’ two mission boards are already beginning to sprout.

Previously, the International Mission Board (IMB) and North American Mission Board (NAMB) carefully observed the geographical separation between their two ministry assignments. But national borders no longer define the task of missions in a globalized world marked by the rapid migrations of people groups in need of the gospel.

Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting in Phoenix gave final approval to ministry assignment changes for both boards emerging from “Great Commission Resurgence” recommendations adopted at last year’s SBC annual meeting in Orlando, Fla. One of the assignment changes directs the IMB to “provide specialized, defined and agreed upon assistance to the North American Mission Board in assisting churches to reach unreached and underserved people groups within the United States and Canada.”

NAMB and IMB mobilization leaders met in Phoenix to discuss some of the directions that cooperation will take in the days ahead. Plans include:

- joint ethnographic mapping of the top 100 North American cities.
- creation of a unified information database to help identify unengaged, unreached people groups in North America and provide resources to reach them.

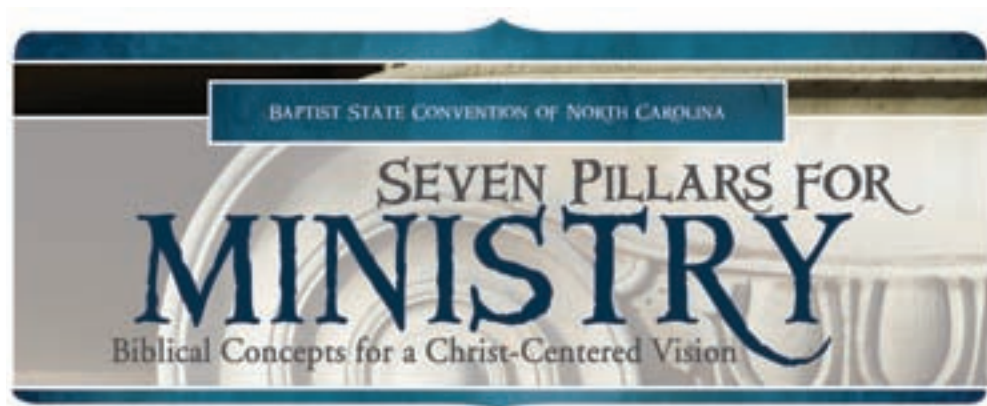
- multiple training opportunities to help churches and individuals plant churches among unreached groups.

“We’re recognizing the diaspora of peoples and the globalization of the world, and we’re seeking the unreached and least-reached peoples wherever they are on the globe, including North America,” said Ken Winter, IMB vice president for church and partner services. “What the convention in Orlando recommended, the convention in Phoenix has now approved — and we’re moving forward with it.

“We’re beyond the ‘Can we do this?’ stage. Now we’re identifying the strategies to assist the churches,” Winter said.

The urban face of North America in particular is changing as the world rushes toward the United States and Canada. According to current mission research, 584 unengaged, unreached people groups can be found in North America, many of which live in urban areas. These groups have less than 2 percent evangelical Christians among them, and no evangelical church or group has a viable plan to present the Gospel to them in ways they can understand and respond to it.

Top leadership of both mission boards intend to meet again later this year to continue joint planning. In the meantime, IMB is surveying retired and former missionaries who might serve as resources, mentors and participants in reaching the unreached of North America. They’re also developing ways missionaries currently overseas can interact with U.S. churches to share ideas for engaging peoples.



When Milton A. Hollifield Jr., executive director-treasurer of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) created his *Seven Pillars for Ministry: Biblical Concepts for a Christ-Centered Vision*, he wanted to address some key issues facing North Carolina Baptists.

The *Biblical Recorder* will present each pillar to you over the next few months. With help from key BSC leaders and churches across the state, the *Recorder* will highlight each of the pillars one at a time and provide examples of churches living out that particular ministry. Have story ideas? Email [dianna@biblicalrecorder.org](mailto:dianna@biblicalrecorder.org).

1. Practice fervent prayer
2. Promote evangelism & church growth
3. Strengthen existing churches
4. Plant new multiplication churches
5. Increase work with the international community
6. Escalate technology improvements & update the web site
7. Reclaim the younger generation of church leaders



# Old Town Baptist narrows in on 'unbroken ground'

By Melissa Lilley  
BSC Communications

In the area known as the outskirts live the tribal groups, who tend to be animistic and somewhat open to the gospel.

The majority of the population, which practices Buddhism and is highly resistant to the gospel, lives in the central plains and river valley regions.

Mark Harrison moved his fingers across the map, pointing out each region. Colored stones outline the different areas. The map is a gift from friends living in Southeast Asia.

Old Town Baptist Church, where Harrison has served as missions pastor for three years, is considering adopting an unengaged, unreached people group (UUPG) living in Southeast Asia. The specific people group they are praying about lives in a country that is 89 percent Buddhist; less than .07 percent of this people group is evangelical.

Whereas an unreached people group (UPG) has a negligible percentage of Christian believers, the UUPG is essentially void of any evangelical witness and is less than two percent evangelical. About 3,800 UUPGs live throughout the world.

Harrison believes the church is close to selecting the people group they will adopt. He is praying that their vision trip next month to Southeast Asia will bring even more clarity.

"We're praying that if this is what God wants us to do He will affirm that while we're there," Harrison said. "I don't know what that affirmation will look like. But I do know that God will affirm His will through the body. It needs to be the church body taking responsibility for this."

Old Town is already further along on their journey than they were just a few months ago. If there's one thing Harrison has learned in recent months about how to adopt an unreached people group, it's to start at home.

"This process starts where you already are. You

don't have to go out and look for something else. Just look at the connections God has already established for you," he said.

Several years ago during an International Mission Board (IMB) regional meeting Harrison met a missionary from Southeast Asia, from the country where Old Town is praying about adopting a people group. Since Harrison already had planned a mission trip to that region, he extended his trip in order to visit the missionary and learn more about the work being done in that country.

Harrison and the missionary continued to keep in touch. Last year, Harrison and Jason Ledford, pastor of families and discipleship, traveled overseas to help the missionary lead evangelism training.

As the partnership continued, conversations turned to adopting a people group. And as it turns out, one of the UUPGs in the missionary's country has refugees from a related people group living in Winston-Salem. Through a local refugee ministry, members of Old Town have already been ministering to these refugees.

Harrison said whichever people group they adopt, their goal is to create local, national and international points of connection. While they want to minister to members of this people group living in their homeland overseas, they also want to minister to refugees living in North Carolina, North America and throughout the world.

Harrison is helping the congregation start to think more in terms of "engaging" a people group and not just "adopting" them.

"We want to be hands-on involved in making sure that

this people group hears the gospel and that there are sufficient opportunities for them to respond to the gospel," he said. "For us, missions is demonstrating and verbalizing the gospel so that people can respond to Jesus' invitation to follow Him. We want to be very intentional."

Reaching an UUPG of any size is going to require cooperation among churches. "I don't have any illusions we're going to reach them alone," Harrison said. He prays that however God leads, whether to this

country in Southeast Asia or somewhere else, that Old Town would help bring together other churches for the sake of reaching an UUPG.

Old Town is ready to follow Paul's example in Romans 15:17 of "going into that unbroken ground where the light has not penetrated," Harrison said. They want their efforts of serving among unreached people to result in new believers who are disciplined and trained to reach their own people.

Although Old Town is still in the process of selecting an UUPG, excitement about what is to come is already building, due in large part to efforts from church leaders to keep this a priority before the congregation.

From worship services to Sunday School classes to small groups, repetition is key.

Harrison joked that whenever he speaks to the congregation they already know he's going to say something about UUPGs.

"If they don't know what you're going to say, you probably haven't said it enough," he said. "You have to oversaturate people."

While adopting a people group is a good thing, Harrison doesn't want Old Town's missions efforts to end there. He sees this as a way to help build a stronger missions mindset into the congregation.

"Our church has a long history of mission involvement, which has grown through Pastor Rick's leadership. Yet, on this continuing journey, we are still growing in our understanding of and obedience to God's call," Harrison said.

Rick Speas, Old Town's pastor, is excited about all God is allowing the church to be part of for His Kingdom.

"As I see more and more of our church members becoming active in going, praying and giving to God's mission, I am extremely humbled," Speas said.

"We are eagerly anticipating whatever God is going to do next, and we are excited to be on this journey with Him for the heart of the nations. I sense that God is doing here what He did in Antioch when He placed a burden for the nations upon the leaders, and then they sent a team out to go and preach the gospel."

Harrison didn't expect the stronger missionary mindset to blossom as quickly as it has. Take, for

(See Old Town Page 5)

**"We want to be hands-on involved in making sure that this people group hears the gospel and that there are sufficient opportunities for them to respond to the gospel."**  
— Mark Harrison

## Southeastern confers degrees on 68 N.C. students

### SEBTS Communications

WAKE FOREST — During two separate graduation ceremonies on May 20, 189 students were awarded with degrees from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and The College at Southeastern.

This spring's graduates hail from 21 states and eight foreign countries. They were conferred with earned associate's, bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees. During the graduation services — one for the seminary and one for the college — Southeastern's president, Daniel Akin, gave the charge to the graduates, urging them to live for Christ. (The *Biblical Recorder* generally lists N.C. students who received graduate level and above degrees from religious institutions.)

Graduates:

Jonathan Moss of Apex graduated with a master of arts in Christian studies and theology. The College at Southeastern also awarded the master of arts in intercultural studies to Frank Wayne Ellington Jr. of Henderson, William Casey Norkett of Charlotte, Brittany Nichole Salmon of Raleigh and Courtney S. Tepera of Wake Forest.

Graduating with a master of arts in

Christian studies were Jonathan Joseph Guffey of Rocky Mount, Jonathan Keith Hunt of Raleigh, James Glenn Sanchez of Rocky Mount, Michael Jay Smith of Winterville and Brent Noel Williams of Raleigh.

Philip Neale Davis III of Cary, Thane Robert Kendall of Gastonia, Grace Lee No of Raleigh and John Leonard Rafidi of Raleigh graduated with a master of arts in biblical counseling.

Michael Bradshaw Long of Raleigh and Madai Soca of Wake Forest graduated with a master of arts in Christian school administration.

Jacob Nathaniel Cerone of Holly Springs graduated with a master of divinity with advanced standing.

Graduating with a master of divinity with biblical counseling was Richard Anthony Donato of Wake Forest.

Rion Marc Bell of Atlantic Beach, Alexandra Jean Harper of Timberlake, Jerrod Paul Marshall of Hendersonville, Aaron P. Miller of Raleigh and Deidre M. Richardson of Louisburg graduated

with a master of divinity with Christian apologetics. Jeffery Keller Kautz of Hickory graduated with a master of divinity with Christian ethics.

Graduating with a master of divinity with Christian ministry were David Wayne Anderson of Wake Forest, Brian Dean Boyles of Charlotte, Joel Murdock-Branscomb of Winston-Salem, Mickey A. Codgill of Arden, Thomas Scott Crane of Wake Forest, Timothy DeGroot of Greensboro, Brandon Taylor Hudson of Durham, Derek Craig Kiser of Newton, Seth D. Osborne of Durham, Daniel M. Rothra of Raleigh, John Benjamin Salmon of Rose Hill, John Michael Shelton of Jacksonville, Andrew James Spencer of Wake Forest, Seth Gordy Wachtel of Raleigh, Michael Ethan Welch of Raleigh and

Robert Eugene Wise of Lincolnton.

Coleman J. Curry of Durham graduated with a master of divinity with international church planting.

Graduating with a master of divinity with pastoral ministry was Michael Dwayne Hyde of Statesville.

Jeremy Karl Amick of Mocksville, Andre A. Ickes of Wilmington, Darren C. Lambert of Lenoir and Robert Chadwick Tucker of Hickory earned a doctor of ministry.

Barry Page Drum of Youngsville and Craig Steven Freeman of Asheboro earned a doctor of education.

Earning a doctor of philosophy were Daniel Keith Campbell of Centerville, Dwayne Anthony Milioni of Raleigh and Christopher Lee Thompson of Charlotte.

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# 'Annie' givers, including Cary church, receive thanks

By Tobin Perry

North American Mission Board

PHOENIX (BP) — The North American Mission Board (NAMB) honored more than 160 representatives of small and large churches who were among the top givers to the 2010 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions during a luncheon at the Southern Baptist Convention.

NAMB invited the top givers in each Southern Baptist association, in terms of both total and per capita giving.

"One of the great blessings of being the president of the North American Mission Board this past year is the opportunity to go to different states and see our missionaries," NAMB President Kevin Ezell told the luncheon guests June 14 at the Phoenix Convention Center.

"My eyes have been opened to their impact. You have every reason to be very proud of the missionaries you support," Ezell said.

"They are sacrificially serving. We know they are doing it on the Lord's behalf, but it's an incredible testimony to your faithfulness."

First Baptist Church in Cary, whose pastor, Jay Huddleston, attended the luncheon, demonstrated that faithfulness by surpassing their offering goal by \$20,000.

"We are an Acts 1:8 church," Huddleston said. "We believe in not only reaching the area where God has planted us — but Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth. ... (W)e know that our nation needs the gospel. That's why we put such an emphasis on the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering."

Also among the pastors whose churches were honored by NAMB was a bivocational pastor whose missions roots go back to his own conversion as a young "military kid." Steve Thompson, pastor of Birmingham Baptist Church in Birmingham, Mo., was saved through the ministry of a Foreign Mission Board (now International Mission Board) missionary in the Philippines.

"Missionaries — whether they're international or North American — have

always been special to me," Thompson said. "Although I'm a product of IMB's ministry, that bleeds over into support for missions in general."

The luncheon attendees were introduced to two of NAMB's church planting missionaries in challenging assignments in North America.

The missionary stories seemed to make their mark on many of the pastors in attendance, bringing some to tears.

"I've been to many, many luncheons

and banquets, but this one I think has blessed me more than any," Huddleston said. "This isn't theoretical. This is real life. These are testimonies of lives that have been touched and changed."

Southern Baptists gave more than \$54.3 million to the 2010 Annie Armstrong offering. Ezell announced that Alabama churches had once again given more than any other state to the offering. North Carolina churches gave the second most to the offering.

## Suit against housing allowance dismissed

By Roy Hayhurst

GuideStone Financial Resources

DALLAS (BP) — A lawsuit in federal court challenging the minister's housing allowance has ended, according to a report from GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The challenge to the minister's housing allowance tax exclusion was dismissed June 17, in the Federal District Court for the Eastern District of California in Sacramento.

The case, Freedom From Religion Foundation v. Geithner, was originally filed in 2009.

The case was voluntarily dismissed by the plaintiffs in light of a U.S. Supreme Court decision in 2011 on the issue of standing, a legal concept that only parties who have been directly harmed by a statute can challenge its constitutionality. Because the plaintiffs are not directly impacted by Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code — the section that governs the housing allowance exclusion — they do not have the standing to challenge it.

"This is the most recent challenge to the minister's housing allowance exclusion," said O.S. Hawkins, president of GuideStone Financial Resources. "We remain committed to making known to Congress the importance of the minister's housing allowance and will continue to work with other church pension boards in Washington to keep this important tax benefit for ministers."

The minister's housing allowance is among the most important tax benefits available to ministers. Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code allows "ministers of the gospel" to exclude some or all of their ministerial income — as designated by their church or church-related employer — as a housing allowance from income for federal income tax purposes.

Rules and limits are discussed in a special Q&A at [www.GuideStone.org/housingallowance](http://www.GuideStone.org/housingallowance).

"GuideStone, along with other denominational pension boards, filed friend-of-the-court briefs in another case in 2002 challenging the constitutionality of the housing allowance exclusion, and we continue to work to ensure the housing allowance is maintained for all pastors," Hawkins said. "We are especially aware of how important this benefit is to those pastors at the crossroads, in rural areas where their housing and lower income would make a new tax burden particularly onerous."

While there are no further challenges to the housing allowance exclusion in process, GuideStone remains vigilant, Hawkins said.

"Moving forward, we can expect more challenges, either through other court cases or through the legislative process, to the housing allowance exclusion," he said. "One of the sacred trusts we have at GuideStone is to stand as an advocate for the pastors we serve. It is our privilege to help serve those who serve the Lord in these important matters."

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# Church News

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➤ **Calvary Baptist Church**, Mars Hill, dedicated its new Sawyer-Troutman Fellowship Building May 22. While voted on in 2010, the building has been part of a long-term dream for 20 years. The building is named for former pastors Vernon Troutman and Tom Sawyer. From left: Troutman, Glenn Graves, Bill Snyder and Sawyer. Snyder is a former interim pastor. Graves is the current pastor.

Contributed photo



➤ **Mountain View Baptist Church**, Lowgap, held its Vacation Bible School June 12-17. Pastor and wife, Russell and Billie Parsons, say they have scheduled other churches to share their taxi used to celebrate the Big Apple Adventure all around Surry County. Also, the church had VBS Man Dennis Lowe, right, to help with the worship rallies with the VBS motto: Hear it. Believe It. Connect It.

Contributed photo



➤ On a recent Sunday **Mount Vernon Baptist Church**, Forest City, baptized seven people at the church's 100-year-old outdoor baptistery. The baptistery, which has not been used in more than 50 years, is in the process of being renovated. Madison Breedlove was the first person to be baptized there recently. Others baptized that day were siblings Casandra, Travis and Kayla Wishon, along with Isabel Elmore, Danny Causby, and Alex McFadden, whose grandfather was baptized there many years ago. The children posed for a group picture, above, after the event with their pastor, Scott Courtney. The baptistery is about 1,200 feet from the church and includes a building that is exclusively dedicated to baptisms. For years, it was used by many churches in the community. The total number of people baptized there is unknown, but may possibly number in the thousands. When the current sanctuary was built in 1958, the outdoor baptistery fell into disrepair from lack of use. The church set out in 2011 to renovate the baptistery for future use.

Contributed photo



➤ **Oakmont Baptist Church**, Greenville, held Oakmont Missions Blitz Day May 21 to improve an apartment complex next to the church. The complex, which has 112 units, was purchased by the church in 2007. The church raised \$57,000 to renovate 15 apartments, provide activities for children, host a medical clinic and complete several exterior projects. The church wants to use the complex to expand its ministries to college students as well as develop vocational, educational, medical and spiritual ministries to the community. See photo gallery at [BRnow.org](http://BRnow.org).

Contributed photo



➤ Youth from **First Baptist Church**, Greensboro, participated in a 30-hour famine recently. From left: Lucas Duncan, Caleb Wilson, Austin Worsley and Tommy Vancil. The youth started the famine after breakfast on a Friday and were not allowed to eat. They were only allowed water and juice during those 30 hours. That night they brought cardboard boxes to create a village to sleep. They had fun playing games, but they also enjoyed their time of Bible study and discussion to better understand the problem of hunger that is all around our community and world. The famine ended on Saturday afternoon with a feast of pasta and pizza. Church members gathered Saturday morning to package around 20,000 meals in two hours for Stop Hunger Now. The youth had to unload the trucks, setup the assembly, and then follow precise instructions for packaging the vitamins, dehydrated vegetables, spices, and rice that make up the dry soup meal. The meals were measured and the packages sealed, and the last step was packing the boxes for shipment.



## Opportunity Corner

### Anderson Univ. holds preacher training

The third annual Preaching University will be at Anderson University in Anderson, S.C., July 26-28. Clint Pressley, of Hickory Grove Baptist in Charlotte, and Greg Heisler, of Southeastern Seminary, will take part. Registration: \$95; \$75 (spouses). Contact (864) 328-1809

or [ministry@andersonuniversity.edu](mailto:ministry@andersonuniversity.edu). Visit [www.preachinguniversity.com](http://www.preachinguniversity.com).

### Ridgecrest plans 2012 staff reunion

The Ridgecrest Summer Staff Alumni Association is making plans for a reunion in 2012. The event, slated for July 19-21, 2012, at Ridgecrest Conference Center. Call: (828) 669-8022.

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# Old Town Baptist narrows in on 'unbroken ground'

(Continued from Page 2)

example, dedicated deacon and Sunday School teacher Ray Grantham.

Grantham is a faithful missions supporter. He supported calling a missions pastor instead of an associate pastor because he wanted to see the church focus turn more outward.

He always encourages others to go and serve in missions, but in his 19 years at Old Town, never really thought about going himself. "I was a great missionary spectator," he said. "I was comfortable that I was doing my fair share."

In helping the church prepare for this people group engagement process, the church staff encouraged small groups to read David Platt's *Radical*.

"You shouldn't read it ... but you should,"

Grantham said.

It's a book that asks the hard questions and makes readers seriously evaluate life's priorities.

The book talks about not just raising money and encouraging others to go so we don't have to — which Grantham said hit close to home.

Grantham is excited about Old Town adopting a people group because it's an opportunity for the entire church body to participate in one way or another.

This year Grantham will join the Southeast Asia team for his first ever mission trip.

This year, beginning next month, this lawyer is committing to take time off from the law firm every Friday so he can be involved in missions in the community.

"I'm going to put my stake in the ground in 2011 and just go do it," Grantham said. "We're called to make ourselves available."

(EDITOR'S NOTE — This is the second article in a series following Old Town Baptist's journey in adopting a people group. Visit [imb.org](http://imb.org) to learn more about people groups that need to hear the gospel.)

## Governor vetoes Woman's Right to Know bill

### 2011 General Assembly big for pro-lifers

#### BSC Communications

When the complexion of the North Carolina General Assembly changed after the last election, pro-life Christians around the state expected to see movement on some bills that have been languishing in the legislature for years. Their hopes were not denied. Four key pieces of legislation passed both House and Senate.

However, one of the most important of those bills was vetoed June 27 by Gov. Beverly Perdue. In Perdue's objections and veto message (available at the General Assembly website), she said the Woman's Right to Know bill "is a dangerous intrusion into the confidential relationship that exists between women and their doctors."

One of the bill's sponsors, Ruth Samuelson, tweeted her disappointment (@ruth\_samuelson) by saying that North Carolina is now one of a minority of states which do not require special informed consent for abortion.

Samuelson vowed to find votes to override the veto in next month's

special legislative session. The bill is shy one vote each in the House and the Senate.

The Legislative Research Office estimates this new law could have saved eight babies from abortion every day in North Carolina.

That's nearly 3,000 fewer abortions each year simply because women are given more information and more time to consider alternatives.

Other bills:

• **Choose Life License Plate.** This bill has been a true perennial; sprouting for 10 years in the General Assembly and each year it has been rejected or left languishing in a committee. It was among a long list of specialty plates being considered this year including Stock Car Racing, Guilford Battleground, First in Forestry, and Support our Troops.

But the Choose Life plate was the most contentious. Amendment after amendment attempted to gut the bill or place restrictions on it, but in the end it squeaked through the door just as the legislature was about to adjourn. Why all the angst over a license plate design?

Perhaps it's because a percentage of the income from the plates goes to Pregnancy Resource Centers, which provide abortion alternatives.

• **Unborn Victims of Violence Act/Ethen's Law.** The opposition was intense for another pro-life bill designed to designate an unborn child as a victim



twin fawns.

• **State Funds Cut to Planned Parenthood.** Many news stories have been cycled about the contentious budget battle between Perdue and state lawmakers. Perdue vetoed the budget but legislators quickly retooled, gathered a few more

votes, and over-rode the veto. Lost in the scuffle was the story that this budget successfully removed all state funding for Planned Parenthood, the nation's largest abortion provider. According to Planned Parenthood, that cuts four percent or just over \$434,000 per year from their budget. The budget also prohibits coverage for elective abortions in government health insurance policies, and repeals the state abortion fund.

Sign up for periodic updates on this bill and other important issues of concern to N.C. Baptists on the Christian Life and Public Affairs blog: [clpablog.org](http://clpablog.org).

(EDITOR'S NOTE — Traci DeVette Griggs, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's creative team leader and liaison to Christian Life and Public Affairs Committee, wrote most of this report. Biblical Recorder Assistant Managing Editor Dianna L. Cagle contributed.)

### Baylor accepts Campbell alum into program

Campbell University alumnus Christopher Moore ('01,'05) has been accepted into Baylor University's Baptist College and University Scholars (BCU) program, a partnership of the Baylor Graduate School and the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities (IABCU).

Moore, who received his undergraduate degree and a master of divinity from Campbell, went on to obtain another master's degree in theology from Duke Divinity School. He will pursue a Ph.D. in church history at Baylor.

The Baylor College and University Scholars program was established to strengthen the ties among IABCU member schools by identifying promising undergraduate or graduate scholars.

Moore graduated magna cum laude in 2001 and was named a "Graduate of Distinction" by the Campbell Divinity School in 2005. He also received the Donald B. Keyser Church History Award for the highest average in church history courses as an undergraduate. He was an adjunct instructor of religion at Campbell University and Sampson Community College and the minister of education, children and senior adults at Durham Memorial Baptist Church. Moore and his wife Amie, also a Campbell graduate, have a daughter, Clara Rose, and are expecting another girl later this year.

Amie Moore recently left her position at the *Biblical Recorder* as circulation manager for this move.

### SBC's Committee on Nominations named

PHOENIX (BP) — Seventy Southern Baptists from 35 state Baptist conventions have been named to serve on the 2011-12 SBC Committee on Nominations.

The Committee on Nominations will nominate people to serve on the SBC's boards, commissions and committees.

They will present their report to the 2012 SBC annual meeting in New Or-

leans. The committee, announced during the June 14-15 SBC annual meeting in Phoenix, is made up of two people from each state convention, with at least one layperson.

Jack Fallaw, a layperson at First Baptist Church in Charlotte, and Chad Hood, associate pastor of Bay Leaf Baptist Church in Raleigh, will be the North Carolina representatives.



#### Obituary

**ROBERT WORTH WEST**, 86, of Raleigh died June 19 at his home.

West was a U.S. Marine Corps World War II veteran and retired from Civil Service at Ft. Bragg. After retiring from Civil Service, he became an ordained minister and served local churches for 20 years. West was the pastor of Piney Grove Chapel Baptist Church, Angier, for more than 12 years.

West is survived by his wife, Alicia Stephenson West; daughters, Betty Spence of Lillington and Barbara Starr of Sneads Ferry; four grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandson; brother, Willard West of Sanford; and sister, Amanda Lucille Taylor of Mt. Olive.

Memorials: Friendship Baptist Church, 133 Tranquil Lane, Willow Spring, NC 27592 or to the charity of one's choice.



#### Staff changes

**MATTHEW JOHNSON** has been called by First Baptist Church, Smithton, as pastor. This is Johnson's first pastoral position.



Enfield Baptist Church, Enfield, has called **KERRY PEELER** as pastor. Peeler was pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Whiteville.

**MIKE JONES** has been called by Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Greensboro, as pastor. Jones was a staff member at Calvary Baptist Church, McLeansville.

Hephzibah Baptist Church, Wendell, has called **KEVIN BRAGG** as minister of music. Bragg was worship pastor at First Baptist Church, Holly Springs, Ga.

Send your church news to Dianna Cagle, BR assistant managing editor, at [dianna@biblicalrecorder.org](mailto:dianna@biblicalrecorder.org) or P.O. Box 18808, Raleigh, NC 27619. Direct questions about possible submissions or story ideas to Dianna's email or (919) 847-2127.



# Mark Creech ministers to legislators

By K. Allan Blume  
BR Editor

**“I**f we are to save our great nation, Christians must light the light of evangelization and light the light of cultural engagement.” This was the message of Mark Creech, executive director of the Christian Action League of North Carolina, in an Independence Day service at Mount Vernon Baptist Church in Boone.

Speaking about the spiritual liberty that comes through Christ, Creech encouraged the congregation to take their faith into the schools, the halls of government, the voting booth, the arts, sports, media and science and make Christ known in these areas until He is rightfully Lord of them all.

“Our nation is in peril today because there is a disconnect between the principles of Christianity and the principles of civil government,” Creech said. His passion as director of the Christian Action League (CAL) is to reconnect these principles and encourage the body of Christ to be active in doing the same.

The slogan of CAL is: “The only lasting cure for evil and injustice is Christian Action.”

The organization was formed as a response to the repeal of prohibition. Originally named “The Allied Church League,” it was birthed in 1937 by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) with the intent of forming a statewide interdenominational organization that would address the state’s alcohol policy. In 1958, the



*LEADING — Mark Creech, executive director of the Christian Action League, spends time at the General Assembly keeping Christian values before state leaders.*

organization’s mission was expanded to address other issues of public policy affecting the religious culture of the state. With the change in the charter, the name was changed to the Christian Action League. In addition to the alcohol issue, today CAL addresses issues such as the definition of marriage, gambling, pornography, and abortion, as well as a host of other critical social issues. (See story, page 5.) CAL is still funded in part with a gift of \$10,000 from the BSC annual budget and from gifts from local churches and individual contributors. Conservative evangelical churches from 17 denominations participate in CAL. It is governed by a board of directors and a board of advisors made up of members from across the state.

In addition to educating Christians on

the current issues and motivating them to action, one of the most important aspects of the ministry is Creech’s interaction with the North Carolina General Assembly. When asked to describe his job he said, “My job is to proclaim the gospel to those who make our laws and to bring the Christian worldview to bear on the legislation that they consider.”

As an ordained Southern Baptist minister, Creech pastored churches for 20 years. He sees his current role as a continuation of that ministry. “In many respects, I feel like I’m still pastoring. Some legislators refer to me as their pastor. I am able to sit with them in their offices and talk about the Lord as the opportunity arises.”

He says the call to leadership of the CAL in 1999 came as the result

of an increasing burden for the moral meltdown taking place in our country. He became so burdened that he began addressing social issues from the pulpit. “I found people in the pew were craving that sort of information.”

Today, Creech speaks to churches across the state about the two great mandates from Christ: the call to fulfill the Great Commission and the call to be salt and light in our world. “You can’t effectively evangelize without seeking to have a cultural impact and you can’t have a lasting cultural impact unless you are seeking to evangelize.”

In his almost 12 years of working with the General Assembly, Creech has worked to build good relationships with the legislators. They see him as trustworthy and often call on his expertise and the research of the CAL staff. “Research is a premium with lawmakers. If there is legislation that we feel is inconsistent with our Christian values, or if it is consistent with our values and we want to help get that legislation passed, I am poised to testify on that issue.”

Creech is available to speak to churches or other groups. Contact (919) 787-0606 or [office@christianactionleague.org](mailto:office@christianactionleague.org). Visit [christianactionleague.org](http://christianactionleague.org).



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# LifeWay leader applies transformational church

By Melissa Lilley  
BSC Communications

**M**any churches across the nation are declining or plateaued, and it's not hard to find research indicating as such. Yet, this does not negate the fact that the church is still God's chosen instrument to tell the world about the hope and salvation found in the gospel.

In light of this truth, LifeWay Christian Resources published a book last year based on research about transformational churches; churches truly focused on, as authors Thom Rainer and Ed Stetzer write, "the gospel's ability to change people."

The research points to seven elements that help define a transformational church: missionary mindset, prayerful dependence, relational intentionality, vibrant leadership, worship, community and mission.

David Francis, director of Sunday School & Discipleship at LifeWay, recently met with leaders from across the state to talk about how to apply these transformational church elements to the Sunday School ministry. The weekend conference was held at Apex Baptist Church in Apex.

## Seeking open groups

Sunday School was always intended to work with an open group concept.

In other words, "an open group expects new people every week," Francis said. "If you can get this one idea permeated through a few Sunday School classes, it will mean everything."

An open group makes sure that newcomers feel included from the moment they arrive.

The Sunday School lesson for that week should stand on its own, so that whether or not a person has been to the class or will ever come again, they can still learn from the lesson.

An open Sunday School class also contacts every member every week, thus practicing relational intentionality.

Sunday School classes with the most impact are the ones that create an environment where the classroom is a safe place to invite others.

The truth no one likes to admit is that some classes do not want new people; they are content with the group they have and the focus is more inward than outward.

"We are secretly hoping no one comes," Francis said.

A transformational Sunday School does everything with the expectation that guests will come.

Even seemingly little details make a difference to newcomers, such as the door near guest parking that needs to be fixed and the small classroom preschool space.

Transformational classes, and churches, are those with church members living close to the church and getting involved in the community.

"It's hard to reach the community when you don't live in the community," Francis said.

## Need a balance

Francis reminded participants that Sunday morning Sunday School classes are different from discipleship groups or small groups.

He said small groups are typically thought of as groups meeting during the week, off the church campus.

Although that may be the case, the defining characteristic of a small group is that it primarily seeks biblical community.

Discipleship groups, however, primarily aim for biblical content to be the focus of the group; equipping is the main purpose of the group.

Small groups and discipleship groups are best able to fulfill these intended purposes when they function as closed groups, meaning once the group begins for a certain time period (quarter, semester, etc.) newcomers must wait for the new time period before joining.

Francis said it's up to Sunday School to "strike a balance" between small groups and discipleship groups. Sunday School is not intended to be everything a small group or discipleship group is intended to be — each has its own unique purpose and is most effective when leaders understand what they are trying to accomplish through the group.



Francis

## Missionary mindset

All groups function at one of three levels: a class, a community or a commission. Sunday School classes functioning at the class or community level are more focused on class members and meeting the needs of those members.

Classes at the commission level are the ones really centered on the missionary mindset. Their focus is the Great Commission. While they care about the needs of others, they also focus on lost people and seek opportunities to share the gospel.

Their evangelism strategy is not just being nice to people or being attractional; they are intentional in sharing the gospel.

Francis further explained that at the class level members talk about what they learned, and at the community level members talk about what others did for them. Yet, at the commission level, the mindset is: "What did we do for others?"

## The Three S's

A transformational Sunday School is one that includes scripture, stories and is led by a shepherd.

"The Sunday School's one textbook is the Bible," Francis said. "Curriculum is the plan for teaching the Bible."

Francis encouraged Sunday School teachers and leaders to remember that everyone they meet has a unique story. As leaders, the task is to draw out those stories and then help people connect with one another's stories.

A gift for teaching is certainly important in a transformational Sunday School class; but as Francis pointed out, gifted shepherds may be more important. "A shepherd will tell you who they are teaching and not what they are teaching," he said.

"Shepherds pray for people. Prayer is the ultimate secret weapon. As you pray for people you really get to know people."

Baptist State Convention of North Carolina consultants are available to meet with N.C. Baptist church pastors about the transformational church process. Contact (800) 395-5102, ext. 5649.

# Transformational church helps association move forward

(Continued from Page 1)

questions, capitalizing on strengths and moving forward in their efforts to make disciples.

## What is Transformational Church?

Last year Thom Rainer, president of LifeWay Christian Resources, and Ed Stetzer, president of LifeWay Research and LifeWay's missiologist in residence, co-authored the book *Transformational Church*.

The book is based on LifeWay's research study to discover the characteristics of churches that are truly seeing lives changed by the power of the gospel.

The study included a survey of more than 7,000 pastors and hundreds of on-site interviews. The research pointed to these seven elements that are present when a church is making disciples and seeing life transformation:

- missionary mindset
- prayerful dependence
- relational intentionality
- vibrant leadership
- worship
- community
- mission

Transformational Church is about moving from a scorecard of "bodies, budget and buildings" to one of discipleship and spiritual maturity. Rainer and Stetzer write that, "a Transformational Church is not simply a 'good church' or a church that does good things. Neither is it necessarily a big church that offers excellent programming, preaching, and worship. A Transformational Church focuses on the gospel's ability to change people."

An assessment tool is available to help measure the health of churches and to explore strengths and weaknesses. A DVD discussion guide is also available as a supplemental resource to the book.

## Does it make a difference?

Most churches in Transylvania have experienced success throughout the years.

Yet, people change and communities change, and what worked in the past doesn't always work in the future.

Campbell has seen churches become more aware of the community around them and the people in the community who do not know Jesus as their personal Savior. Sometimes a church doesn't even know who lives around them.

Transformational Church can be a true wake up call for churches; a reminder that if church priorities are not Kingdom priorities, the church may eventually cease to exist.

"Transformational Church is not a plug and play. It goes beyond a process to a lifestyle," Campbell said. "This is how we do life; it's not how we do church."

Transformational Church has proven effective in Transylvania in large part because the change comes from within.

"It helps leaders birth action priorities, and then they gain ownership of them," Campbell said. "I'm not saying this is what you need; they are saying this is what we need."

"Ultimately, I am just the coach and turn the process over to them."

Ownership also comes when church leaders seriously consider results from the assessment and begin to make changes based on the facts and not on how things have been in the past.

Too often churches rely on things done in the past without ever considering who lives in the community today and what approach will be most effective today.

Campbell encourages pastors to walk leaders through the DVD series and to give a copy of the book to every deacon.

He said healthy churches also have much to gain through Transformational Church.

One of the greatest benefits for churches is a discovery retreat. Church leaders meet with a coach, like Campbell, and walk through the assessment results and begin developing action priorities that point toward change.

Although change is coming in Transylvania, it's not instant success. "It's not an overnight turnaround," Campbell said. "Be patient, be in there for the long haul. Every church is different in how fast it will go through the process."

Campbell said change is coming because churches are realizing they have been measuring their own fruitfulness, but never the fruitfulness of the people they disciple. "You know you've made a disciple when the one you are discipling is fruitful," he said.

## Where to start?

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) wants to help churches interested in Transformational Church. Through a partnership with LifeWay, Congregational Services staff members have been trained as Transformational Church consultants and are available to work with North Carolina Baptist churches at no charge to the church. Although churches may choose to work directly with LifeWay, there is a charge for church consultation through LifeWay.

"Our staff is available to walk with you through every step of the process as you begin the journey of becoming a Transformational Church," said Lynn Sasser, executive leader for congregational services. "We are here to help you introduce the process to church leaders, facilitate a discovery retreat, provide accountability and consulting, and help prepare your church members for the journey."

Sasser said he is praying that churches across the state will embrace a new scorecard that focuses on disciple-making and transformed lives.

Visit [www.ncbaptist.org/transformationalchurch.com](http://www.ncbaptist.org/transformationalchurch.com).



# A Hawk in the Holy Land

## Chowan student's personal experience in Israel, Egypt

By Kelly Brown

Chowan University Relations

When I came to Chowan University three years ago as a naïve freshman, unsure what my faith as a Christian really meant, I had no idea of my potential as a rising Christian leader. Since coming to Chowan my faith has increased through missions, campus Bible studies, the Chowan Christian Service Association, and other faith-based activities, including the opportunity to see the Holy Lands of Israel and Egypt in person over the summer. "So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come. The old has gone, the new is here" (2 Cor. 5:16-17).

This verse captures the essence of what Chowan has done for me; it has given me "new eyes." With these eyes, I've seen the world in a whole new light and experienced Christ in ways that I never imagined. Recently, I had the opportunity to participate in the annual travel study trip to Egypt and Israel. This trip has done things for my ministry and personal life that are indescribable. It's a life experience that I will never forget. Reading scripture on the Sea of Galilee, knowing that Jesus traveled on that same sea, just blows my mind. One day as we were walking in Jerusalem to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, classmate and friend Elizabeth Miller said to me, "Kelly, we are standing in the Bible!" It was in that moment I realized the reality of my ministry and Bible. I had read so much about these places, and now we were visiting them — Wow! One of the hard things to do when you aren't physically seeing things is to understand how history and the Bible meet. This trip allowed me the opportunity to understand how both of these worlds come together.

After returning from the trip, I was sharing with my grandfather what I had experienced. As always he was ex-



Contributed photo

**TOURING** — Kelly Brown, third from the right on the back row, and other Chowan University students enjoy the sights, like the impressive Pyramids of Giza in the background, while on their travel abroad trip to Israel and Egypt.

cited to hear my experiences. I don't recall the whole conversation we had, but only what he said as I left his house: "Kelly, I've dreamed of so many things, and it's beautiful to see you fulfill those dreams, even more fulfilling than me doing it myself."

My grandfather saying this brought back home what Chowan President Dr. Chris White had said one night encouraging us to share our experiences and to realize that we were living the dream of so many people. We should not keep this new knowledge hidden, but share it.

While in Israel as I was baptized in the Jordan River, I contemplated what exactly that meant. I began to think about the word "repent" and what it literally means. It means to see the world with a brand new set of eyes. My time in Egypt and Israel through Chowan University has not only allowed me to see the world with "new eyes," but also allowed those I have the opportunity to share my experiences with to see the world with "new eyes." I am very grateful for this chance of a lifetime.

## Reflections from Phoenix

By Milton A. Hollifield Jr.

BSC Executive Director-Treasurer

Although a few weeks have gone by, I find myself still reflecting on the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) meeting. I can't seem to get this one image off my mind: hundreds of messengers flooding the altar and committing to help their church get involved in taking the gospel to unreached and unengaged people groups.



International Mission Board (IMB) president Tom Eliff reported that 3,800 people groups in the world are unengaged and unreached. Among these groups, less than two percent are evangelical Christians and no individual or church is intentionally engaging them with the gospel.

During the convention sermon David Platt, senior pastor of The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Ala., reminded us that the reason we go to these unreached people groups is not out of guilt. We go because we want to see Jesus, our King who is worthy of praise from every people group on this earth, glorified. Do you pray for Jesus to be glorified throughout the ends of the earth?

It was emotionally moving for me to watch as some new IMB missionaries were commissioned for service. Some of these missionaries are well aware they will serve Jesus at great risk, but that does not discourage or dissuade them because of their intense love for Jesus and the compassion they have for the people where God has called them to serve.

The entire SBC meeting truly had a missions focus, and not just on international missions. I am thankful for the work of our North American Mission Board (NAMB), and especially grateful for the lives of the 20 new NAMB missionaries who were commissioned in Phoenix, Ariz.

During the NAMB report I was greatly encouraged and challenged by the testimony of a husband and wife who left their home in South Africa to plant a church in Norwich, Conn., where only two percent of the residents are evangelical Christians. This one church planter has now led 67 people to faith in Jesus Christ. What a testimony to God's power to save, and God's faithfulness to work through those who love Him.

Last, but certainly not least, I remember and appreciate the challenge Frank Page, SBC Executive Committee president, set before the messengers in Phoenix. He said if all Southern Baptist churches would increase Cooperative Program giving by 1 percent, the Cooperative Program would increase by \$100 million. What a challenge! What a wonderful and obtainable opportunity to reach more people with the message of Jesus.

North Carolina Baptists, is striving to help fulfill the Great Commission your greatest desire? Are you praying, giving and going so that others may hear and believe?

"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." Revelation 7:9

## Tar Heel Voices

### NIV resolution raises questions

I write with reference to (the *Biblical Recorder's*) article on the 2011 SBC meeting in Phoenix and specifically the reference to the resolution regarding the NIV (*BR*, June 25: "N.C. Baptists take part in So. Bapt. Convention").

There are basically two kinds of Baptists: the first is that group that grew up in the church and baptism came along at about age 10. The second is that group that contained saved people, but they decided to wait, investigate Baptist teachings, investigate other denominations' teaching, and then accept baptism. I belong to the latter group. One of the things that identifies us as Baptist Christians is the notion that each of us is accountable, responsible, and equal to all other Christians in the eyes of Jesus; simply, it is that you are a priest and so am I. The adoption of this resolution, passed "nearly unanimously," moves not only away from this basic teaching but brings up ticklish questions that are too many to give here, so I give three: (1) I assume that the dear brother who brought this resolution has read the new NIV, all of it. Would he then deny me the right to read it? (2) *BR's* article reports 4,814 registered messengers, so one can assume that at least 4,000 voted for this resolution. Are we to assume then that each has read the entire NIV? (3) The resolution "requests" that managers of LifeWay retail stores not carry the new NIV. If a manager does stock the NIV, will he or she get into trouble?

Hershel C. Johnson  
Retired missionary to Japan

## Theological education makes me debtor, steward

God has blessed me in many ways. One of His most gracious provisions in my life is the theological education I received at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. I am a twice graduate of Southeastern, completing my (master of divinity) in 2002 and my (doctor of ministry) in 2010. As I have reflected of late on this blessing, I was reminded that I am both a debtor and a steward.

First, I am indebted to Southern Baptists because of the Cooperative Program. Because of the giving of faithful Southern Baptist members of Southern Baptist churches, I was able to receive my seminary education at a fraction of the cost of other schools. I would not have been able to receive this education if it had not been for this provision.

Second, I am indebted to the visionary members of Powderly Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala., the



Guest Column

Randy Mann

church my family attended for much of their childhood and early adult lives.

When community changes and membership decline required the church to sell the facility to the Birmingham Baptist Association, the proceeds went into a scholarship fund through the Baptist Foundation of Alabama. These monies were designated to provide scholarship assistance to past church members, or their family members, who would pursue a college or seminary education through one of our (Southern Baptist Convention) schools.

(See Theological Page 9)

## REACT:

### Tar Heel Voices is your forum

- Letters are limited to 300 words and may be edited for style, length and clarity.
- Name may be withheld only for sufficient reason.
- Letters must be signed and include an address and phone number.

- Only one letter from a writer will be published in a 90-day period.

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# This is not a time for silence

**T**his week Americans are celebrating the 235th anniversary of a written statement of freedom we call the Declaration of Independence. Fifty-six courageous, freedom-loving individuals signed this document stating, "And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor." One gets the impression these men were serious.

Most of these men were men of strong faith. Twenty-seven had seminary degrees. That should get our attention. It is comparable to half of the current U.S. Congress being pastors. America has a strong religious heritage. There is no credible argument against that. Even those founders who were not Christians held great respect for Christian values, embraced many of those values and were strongly influenced by the teachings of scripture.

Four years ago Matthew Spalding wrote a series of reports covering the basic principles of America's foundations. In report number 11, titled *Independence Forever: Why America Celebrates the Fourth of July*, he wrote, "The Declaration of Independence and the liberties recognized in it are grounded in a higher law to which all human laws are answer-

## From the Editor



K. Allan Blume

able. This higher law can be understood to derive from reason — the truths of the Declaration are held to be 'self-evident' — but also revelation. There are four references to God in the document ...." Spalding's report underscored the role of God and biblical revelation in the establishment of our founding documents. Human reason alone was inadequate to build a great nation.

John Adams, the second president of the United States said, "(W)e have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion .... Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate for the government of any other."

From the foundation of America, Christians have been the salt that preserved its values and influenced its direction. We have been the light which has guided the nation through many dark nights. Salt and light — this is what Jesus said we are.

*"Before any man can be considered as a member of Civil Society, he must be considered as a subject of the Governor of the Universe."*  
— James Madison, 1785, fourth president of the United States

The contributions of Christians and the principles of the Christian faith have made a significant impact on this great nation. Probably our most abiding gift is the principle of freedom. Freedom is a biblical value.

History repeats the saga of man's bondage and the search for freedom. Part of that search is personal; part is national. But the search never ends until the Christian message is embraced.

Jesus reminds us, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin" (John 8:34). That's all of us. All of us have sinned, so all are enslaved, longing for freedom. Since Jesus never ends his message on a hopeless note, he added, "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). Free indeed! That is the longing of every human heart.

When personal freedom is experienced, it transforms, forbidding silence. We are compelled to speak out when the cries of oppression and bondage are heard. This was the impetus for the American colonists to respond to the voices of oppression. They acted on their convictions.

Today a misguided movement insistently calls for the silence of Christian conviction in every venue. They falsely conclude that freedom of religion must mean freedom from religion. Their goal is to eradicate God from every public place. They continue to work diligently to elimi-

nate any form of religious influence from public life, especially where there is any connection to government.

In reality, those who wish to silence the voices of Christians are calling for the removal of freedom. Ironically they use the voice of freedom to call for its termination. They do not understand the meaning of freedom. They are promoting "license," which is the idea that one is free to do anything they want. True liberty is the freedom to do what we "ought."

In the bondage of sin, we are not free to do what we ought. We are shackled by error, completely incapable of moral good. Sin's grip has saturated every element of the human condition.

The only hope of each human being is to choose God's best and experience His freedom. The only hope for a nation is for more men and women to embrace the truth of scripture through faith in Christ.

This is not a time for silence. If ever the voices of pastors, churches and Christians should be heard is its now.

The conviction of freedom must be lived. If it were yours to sign today, would you "... mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor"? May that question haunt us until we break the silence and take a stand for the biblical value of freedom.

*"Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate for the government of any other."*

— John Adams, 1798, second president of the United States

## Theological education makes me debtor, steward

(Continued from Page 8)

I was a recipient of that scholarship assistance.

Third, I am indebted to the faculty and staff at Southeastern who invested in my life during my time there. I would not begin to single out certain individuals, as so many played integral roles in my theological education and spiritual formation, both inside and outside the classroom. They were not only administrators, educators and professors. They were mentors, encouragers, accountability partners and friends. I am grateful to God for their investment in my life. Further, it was Southern Baptist churches that gave to support the seminary and Southern Baptist trustees that elected the faculty who invested so deeply in me.

Overarching this sense of indebted-

ness to Southern Baptists is a heavy sense of responsibility to steward well the education and experience God has entrusted to me. I am trying first to steward what I have learned in the context of my home, as a husband and father. If a strong theological education does not first help me better minister in the primary ministry context of my home — to my wife and children — that education has failed to accomplish all it should.

I am also trying to be a good steward of this education in the local church I serve. As minister of education and evangelism, I am seeking to develop a culture wherein people are passionate about the glory of God, are growing as faithful followers of Christ, and are taking the message of Christ with them as they go, in our community and to the ends of the earth. Both the theological

foundations I am building upon and the methodological approaches we have implemented are outflows of my training and experience.

Finally, I am seeking to steward my education well by allowing it to have an impact far beyond the context of my local ministry. While my primary responsibility is my local church, I want to allow God to use the education with which He has blessed me for the building of His kingdom around the world. Whether writing book reviews and blog posts, leading short-term international mission teams, or training pastors in foreign countries, I want to use my theological education to bring glory to God, to serve Christ and to be used in the building of His kingdom.

So to Southern Baptists who have faithfully given to the Cooperative Program, thank you for your investment

in me and other students/ministers like me. Continue to give faithfully so future generations of students can be trained and used of God in significant ways for His glory.

To students who are currently pursuing a Bible college or seminary education, take this training seriously and understand your indebtedness to those who have made it possible. To those who have received a theological education and are serving in a local church or denominational context, steward well that which has been entrusted to you — allowing God to use your education and training for His glory and for the building up of His kingdom, in your local context and beyond.

(EDITOR'S NOTE — Mann is minister of education and evangelism at Wake Cross Roads Baptist Church in Raleigh.)

  
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## Lesson for July 17

## Formations

## Lesson for July 24

## That All May Know Your Name

**Focal Passage: 1 Kings 8:22-23, 41-43, 59-60**

Most leaders want to be remembered for at least one outstanding accomplishment. As king, Solomon expanded the empire handed to him by his father, David, and without doubt his greatest achievement was building the Temple.

The text for today describes the dedication of the Temple. The day of dedication was scheduled to take place during the Festival of Booths. The Temple was dedicated during a time when the people would remember their ancestors' time in the desert. The location of the Temple also had great significance because it was built on the threshing floor, the place where, years earlier, David had built an altar to worship God.

The famed Ark of the Covenant was placed in the Temple, which would be its new permanent home.

The feature that set apart the Solomonic Temple from other temples in the ancient world was that there was no idol in it. It contained only the Mercy Seat over the Ark and the Cherubim overshadowing the Mercy Seat. This declared to the world that idols were unnecessary for God to be present. The God of Israel was not localized or bound in any sense.

Years later, the Christian martyr, Stephen, said to an unruly crowd, "... Solomon built God a house. How-

ever, the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says: 'Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. What house will you build for Me?' says the Lord, 'or what is the place of My rest? Has not My hand made all these things?'" (Acts 7:47-50, quoting Isaiah 66:1-2).

Solomon realized that God could not be limited to one particular place (1 Kings 8:27). God cannot be limited or inhibited by human hands or buildings. God is beyond our control.

Solomon's finest moment came as he dedicated the new Temple to the glory of God. At that inspired moment, it was as if Solomon could see into the future when he prayed, "When a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a distant land because of your name — for they shall hear of your great name" (v. 41-42).

The day would come when people from all over would visit this magnificent Temple and be told of God's mighty works. The Temple would become a link between the people and God.

May this story encourage us to look beyond our church buildings to the "foreigners" who are in our midst and share with them the story of God's mighty works, so that they too may know His name!



**DuPre Sanders**  
pastor, Roxboro  
Baptist Church

## Let the Nations Be Glad

**Focal Passage: Psalm 67**

It was a worship service to remember! In 1988, I attended my first convocation service held in Binkley Chapel on the campus of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. I will never forget the experience. The preaching was stirring, the music played by the organ was majestic, but what was truly memorable for me was listening to the most beautiful and heartfelt congregational singing I had ever heard.

The people of God love to sing the praises of God. The Psalms are the hymn book of the church. Psalm 67, we are told, was to be sung to the accompaniment of stringed instruments.

Now we know from 2 Chronicles 29 that the instruments, instituted by David at the direction of God, were used in conjunction with the sacrifices in worship at the Temple.

These sacrifices, of course, preceded the great sacrifice of the Lord Jesus for the sins of His people. As we meditate upon this Psalm, let us keep this fact in mind. All of the blessings that we receive come as a result of the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the first three verses of this Psalm is a prayer of God's people that they

might make known the way of eternal life to the nations of the world. When the eternal kingdom comes, and the King of kings reigns and judges the earth, then all the redeemed shall "be glad and sing for joy" (v. 4). The last three verses proclaim the blessedness and fruitfulness of that day.

Psalm 67 belongs to the tradition of giving thanks to God for the mercy, blessing, and favor He has shown His people. What makes Psalm 67 unique, though, is that the Psalmist has his eyes on something bigger than just his own community.

This is surprising because, normally at a time of abundance, the tendency is to thank God for what He has done for you. In Psalm 67, we have a person who at a time of abundance, even while he thanks God, focuses on God's larger purpose in the world.

We are blessed to be a blessing. This is a theme that runs throughout the Bible.

It goes all the way back to the call of Abram where it says, "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing" (Gen. 12:2). It's at the very heart of God's covenant relationship with His people.

I think back to that heartfelt singing I heard as I attended my first seminary chapel service and ask, "Does my life bear witness to a God worth singing about?"

## Lesson for July 17

## Bible Studies for Life

## Lesson for July 24

## Personal Relationship

**Focal Passages: Galatians 4:1-7; 1 John 1:5-9; 3:1-3**

Luther, my lead tenor, wasn't feeling any connection between his soul and the notes of the spiritual, "Too Late, Sinnuh!" that my chorus was rehearsing for state contest. Impulsively, he stood, faced the group, and exclaimed, "Set yourself free, class; set yourself free!"

While calling for more "soul," Luther overlooked the need to master first the elementary knowledge of the music — notes, pitch, rhythm, and dynamics — before the spiritual could progress from the students' heads to their hearts and eventually resonate in the ears of their listeners.

Today, cries for political, religious, financial, and physical freedom reverberate throughout the world.

Centuries ago, while addressing the Galatian Christians, Paul stressed still another kind of freedom — spiritual freedom from sin, made possible by Christ's death and resurrection.

Since the time Paul last preached in Galatia, many Christians there had allowed the Judaizers to convince them that Christ's death and resurrection were not sufficient to save them from sin; they must renew their practice of circumcision and keep the Mosaic law.

Paul argued that this legalism would not promote spiritual maturity, but

would drive them backward to the ABC's of spiritual infancy. In the childhood of the world, the law served as guardian for people of faith (Heb. 11).

But God intended for grace, not law, to be the way of salvation (Eph. 2:8-9). Paul used the word *stoicheia*, which meant the ABC's of faith, to describe the elementary forces of the world that currently enslaved the Galatians.

Now, in God's time, He had sent His Son to free them from the bondage of the law (Gal. 4:3-5).

Therefore, Paul insisted, "But now, since you know God, or rather have become known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and bankrupt elemental forces? Do you want to be enslaved to them all over again?" (v. 9).

Once my chorus mastered the elementary aspects of the music, and performed the spiritual in contest, receiving A's from all judges, why would I, the following morning, go back to teaching the notes all over again?

Today I remember Luther's appeal as reminiscent of the centuries-old cry of Paul: "Now that you live under grace, don't return to slavery under the law. Set yourselves free, Christians, set yourselves free!"



**Catherine Painter**  
Author, speaker  
from Raleigh

## Personal Responsibility

**Focal Passage: Romans 6:8-18**

During Bible study, Bill took issue as I discussed several ways a person cannot be born again, including baptism and good works.

He argued, "I was reared to believe I will go to heaven because I've been baptized and I keep the Ten Commandments."

He recited several good works in which he engages.

Gently, I said, "Bill, everything you've shared is something you can do without help from God.

"So, what part did God have in your salvation?"

When Bill didn't answer, I suggested he claim Ephesians 2:8-9: "By grace are you saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift — not from works, so that no one can boast."

Bill asked what his responsibility might be.

Should he just wait for salvation to happen to him?

No, but salvation does require action on our part, beginning with the conviction that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). While conviction reveals our need to break with sin, however, conviction doesn't save us.

For example, I'm convicted to get out of bed when my alarm goes off, but struggling with sleep continues until action takes place: my feet touch the floor.

Confession, which is agreeing with God: "Lord, You're right; I'm wrong." also plays a part.

Even then, the sincerest confession cannot save. I have shared Christ with someone who confessed her sins and wept bitterly, but she remained lost because she wouldn't part with them.

Repentance is our turning point — turning from every known thought, word and deed we confess to be wrong.

Then, at our invitation (Rev. 3:20), Jesus enters our hearts and sets us free to live no longer "under law but under grace" (Rom. 6:14).

God has removed our sins from our accounts and placed them on Jesus' account, and Jesus has paid the price for them all on the cross.

Now we no longer pluck the spiritual daisy of doubt: "He saved me; He saved me not!"

Instead, we claim His promise that "The one who comes to Me I will never cast out" (John 6:37).

Strange, isn't it?

While we cannot save ourselves, we can condemn ourselves.

Our choice is all-important — whether we receive or reject Christ as Savior, and eternity will provide us a long time to live with our choice.

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# Father's warnings twice saved family from nuclear bombs

By Norman Jameson  
Associated Baptist Press

NEW BERN — Rieko Suganami Evans remembers the sky glowing strangely red behind a huge cloud and one little airplane flying out of the cloud. It was Aug. 6, 1945, and the Japanese city of Hiroshima had just been vaporized in the world's first use of atomic energy as a weapon.

Rieko had left Hiroshima the day before after a warning call from her father — formerly an attaché from the Japanese Imperial Army to Britain who lost favor with the emperor by continually urging him to surrender.

"Get out now!" he told them.

Grabbing their bags and hurrying to the train station, Rieko's mother and children left behind the cousins they had come to visit and headed for a safer city — Nagasaki.

Two days later her father called again with the same message. They hurried away from Nagasaki the day before it was destroyed on Aug. 9, finally convincing the emperor to surrender and end the war — and rehabilitating her father's honor.

Sixty-six years after those bombs demonstrated the horrific destructive force of nuclear weapons any reference to Hiroshima and Nagasaki still recalls that dramatic event. And their names sound a constant warning for vigilance to all nations to avoid nuclear conflict.

Rieko, 72, is a member of First Baptist Church in New Bern.

Childhood events still burn brightly in her memory, although she was too young to understand the significance of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, or her father's expulsion from the emperor's inner circle.

Her father, Maj. Gen. Ichiro Suganami, was an attaché in London before the war.

He maintained his intelligence connections and knew America was developing a bomb with the capacity to eradicate an entire city in an instant. He urged the emperor to surrender to avoid that fate for Japan.

Instead, the emperor dismissed Suganami. But Evans is certain that friendships her father developed gained him an early warning by which he was able to make the fateful calls to his family.

Suganami failed to convince the emperor to surrender, but he gained appreciation from the Allies who evidently warned him about the pending bomb drop; and he avoided prison when



Rieko Suganami Evans

General Douglas MacArthur came to oversee the occupation of Japan.

Rieko's sister married a MacArthur aide, a Japanese-American.

While MacArthur put the emperor's inner circle and all the highly placed military leaders in prison, he did not imprison Suganami — a distinction that bothered his wife until she died at age 104.

She felt it would have been more honorable and befitting his rank as a major general to have gone to prison.

Still, Suganami lost his high status and made a living basically as a private tutor until he died at age 66.

He already struggled for full inclusion into the inner circles because he was a Catholic Christian and did not see the emperor as a god as did the vast majority of his other subjects.

A graduate of Seijo University in Tokyo, Rieko is an American citizen, who came to Los Angeles under sponsorship of an American couple.

She had court reporter training and was very independent — unusual for a Japanese woman.

Most Japanese women who graduated from university in Japan and came to the United States to seek opportunities after the war returned to Japan to marry.

After five years in Los Angeles, Rieko passed her tests for citizenship. Even today she cheers when a Japanese airplane is shot down in WWII war movies, so confesses she must be "fully American."

She retains a tremendous appreciation for America's helping to rebuild the decimated cities after the war ended.

Her father's advocacy for surrender is well known in Japanese history. But his position was not shared even by his brothers, and their disagreement is

both part of Japanese history and part of discomfiting family lore.

Rieko married Joseph Evans — a "CIA master spy" who specialized during the Cold War in Soviet counterintelligence — at age 46 and moved to New Bern. Although she was young during the Second World War she retains several vivid period memories.

She remembers her father returning home from London with a suitcase full of milk chocolate bars. She also remembers that he shared them with neighbors, which she did not like one bit.

She remembers her mother and sister going into the fields and returning with an armful of potatoes; of the emperor announcing over the radio while they huddled in an underground bunker that Japan was surrendering. It was the first time most Japanese had ever heard his voice.

She remembers walking to church through the meadow with her father. Her mother and one sister never became Christian. Her father's Bible is heavily marked and underlined.

She remembers that photographs of a man and woman together were prohibited during the war; likely to keep relationships from being used to weaken the resolve of a war captive. Her mother kept the children in the house during the anniversaries of the bombs dropping.

She remembers working in California and a customer refusing to be served by "a Japanese" person. She remembers being told so many times that an imperial military officer's wife and children were not to cry, that when her husband of 24 years died it was four months before sobs finally broke through her reserve.

In New Bern she attended the

Catholic Church for many years but had friends at First Baptist. When her husband was ill she started attending First Baptist, where many others soon befriended her, including former International Mission Board missionaries to Japan, Hershel and Elizabeth Johnson.

Rieko was baptized two years ago.

## Tsunami pain

Rieko said the samurai spirit of Japan keeps them from seeking or appreciating outside help, even in times of direst need.

But if Japan can rebuild from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, she is certain they can recover from the twin terrors of earthquake and tsunami that struck hard in March.

She tries to find out through personal connections how cousins and family friends are getting on after the disasters. She gets little feedback.

"They are not talking," Rieko said. "That's another Japanese trait. They don't spill any bad news."

One of Rieko's best classmate's sons is working near the crippled nuclear reactor. While other heroic workers volunteered for almost certainly suicidal turns to disarm the reactors and prevent holocaust, Rieko's classmate says simply about her son, "He's fine."

She has visited the Pearl Harbor Memorial, where she felt "very awkward."

While others may have noticed that she was Japanese, none could have known that her father tried his hardest to convince his emperor to surrender and avoid the nuclear holocaust that still haunts human history.

(EDITOR'S NOTE — Jameson is reporting and coordinating special projects for ABP on an interim basis.)

## Southern announces missions dean

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary announced that Zane Pratt will become dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions and Evangelism in August.

Pratt, a former missionary, oversaw missions work across Central Asia from 2001-11. Pratt will replace former dean Chuck Lawless who became vice president for global theological advance at the International Mission Board.

In addition to his role as dean, Pratt will serve as associate professor of missions.

"I am absolutely thrilled with the appointment of Zane Pratt as dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions and Evangelism," said R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Seminary. "Zane is one of the world's premier missiologists and most effective missionaries. ... His experience leading a missionary movement in one of the world's most challenging regions is invaluable. I have had the opportunity to visit with Zane on the field and to see him at work. I have long admired his vision, his tenacity and his faithfulness. I cannot wait for the students of Southern Seminary to know him as dean, teacher and friend. I am convinced that he will be an epic leader of the Billy Graham School."



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**Associate Director of Missions.** The Piedmont Baptist Association will be accepting resumes for the Associate Director of Missions position until July 31, 2011. This is a part-time (20 hour per week) position focusing on: church revitalization and congregational health. Requirements: pastoral experience, seminary (M. Div. or equivalent), experience and/or training in transitioning plateaued and declining churches. Send resumes to Piedmont Baptist Association, 2009 Sharpe Rd., Greensboro, NC 27406, attention: Dr. Larry Doyle.

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Macedonia Baptist Church, Raleigh, seeks **part-time Youth Minister** for middle and high school students. Duties include but not limited to Sunday School, Wednesday evening discipleship, youth targeted activities, outreach, special programs and retreats. Position should be viewed as an opportunity to grow youth's Christian faith and involve them in broader ministry of the church. Ideal candidate will have four-year college degree, experience and passion for working with students. Send letter of interest, resume, a Statement of Faith and Statement of Call to Ministry to Macedonia Baptist Church. ATTN: Shannon McCollum, Personnel Ministry Team, 7100 Holly Springs Road, Raleigh, NC 27606. For details visit [www.mbcnc.org/youthminister](http://www.mbcnc.org/youthminister) or contact Shannon McCollum at [shannonbmccollum@gmail.com](mailto:shannonbmccollum@gmail.com) or (919) 868-5989.

### Miscellaneous

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# Haiti still needs help

By Melissa Lilley  
BSC Communications

**D**an Phillips hadn't even been home 36 hours before another return trip was on his calendar. A year ago Memorial Day weekend Phillips went on his first mission trip, a medical mission trip to Haiti.

When Phillips stepped off the plane he saw people everywhere living in tents and shelters, and a landscape of dirt and filth. Although at that time Haiti was already five months into recovering from the massive Jan. 12 earthquake, "it was like it happened yesterday," Phillips said.

Nothing, not even serving on the Vietnam evacuation team back in 1975, prepared Phillips for the poverty he saw in the Haitian villages.

Every day for about a week Phillips, who has been in emergency medicine for 20 years and has a medical office in Roxboro, went out with the medical team to different villages. The hospital he had envisioned working in turned out to be clinics set up in tent villages, church buildings with tarps on top, or outdoor amphitheaters.

They went to mountain villages and to what is considered the worst slum in the western hemisphere. The team worked among all the flies and mosquitoes and without examining rooms or labs to get blood counts and X-rays.

Although they cared for the Haitian people as best they could with the resources they did have, Phillips said he had a hard time dealing with the fact that he couldn't do more for the people. Some medical conditions that could have been resolved very easily back home were difficult if not impossible to treat in Haiti.

The team saw patient after patient and treated for medical conditions such

as skin diseases, high blood pressure, parasitic diseases, anemia and cared for many newborn infants. When Phillips went back last December his team treated many cases of malaria, typhoid and cholera.

Volunteers like Phillips began arriving in Haiti immediately after the earthquake hit, with the first team of N.C. Baptist Men volunteers arriving just three days after the disaster. So far, nearly 800 volunteers have helped care for more than 90,000 patients, constructed more than 800 temporary shelters and assisted with building 21 homes.

While volunteers are in Haiti to help meet physical needs, they are also there to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. Since January 2010, North Carolina Baptist volunteers have seen more than 1,000 Haitians pray to receive Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

Phillips is making another trip to Haiti this month and is looking to go again later this fall. Between trips he is helping coordinate supplies for medical teams.

Medicines cannot be easily shipped to Haiti and many of the items teams need cannot be purchased in Haiti. "I've tried to be a resource for the teams going," Phillips said.

Family doctor Cathi Sander is another North Carolina Baptist volunteer committed to helping in Haiti. "I went because I knew God wanted me to go. But that didn't make me feel better. I was scared to death," she said.

This was Sander's first medical mission trip and her first international mission trip. She went to Haiti in early 2010 and again this past March.

Sander was on one of the first volunteer teams to Haiti. She said the 36-48 hour shifts pushed her harder than ever before.

One night, while working the overnight ICU shift without an interpreter,



**HELPING** — Cathi Sander, above right, a doctor and North Carolina Baptist Men volunteer, treats a patient at a hospital in Haiti in February 2010. An earthquake hit the country January 2010. Sander learned there was no medicine to keep from causing pain while treating wounds. At left, Haitian doctors Merline and Vladimir lead North Carolina's medical efforts in Haiti.

medicine to put him to sleep she would have done so. Numbing his arm was all she could do.

She spent two hours with the teenager, and he told her he was sorry for crying.

No matter what sickness a person had, from adults to children, "the only response I got back was gratitude. It felt so unfair because they deserved better than what I had to offer," she said.

Sander said among the Haitian people she could, "see fear in their eyes when we told them we were leaving."

The Haitian people are still in desperate need of help, and N.C. Baptist Men are still sending volunteers. Visit [www.baptistsonmission.org](http://www.baptistsonmission.org).

Sander found herself caring for two very sick patients. One man needed to be on a ventilator, another man suffered with chest pains.

"That was the most intense 12 hours of my life," she said. Sander said her prayer over and over, "wasn't even a full prayer." She simply prayed to God, "I can't do this. This is all You, right?"

Morning came, and God healed, as patients not expected to live did.

Later that same day, Sander had to change the bandages on a 14-year-old teenager. His wounds were so severe that had Sander been able to give him



**PRAY** for those serving in churches and associations across North Carolina as well as in positions in other states and overseas.

These are some North Carolina Baptists on mission this summer.

**Baptist Campus Ministry-funded missionaries:** Lauren Allen, Taylor Bean, Bruce Bentley, Tiffany Brown, Kayla Cooper, Kelsey Daniel, Melanie Ellis, Sarah Ennis, Sabra Hart, Anna Hulsey, Jillian Jones, Megan Keith, Vasyl Khokhla, Grace McDaniel, Katie Medlin, Tina Register, Kurt Rogers, Sarah Sanders, Sydney Stikeleather, Chelsea Taylor, Kristen Womack.

**Youth Corps members:** Morgan Bennett, Nathan Black, Brandon Gastor, Lori Hall, Brian Hayes, Angie Krider, Travis McGuirt, Matt Salley, Robert Tatum