



BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

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Steve Scoggins up for second term as BSC president

By **DIANNA L. CAGLE** | BR Assistant Editor

The current president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) will be nominated for a second term this November.

Michael Smith, director of missions for Carolina Baptist Association, will nominate Steve Scoggins, senior pastor of First Baptist Church (FBC) in Hendersonville for the office during the BSC annual meeting Nov. 11-12 in Greensboro.

“Steve Scoggins has, for years, established a remarkable record in leading churches in Oklahoma, Georgia, Alabama and North Carolina,” said Smith in email comments to the *Biblical Recorder*.

“No matter where he has gone, the churches he has served have grown and become vibrant, healthy congregations. Steve’s basic philosophy of loving the Lord, and loving people has been effective in the way he goes about doing both.” Smith said that same “philosophy of ministry” has catapulted FBC to the top in giving, mission efforts and leadership.

“That same philosophy can be seen in the way Steve has led the state convention this past year as president,” Smith said. “His steadiness, and ability to work with the various people throughout the state, have helped give our convention stability in a very unstable time.”

In comments to the *Biblical Recorder*, Scoggins noted his church’s strong support for the Cooperative Program(CP).



STEVE SCOGGINS

[See Scoggins page 12](#)

Flooding draws volunteers to Charlotte, Conover



Roger Carlson (yellow hat), Neil Brown (blue hat) and Randy Glazier, all volunteers with North Carolina Baptists on Mission (NCBM), pray with a Conover family. While the family’s house was safe from the flood waters, they were only able to access the house by foot. (NCBM photo)

By **DIANNA L. CAGLE** | BR Assistant Editor

Baptists on Mission individuals and groups stay busy with jobs in Charlotte and Conover areas, even as Hurricane Florence activity continues. Storms in early June left flooding in areas of Mecklenburg and Catawba counties. Crews set up at Calvary Baptist Church in Charlotte and Oxford Baptist Church in Conover.

“It’s a ministry, not a work detail,” said Jimmy Lawrence, the North Carolina Baptists on Mission (NCBM)

state disaster recovery coordinator. Mud out and tear out teams were needed most.

“We’ve just had people that’s displaced,” he said.

Lawrence noted that crews worked the week of July 4, including the holiday, to help families return to their homes. He said he and his wife Pam “feel really called to do this kind of work.”

As a former fire chief, Lawrence has seen firsthand what Baptists do when disaster strikes. Lawrence was answering an emergency call in 1998 to a tornado site.

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Norman Geisler, Christian philosopher, dies

By **DIANNA L. CAGLE** | BR Assistant Editor



NORMAN GEISLER

Norman Geisler, 86, co-founder of Southern Evangelical Seminary (SES) in Charlotte, died July 1 in Charlotte.

Geisler announced his retirement from his teaching duties at SES “due to health reasons” at the end of April.

SES was co-founded with Ross Rhoads in 1992; Geisler was named as the school’s first dean.

Rhoads, who died in May 2017, served as SES’ first president.

“Quite simply, Dr. Geisler has been the pre-eminent Christian apologist of the past half-century,” said Richard Land, SES president in a statement released by SES in April. “If they ever construct a Christian apologist’s Mount Rushmore, they would unquestionably start with Dr. Geisler’s visage. He has truly been one of God’s great gifts to His church. Southern Evangelical Seminary

[See Geisler page 5](#)

Keep your head in the game

The Great Commission is a team sport. No single congregation can make disciples of all nations by itself. That is why North Carolina Baptist churches work together to achieve what they cannot alone. Teamwork is essential. We must stay focused, and I believe the *Biblical Recorder* plays a key role.

I was reminded of this recently while I watched my 8-year-old son play flag football. As the team transitioned from offense to defense, he jogged to the side-

lines, grabbed his water bottle and took a knee. As kids that age do, he quickly became distracted. He and other players were chatting among themselves and lost interest in what was happening on the field. After the game, I talked to him about how paying attention and cheering for teammates was part of the game. No matter what position you play, or what your task is at the moment, it is essential that everyone stays engaged and supports one another. The same is true for Baptists in North Carolina and beyond.

Staying up-to-date on the latest developments in local ministries, church planting, international missions, theological education, cultural engagement, church revitalization and other news is a vital part of being a team player in our cooperative effort.

The *Biblical Recorder* is here to help you get the information you need to make strategic ministry decisions. We also tell inspiring stories of how your fellow congregations are winning the lost for Christ. I believe that if we do our job

well, it helps us all stay engaged and on mission together. We offer a variety of options to help you catch the latest news: a website, e-newsletter, social media accounts and our historic print edition. Will you join us in the team effort to make disciples of all nations? **BR**



SETH BROWN
Executive Editor

What's happening with children at the southern border?

By **TRAVIS WUSSOW & JEFF PICKERING** | ERLC

Recent outcry over issues at the United States-Mexico border broke out after reporting from The Associated Press (AP) revealed unconscionable conditions for child migrants in government custody in a facility near El Paso, Texas.

The AP story highlighted concerns from a group of attorneys who interviewed 60 children at the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) site. Their accounts revealed safety and sanitation concerns with the housing conditions and a lack of adequate adult supervision. Here is what you should know about this situation at the border.

Q: Is there a surge in people crossing the southern border?

A: The number of people crossing the southern border in 2019 has increased dramatically, according to CBP data. The number of apprehensions year-to-date at 593,507 is more than double the number of apprehensions of any of the last five years. This current increase is even more significant because the trend was in the opposite direction for decades. Since the peak of 1.6 million apprehensions at the southern border in 2000, 2017 saw the lowest number of apprehensions since 1971.

In addition, the demographics of those crossing the border changed significantly. Over the last 10 years, the trend shifted from primarily single men from Mexico to overwhelmingly family units from Central America. This presents new challenges for processing asylum claims and managing the family units who have been detained. Further, as discussed below, Congress had not provided appropriate levels of funding to meet this crisis. CBP struggled with limited resources as the administration sought to manage this situation and impose new detention policies.

Q: Who is being held in these detention facilities?

A: While a majority of those detained are adult men, the number and treatment of children in these detention centers garnered national attention. When migrants make an asylum claim in the United States, according to U.S. immigration law, they have the right to a court hearing if they pass an initial screening to prove they meet the legal criteria to be granted asylum.

Due to a longstanding backlog in asylum and immigration cases and partisan gridlock on resources for immigration courts, previous administrations released migrants waiting for their court dates, which in some cases can take several years.

Even though 92 percent of migrants seeking asylum did appear in court for their hearings from 2013-2017, according to the Department of Justice, this practice has come under criticism. As a response, the Trump Administration sought to hold asylum seekers in detention facilities in a greater number of circumstances while waiting for their hearings.

Q: Is immigration law different for children?

A: At the center of the government's policies toward child migrants is a 1997 consent decree known as the Flores Settlement Agreement. Flores directs that children who are unaccompanied or who have been removed from their parents during the process of immigrating are to be transferred to a licensed facility within three to five days of apprehension, and a max of 20 days during times of emergency influx, according to the nonprofit Human Rights First. This means, practically, that families cannot be detained together as a unit for longer than 20 days. After that time, children are to be transferred to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services'

(HHS) Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). The Flores Settlement also lays out housing condition standards, including the requirement of "safe and sanitary facilities" among many others, all while the government makes a "prompt and continuous effort toward family reunification and release" for children.

Q: What sparked public and media attention about these facilities?

A: AP reported that children were held in overcrowded and under-supervised facilities for as many as 27 days. The scenes unfolding were of children sleeping on the floor, consoling one another, and some with health issues like the flu and lice. Rep. Michael McCaul (R-Texas), former chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, stated that the current migrant housing conditions are the "worst [he has] ever seen" and Vice President Mike Pence said the conditions

were "totally unacceptable" for these children.

Q: How long have these issues been going on?

A: During the early 2000s, much was done to deal with the high amount of southern border crossings including the Secure Fence Act of 2006 which authorized the construction of nearly 700 miles of physical barriers along the border. According to CPB staffing data reported by Politifact, the number of Border Patrol agents at the southwest border nearly doubled since 2005. While the number of detainees dramatically dipped between 2014 and 2015 when the Obama administration redirected its focus to removing serious offenders and recent border crossers in 2014, the picture over the last few years has changed. In 2019, there is

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On earth as it is in heaven

Revelation 7:9 describes a beautiful picture of heaven in which a multitude of individuals from every nation, tribe, people and language are worshipping around the throne of God.

Have you ever stopped to ponder this picture and wonder what it might be like to have this scene lived out in our churches? Imagine if we could all get a glimpse of what heaven will be like while we are here on earth with people from various nations and languages worshipping together.

Mark Hearn is a pastor whose church reflects this reality. Mark serves as senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Duluth, Ga., in the suburbs of Atlanta. Duluth is one of the most diverse communities in the United States, and during his tenure as pastor, Hearn has led his congregations to embrace and reach the community around them. His church's journey has been featured by major news outlets and chronicled in his book, *Technicolor: Inspiring Your Church to Embrace Multicultural Ministry*.

He and other leaders from Hearn's church will be

with us in August to encourage, inspire and equip pastors and leaders in our state to embrace multicultural ministry. He will be one of the keynote speakers for our first ever "Strengthen the Church" Conference scheduled for Tues., Aug. 13 at Ridgecrest Baptist Church in Durham.



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive
director-treasurer

Joining Hearn will be Walter Strickland, assistant professor of theology at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he also leads the institution's Kingdom Diversity Initiative. Strickland is no stranger to North Carolina Baptists as he has contributed to Baptist life in our state and across the Southern Baptist Convention in a variety of leadership roles. He has recently spoken at some of our statewide events on the subject of culture and contextual awareness in disciple-making.

The two men will also be among the more than 30 breakout session presenters representing state convention staff members, pastors, church leaders and representatives from parachurch organizations from North Carolina and beyond.

IN FOCUS

A WORD FROM OUR LEADER

I hope you will make plans to attend this new and important event. The population of North Carolina is certainly changing. In His sovereignty, God is bringing the nations to our state. We have a tremendous opportunity to reach those He is bringing here with the gospel and help them reach their families and homelands for Christ. And as we reach them, may our churches and congregations reflect on earth as it will be in heaven.

You can learn more and register for the Strengthen the Church Conference at strengthenthechurch.org. **BR**



Hearn to share multicultural ministry advice

BSC Communications

Mark Hearn serves as senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Duluth, Ga., a suburb of Atlanta, that is one of the most diverse communities in the United States. During his tenure as pastor, Hearn has led FBC Duluth to embrace multicultural ministry, a story that has been chronicled by *The Wall Street Journal*, Baptist Press and in the book *Technicolor: Inspiring Your Church to Embrace Multicultural Ministry*.

Hearn will serve as a keynote speaker for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's first-ever "Strengthen the Church Conference" Aug. 13, which is designed to equip and inspire church leaders to embrace and pursue multicultural ministry.

Hearn recently took time to answer some questions about changing communities, First Baptist Duluth's journey and what he plans to share at the conference.

Q: Communities across the country have become and are projected to continue becoming more and more culturally and ethnically diverse. Oftentimes, however, people and pastors can be slow to recognize or acknowledge how their communities are changing around them. What's a first step for churches to recognize these changes and embrace multicultural ministry?

A: Most churches react to change like the frog in the kettle. A frog placed in warm water grows comfortable with its surroundings. So much so, that if the water is heated to boiling point, the frog will be boiled alive rather than jump

to freedom. Our church was a "frog in the kettle."

The Duluth community changed from a community whose population was more than 90 percent Anglo in 1990 to a mosaic community whose population was 41 percent Anglo when I arrived in 2010. In spite of this rapid diversification, ministries at FBC Duluth were pretty much unchanged. Pastors and church leaders need to keep up with what is changing in their communities.

School population data are public records that need to be accessed and analyzed regularly. Contact with city officials to discuss the direction of local government should be on the agenda of every church that desires to have genuine community impact. Statistical projections about community growth are available from most state conventions or discernible from places like citydata.com.

Q: You mentioned how Duluth grew into one of the most diverse cities in America. What similarities might Duluth have with other communities across the country when it comes to changing populations and demographics?

A: Demographers are now projecting that every city in America will be a "majority-minority" by 2050. This means that there will be no majority culture in the city. Duluth became a majority-minority in 2008. Therefore, we were about one generation ahead of the curve. I tell our church leaders, all the time, that we are paving the way as pioneers on a path

that almost every American church will have to travel.

Since we began chronicling our story, I have been contacted to share our triumphs and failures with others who are seeking answers to their new normal. To date I have led seminars or consulted with churches in California, Louisiana, Arkansas, New York, Georgia and now North Carolina. I have heard repeatedly a note of gratitude from pastors and leaders who thought their

situation was unique, and no one was addressing their changing dynamic.

Q: In your book, *Technicolor: Inspiring Your Church to Embrace Multicultural Ministry*, you share your story about how God led you and First Baptist Duluth to reach out and minister to your diverse community. How would you describe that journey?

A: One of the most encouraging verses in the Word of God is Galatians 6:9 (ESV): "And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."

The work of transitioning a church from a mono-ethnic, traditional setting to a vibrant multicultural community of faith is both challenging and exhilarating.

I have pastored FBC Duluth for just over nine years. Looking back, I can divide this tenure into three distinctive three-year time periods. The first three years were about casting vision. This was a period of discovering the demographic nuances of our area and forging a plan for the future.



MARK HEARN

The next three years were about grappling with the vision. While the early period was more about evaluation, this time frame was about education. In the interest of disclosure, this is when the idea of change turns into the reality of change and produces conflict. However, these past three years have seen the fruits of the vision.

In 2017, for the first time in the 130-year history of our church, the majority of our new members were internationally born. That amazing trend has continued and increased every successive year. We now have church members from 46 nations, offer our services each week in three additional languages, and over 30 percent of our leadership (staff, deacons and lay leaders) were born outside the United States. We truly believe the best is yet to come!

Q: We're excited to have you join us for the Strengthen the Church Conference. What do you plan to share with attendees to encourage them to pursue multicultural ministry?

A: We are bringing our entire staff and a couple of lay leaders to the conference. Our plan is to share the path of our journey and to give some "best practices" for all who are interested in learning about next steps.

However, I want to be very clear that our story is less about emulation and more about inspiration. Every church dynamic and demographic is different. There is not a "one-size-fits-all" plan to become a multicultural church. But there are common principles and paths that can begin the beautiful journey to discovering church in *Technicolor*! **BR**

Mark Aderholt pleads guilty in sex assault case

By DIANA CHANDLER | Baptist Press

Former Southern Baptist missionary, minister and state convention worker Mark Aderholt pleaded guilty July 2 in a plea deal related to the sexual assault of a minor two decades ago.

Aderholt, 47, pleaded guilty to assault causing bodily injury, said Sam Jordan, a communications officer with the Tarrant County, Texas, District Attorney's Office. Aderholt surrendered to authorities July 2 to begin serving 30 days in jail and 24 months' probation, and was levied a \$4,000 fine in confessing to the Class A misdemeanor.

Aderholt was originally charged with four counts of sexual assault of a child under 17, a second-degree felony, in crimes that allegedly occurred in 1996 against a 16-year-old Anne Marie Miller. She met Aderholt, she told the court, while searching the America Online website for help organizing a See You at the Pole event during her junior year in high school. Aderholt, then a 25-year-old Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary student, responded to her online search.

Miller agreed to the terms of Aderholt's plea deal, adjudicated in the 297th District Court of Tarrant County. "This morning," Miller wrote on her blog after the

July 2 hearing, "I had the opportunity to do something I never thought I would be able to do, emotionally or logistically: tell Mark Aderholt how the sexual abuse he inflicted on me as a teenager affected me, and that I forgive him. I did both at his hearing today at the Tarrant County Courthouse."

In the victim impact statement she made off the record in court but later posted on her blog, Miller termed her ordeal "over."

"I used to believe that in order for this ordeal to be over, you needed to tell the truth and ask me to forgive you," she told Aderholt. "I know now that's not the case. This is over because I have spoken the truth. It's over because I have forgiven you. Your lies have no more power."

She encouraged Aderholt to repent.

"I pray you begin to feel the pulse of conviction pursuing your heart," she said.

"I pray you begin to immerse yourself in the repentance and forgiveness you have spent your life proclaiming but never fully experiencing.... And I pray you will know the holy and saving power of God's perfect and unconditional love."

Aderholt made no statement in court other than his guilty plea, the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* reported.

Aderholt served as a missionary with the International Mission Board (IMB) from 2000-2008 and later on the staffs of two Arkansas churches. He was arrested in the Miller case in 2018 in South Carolina, where he had served on staff of the South Carolina Baptist Convention.

Former IMB President David Platt apologized to Miller in 2018 and announced two independent investigations of IMB's handling of any past sexual abuse allegations and its policies of zero tolerance for sexual abuse.

In May, current IMB President Paul Chitwood also apologized to any victims of sexual abuse perpetrated by "anyone associated with IMB" and said IMB is "committed to making the changes necessary to better prevent instances of child abuse and sexual harassment (including sexual assault) and to better care for victims while holding perpetrators accountable."

The Southern Baptist Convention addressed the issue of sexual abuse extensively at its 2019 annual meeting June 11-12, passing constitutional and bylaw amendments, conducting panel discussions and releasing new resources to equip churches to combat abuse, submit perpetrators to criminal justice and minister to victims. **BR**

NAAF launches new website, logo, social media

By DIANA CHANDLER | Baptist Press

The National African American Fellowship (NAAF) of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has rebranded with the new website *naaftogether.org*, a new logo and social media presence on several platforms.

NAAF will send a letter in mid-July announcing the change to its membership of about 4,000 African American Southern Baptist pastors, rebranding task force leader Kevin James told Baptist Press (BP) July 2.

"I'm excited about it, and I'm just excited about where God is leading us," James, also NAAF's director for the northern and western regions and pastor of New Creation Bible Fellowship in Tracy, Calif., said in unveiling the changes at the fellowship's June business meeting. "The number one thing that we want to do, and that's why we chose the URL *naaftogether*, is to connect everybody together."

"You know as Southern Baptists we say we can do more together than we can do by ourselves," James said at the meeting held in Birmingham, Ala., in advance of the SBC 2019 annual meeting. "For the fellowship, we're trying to bring everybody together in one place."

The logo, featuring a cross transcending a globe, is designed to spotlight the gospel message, unity, and affiliation with the SBC, leaders said. NAAF utilizes Facebook, YouTube and Periscope, and is developing a presence on Twitter and Instagram.

NAAF rebranded to become more attractive to a social media-savvy audience, create a more navigable and functional website, and to more efficiently share information with fellowship churches, James said.

New resources for pastors and state African American fellowships include PowerPoint decks, NAAF flyers, letterhead, links to NAAF partners within and outside the SBC, and contact information for NAAF officers, regional leaders and state presidents.

Additional resources are planned, NAAF executive director Dennis Mitchell told BP. "We are working on another very exciting initiative that we call NAAF Global Connect," Mitchell said. "It's a database that contains the names of NAAF churches that are engaged in mission projects and partnerships outside of the U.S."

"Having that information in the database will allow pastors and churches who might have an interest in going to Kenya for example, to see who is already working in Kenya, where, the nature of the project, and when those trips typically take place," Mitchell said.

"We see that as an opportunity of connecting churches that are already working abroad," he noted, "to those who might have an interest in doing so."

The new website will allow churches to advertise events, learn of NAAF activities and in some cases, broadcast church and fellowship activities, leaders said. *Naaftogether.org* enables giving through PayPal.



"The new website will be the focal point moving forward to bring all churches together (hence, *naaftogether.org*)," James said.

Marshal Ausberry, SBC first vice president and senior pastor of Antioch Baptist Church in Fairfax Station, Va., is NAAF president.

Formed to address the needs of Southern Baptist African American churches, NAAF states as its mission "to seek and encourage African American participation in every facet of kingdom building

through the Southern Baptist Convention," and envisions an SBC "that fully reveals the unity of the body of Christians that celebrates diversity while carrying out the Great Commission."

The fellowship's churches have a combined membership of 400,000 NAAF said on its website, with congregations ranging in size "from house churches to some of the largest churches in America and ministering to people in rural, urban, suburban and multi-ethnic communities across the country." **BR**

Man charged with 4 church arsons, burglaries, theft

By DIANA CHANDLER | Baptist Press

A Nashville man confessed to setting fires at four area churches, including two Southern Baptist congregations, authorities said June 26.

Crievewood Baptist Church and Priest Lake Community Baptist Church suffered minor damage in the arsons and burglaries committed within an hour of one another June 25 beginning at 11 p.m., the Nashville Fire Department said in a press release. The suspect, 26-year-old Alan Fox, admitted to setting fire to a file cabinet filled with papers a floor underneath the sanctuary at Crievewood Baptist, and starting a fire in a trash can positioned near curtains in the academy gym at Priest Lake Community church, Nashville Police told WKRN-TV.

Priest Lake Community church pastor Harold Frelix praised God that the flames caused only minimal damage.

“You could tell it was intended to catch onto the curtains that we have hanging in the gym,” Frelix told Baptist Press (BP) Thursday. “The fire went up the wall a little bit and it melted a hole in the floor. It was pretty intense, but it didn’t do much damage.... What it actually accomplished was minimal.

“So my congregation said, ‘Well, Satan

walked in the door, but he was unable to do much,’” Frelix said. “That’s the way we’re dealing with it.” Between 300 and 400 people worship at his pastorate on Sundays, Frelix told BP.

Crievewood Baptist pastor Ray Miller also expressed gratitude that damage was not extensive.

“Let’s be grateful that the damage was not as bad as it could have been. Let’s be bold in proclaiming Jesus Christ is Lord in every situation,” Miller said in a June 26 Facebook post to his congregation of about 200 Sunday worshippers. “We do not know the why of this man or the why of our church. What I do know is that when hate screams loud, love sings louder. I believe we will have the opportunity to extend God’s forgiveness to this man one day. Let’s prepare our hearts to do so.”

Fox also reportedly admitted to burglarizing and setting fires at St. Ignatius of Antioch Church, a Catholic congregation, around 1:30 a.m. June 26, and at Crievewood United Methodist Church just before 4 a.m. on June 17.

All four churches are within a 10-mile area in South Nashville, where Fox lived in an apartment complex, but the churches represented denominational and ethnic diversity. Crievewood Baptist

also hosts a Laotian mission, according to Southern Baptist Convention church profile data. Officials have announced no motive for the crimes.

The suspect gained entry to churches by breaking glass doors or windows, police said, and no injuries were reported. Fox reportedly had a gun when local, state and federal officials arrested him at his home. A tip to the Tennessee Fire Marshal’s arson hotline alerted investigators, the Nashville Fire Department said. Fox is jailed on nine felony counts, including four counts of arson of a place of worship, four counts of burglary and one count of theft of property over \$1,000, according to the Davidson County Sheriff’s Office. His bonds total \$225,000, sheriff’s records show.

Surveillance cameras at St. Ignatius church reportedly captured footage of Fox entering the church and stealing televisions and other items before starting a fire. Priest Titus Augustine, who lives next door to the church, said he spotted Fox on church grounds and called police.

“I saw somebody come out through the door bringing stuff,” WKRN quoted Augustine. “It was scary, it was scary yeah. I told them (police) I’m not going out till I see the police car.” **BR**

AROUND THE STATE

MELVIN THOMAS “TOMMY” ROBERTSON, 83, of Elizabethtown, died June 22.

Robertson received an associate degree in religion from Fruitland and a bachelor’s degree from Mars Hill College (now university).

As a pastor, he served Trinity Baptist Church, Hendersonville, N.C., for three years, Jupiter Baptist Church, Weaver, N.C., for five years, and Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Creedmoor, N.C., for 21 years where he retired as pastor emeritus. He also served Mill Creek Baptist Church, Roxboro, for seven years and Tally Ho First Baptist Church, Stem, N.C., for five years. He previously served on the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina’s general board and Fruitland’s board of directors.

He is survived by his wife, Zalean D. Robertson; daughter, Lisa Robertson Elliott of Creedmoor, N.C.; son, David L. Robertson of Raeford, N.C.; sister, Anita R. Suitt of Fayetteville, N.C.; six grandchildren; two great grandchildren; and three step-children.

Memorials: Children’s Home Society of NC, PO Box 338, Thomasville, NC 27361.

Geisler

Continued from page 1

would not exist without Dr. Geisler’s vision and dedicated service over the past 27 years.

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

Geisler, the author of more than 125 books, taught theology, philosophy and apologetics at the college or graduate level for more than a half-century. Geisler also served as a professor at Trinity Evangelical Seminary, Dallas Theological Seminary, Veritas Evangelical Seminary and SES.

He received education at William Tyndale College, the University of Detroit, the University of Detroit Graduate School, Wheaton College, Wheaton Graduate School, Wayne State University Graduate School, Northwestern University and Loyola University.

He served on the faculty or in administration of Wheaton College, Detroit Bible College, Trinity College, Trinity Evangeli-

cal Divinity School, Dallas Theological Seminary, the Liberty Center for Research and Scholarship, and SES.

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

He served numerous churches over the years as well: Northeast Suburban Youth for Christ (Detroit), Dayton Center Church (Silverwood, Mich.), River Grove Bible Church (River Grove, Ill.), Memorial Baptist Church (Warren, Mich.), Alumni of Detroit Bible College, Quest for Truth radio ministry and Southern Evangelical Church (Charlotte).

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

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

Memorials to: Norm Geisler International Ministries (ngim.org); include note “Norm’s Legacy.” Funds will be used to finish a documentary already in progress on Geisler’s life. **BR**

Fanning the Flames PRAYER SUMMIT

SATURDAY, SEPT. 7, 2019 | 9 A.M. - 2 P.M.
TRUETT CONFERENCE CENTER & CAMP | 345 TRUETT CAMP RD. | HAYESVILLE, N.C. 28904



MARVIN GREEN, pastor, retired DOM,
Sandy Run Baptist Association,
Forest City, N.C.



DAVID HORTON, president,
Fruitland Baptist Bible College,
Hendersonville, N.C.



FRED LUNSFORD, pastor,
retired DOM, Truett Baptist Association,
Marble, N.C.



J. CHRIS SCHOFIELD, director,
Office of Prayer, Baptist State Convention,
Cary, N.C.

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(800) 395-5102, ext. 5513 or visit www.praync.org.



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by your gifts through the Cooperative Program and the North Carolina Missions Offering.

Southern Baptists respond to border crisis

By JANE RODGERS | Southern Baptist TEXAN

While state and national officials craft responses to the humanitarian crisis along the Mexico border, Southern Baptist entities – including the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention (SBTC) and the North American Mission Board (NAMB) – are actively engaged in addressing the migrant influx.

“The crisis at our southern border is unlike anything we’ve witnessed before and has put an enormous strain on the existing resources we have in place,” Texas Gov. Greg Abbott said.

Abbott announced June 21 the deployment of 1,000 Texas National Guard troops to assist the Department of Homeland Security and the Customs and Border Patrol. The U.S. Congress passed a \$4.5 billion border relief package June 25, while the U.S. Senate’s bipartisan bill to allocate \$4.59 billion for the crisis advanced out of the Senate Appropriations Committee on a 30-1 vote the preceding week.

Ronnie Floyd, president and CEO of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, emphasized June 27 the border crisis “has the attention of Southern Baptists.”

“I am grateful for churches and ministry groups in New Mexico, Texas and California helping in a variety of ways, such as serving hot meals and non-perishable lunches and providing other ministries of compassion as they are able,” he said in written comments to Baptist Press.

“The hands-on ministry being done through local churches working in partnership with one another and in their associational and state networks is what Southern Baptists are all about.”

Floyd noted that at last year’s SBC annual meeting in Dallas, Southern Baptists “formally called on elected officials, especially those who are members of Southern Baptist churches, to do everything in their power to advocate for a just and equitable immigration system.”

“In the meantime,” Floyd said, “we urge Southern Baptists and other Christ-followers to be the hands and feet of Christ to those in need.”

The border crisis is nothing new to Southern Baptist churches in the Rio Grande Valley, as West Brownsville Baptist Church senior pastor Carlos Navarro explained.

Navarro has been involved in ministry to migrants since his arrival in the Valley a quarter-century ago, when he took over weekly teaching at a Brownsville detention center.

After the closure of that facility in 2006, he began ministering at Southwest Key’s Casa Padre center. More than 1,500 young men and boys voluntarily attend Navarro’s weekly Bible teaching at Casa Padre, and recent weeks have seen the numbers of decisions for Christ soar from 150-200 to 200-250.

The church formed Golan Ministries – its name a reminder of the pastor’s support of Israel – “where my Lord and Savior will one day return,” in April 2018 after the Mexican Consulate in Brownsville contacted Navarro for help with that summer’s migrant crisis.

Since then, Golan has provided water, clothing, food and Spanish Bibles to migrants on both sides of the border.



Pastor Carlos Navarro prays with migrants shuttled by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents to the shelter at West Brownsville Baptist Church, Brownsville, Texas. (Photo courtesy of West Brownsville Baptist Church)

The SBTC donated 1,500 Bibles to that effort.

In late April this year, West Brownsville Baptist began serving as an overflow respite center when the city’s two other emergency shelters, operated by the Catholic Church, reached capacity, and the mayor and city commissioners approached Navarro for help.

Navarro said yes, and West Brownsville members converted Sunday School rooms and other spaces to shelter migrants.

“Today is the 59th day,” Navarro said on June 26. “We have served over 1,600 migrants in two months.” Numbers have ranged from 75-100 per day initially to 35-50 daily now.

“They are sending us the most vulnerable, moms and dads with children, and single moms with children,” Navarro said, noting that migrants from South and Central America, India, Pakistan and Africa have sheltered at the church after clearing U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

While the city of Brownsville has financed efforts at the other respite centers, West Brownsville Baptist has received no city funding and has relied upon donations, including significant grants from the SBTC and NAMB. The Red Cross donated 1,000 toiletry kits, some blankets and 20 cots.

Navarro says that, besides funds for supplies, West Brownsville Baptist needs adult, infant and children’s t-shirts and underwear from sizes small to large, disposable diapers, flip flops or Crocs in all sizes, personal hygiene wipes and disinfecting wipes.

“We go through a bottle and a half of Lysol a day to keep things sanitary,” Navarro said.

He also needs Bibles – preferably the revised Reina-

Valera 1960 Bible with black covers – because West Brownsville is addressing both the spiritual and physical needs of the migrants. Navarro shares the gospel.

Some 900 of the shelter’s 1,600 guests have reportedly professed to trusting Christ as their Savior to date.

Scottie Stice, SBTC disaster relief director, confirmed that a disaster relief (DR) shower and laundry unit would soon be deployed to West Brownsville Baptist to assist the church’s efforts.

In addition to the work of churches like West Brownsville along the border, SBTC DR volunteers have teamed with the Salvation Army in El Paso and Del Rio this spring and summer to serve migrants who have passed through security, been vetted by the border patrol and undergone medical screening before arriving at temporary shelters.

In Del Rio, small SBTC crews have rotated in and out to man a shower/laundry unit. The SBTC’s DR bunkhouse has also been on site, housing Salvation Army and SBTC volunteers. SBTC shower and laundry operations were suspended in late June and will resume after July 4.

Since May 5, disaster relief volunteers have helped prepare and serve from 600 to 1,400 meals per day in El Paso.

The Del Rio and El Paso relief efforts mark a “renewed partnership with the Salvation Army,” Stice said.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Jane Rodgers writes for the Southern Baptist TEXAN, texanonline.net, news journal of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention. Baptist Press contributed to this story.) **BP**

Report: Young adults less LGBT tolerant

By **GRACE THORNTON** | Baptist Press

America's younger generation is becoming less comfortable with LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) individuals, according to a report released June 24.

The Accelerating Acceptance report, conducted by The Harris Poll on behalf of the LGBT advocacy group GLAAD, showed that respondents age 18-34 were much less tolerant of LGBT people than in the prior two years' surveys.

GLAAD first launched the report to gauge "the state of America's hearts and minds when it comes to accepting LGBT people," according to its website.

Released just before the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall riots in New York City that started the LGBT movement, this year's results surprised advocates, as the younger generation has typically been known as more open and progressive. Overall, only 45 percent of non-LGBT respondents in the younger bracket said they were "very" or "somewhat" comfortable around LGBTQ people or with LGBT issues in 2018 – a sharp decline from 53 percent in 2017 and 63 percent in 2016.

In 2018, the biggest drop from the previous year happened among young women – from 64 percent in 2017 to 52 percent in 2018. It had dropped only 1 point – from 65 to 64 percent – the year before.

But across all three years, the decline was especially noticeable among young males, dropping from 62 percent in 2016 to 40 percent in 2017, then 35 percent in 2018. **BR**

Study gives closer look at daily Bible reading

By **AARON EARLS** | LifeWay Christian Resources

Christians say the Bible is God's Word, but even among Protestant churchgoers only a third spend time reading it every day, according to a study released July 2.

The 2019 Discipleship Pathway Assessment study from LifeWay Research, conducted Jan. 14-29, found those who regularly attend Protestant churches are inconsistent in their reading and thinking about scripture.

The study identifies Bible engagement as one of eight signposts that consistently show up in the lives of growing Christians. "This research asked churchgoers about many biblical characteristics to see which actions, beliefs and desires are present in the lives of followers of Christ," said Scott McConnell, executive director of LifeWay Research. "Among them, Bible reading was one of the most predictive of spiritual maturity."

Regular Bible reading

A third of Americans who attend a Protestant church regularly (32 percent) say they read the Bible personally every day. Around a quarter (27 percent) say they read it a few times a week.

Fewer say they only read it once a week (12 percent), a few times a month (11 percent) or once a month (5 percent). Close to 1 in 8 (12 percent) admit they rarely or never read the Bible. A 2016 LifeWay Research study found 1 in 5 Americans said they had read all of the Bible at least once. However, more than half said they have read little or none of it.

In the latest study, churchgoers aged 50 to 64 are more likely to say they read the Bible every day (35 percent) than adults under 50 (30 percent).

Churchgoers in the western U.S. (37 percent) are more likely to be everyday Bible readers than those in the Midwest (31 percent) or South (31 percent).

Hispanics are the ethnic group most likely to say they read scripture every day (40 percent). Those who attend church four times a month or more (34 percent) are more likely to read every day than those who attend less frequently (27 percent). Evangelical Protestants (36 percent) and black Protestants (30 percent) are also more likely than mainline Protestants (20 percent) to say they read scripture every day.

"Jesus' prayer for His followers was that they would be sanctified by the truth of God's Word," McConnell said. "It's not surprising that the lives of those who spend time reading the Bible look more like Christ."

Impact of regular Bible reading

In a 2016 study of churchgoing Protestant parents, LifeWay Research found regular Bible reading as a child was the biggest factor in predicting the spiritual health of young adults.

The latest survey finds Bible reading as an adult has similar far-reaching effects.

LifeWay Research asked churchgoers if they think about biblical truths throughout the day and if they miss time with God if they go several days without reading the Bible. Responses to those questions are closely tied to how regularly churchgoers read the Bible.

When asked if they find themselves thinking about biblical truths throughout the day, 32 percent of Protestant churchgoers strongly agree. In total, nearly 7 in 10 at least somewhat agree (69 percent).

Twelve percent disagree and 20 percent aren't sure.

Women (33 percent) are more likely than men (29 percent) to strongly agree.

Churchgoers 65 and older (27 percent) are the age demographic least likely to strongly agree, while Hispanics (52 percent) are the ethnic group most likely to strongly agree.

Evangelical Protestants (35 percent) and black Protestants (33 percent) are more likely than mainline Protestants (18 percent) to strongly agree.

Among those Protestant churchgoers who say they read the Bible every day, 51 percent say they find themselves thinking about biblical truths during the day.

For those who read the Bible a few times a week, 32 percent say the same. That falls to 20 percent of those who read Scripture once a week to a few times a month and 9 percent of those who read it once a month or less.

"This is a case in which the action of reading the Bible influences one's thoughts," McConnell said. "This mindfulness on God's truths has additional benefits of influencing other actions and speech."

A third of Protestant churchgoers (33 percent) strongly agree they desperately miss the time with God if they go several days without reading the Bible. Nearly 3 in 5 at least somewhat agree (58 percent).

Around 1 in 5 disagree (20 percent) and 22 percent neither agree nor disagree.

Bible engagement is one of eight signposts measured in the Discipleship Pathway Assessment and addressed in LifeWay's Bible Studies for Life curriculum. For more information, visit DiscipleshipPathwayAssessment.com.

For the full story, visit BRnow.org. **BR**

A North Carolina path for affordable ministerial education

By **STEVE SCOGGINS** | Guest Column

Recently was made aware of a change that will enable more students to pursue quality ministerial education in North Carolina. For years, the Charles B. Keese Scholarship has helped pay tuition for North Carolina students when they pursued their master of divinity degree at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Now that same assistance will be offered to students who are in their junior and senior years at the College of Southeastern.

I teach at Fruitland and have written previously about the wonderful experience students have studying for the ministry at Fruitland Baptist Bible College. Our tuition is now \$600 a quarter for 16 hours credit. Added to that are similarly affordable prices for room and board at the college.

Fruitland offers an associate's degree. Because so many of our students go on to both a bachelor's and

master's degrees, they often transfer to the College at Southeastern to finish their studies. They usually find at Southeastern an experience as spiritual and rewarding as they had at Fruitland.

The cost of going to the College at Southeastern is about half of what it would cost a student to go to a private Christian college. The reason for that price difference is that churches like yours and mine support Southeastern through our Cooperative Program gifts. Even though it is more affordable than most Christian colleges, because Fruitland is so inexpensive to attend, our students sometimes experience "sticker shock" when they transfer to Southeastern. By adding the Keese scholarship to the already discounted tuition because of the Cooperative Program, both schools will be within reach to most students without having to take out college loans.

The camaraderie at Fruitland is one of the greatest parts of the Fruitland experience. Although it offers

online classes, I do not believe there is anything that equals the experience of developing the friendships and interacting with professors in person. There is more to preparing for ministry than classroom information. The college at Southeastern will give students a continuation of the experience they had at Fruitland as they finish their bachelor's degrees.

Why don't you consider the North Carolina path for affordable ministerial education – Fruitland for the first two years, the College at Southeastern for the second two years, followed by a master of divinity program at Southeastern Seminary? Fruitland's next quarter begins in October.

The deadline for Keese scholarships for January classes at the College of SEBTS is Oct. 1. Both schools would love to hear from you soon!

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Steve Scoggins is senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Hendersonville and president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.) **BR**

SWBTS responds to sexual abuse lawsuit

By DIANA CHANDLER | Baptist Press

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS) is committed to protecting survivors of abuse and being a safe place for the vulnerable, SWBTS President Adam W. Greenway said in response to a lawsuit filed by a former student who alleges being raped by a fellow student.

“While we cannot address issues in ongoing litigation, it is important that the Southwestern Seminary community knows that we take these matters seriously and are committed to our campus being a safe place for the vulnerable and for survivors of abuse,” Greenway told Baptist Press (BP) June 24. Both Southwestern Seminary and former SWBTS President Paige Patterson are named as defendants.

“As I said in my report at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, I realize in a Genesis 3 world that there may be times when our seminary may fall short of expectations,” Greenway told BP. “In any and every area where this has been the case, I am sorry. It is my resolve for our seminary to do better.”

Greenway responded to a personal

injury lawsuit that alleges “Jane Roe” was forcibly raped at gunpoint on at least three occasions from October 2014 through April 2015 by a fellow student with a criminal history who also was employed as an SWBTS plumber.

Roe alleges neither Patterson nor SWBTS sought to protect her when she reported her abuse.

Instead, the suit claims, Patterson in particular intimidated Roe, disparaged her and told her being raped was “a good thing,” “because the right man would not care if she was a virgin or not.” Also, the lawsuit claims, SWBTS had no system in place to prevent and address the sexual assault of students.

The lawsuit was unsealed June 6 in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas in Sherman.

Roe’s attorney Sheila P. Haddock of San Diego, Calif., told BP the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct constrain all parties involved from commenting on the case.

Her client hopes to avoid further traumatization and to maintain privacy by pursuing the case as “Jane Roe,” Haddock said.

“What I can say is this: Jane Roe is

an extremely courageous young woman who is still struggling to put the pieces of her life together,” Haddock told BP, “to build a future for herself and to find her voice. This case is a step forward for her on this journey.” Roe is seeking a jury trial and monetary damages currently unspecified.

BP was unable to reach Patterson for comment by deadline. Attorney Shelby Sharpe, who has represented Patterson in the past, said Patterson has been out of the country. In previous statements, Patterson has denied accusations related to mishandling reports of abuse.

The SWBTS Board of Trustees fired Patterson in May 2018 “regarding the handling of an allegation of sexual abuse against a student during Dr. Paige Patterson’s presidency at another institution.”

The case was originally filed March 11 under the plaintiff’s official name, but was refiled May 22 after the court granted use of the pseudonym Jane Roe, according to court documents available online.

Summonses to SWBTS and Patterson to inform them of the lawsuit were dated June 18 and allow 21 days from the date of service for replies. **BR**

Carson-Newman elects new leader

Baptist Press

Tennessee Baptist pastor Charles A. Fowler has been elected as the 23rd president of Carson-Newman University (C-N) in Jefferson City, Tenn.

Fowler, the unanimous choice of both the presidential search committee and of the board of trustees on June 7, was introduced as president June 10 during a news conference on the C-N campus. He succeeds Randall O’Brien who retired in 2018 after a decade as C-N president.

Fowler comes to Carson-Newman’s presidency from the Memphis-area Germantown Baptist Church, where he has served as senior pastor since 2010.

He previously served in a number of roles at Union University in Jackson, Tenn., for 15 years, including vice president for enrollment management, vice president for development and professor of Christian ministries and education. He is a graduate of Union University, Mississippi State University and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. **BR**

Border

Continued from page 2

thus far a 300 percent increase in the number of family units apprehended at the southern border, causing the overflow of detention facilities.

Due to the current massive surge in migrants crossing the southern border and making asylum claims, both CBP and ORR are experiencing significant resource shortfalls. The failure of Congress to provide appropriate levels of funding to manage the surge is due in part to the partisan debate between the House, Senate, and administration over related immigration policy issues.

Q: What is the U.S. government doing about the issue?

A: On June 25, the AP followed up with news that most of the children at the Texas facility had been transferred to shelters run by HHS ORR. The story quotes ORR spokeswoman Evelyn Stauffer who said that unaccompanied children, “are waiting too long in CBP facilities that are not designed to care for children. These children should now all be in HHS care as of Tuesday.”

Congress also responded this week with emergency supplemental spending bills aimed at meeting basic needs in these shelters and alleviating the immense pressure to the system under stress at the border. Both chambers authorized around \$4.5 billion but differed in the ways in which and agencies to whom the money would be appropriated.

When the House bill, passed by Democrats with a party-line vote of 230-195, came to the Republican-led Senate, it predictably failed. The Senate then took up its own bill, S. 811, which was developed by a bipartisan group of Senators on the Appropriations Committee.

The Senate version passed overwhelmingly by a vote of 84-8.

Late June 27, the House considered and passed the Senate bill in a bipartisan vote of 305-102, which means that a bill providing new funding is now headed to the president’s desk.

Assuming the legislation is signed into law by the president, this bill would provide additional funding for DHS and HHS for migrant processing facilities and refugee assistance programs. The bill also provides funding for the Department of Justice for immigration judges, the Department of Defense for military assistance, as well as overtime pay for Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents.

Q: How is ERLC engaged in this debate in Washington?

A: On Thursday morning, while Congress was considering these bills, the ERLC, along with the Evangelical Immigration Table, sent a letter to President Trump, Vice President Pence, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader McConnell expressing concern for the inhumane conditions in which children are being held at the southern border. The letter calls for multiple actions and policy changes including supplemental funding, additional personnel trained to care for children, respect for asylum laws and family unity, and restoration of foreign aid to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Russell Moore signed and commented on the letter, “As Christians, Jesus calls us to respond to the cries of those in need around us. The conditions at the border ought to prompt all of us to remember that these migrant children are not a mere problem to be solved.

They bear the image of God, and are endowed by him with dignity and worth. Jesus loves them, and so should we. The problems at the border will require complex solutions and long-term strategies by our government - both Congress and the administration coming together. In the meantime, we should do everything we can do to help alleviate the suffering of those who are attempting to flee violence in their home countries.”

Q: How can Christians help?

A: As Christians, we affirm that all people are made in the image of God and endowed with immeasurable dignity and worthy of respect and love. Because the Bible is clear that we are to love our immigrant neighbors, we must seek ways to alleviate unjust suffering for migrants wherever we can. Southern Baptists are on the frontlines serving immigrants through the Baptist Convention of New Mexico and the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention as just two of many examples.

Now is a great time to join them and serve immigrants in your community. Several organizations like World Relief and World Vision, as well as many local organizations like these identified by the *Texas Tribune* are serving at the southern border, providing legal aid and essential supplies. Christians can join in their efforts by offering their talents, partnership, and prayers.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Travis Wussow serves as the Vice President for Public Policy and General Counsel. Jeff Pickering serves as associate policy communications director in the Washington, D.C. office. ERLC policy interns Alyssa Koelemay and Nick Raineri contributed to this article. This article was originally published at ERLC.com. Used by permission.) **BR**

Scripture plaques serve as visual reminder of Gardner-Webb's calling

Gardner-Webb Communications

The main entrances to every building on the Gardner-Webb University (GWU) campus recently received plaques that serve as visual reminders of the university's calling. An initiative of the GWU President's Council on Christian Mission and Identity, the signs are engraved with Mark 12:29-31 – *"Jesus answered him, 'The first of all the commandments is: Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these'"* (New Kings James Version).

According to Tracy Jessup, vice president for Christian Life and Service, senior minister to the university and a member of the President's Council, these verses were chosen because of the example set by GWU supporters, Robert and Carolyn Tucker.

In 2010, the Tuckers, owners of Shoe Show, Inc. in Kannapolis, N.C., donated \$5.5 million for the new student center.

"At the request of the Tucker Family, such a plaque has adorned the entrance of the Tucker Student Center since its dedication," Jessup related.

"The Tuckers have given a similar plaque to all their children and grandchildren to place at the entrance of their homes. These words express the greatest commandments according to Jesus – love of God and love of neighbor. Furthermore, these words are central to the motto of Gardner-Webb University – 'For God and Humanity.'"

Recently, the family gave a \$4 million scholarship endowment – also based on Mark 12:29-31 – to establish the "Tucker Heart, Soul, Mind, and Strength Scholarship."

More than 70 plaques were installed on campus. Every building has at least one plaque, with some buildings getting two or three – based on main entrances used by staff/faculty, students, and guests.

In addition to the new signs, the council has enhanced the presentation of the University's Christian mission and identity on the GWU website (gardner-webb.edu). **BR**

OPPORTUNITY CORNER



The 2019 Church Weekday Education Conference, presented by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, will be held Aug. 9-10 at the Embassy Suites in Winston-Salem. The conference is designed to encourage, affirm and refocus weekday directors and staff on the unique opportunities they have to disciple others while providing quality childcare.

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina is offering a choice of two sites for this year's Annual Literacy Missions Conference.

The first will be Aug. 24 at Providence Baptist Church, Raleigh; the second will be held Sept. 21 at Hickory Grove Baptist Church, Charlotte, from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. at each site.

The 2019 Conference will provide quality instruction with sessions to

This two-day event provides training for directors on Friday and all staff on Saturday. Conference hours are approved by the N.C. Division of Child Development. Prices begin at \$75 and vary according to staff position and date of registration. Go to ncbaptist.org/church-weekday-education-conference for more information on registration, pricing and accommodations.

include Bible teaching for children, youth and ESL, how to relate to Muslims and Buddhist, and the latest in teaching citizenship and using technology in our classrooms.

Please register at ncbaptist.org/literacymissionsconf. Registration is \$25, which covers the conference and your lunch.



SEMINARY CHANGES

Midwestern Seminary

ERIK ODEGARD has been named as director of Fusion at Midwestern Seminary's Spurgeon College. Fusion involves summer-long deployments of a group of students (cohort) through a partnership with North American Mission Board and International Mission Board personnel.

New Orleans Seminary

LARRY LYON has been named vice president of enrollment. He previously was the director of enrollment at Southeastern Seminary. He and his wife Stephanie have three daughters, Anna Kate, 14, Abby, 11, and Maggie, 5.

Southern Seminary

MATTHEW HASTE has been named associate professor of biblical spirituality and director of professional doctoral studies. Haste was associate professor of ministry studies at Columbia International University's seminary and school of ministry since 2015. Haste and his wife Cheyenne have three children.

Theologian and worship pastor **MATTHEW WESTERHOLM** is joining Southern as associate professor of church music and worship. Westerholm also will serve as executive director of Southern's Institute for Biblical Worship and provide vision for the seminary's musical groups. He and his wife Lisa have three sons.

J. KEITH MCKINLEY, a missionary with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board (IMB) for 20 years, has been named as associate professor of Christian missions to Southern Seminary's Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Ministry.

McKinley and his wife Gail have four children.

Southeastern Seminary

Southeastern Seminary has named **SCOTT PACE** as dean of The College at Southeastern, following the election of former dean Jamie Dew as president of New Orleans Seminary. Pace was installed in the Johnny Hunt Chair of Biblical Preaching in August 2018 and elected by trustees to the faculty as associate professor of pastoral ministry and preaching in April 2019.

Pace and his wife Dana have four children, Gracelyn, Tyler, Tessa and Cassie.

RONJOUR LOCKE succeeds Pace as director of the Center for Preaching and Pastoral Leadership.

Locke has served as the preaching center's associate director and an instructor of preaching and urban ministry since coming to Southeastern in January 2018.

Locke and his wife Anne have four children, Joshua, Noah, Mikaiya and Naomi.

ROSS INMAN has been named associate professor of philosophy at Southeastern Seminary.

Inman previously served at Southwestern Seminary as assistant professor of philosophy, chair of the philosophy department and coordinator of the school of theology's philosophy and ethics division at the Fort Worth, Texas, campus.

He and his wife Suzanne have three children.

Southwestern Seminary

JOSEPH R. CRIDER and **CHUCK T. LEWIS** have been named as professors of church music and worship, with Crider also serving as interim dean following **LEO DAY**'s transition to lead the new Southwestern Center for the Arts.

JOHN D. MASSEY, meanwhile, has been named in-

terim dean of the Fish School and **BRENT RAY** has been named as director of its World Mission Center, both succeeding **KEITH EITEL**, who assumed both positions in 2005 and has now retired.

At Southern, Crider was the Ernest and Mildred Hogan Professor of Church Music and Worship and executive director of the Institute for Biblical Worship; Lewis was associate professor of church music and worship and director of the Doxology vocal ensemble.

Massey, a former International Mission Board missionary, joined Southwestern's faculty in 2012 as associate professor of missions.

Ray came to Southwestern in 2012 as director of Global Theological Innovation (GTI) and associate director of the World Missions Center, a role that saw him foster relationships with overseas seminaries. As GTI is absorbed by the World Missions Center, Ray will now oversee all missions mobilization efforts of Southwestern Seminary.

Day, who came to the seminary in 2013, has been dean of the School of Church Music and Worship. Day has overseen the seminary's annual Gala, the annual Keyboards and Carols at Christmas concert and the annual Summer Music Camp, which began which under his leadership to enrich high school students' musical talents through an on-campus, week-long workshop.

The new center, to be housed in the School of Church Music and Worship, will host various concert series, camps and workshops as well as develop art and music curriculum to strengthen and revitalize youth and children's choirs in local churches. As director of the center, Day will also continue as professor of voice at the seminary.

July 21

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

July 28

Pursue Godliness

Focal passage: 2 Chronicles 14:1-8

I would likely never make the decision to run in a race. When I was young, my dad said they should track my speed with a calendar.

However, if I made the commitment to run a race, I recognize some significant things would have to change. I would have to exercise to get in shape. I would have to change my diet – no more Nutty Buddy® wafer bars.

I would have to take off my blue jeans and flip flops and put on running shorts and shoes.

King Asa recognized that committing to truly follow after God meant surrendering completely – being “all in.”

There was no room for tolerating idolatry or other sin.

Therefore, he tore down the high places and altars that opened the door to false worship.

Truly honoring God required intentional pursuit and action.

Such is the same for us today. While we can only receive salvation and follow God by grace through faith in Christ, we are called to work out our salva-

tion – also by grace through faith – with fear and trembling. Part of the pursuit of godliness is putting off every kind of hindrance that gets in the way of loving God completely and following God obediently.

Thus the writer of Hebrews admonishes his readers, “*let us lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily ensnares us. Let us run with endurance the race that lies before us, keeping our eyes on Jesus, the source and perfecter of our faith*” (Hebrews 12:1-2).

Are you walking by faith and pursuing godliness? If so, what things are you having to tear down? Is social media or television hindering your pursuit of godliness? Will you tear them down? Are you demonstrating a singular worship of God by how you spend your time and money? A life of godliness doesn't happen accidentally. We must pursue it, even as the Holy Spirit does His work in us, making us look more like Jesus. Will you commit to doing whatever it takes to follow God and to pursue godliness for His glory?



RANDY MANN
Pastor, Central Baptist
Church, Henderson

Focal passage: 2 Chronicles 14:9-15

In a previous lesson I mentioned doing a preceptorship as a part of my nursing training. During that time, I would work with a practicing nurse, watching what he did to take care of patients. He would gradually hand over more and more responsibility to me until, finally, I was ready to take care of patients on my own. I could always call on him when I needed him for something, but the expectation was for me to do things on my own.

Many people treat their relationship with God like that.

They think that spiritual maturity is growing to the point of doing more and more on their own.

In reality, spiritual maturity is not becoming less and less dependent on God, but rather growing more and more in our dependence on Him.

We must daily train ourselves to depend on, trust in and walk with Him. We must never see Him simply as our “safety

valve” to call on when we get ourselves in over our head. Through consistent prayer and submission, we must keep ourselves in a posture of dependence. That way, when a major crisis arises, we will run the well-trod path to our Father we depend on, rather than responding in our flesh and our own strength, trying to work it out on our own until we become totally desperate.

King Asa was faced with an impossible situation, humanly speaking, facing an army twice his size.

Rather than slinking into hopelessness or trying to walk in self-reliance, he responded by taking his situation to God in prayer. He acknowledged that God is the one to whom every person should turn – those with great strength and those with none. He helps “*the mighty and those without strength.*”

He calls each to depend on Him.

Have you established the daily pattern of depending on God as you submit to Him and seek Him in prayer? Have you beaten down that daily path such that when difficulty comes, you will do what you've trained your heart to do, call out to the one on whom your life depends?

July 21

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

July 28

Focused

Focal Passage: 2 Timothy 2:1-13

Paul begins chapter 2 with his re-statement of our disciple-making mission, “*You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*”

In order to lead others to follow Jesus, we need strength and grace. We also need focus. Paul uses six metaphors in chapter 2 to illustrate the focus and diligence we need to teach others to live and share the gospel.

The first three metaphors are found in verses 1-7.

We need the dedication of soldiers, the integrity of athletes and the hard work of farmers.

As we reflect the gospel personally and teach the gospel to others, we must engage in this task well.

If soldiers can be dedicated to their commanding officer to the point of suffering and death, then followers of Jesus

must be equally dedicated to their Lord and Savior.

If athletes can compete according to the rules in order to win, then followers of Jesus must faithfully train themselves and others in the gospel of Jesus Christ. If farmers can labor early, long and late in order to have fruitful crops, then followers of Jesus must labor in the strength and grace of Christ and expend themselves for the gospel.

Each of these metaphors implies focus.

Soldiers, athletes and farmers are judged based on short moments of glory: the battle for the soldier, the event for the athlete and the crops for the farmers.

But the quality of those fleeting moments is forged by their focus during the drudgery of suffering, preparation and hard work.

May we be so focused on the gospel.



CHRIS HEFNER
Pastor,
Wilkesboro Baptist
Church

Focal Passage: 2 Timothy 2:14-26

As Paul continues in chapter 2, he uses the language of reminder. It amazes me that much of the Christian experience is not novel, rather it is repetitive. We don't graduate from the gospel. The gospel is our entry into the Christian faith, but it is also the conduit toward spiritual maturity.

Paul uses three more metaphors to conclude the chapter. These metaphors emphasize our responsibility to apply the gospel to our daily lives.

We need to embrace the diligence of a faithful student who correctly interprets God's Word. We need to embrace

the holiness of an honorable vessel who shuns youthful sins.

We need to embrace the gentleness of a servant who teaches the truth while avoiding unnecessary quarrels.

Diligence is the key quality in these metaphors.

Diligent

Paul charged Timothy to teach the gospel. The student, the vessel and the servant must diligently pursue gospel understanding and gospel clarity. The challenge of any church, any pastor and any teacher within the church is clarity about the gospel.

Today's church faces the prospects of gospel distortions – prosperity gospel theology, moralistic preaching, manipulated responses and easy believism. Today's church also faces the prospects of theological divisions on tertiary issues. It is the task of the pastor and church leaders to remain diligently focused on the primary goal of the church – communicating the gospel of Jesus and training others in the gospel.

Paul highlights one of the primary pastoral tasks: discernment in gospel teaching.

Paul challenged Timothy to recognize distortions, divisions and distractions that will hamper the church in its mission. Diligence in study, holiness and gentleness is the means by which followers of Jesus will be able to discern these issues and remain faithful to the gospel.

Soldiers ... are judged based on short moments of glory.

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Goodwill Community Foundation donates \$200,000 to Baptists on Mission

Crystal Horton, right, Baptists on Mission health screening coordinator, along with Richard Brunson, second from right, executive director-treasurer of Baptists on Mission, accept a \$200,000 donation from Goodwill Community Foundation (GCF). Dennis McLain, left, GCF president and CEO, and Stephenie McLean, second from left, GCF director of regional community development, presented the check June 6. Baptists on Mission plans to use the money to replace one of its mobile health screening units. (BSC photo by K Brown)

Submissions

The *Biblical Recorder* is pleased to publish staff changes, church news and events with a statewide interest. Please send information immediately following an event, or for opportunity corner, send at least two months in advance. Include cost and contact information in your email or correspondence. Send to dianna@BRnow.org or *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512. Call (919) 847-2127.

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Denominational

South Mountain Baptist Association, Vale, NC, is seeking a **part-time Associational Missionary**. The association's office is on the southwestern edge of Catawba County. There are 28 churches in our association that span Catawba, Lincoln, Cleveland, Burke counties. Submit résumé to South Mountain Baptist Association, 3639 NC 18 Hwy., Vale, NC 28168, or smba@ncwireless.net. Résumé deadline: July 31.

Pastor

Clement Missionary Baptist Church, Autryville, NC, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. We are a conservative, mission minded, rural church with an average attendance of 105. Applicant should be licensed and ordained by a Southern Baptist church. Mail résumés to Jennifer Matthews, PSC 60 Waterwheel Ln., Godwin, NC 28344. or email to Clementpastorsearch@gmail.com.

Amity Baptist Church, Denver, NC, is prayerfully seeking a **full-time pastor**. We are affiliated with and support the SBC, BSCNC and South Fork Association. We adhere to the 2000 BF&M. Minimum of five years pastoral experience and Bible college and/or seminary training. Send résumés to: Amity Baptist Church, c/o Pastor Search Committee, 881 Amity Church Road, Denver NC 28037, or AmityPastorSearch@gmail.com.

Stallings Memorial Baptist Church, Salisbury, NC, is seeking a **full-time Pastor**. Being a mission-minded Southern Baptist church, we are searching for the man God desires to lead His church into the future with an emphasis on evangelism and missions. Applicants should be SBC ordained with a seminary education and affirm the 2000 Baptist Faith & Message. Send résumés to: smbcpastorsearchcommittee@gmail.com or PO Box 438, Rockwell, NC 28138.

Bridge42, an elder-led church in Morganton, NC, is seeking a **bivocational pastor** to lead our elders and body in our gospel mission. Visit our website – www.bridge42.org/pastoral-search – for an expanded view of our values and people. Master's degree in theology/ministry or related ministerial field with at least 7 years of pastoral experience preferred. Minimum 4 year undergraduate degree in related ministerial field with at least 5 years of experience required. Send résumé to Bridge42searchteam@gmail.com.

Church Staff

Mauldin First Baptist Church, Mauldin, SC, is seeking to hire a **Full-Time Student Pastor**. Primary duties include overseeing the ministries of students and their families from 6th grade through college. Applicants must possess a bachelor's degree and 3 years of experience is preferred. Please submit résumés and/or questions to wleonard@fbcmauldin.org.

Central Baptist Church in North Little Rock, Arkansas, is accepting résumés for the position of **full-time Student Minister**. The deadline to submit a résumé is August 8. Please email your résumé to cbstudentresume@gmail.com.

First Baptist Church, Wadesboro, NC, is seeking a **part-time Interim Minister of Music** to oversee a comprehensive music program encompassing all areas of music, adult choir, youth & children's choirs. Organ and experience in a church setting preferred. Candidates should be willing to embrace a blended style of worship, including traditional, contemporary and praise music. Duties consist of all worship services, special services and any church related events where music is needed. Includes assisting the pastor in planning worship services, plan, organize and promote camps, programs, etc. for various choirs. Salary & hours negotiable. Send résumé with cover letter to: Personnel/FBC, PO Box 423, Wadesboro, NC 28170, or email to: officefbc@windstream.net.

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

Minister of Music. This position is responsible for providing leadership to a comprehensive music ministry including choirs, orchestra, vocal groups, audio & video teams, etc. The preferred candidate would have experience directing a blended style (traditional & contemporary) of congregational worship. This position is part of the pastoral team of the church. Oxford Baptist Church adheres to the 2000 BF&M. Please email résumés to pastorjoel@oxfordbaptist.com or mail to Oxford Baptist Church, Attn: Senior Pastor, 5965 Springs Road, Conover, NC 28613. All résumés should include references, statement of faith, salvation testimony, and a DVD or URL of sample of candidate leading a worship service.

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Scoggins

Continued
from page 1

“Our church has been either first or second in gifts to the CP in North Carolina for over 20 years,” Scoggins said.

“The reality of what we are doing matches the principles I have always supported.

“I have been committed to the principle behind the CP, allowing a balanced way to support all types of great ministries, from reaching the nations, to training ministers, to caring for orphans here at home.

“This year I have gotten to know our state missionaries and to see their work first hand. All of my surprises have been ‘pleasant surprises.’”

With the theme of “God’s Great Work” for this year’s BSC annual meeting, Scoggins wants “to show N.C. that we are doing the work of both the Great Commission and the Great Commandment through the ministries being supported by the Cooperative Program.”

He said serving a second term would allow him to continue to be a cheerleader for the good work in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and in N.C.

“After serving over 40 years as an SBC pastor, I want to help the next generation be encouraged and effective in their serving the Lord,” Scoggins said.

Micheal Pardue, current BSC first vice president, and Matt Ledbetter, current BSC second vice president, will also be re-nominated.

Pardue is pastor of First Baptist Icard in Connelly Springs, and Ledbetter recently became pastor of Creeksville Baptist Church in Conway. **BR**

Flooding

Continued
from page 1

NCBM was there with chainsaw teams clearing property and helping the local people.

“I had been going to a Baptist church but didn’t really know anything about Baptist disaster relief,” he said. “The rest is history.”

As members of First Baptist Church in Mayodan, the couple serves together: he coordinates sites and Pam helps with administration. “It’s a lifelong commitment for us,” he said.

Lawrence said one guy had lived in his home since 1971 and flooding had only ever gotten to the second step leading into his house. But “this time, he had 43 inches of water in his house.”

Lawrence said many people had to be evacuated in the middle of the night and early morning hours.

Hurricane Florence recovery continues

While work winds down in the western part of the state, volunteers are expected for at least the next three years at rebuild sites related to Hurricane Florence devastation.

“Hurricane Florence was the worst natural disaster to ever hit our state,” said Richard Brunson, NCBM executive director-treasurer. “Over 80,000 homes were damaged or destroyed by Florence.”

NCBM hosts four large rebuild sites and two smaller sites where volunteers can help people recover from the damage.

Brunson said it is helpful to have skilled workers on volunteer teams, but volunteers are not required to have train-



Teams are needed to clear out houses and help rebuild for victims of Hurricane Florence. The North Carolina Baptists on Mission have several sites where volunteers can serve. (NCBM photo)

ing. “We have experienced leaders at each site who help coordinate the work of the volunteers,” he said.

NCBM uses one of its mission camps – Red Springs – as a location for volunteers, along with three rebuild centers. Brunson said it is likely at least one of these three rebuild centers will be turned into a mission camp in the future.

Because of the generosity of North Carolina Baptists through the North Carolina Missions Offering and other gifts, Brunson said NCBM owns sites in Lumberton, Rose Hill and New Bern. The three rebuild hubs combined house and feed up to 500 volunteers at a time. NCBM also is partnering with churches in Wilmington to house up to another 200 volunteers.

“There are many stories that could be told of how God is using volunteers to share His love with hurting people,” he said.

A site coordinator in Wilmington called a homeowner after Hurricane Florence because he had enough workers to help at another site. “The homeowner told the site coordinator that he was planning on taking his own life that day because he was in such despair,” Brunson said. Those students offered hope to the homeowner through their work tearing out damaged floors and walls. Because of the volunteers, that homeowner and many others have hope and know that God and others care about them.”

Visit baptistsonmission.org for more information. **BR**

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