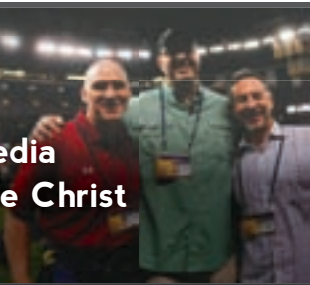


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winner uses media
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BR BIBLICAL RECORDEER

JULY 20, 2013 • News Journal of North Carolina Baptists • VOLUME 179 NO. 15 • **BRnow.org**

PASTOR FROM SOUTH ASIA reaches out to North Carolina

By MELISSA LILLEY | BSC Communications

Matek,* left, prays with Darryl Love, senior pastor of Crossover Community Church in High Point. A native of Pakistan, Matek is here in North Carolina planting a church. (BSC photo)

Matek* ministered and shared the gospel in Pakistan for many years before the country he loved so dearly forced him out.

Raised in a Christian home in a country that is about 96 percent Muslim, Matek came to faith in Jesus Christ as a teenager and followed in his father's footsteps of full-time ministry. From open-air crusades to festivals and seminars, they shared the gospel and saw people come to faith in Christ.

"In our country it is really dangerous," Matek said.

See Pastor page 5

Budget cuts, Hollifield sale OK'd by EC

By SHAWN HENDRICKS | BR Managing Editor

As Cooperative Program (CP) dollars lag more than 15 percent behind this year's budget in North Carolina, the Executive Committee of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) approved a 10 percent decrease to the 2014 CP budget during their July 11 meeting.

The committee also accepted an offer on the Hollifield Leadership Center in Hickory for \$2.5 million. BSC leadership announced a new hire involving collegiate ministry, and the committee approved the new title of Brian Davis, who is now associate executive director-treasurer of the BSC.

Budget

The Executive Committee approved a decrease in the 2014 CP budget from \$33.5 million to \$30 million. In addition, the committee voted to continue increasing the allocation of CP gifts to the Southern Baptist Convention by .5 percent, which they have done the last 8 years. This raises the allocation to 36.5 percent. The budget will go before the

See EC page 9

'A dark day in American history,' says N.C. pastor; others join concerns on marriage ruling

BR staff

Since the Supreme Court's ruling on gay marriage June 26, many North Carolina Baptist leaders haven't shied away from voicing their disappointment on the controversial issue. They've also addressed how Christians should move forward.

The following is a series of quotes

from N.C. Baptist pastors and seminary professors who shared their thoughts on the High Court's decision to strike down the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). In another case, the Court also essentially allowed to stand a federal judge's invalidation of a California amendment that limited marriage to heterosexual couples. Though the Supreme Court stopped short of legalizing same-sex mar-

riage throughout the country, many N.C. Baptists remain uneasy about the future of the nation and the Church.

John Attaway

"A dark day in American history," is how John Attaway, pastor of Mount Pleasant Baptist Church in State Road, described the Supreme Court's handling of the issue.

"I believe this ruling shows the depth of America's rebellion against God and what He defines as moral and right," Attaway said. "As a nation, we continue our headlong march toward total rejection of God's truth and law. Like Israel, we refuse to do what is right in the sight of the Lord. The church, more than ever, must stand on God's Word without

See Ruling page 6

Emmy winner uses media to share Christ

For Jess Stainbrook, media is an excellent tool for positively impacting lives and sharing his faith with others. In 2006, Stainbrook founded 1615 The GC Media Project (www.1615.tv) with the mission to bring positive change to today's culture through radio, television and film. Stainbrook received a "Teddy" award from Movieguide for his work as executive producer and founder of the film "Seven Days in Utopia," a family-friendly film that features actor Robert Duvall. Stainbrook has worked on projects with ESPN and PBS and other networks and has won eight Emmy Awards. Each year, Stainbrook works with the *Biblical Recorder's* Roman Gabriel III to cover the Super Bowl, while highlighting a Christian perspective. Stainbrook is also executive vice president of Scripture Union, a ministry that encourages and equips people through various media to access and regularly read the Bible. In this interview, Stainbrook shares about the role of media, new technology and the importance of quality entertainment.



ROMAN GABRIEL
Sports Q & A

Q: Tell our audience about why you made the transition from successful secular television to ministry and 1615.tv?

A: I think you get to the point of your life where you look at your career, [and consider] whether it's been suc-

cessful or whether it has significance. ... About eight years ago God called me out of what I would call my full-time job in media and broadcast television. ... My call was how do you go about impacting the world through your profession in media politics, government, sports, and influence our culture. But of course on top of that is to do it through Christ. What we're really trying to do is be like Jesus, ... to produce excellent media content ... with truth. ... More often than not many people find their way to God [by] reading the Bible and discover[ing] the truth. Our goal is to create great content [and] provide a good discussion for people to discover [Jesus] on their own.

Q: With all the new technology available for people to follow sports and entertainment, telling a faith-based story is becoming more mainstream. Where do you see this entire process going in the next generation?

A: We are in this great time right now with this explosion of technology, where information and entertainment is available to everyone. It used to be if you were a filmmaker or production studio that you would have to have deep pockets and mountains of equipment to be able to produce the kind of product that's needed in order to put out quality programming. Today, you could go out with your cell phone and make a documentary that [is] socially relevant anywhere, anytime. ... With a push of a button immediately anybody in the world can see it. ... As filmmakers and believers, ... we can go out and train people with big

visual storytelling and documenting situations, and have an impact on the culture utilizing technology in this next generation. You can travel to Third World countries and see children using cell phones. [With] the available opportunity to communicate so quickly, there is coming a day very soon where we will ... push a button on my phone and push the Bible out to almost anyone in the world.

Q: Why is covering the Super Bowl so important to you?

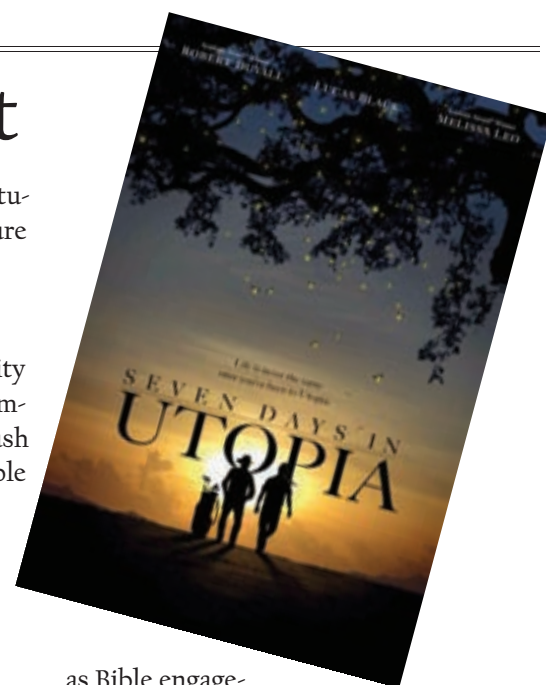
A: Sports and media are the two biggest influencers of our youth today.

Take something in the United States like the Super Bowl – a very interesting Barna survey just came out that says that athletes who speak about their faith have more impact than church leaders. So, when we are out there covering [the] Super Bowl we have the opportunity to impact more people than the guys [who] are standing in the pulpit, because the people and our youth are attracted and hearing those messages.

Q: Talk about your move to Pennsylvania and one of your new challenges as executive vice president of Scripture Union?

A: You never know how the Lord's going to work. Everybody expected I would go right to the next feature film ... after we finished up "Seven Days in Utopia."

I joined up with Scripture Union here in Valley Forge, Penn. They're involved [in] what's known in Christian circles



as Bible engagement, which is just a big term for getting people more involved in reading the Bible on a regular basis so God can impact their lives.

Q: How do our readers find out more about what you are doing?

A: You can get the movie "Seven Days in Utopia," a great family movie starring Robert Duvall on DVD, on Netflix, and on Amazon and Yahoo.com.

You can find out interesting ways to access the Bible at scriptureunion.com, and [go to] jessstainbrook.com or 1615.tv to see our Sold Out Super Bowl programming and other great film and media products we are involved in doing.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Roman's Sold Out Sports Talk Radio program on American Family Radio can be heard in 200 cities nationally or streaming live at afr.net. Visit his website: soldouttv.com; Facebook page: Roman Gabriel III Fan Page; connect with him on Twitter: [romangabriel3rd](https://twitter.com/romangabriel3rd); email him: roman@soldouttv.com or call (910) 431-6483.) **B**



At Super Bowl Media Day with Sold out Team (from left): Frank Bokoski, Roman Gabriel III and Jess Stainbrook. Stainbrook uses his media influence to spread the gospel. (Contributed photo)

AROUND THE STATE

Obituary

HARVEY Y. CRIMINGER JR., 84, formerly of Salisbury, died July 4, at Winston Salem Nursing and Rehab after an extended illness.

He was a graduate of Berryhill High School in Charlotte, Mars Hill College and Baylor University. He later graduated from Southeastern Seminary and was ordained at his home church, Pritchard Memorial Baptist in Charlotte. Criminger served at Finley Baptist in Finley, N.D., and Piney Fork Baptist in Gretna, Va. In North Carolina, he ministered at Sharon Baptist and Fairview Baptist in Reidsville, Ramoth Gilead Baptist in Elizabeth City and Jerusalem Baptist, Mocksville, until his retirement.

He is survived by his son, Dan Criminger of Greenville; his daughters, Jane Johnson of Lexington and Betsy Lowery of Helena, Ala.; his sisters, Lottie West and Connie Hamilton of Charlotte; and four grandchildren.

Memorials to First Baptist Church of Salisbury, 223 N. Fulton Street, Salisbury, NC 28144, where he was a member, or to Alzheimer's Association Western Carolina Chapter, 3800 Shamrock Drive, Charlotte, NC 28215.

Staff changes

Anderson Grove Baptist Church, Albemarle, has called **DANIEL HAZLETT** as minister of music. He previously served Memorial Baptist Church, Norwood.

GEORGE WHITENER has been called as pastor of Auburn Christian Church, Raleigh.

Woodland Baptist Church, Wake Forest, has called **TITO MADRAZO** as pastor. He previously served Drexel First Baptist Church as senior pastor.

DEWAYNE LAMBETH has been called as pastor of Center Road Baptist Church, Bladenboro. He previously served Calvary Baptist Church, Salisbury, as associate pastor.

Retirement



On May 26, **GLENN DANCY III** retired from the pastorate of Mount Vernon Baptist Church, Olin after almost 33 years in the ministry.

Dancy preached his first message in 1979 and was ordained in 1980. He graduated from West Lenoir Baptist Ministries.

In 2005, Mount Vernon was going through several changes and was looking for a godly man to pastor the church. Dancy preached his first sermon there on May 29, 2005, and became the interim pastor on July 3, 2005.

He became pastor Sept. 25, 2005. During his tenure, a new sanctuary was built and occupied on the church's homecoming in 2010.

He and his wife, Linda, plan to live in Hays.

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. All submissions will be subjected to *Biblical Recorder* styles and guidelines and will be edited. Send to dianna@BRnow.org or *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512. Call (919) 847-2127.

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OPPORTUNITY CORNER

Training shows how to share gospel

"The Story" is a new tool created to help believers understand the gospel in the context of the entire scripture and how it fits in God's overall story. It is designed to equip and help believers to "know, live and share the gospel as a lifestyle." A witness training conference will be held Aug. 16-17 at Caraway Conference Center for anyone hoping to learn how to effectively utilize "The Story" and share the gospel.

Registration cost for a single participant is \$90 for a single room or \$80 per person for a double room. For husband and wife participants, the conference cost is \$150. The fee includes lodging and three meals: Friday dinner and Saturday breakfast and lunch. Register online at www.ncbaptist.org/thestory by Aug. 2. For more information, call (800) 395-5102, ext. 5563, or email evangelism@ncbaptist.org.

Five associations join for training

The Training Extravaganza, sponsored by Raleigh, Johnston, Little River, Sandhills and Yates Baptist Associations, will be held Sat., Aug. 17, from 8 a.m.-noon at Trinity Baptist Church in Raleigh. Eighty conferences will cover eight leadership topics over two morning sessions. Choose from: church administration and leadership development, missions, church health, church and technology, discipleship, family issues, evangelism and outreach, and Bible study and small groups.

This training is offered to church staff, lay leadership and every church leader at no cost. Donations will be accepted for breakfast, and no registration is necessary. For more information, visit www.raleighbaptists.org, or call (919) 231-3995.

Celebration targets bivocational, small church pastors, assoc. missionaries

Bivocational and small church pastors, church planters, associational missionaries and their spouses are invited to attend the 2013 Appalachian Bivocational Celebration, "Preaching God's Word in Today's World," on Sept. 6-7, at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College (CCBBC), Pineville, Ky. Join a refreshing time of inspiration, encouragement and fellowship. Hear from speakers Al Gilbert, vice president for evangelism and the executive director of LoveLoud with the North American Mission Board (NAMB), and Paul Badgett, NAMB Kentucky ambassador. Gilbert formerly was pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem.

Pastors' wives have the opportunity to hear from KK Gilbert. Free child care will be provided.

The cost of registration is \$25 by Aug.

1, which includes two meals. The fee will be waived for active CCBBC and Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute students and spouses. Registration after Aug. 1 will be \$40.

Participants are responsible for their own lodging; options include Pine Mountain State Resort Park, Pineville, Ky.; Holiday Inn Express, Middlesboro, Ky.; or Sleep Inn, Middlesboro, Ky. When making reservations, inform them that you are coming for a conference at CCBBC. Register online at www.cbbbc.edu.

'It's a New Day' planned in Fayetteville

The New South River Baptist Association will sponsor and host one of Crown Financial's "It's A New Day" conferences on Fri., Sept. 20. The stewardship conference teaches godly financial principles and the promises of a debt-free life.

Dave Scobey, professional consumer credit counselor, will be the main speaker. Ashley Clayton, associate vice president for Stewardship of the Executive Committee, will also be present at the event.

The conference will be held at the New South River Baptist Association Resource Center, Fayetteville, N.C., from 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. The cost is \$20 per individual or couple. Register online at <http://www.sbc.net/newday/events/>. Contact Robert Ivey at (910) 485-8791 or email robertnsrba@nc.rr.com.

WMU-NC works with Habitat for Humanity on Women Build

The Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina (WMU-NC), in partnership with Habitat for Humanity of Randolph County, will be sponsoring Women Build Oct. 19-26. This is an opportunity to serve the community by building houses and creating relationships with future homeowners and other workers.

A maximum of 25 women may volunteer each day. The work hours are 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. every day except Oct. 20 and Oct. 23.

Volunteers must be at least 16 years old; anyone under 18 must work with an adult and may not use power tools. Construction experience is not required, and there will be staff members ready to help volunteers. Tools will be provided, but participants may bring their own. Hammers, tool belts, measuring tape, gloves and pencils are recommended. Volunteers must sign a release and waiver of liability form. Parents must sign for youth under 18. For more information and to sign up individuals or groups, contact Margaret Harding at (866) 210-8602, ext. 209, or email mharding@wmunc.org.

Chaplains pursue mission in a military suddenly hostile to Christianity

World News Service

This year: An Idaho Air Force base removes a painting called “Blessed Are the Peacemakers” because it references a Bible verse. The Air Force yanks off You-Tube a video tribute to first sergeants because its statement, “God created a first sergeant,” is “highly suggestive of the Book of Genesis in the Bible and has Christian overtones.”

Also this year: An Army Reserve training brief on hate groups declares that evangelical Christians and Roman Catholics are extremists as dangerous as al-Qaeda. A commander tells a chaplain to “stay in your lane” when he offers spiritual advice about the military’s exploding sexual assault problem.

Last year: A superior tells an Air Force major to remove from his desk the Bible he had kept there for 23 years. An Army lieutenant colonel instructs his subordinates to recognize the “religious right in America” as a domestic hate group like the KKK and Neo-Nazis. An Army master sergeant with 25 years of service faces punishment for serving Chick-fil-A sandwiches at his promotion party.

Two years ago: Christian prayers banned at veteran funeral services in Houston’s National Cemetery. Bibles temporarily banned at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. A Christian cross banned from a military chapel in Afghanistan. A chaplain called into his supervisor’s office and chewed out for closing a prayer with the words “In Jesus’ name.”

Coincidence that all these incidents occurred recently? About 80 military chaplains who gathered in South Carolina for a three-day conference last month didn’t think so. George Washington established the military chaplaincy, but Doug Lee, a retired Army chaplain who achieved the rank of brigadier general, told attendees, “You are in the military in a new era.”

The marginalization of Christianity in a military becoming more and more hostile to religion has left the chaplains feeling muzzled – and they now face same-sex couples coming to them for

marriage counseling. The chaplains still get to wear crosses on their collars, so they worry even more about those Christians in regular uniforms losing the First Amendment freedom of religious expression that they volunteered to defend.

“We are at war,” said Chaplain Thomas MacGregor, a U.S. Army colonel. In June 2009, MacGregor bucked the trend by invoking Jesus’ name and proclaiming His resurrection during a prayer at the official Normandy ceremony honoring the 65th anniversary of D-Day. Several chaplains turned down the assignment, MacGregor said: “Be as wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove ... that is the rule of the thumb I give to my junior chaplains.”

This May, frustrated with the weight of evidence, Coast Guard Rear Admiral William Lee broke rank, throwing out his prepared text at Washington’s National Day of Prayer event.

“They expect us to check our religion in at the door – don’t bring that here,” Lee said.

“Leaders like myself are feeling the constraints of rules and regulations and guidance issued by lawyers that put us in a tighter and tighter box regarding our constitutional right to express our religious faith. ... Pray that we will be able to weather the storm.” Lee received five standing ovations.

Capitol Hill lawmakers are taking notice. In June, Rep. John Fleming, R-La., successfully inserted into a Defense spending bill an amendment stating military personnel will have freedom of conscience and will not be disciplined for their religious beliefs. At the chaplains’ conference Doug Lee commented on that: “Isn’t it tragic that we have to have a special paragraph that would insist on your First Amendment rights which are clearly spelled out already? ... That’s where we are.”

Last December Congress passed a similar amendment to safeguard the religious beliefs of service members. But President Barack Obama, when he signed the larger bill into law, said the protections

See Chaplains page 10

Chaperone charged with sex crimes at Caswell

BR staff

Brunswick County Sheriff’s deputies arrested an Albemarle man for sex crimes that occurred at the North Carolina Baptist Assembly at Fort Caswell, Oak Island.

Clyde Wesley Way, 68, faces 24 charges of molesting young boys at Caswell, which is owned and operated by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC). While not an employee of Caswell or the BSC, convention officials say Way was a chaperone with a church group visiting the facility. According to news reports, the crimes involved four boys between the ages of 10 and 13. The boys were with their church June 24-29 as part of Youth Weeks, which are sponsored by the BSC.

Charges include 16 counts of sexual exploitation of a minor, four counts of employing or permitting a minor to assist in an offense involving a lewd act, and four counts of indecent liberties with a child.


“The safety of participants in the summer camps sponsored by the [BSC] is of utmost importance,” according

to an official statement released by the convention. “The [BSC] requires that all employees undergo criminal background checks. In addition, every church is required to conduct background checks on all chaperones accompanying its youth and children attending the [BSC] camps and to give evidence that these checks have been conducted.”

Way was being held in the Stanly County Detention Facility under a \$350,000 bond at press time. “We have been cooperating, and will continue to fully cooperate, with law enforcement as their investigation of this chaperone continues,” BSC said in the statement.

Every summer, Youth Weeks at Caswell hosts thousands of middle and high school students.

“Hundreds of young people respond to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, with many participants expressing their desire to invest their lives in missionary and ministry endeavors,” the statement said. “We pray for all the young people attending our camps this summer, but especially the young people, their families and the church involved in this situation.” **BR**




SPEAKERS & FACILITATORS :

John Franklin, John Franklin Ministries, Russellville, KY
 Steve Griffith, Senior Pastor, Osborne Baptist Church, Eden, NC
 Mark Harris, Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church, Charlotte, NC
 Bob Lowman, Director of Missions, Metrolina Baptist Association, Charlotte, NC
 J. Chris Schofield, Director, Office of Prayer, BSCNC, Cary, NC

AWAKEN: Prayer Retreats & Rallies

The morning prayer retreats will be from 9.30 am-12.30 pm followed by lunch and are designed for pastors and ministry staff. Evening association-wide prayer rallies for everyone will follow on the same day from 7-8.30 pm.

<p>August 13 Brunswick Association Jeff Gibby, (910) 754-7979</p> <p>August 29 Cabarrus Association Robert Leonard, (704) 786-9171</p> <p>September 10 Bladen Association Bruce Cannon, (910) 862-3496</p>	<p>October 8 Eastern Association Paul Langston, (910) 293-7077</p> <p>October 22 Columbus Association Tim Jernigan, (910) 642-2155</p>
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Pastor

Continued from page 1

“That was very risky ministry.”

A few years ago members of his family had to leave the country because of their ministry. In one village alone, nearly 150 Christians were killed.

Not long after, Matek was forced to flee the country and sent into hiding. Yet, despite risk of persecution and even death, he experienced much joy ministering in his home country.

“If we don’t reach the Muslim people, who will? I loved living in Pakistan,” he said.

“We were satisfied with our ministry and work.”

About nine months ago he and his wife, Miriam*, came to live in High Point, N.C., which is home to about 1,300 Muslims from Pakistan. Matek is working to start the first Pakistani Baptist church in North Carolina.

Journey of faith

After fleeing Pakistan in 2010, Matek served in other countries, determined to still spread the gospel.

Once he received his visa everything fell into place for him to move to New York City to be with Miriam, who had been traveling back and forth between New York and Pakistan since they were

married in 2009. Miriam, who was living and working in New York, met Matek while in Pakistan visiting her family.

They had an arranged marriage, and they were married about one month after meeting.

Miriam said she really came to know God while living in New York.

“When you are alone, you feel empty. But God told me who He is.

“He is my Father; He is my everything,”

After Matek joined Miriam in New York they prayed for God to show them where to go next.

While in California speaking at a conference they met Ralph Garay, a church planting consultant with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC). Garay previously pastored a Filipino-American church in San Diego.

Garay shared with Matek and Miriam the great need for a Pakistani church in North Carolina.

“Life was easy in New York,” Matek said.

“Miriam had a good job. We had no contacts in North Carolina.”

Before even leaving New York they realized God was paving their way to North Carolina.

Answer to prayer

A few days before leaving New York Matek earned his driver’s license, but did not have a car. When Mark Gray, BSC church planting team leader, learned that Matek and Miriam were coming to North Carolina he shared their need with his church, Epoch Church, and the group provided a van for them to use.

When Larry Doyle, director of missions for Piedmont Baptist Association, heard about Matek and Miriam he connected them with Darryl Love, pastor of Crossover Community Church in High Point. A friend of Love’s provided a home for Matek and Miriam and the church furnished it.

“God was attaching us to people and we had never even met them,” Matek said. For two years Love and Crossover Community prayed for God to help them reach the Pakistani people in their community. “You can’t get to our church in any direction without passing the home of a Pakistani. At one time, everyone looked like us. Now, we’re a minority,” Love said.

Love and Crossover Community are partnering with Matek as they see an answer to prayer unfold – someone to help them reach Pakistanis with the gospel.

“They have been accepted as family,” Love said. “They have become part of our lives. We are helping them build relationships with the community.”

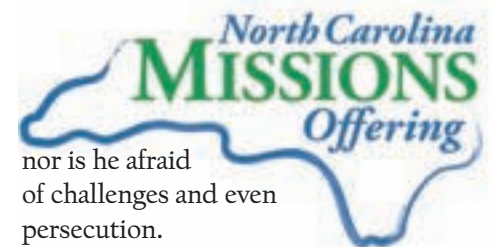
Gray said Matek’s journey helps remind him of God’s sovereignty.

“To think that God would bring him here on that incredible journey, to get him here, is phenomenal. The need was great to have a missionary who could come here to reach the Pakistanis in their culture and context,” he said.

Sharing in love

“We came here with just our luggage,” Matek said. “We came here to start a church; we came here to work.”

Matek is not afraid of working hard,



nor is he afraid of challenges and even persecution.

“Persecution is the sign of revival,” he said. “It’s the Spirit of God who encourages us to face that. They are more blessed who face persecution than those who don’t face persecution.”

Matek and Miriam are focusing on meeting Pakistanis and Muslims in their community, building relationships and sharing the gospel.

“The first thing we need to do is love Muslims,” Matek said. “Jesus said to love your neighbor as yourself. The second key thing is to pray for them. In our minds we often think that all Muslims are bad. We need to change our mindset. Never think it cannot be possible to reach a soul.”

Matek encouraged believers who want to reach people from other religious backgrounds and cultures to be intentional in meeting them. Every visit to a restaurant, store or gas station is an opportunity to meet someone.

“We can’t win souls if we don’t use the small opportunities. If we want to do something big, we can’t miss the small opportunities,” he said. “We can’t develop our church like other churches; it takes time to build relationships. One salvation response may take years. But we trust in God and He will make a way. He will do it.”

Matek cautioned against moving too quickly with Muslims and encouraged believers to be patient and faithful.

“Don’t go very fast,” he said. “But go every day. Go again and again and again.”

The North Carolina Missions Offering helps support church plants such as the Pakistani church. To learn more, please visit www.ncmissionsoffering.org.

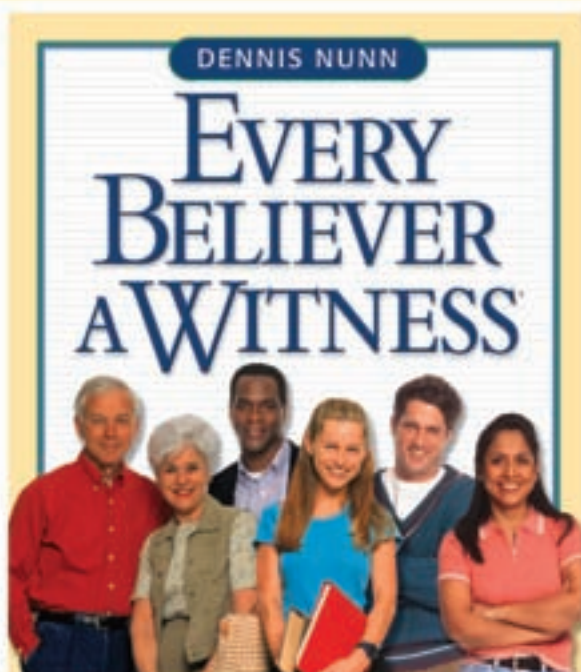
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Ruling

Continued from page 1

wavering. We must proclaim it and live it unapologetically. It comes down to a question of authority and truth, and the church must uphold both as found in the Bible. We can expect opposition, even persecution, for doing so. We will be marginalized, criticized, and demonized for proclaiming ‘thus saith the Lord,’ but say it we must! These are ‘Noah days’ and perilous times, and we must remember that God is faithful, and will not abandon His people!”

Bobby Blanton

“The Supreme Court’s recent ruling has been attributed to the shift in public opinion,” said Bobby Blanton, pastor of Lake Norman Baptist Church in Huntersville.

“Why wouldn’t public opinion be changing on this issue? You can’t watch a sitcom on television without seeing a character who is portrayed as a nice, friendly, normal, caring, responsible, funny person who just happens to be homosexual. Homosexuals are held with the highest of respect and admiration and even called ‘heroes’ when they ‘come out.’

“At the same time, Bible-believing Christians are portrayed as mean-spirited, narrow-minded homophobes. When we have been fed a steady diet of this propaganda from Hollywood – and Washington – for the last 20 to 30 years, it is no mystery why public opinion, particularly among our younger generations, have been largely won over to the homosexual agenda.

“There is a growing softness of this issue from within the church,” he added. “The softness toward same-sex marriage has come from many parents who have seen their children drift into this lifestyle as well as their own lack of biblical foundation. Sadly, many church members gain their perspective and insight more from the media than from God’s Word. ...

The recent High Court’s ruling should be a reality check for the church for the days ahead. ... There has never been a time in our nation’s history for a greater need of holiness and cross-bearing from within the church. The church will either be a catalysts for spiritual renewal across our nation, or one of the sad reasons for its downward spiral.”

Nathan Finn

“As our culture becomes increasingly comfortable with homosexual marriage, the church must consistently and winsomely proclaim two complementary messages,” said Nathan Finn, associate professor of historical theology and Baptist studies for Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest.

“On the one hand, we need to communicate the biblical vision of marriage as a lifelong, covenantal commitment between one man and one woman. This view of marriage is a picture of the gospel itself (Ephesians 5:22-33), so we must not retreat, even if our views seem bizarre or even insulting to many in our culture. America, like much of the West, is in a moral free fall. The church must be salt and light.

“On the other hand, we need to be diligent in applying the gospel to three types of people affected by this issue. Christians who struggle with same-sex attraction need to be reminded that no temptation is too great for them to bear with God’s help and the support of other believers (1 Corinthians 10:13). Believers who have engaged in same-sex sin at some point need to be reminded that all those who are in Christ have been forgiven of their sins, cleansed by the blood of Christ, and need not be haunted by the past (Colossians 2:13-14). Those who identify as homosexuals and pursue that lifestyle should be urged to repent of their sins and look to Christ for their salvation because homosexuality is unac-

ceptable to God and leads to spiritual death (Leviticus 18:22, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

Daniel Heimbach

“In the land of the free and home of the brave, disagreement over something so fundamental as marriage should be left to the people as instructed by conscience, tradition and faith,” said Daniel R. Heimbach, senior professor of Christian ethics at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest.

“But what the Supreme Court majority has done is enshrine into the Constitution a radical redefinition of marriage under which sexual difference makes no difference.

“This is a tragedy that exalts private desires over the public good and sentiment over God’s ordering of creation. ... The DOMA decision brands faithful Christians as un-American bigots driven, not by faith or even reason, but by nothing more than ‘bare ... desire to harm.’ Such aspersion is not only completely false but demonstrates deeply rooted animus toward those who cling to faith in the wisdom and power of God.”

Marty Jacumin

“It serves as a reminder of our fallen world but it also reminds us of our God-given task,” said Marty Jacumin, pastor of Bay Leaf Baptist Church in Raleigh.

“Our gospel message has not changed, and we must continue to proclaim that message with conviction and purpose. It will be the gospel that changes hearts, not legislation.”

Ryan Pack

“When I think of the Supreme Court ruling on gay marriage, one word comes to mind ... opportunity,” said Ryan Pack, pastor of First Baptist Church, Hendersonville. “... When darkness gets darker, light shines brighter. Remember that the

New Testament church grew and multiplied under some of the worse sexual perversions in history. This is an opportunity for the church to expand. Secondly, I believe this is an opportunity for revival. The American church is asleep and needs to wake up. Could this be our wake-up call to repent of our sins, fix our marriages and set a better example to a watching world? May God send revival!”

Joel Stephens

“The recent decisions by the Supreme Court and the reaction of the American people to them should serve as a wake-up call to the church in America,” said Joel Stephens, pastor of Westfield Baptist Church in Westfield.

“We cannot afford to live in denial anymore. Biblically-based morality is the minority opinion, and its ranks are shrinking exponentially. But this is not a time for despair. As the darkness deepens, the Light of Christ shines more brilliantly.

“Perhaps at no point in our nation’s brief history has the church been so needed as now. It’s time to rise up and be the church Christ desires – ‘a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but ... holy and without blemish.’ America doesn’t know it, but she desperately needs a revived Church. But there will be no revival in the Church unless there is first an emphasis on holiness.”

Rit Varriale

“The decision of [the Supreme Court] was discouraging,” said Rit Varriale, pastor of Elizabeth Baptist Church in Shelby.

“Yet, the general apathy and cowardliness of the church in America is even more discouraging,” he added. “If we want revival in America, then we need the courage to obey God before we obey the government. When that happens, we’ll have revival” (Acts 5:29-32). **B**



“Sadly, many church members gain their perspective and insight more from the media than from

God’s Word.”

– Bobby Blanton

“... we need to communicate the biblical vision of marriage as a lifelong, covenantal commitment between one man and one woman.”

– Nathan Finn



“Our gospel message has not changed, and we must continue to proclaim that message with conviction and purpose.”

– Marty Jacumin

“We cannot afford to live in denial anymore. Biblically-based morality is the minority opinion, and its ranks are shrink-

ing exponentially ...”

– Joel Stephens



Post-DOMA, gay marriage backers target states

Baptist Press

At least five states are facing legal battles over marriage definitions that could determine whether the tone set by the Defense of Marriage Act's (DOMA) demise will resonate in individual states.

An Arkansas lesbian couple filed a lawsuit in Pulaski County Circuit Court that alleges the unconstitutionality of an Arkansas amendment that defines marriage as between one man and one woman, the *Arkansas Baptist News* said.

According to the *Detroit Free Press*, another lesbian couple has pushed for the legalization of gay marriage in Michigan, another state with a marriage amendment.

Gay marriage advocates also have announced plans to try and overturn traditional marriage laws in North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

The suits, if eventually taken up by the U.S. Supreme Court, could result in gay marriage being legalized nationwide. The Senate and the Administrative Office of the United States Courts already are supporting an affirmation of same-sex couples' rights to federal benefits no matter what state they live in, *The New York Times* reported.

Maggie Gallagher, author of *Debating Same-Sex Marriage*, said American political order shifted when the Supreme Court made its decision to overturn DOMA June 26, with traditional marriage supporters becoming a "disempowered and disfavored" minority.

"Marriage as an important cultural status is rooted in a shared belief that we need to bring together male and

female to make and raise the next generation together, and that adults have a serious obligation to make serious sacrifices, including their sexual life, to make that happen," Gallagher said to editor-at-large Kathryn Jean Lopez of National Review Online.

"Marriage, after gay marriage, is an under-defined commitment to love and caretaking, whose public character and status is newly uncertain," Gallagher added. "Why love? Why sex? Why just two? What does this have to do with parenting? What other relationships have an equal right to be counted as marriage?"

The Boston Globe said Indiana and Iowa could become the focal points for traditional marriage supporters trying to pass marriage amendments.

Russell D. Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, was not surprised the Supreme Court struck down DOMA, but he was startled by the justices' reasoning, he said.

The majority "essentially said there's no reason to define marriage as the union between a man and a woman exclusively except for hostility and animus toward persons, which we don't believe is the case," Moore said on C-SPAN's "Washington Journal."

"I think [Associate Justice Antonin] Scalia is right [in his dissenting opinion], that it will be very difficult for the court now to allow states to state-by-state define marriage in the way that they currently do," Moore said. "I think the language there is setting the court up for a *Roe v. Wade* type of decision in the future."

Roe v. Wade was the 1973 Supreme Court ruling that invalidated all state restrictions on abortion.

Lawsuits against state bans on same-sex marriage were "nearly a given" after the DOMA decision, said Larry Page, executive director of the Arkansas Faith & Ethics Council. Gay marriage opponents may not have been expecting the lawsuits so quickly, he added, but same-sex marriage advocates are taking advantage of the shock waves created by the Court's decision.

"What we are witnessing is the metamorphosis of the U.S. Supreme Court – it has ceased being a fair and impartial arbiter of legal disputes in which it interprets the law," Page said. "[It] has transformed itself into a forum in which political correctness and the whims of popular opinion dictate its decisions, rather than the strict letter of the law or the will of the body politic as manifested in legitimate elections."

Arkansas constitutional Amendment 83 bans same-sex marriage, which lesbian couple Kendall and Julia Wright said "violates their constitutional rights." The Wrights were married in Iowa and are suing on behalf of 11 other homosexual couples in Arkansas.

Same-sex partners April DeBoer and Jayne Rowse have adopted children separately, according to the *Detroit Free Press*, but wish to legally marry and unite their families in Michigan. Bernard Friedman, a federal judge in Detroit, said the couple is "entitled to their day in court and they shall have it."

But same-sex marriage supporters are not the only group reveling in the Court's decisions, *Religion Today* reported. Polygamists also are celebrating the overturning of DOMA. Some say the decision could eventually provide equal rights to having multiple marriage partners. **BR**



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COMING AUGUST 1

Look for our **DIGITAL ONLINE EDITION**

Next Generation students prepare to be mission leaders

By MELISSA LILLEY | BSC Communications

Although Hicksville, N.Y., is no longer the last stop on the Long Island Rail Road, a distinction it held for several years after the rail station was built in 1837, this hamlet of Nassau County remains a hub of activity.

This growing activity is due in large part to an increasingly diverse population, primarily South Asian and Indian. About 10 percent of Hicksville's 41,000 residents is South Asian or Indian. Commercials and advertisements in India even encourage people to move to Hicksville – the “new Little India.”

Three students devoted two weeks this summer to meeting with community leaders, religious leaders and Hicksville residents to learn about the South Asian influence in Hicksville.

They learned that in the 1980s South Asians began moving to Queens to pursue a better life, but soon began settling and opening businesses in Hicksville. People are coming from northern India locations such as Delhi, Punjab, Gujarat and Bombay, and are known for being well educated and economically savvy.

But what really grabbed the students' attention is that Hicksville is less than one percent evangelical. About 65 percent of Indians in Hicksville are Hindu and 30 percent are Sikh.

“We learned that many Indians and South Asians are open to the gospel when they move here,” said Will Earls, a sophomore at Gardner-Webb University. “But the reality is that we are not reaching out to them. So they go back to what they know; to what is familiar.”

Earls is in his second year of the Next Generation Missional Journey, which is a three-year initiative sponsored by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) Office of Great Commission Partnerships.

Students read assigned texts and attend three, one-day training sessions throughout the year. During the training sessions they learn from pastors, missionaries and missions strategists. At the end of each year students participate in a hands-on missions experience.

In their second year, leading up to the summer missions experience in New York, Earls and his five classmates spent the year learning about the theology of the city and how to impact the world from North America.

Last year the group learned about their responsibility to help fulfill the Great



From left, front row: Tori Ford, Jessica Francis, Rebecca Nivens, Emily Compton (ministry assistant in Office of Great Commission Partnerships), Hannah Davidson; back row: Josh Williams, Mike Sowers, Will Earls. Part of the Next Generation process is spending time on the mission field.

Commission and spent a week in the summer serving in North Carolina. Next summer, at the completion of their third and final year, they will study how to reach unreached people groups and will serve in Southeast Asia.

“What will really help is when we take what we have learned home with us,” said Earls, who is a youth minister at Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church in Shelby and planning to pursue full-time vocational ministry.

“It's not about anything I can do, but how I obey and follow Him. It's how you love God and people.”

Students learned how they can better obey the Great Commission by learning how to intentionally share their faith and reach out to people from unreached, unengaged people groups.

While Earls and two students served in Hicksville, three other Next Generation students, including Rebecca Nivens, were learning about the Sri Lankan and Buddhist influence on Staten Island.

Nivens was reminded that reaching people with the gospel begins with building relationships and caring about people.

“It's not about anything I can do, but how I obey and follow Him. It's how you love God and people.”
– Will Earls

“I learned a different perspective on people and how God wants us to reach them,” she said. “This has opened my eyes to missions. It's not something you can do and just leave. You really want to know and learn about the people.”

Live like a missionary

Prior to serving in New York the group received training from Chris Clayman about how to gather people group infor-

“Be the aroma of Christ. Are you a picture of the gospel?”
– Brad Wall

mation and learn about the community.

Clayman is employed by the North American Mission Board and is author of *EthNYcity*, which features profiles on immigrant groups in metro New York.

“There isn't much being done for raising leaders like this in this context; it fills a big need,” he said.

Clayman challenged the students to live like missionaries and to always look for opportunities to share the gospel.

“Put yourself in their space,” Clayman said. “Be in the place where you start to see them. Buy things from their store. Put yourself in situations where God can use you to speak into their lives.”

In New York the students also received training in how to start conversa-

tions with people on the street, in restaurants and in businesses, and how to turn those conversations into opportunities to share the gospel.

The students then went out across New York City to share the gospel.

The students served in Jackson Heights, Queens, seeking to share the gospel with South Asians.

“We never expect to live in the radical obedience we see in the Book of Acts,” said Brad Wall, who led the training and partners with Metropolitan New York Baptist Association through a local ministry called Global Gates.

“Be the aroma of Christ. Are you a picture of the gospel?”

Chuck Register, BSC executive group leader for church planting and missions development, de-

scribed the Next Generation class serving in New York as “trail blazers.”

“With excellence, they have faithfully and passionately served their Lord and shared their faith on the streets and in the boroughs of one of the world's most strategic cities,” Register said.

“Their research will assist future ministries and mission teams in reaching the Sri Lankan and South Asian peoples living in metro New York City.”

Next Generation Missional Journey students are eligible to earn 13 credit hours from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Spots are still open for the fall. Applications are available at www.ncbaptist.org/gcp. **BR**



North Carolina closes Durham abortion clinic

Baptist Press

The North Carolina government has closed a Durham abortion clinic because of safety violations.

The state's Department of Health and Human Services discontinued the certificate of operation for The Baker Clinic for Women July 5. The department said a survey of the clinic showed it failed to provide adequate quality control of blood banking for

108 patients, according to *The Durham Herald-Sun*.

The abortion clinic, which opened in January, has 60 days to appeal its suspension, but John Baker, the clinic's owner, said he hopes to correct the problems and resume operation, *The Herald-Sun* reported.

In May, Maryland shut down four abortion clinics and suspended the licenses of three abortion doctors for procedural infractions, according to *The Associated Press*. **BR**

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EC Continued from page 1

Board of Directors for approval in September. In addition to adjusting to the \$3.5 million decrease in the 2014 budget, N.C. Baptist organizations will receive a slightly lower percentage of CP dollars than what was originally budgeted for them next year. "It's not exactly the same percentage [as this year]," said John Butler, BSC's executive leader for business services. "It's a little less, but close."

The reduction would also mean no cost-of-living increases for BSC staff in the coming year, said Rob Roberts, chairman of the budget committee.

"We're trying to be realistic in terms of what we feel like we can do as a budget," Roberts said. "We're just trying to bite the bullet."

Other committee members asked if any relief could come soon from the 1% Challenge for CP, a Southern Baptist Convention initiative that encourages churches to increase their CP giving by one percent.

Though some N.C. churches have begun implementing the challenge, many of them won't start until their budget for next year begins, Butler said. Even then, the increase may not be easy to see.

"The problem is ... [church] income has been down," Butler said. "We hope that we'll see an increase. We need it – no question about that."

Milton A. Hollifield Jr., BSC's executive director-treasurer, thanked churches for what they're already giving to CP.

"Churches in the Convention ... have been growing in their contribution," Hollifield said. "It's because of [those] increases that we are able to be where we are financially. If it was not for that, the picture would be more grim than what it is."

Hollifield Leadership Center

The Executive Committee accepted a \$2.5 million offer on the Hollifield Leadership Center. Butler said the BSC agreed to finance the sale, and it will be paid off with a \$250,000 down payment and remaining payments over a five-year period.

After years of financial challenges, the center ceased weekly operation at the end of 2012, but has remained available for weekend retreats up until now.

At an annual cost of \$50,000 to maintain, Butler pointed out a down payment of \$250,000 alone will cover five years of what it would cost to hang on to the facility.

The BSC purchased the center for about \$3 million in 2000 to use for retreats and training by churches, parachurch ministries and other non-profit organizations. One full-time employee has remained on staff at the center this year to help take care of the property

until it sold. Proceeds from the sale will go toward the New Beginnings capital campaign at Caraway Conference and Camp near Asheboro.

New positions

The Executive Committee approved Brian Davis' new job description as associate executive director-treasurer. His new responsibilities, which have been expanded to include the new BSC structure and strategy that was approved by the committee in April, are now in effect.

For the past seven years, Davis has served as the BSC's executive leader of administration and convention relations.

"I think you all have observed his work and would understand why I feel there is much value in doing this," Hollifield said.

"I do try to stay in the field a lot to be with our churches, ... [and] there has to be a person in responsibility to answer questions and make decisions, especially when I'm away from the building. ... Brian has that responsibility, and in reality, what I'm asking you to approve is much of what he has been doing ... for some time but with a different title."

Executive Committee members also learned Jonathan Yarboro, campus minister at Appalachian State University in Boone, has been hired as the campus ministry consultant for the Western region.

Under the new structure, Yarboro will join Collegiate Partnerships with team leader Rick Trexler. The team includes: Sammy Joo, a consultant for international students in the Triangle area, and Tom Knight, a consultant for international students in Charlotte. The position for the Central region remains open.

In other business, the Executive Committee approved the following Committee on Committee recommendations for the Board of Directors:

- Herman W. "Buddy" Pigg Jr., pastor of Mount Harmony Baptist Church, Matthews (Union Association), will fill the 2016 unexpired term of Terry Casino in Region 6.

- Vernon Eller, pastor of Union Baptist Church, Zionville (Three Forks Association), will fill the 2014 unexpired term of Matthew Grindstaff in Region 7.

- John Compton, pastor of Mountain View Baptist Church, Hickory (Catawba Valley Association), will fill the 2014 unexpired term of Kevin Purcell in Region 8.

- Don Warren, member of Parkwood Baptist Church, Gastonia (Greater Gaston Association), will fill the 2015 unexpired term of Scott Hardin in Region 8.

The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Aug. 15. **BR**

Chaplains

Continued from page 4

were “unnecessary” and “ill-advised.” Six months later the Obama administration has refused to issue regulations to enforce the protections. At a congressional hearing this spring, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel seemed to be unaware that the protections were in the law.

The Obama administration issued a statement on June 11 saying it “strongly objects” to a new religious liberty amendment: It would have a “significant adverse effect on good order, discipline, morale and mission accomplishment.” The Administration did not object to an amendment offered last month by Rep. Jared Polis, D-Colo., that would create atheist chaplains. That amendment lost, but 150 House Democrats voted for it.

How bad is the military environment? Reports of the influence of Mikey Weinstein, who met with officials at the Pentagon and has called religious proselytizing “a national security threat... sedition and treason... spiritual rape,” are probably exaggerated. But Major John Sackett, an Air Force chaplain, told me at the conference that Air Force chaplains like himself have “fear of retribution. ...I often ask, ‘Will what I need to say now actually get me in trouble?’”

Complicating this are legitimate con-

cerns that in the past some Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, or other members of the American military have felt the pressure that minorities often feel. But, as Michael Horowitz of the Hudson Institute has put it, evangelicals in many ways are the new Jews of American society, facing discrimination of the kind Jews felt two generations ago.

John Wells, a former Navy commander turned lawyer who represents the master sergeant facing discipline for serving Chick-fil-A at his promotion party, said, “The problem is this case is the tip of the iceberg. I’ve got people calling me all the time saying, ‘I am a chaplain and my prayers are being censored,’ or ‘I am being told if I state my opinion on something that I am going to get hammered.’”

Sackett, the Air Force chaplain, traces this climate of intimidation to confusion about the law: “You are free to pray however your conscience dictates in any situation because that’s the law. ... Commanders don’t know that anymore. So many of them actually think it is illegal to talk about Jesus. The commanders are well-intentioned, but they are also not interested in any lawsuits.”

Sackett and his commanding chap-

lain plan an officers’ training session regarding constitutional law and the free exercise of religion. But even chaplains are bewildered: New ones often ask Sackett if they can offer Bible verses or pray while counseling. Ten years ago, he says, base commanders would often announce upcoming religious events and chaplains would often open and close command level staff meetings with prayer. Not anymore.

Some confusion stems from the military’s own dizzying array of press releases about what is permitted. An Air Force statement this spring said service members could “express their personal religious beliefs as long as it does not make others uncomfortable.” Many chaplains wondered who would be deciding what is uncomfortable – and would this definition change over time?

The Pentagon then said service members could evangelize but not proselytize. That kicked off debate over the differences between evangelizing and proselytization. While chaplains at the conference agreed that coercion has no place in Christian faith, they worried that complex definitions of theological terms would have a chilling effect on discussion. They also discussed reports that the

Army’s new definition of resilience has removed the word “spirituality” from the attributes needed for a soldier to overcome adversity.

Evangelical denominations face a hard choice: If they pull their support of chaplains because new rules don’t allow them to represent Christian belief, the gap will be filled by groups with liberal theology. Sackett said, “One of the reasons I am still in is I am afraid who might take my place.” But he may not get a chance to stay: “I think a time is shortly coming when chaplains who speak out on moral issues and on issues of community standards are going to be told go find a new job,” said Chuck Williams, an Army chaplain based in Hawaii.

The chaplains also say the assault on religious liberty in the military, if allowed to stand, could expand to society at large. The military has often been a touchstone for cultural change: “It is just a matter of time before these same challenges are going to come to the local church,” said one chaplain who asked not to be identified because he had received direct orders from his commander not to talk to the media. “You have your head in the sand if you think that you are protected behind the church.” **BR**

Opponents to Boy Scouts policy to launch alternative

By **ADELLE M. BANKS** | Religion News Service

A fledgling organization that opposed the Boys Scouts of America’s (BSA) decision to accept openly gay Scouts announced July 9 it will launch an alternative group with a Christian worldview.

“It’s our vision to be the premiere national character development organization for young men which produces godly and responsible husbands, fathers and citizens,” announced Rob Green, interim executive director of the as-yet-unnamed organization.

“The organization’s membership policy will focus on sexual purity rather than sexual orientation,” Green said in a conference call with reporters.

John Stemberger, founder of *OnMyHonor.net*, which opposed the BSA policy change, differentiated between the inclusiveness of the BSA and the new organization.

“The issue with Scouting is just that when you’re going to allow a young man to be in the program to be openly flaunting sexuality, that’s just inappropriate and parents do not think that’s a clean

and safe environment for their kids,” he said.

In fact, the Boy Scouts also forbid sexual behavior by youth members.

About 50 leaders, including representatives of religious denominations and veteran Scout officials, gathered June 29 in Louisville, Ky., and decided to launch the group on Jan. 1, 2014, the day the BSA policy change becomes effective.

Green, a former BSA executive in Florida and South Carolina, said boys of any religion will be welcome but adult leaders will be required to adhere to a statement of faith.

He said the group’s provisional faith statement mirrors that of American Heritage Girls, an independent faith-based organization that is viewed as an alternative to the Girl Scouts.

The BSA declined to comment specifically on the new group.

“It would be inappropriate for us to discuss other organizations,” said BSA spokesman Deron Smith.

“We remain focused on reaching and serving youth in order to help them grow into good, strong citizens.”

Visit *OnMyHonor.net*. **BR**

What time is it?

O ne morning the phone awakened us from a deep sleep at 3:45 a.m. Those calls can literally change your life. This one did. It was my daughter. She was headed to the hospital to deliver our first grandchild. We were startled by her words because she was four weeks early. We headed to the hospital as soon as we could.

As I reflect on that morning I cannot help but think about Paul’s words to the Roman believers in Romans 13:11. Paul cautioned the believers to understand that God’s “kairos” or opportune time to return to Him was upon them.

This was a call to awaken from an apathetic and immoral life. It was actually a call to repentance and a holy life in Christ. God’s “kairos” time is nearer than when we first believed. The completion of His salvation in our lives is

upon us; it is closer than we thought.

Daybreak is approaching fast and we all must answer one question –

are we ready? What is God saying to you about your spiritual and moral condition? Do you need to awaken, repent and return to Christ? What time is it and how do you need to respond?

Prayer Points

- Pray the Holy Spirit would give you a greater sensitivity to God’s

“kairos” time.

- Pray your heart would be renewed in Christ as you awaken, repent and return to Christ before it is too late.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – *Chris Schofield is director of the Office of Prayer for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. For more information you can reach him at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5514, or cschofield@ncbaptist.org.)*



DR. CHRIS SCHOFIELD

Author challenges readers to ‘Stop Asking Jesus Into Your Heart’

Stop Asking Jesus into Your Heart: How to Know for Sure You are Saved by J.D. Greear (B&H Publishing, 2013)

It was clear from before the first word penned by J.D. Greear that *Stop Asking Jesus Into Your Heart: How to Know for Sure You are Saved* was going to be no ordinary book. Five pages occupy the front of this little book – five pages full of endorsements from well-respected pastors, professors, and religious leaders. Within the endorsements it is clear that this book forces its readers to carefully examine the nature and doctrine of salvation.

Greear opens the book with, and subsequently weaves through, his own story of salvation. His story brings practical application to his thesis that assurance of salvation is found in our present posture toward Christ. Our faith and hope rests on His sacrifice. Greear jokes that he must hold the world record for “asking Jesus into his heart.” As a young man he was plagued by doubt and a lack of assurance. This book recounts his discovery of the wonderful assurance that Christ wants His people to have.

Stop Asking puts it very simply, either we believe or we do not. Everything else will flow out of whichever of these two postures we dedicate ourselves. In this, we accept we are dependent on Christ or we rely on ourselves.

Greear writes, “Truly admitting

unworthiness and inability is difficult because we have spent our whole lives trying to prove we are anything but unworthy. Most people will admit they make mistakes and are not perfect, but far fewer will go on from there to admit their ‘mistakes’ make them unworthy of eternal life and worthy of utter condemnation.”

Understanding we are unworthy shows us we don’t deserve anything from, and have nothing to offer, God.

However, because Christ has died in our place and settled our account with God, “God’s forgiveness of us is not mercy, it is justice.” We have been given this gift of righteousness through the finished work of Christ on the cross. Greear calls

understanding this gift a “key component in obtaining assurance.”

Moving further in his encouragement toward assurance, Greear spends two chapters dissecting the two pivotal words associated with salvation: repent and believe. Greear calls these two sides of the same coin.

“Jesus lived and died; we believe He lived and died *for us* and we choose to rest our hopes for salvation upon Him,” he writes.

“We believe not only that Jesus is Lord (as a fact of history), but that He is our rightful Sovereign as well, and we submit to Him (as an act of volition).”

This is a far cry from what we often make salvation out to be and gets to the

crux of the point made in Greear’s title – “‘Repentance and belief’ and ‘asking Jesus into our hearts’ are not always interchangeable.”

So often, he points out, many people only have a brief moment in time, when they said a prayer or walked an aisle to hold on to as their hope for salvation and an eternity with Christ. This reality causes Greear to state boldly that, “your present posture is more important than a past memory.” For me that statement draws my mind somberly to the remembrance of so many funeral services I have conducted when the testimony of the one lying prostrate in front of me was solely based on a very distant memory.

Greear goes on to point out that belief is inextricably coupled with repentance.

Repentance is not simply outward actions, but it is “fundamentally a motion of the heart in which we abandon our posture of rebellion and adopt one of submission toward Christ. Repentance is evidenced by outward action, but it does not equal that.” Repentance is not perfection, partial surrender, becoming religious, simply confessing or feeling sorry for sin, or even praying a prayer. Repentance is a heart change where settled defiance is eradicated, Jesus is followed, and the Spirit changes our desires.

Greear closes the book by considering eternal security, and his explanation is concise, pastoral and sobering: “The full doctrine of eternal security is that once we are saved, we will always be saved, and that those who are saved will persevere in their faith to the end. It is true that ‘once saved, always saved,’ but it is also true that ‘*once saved, forever following.*’” The scriptures provide

both assurances of salvation and warnings against falling away.

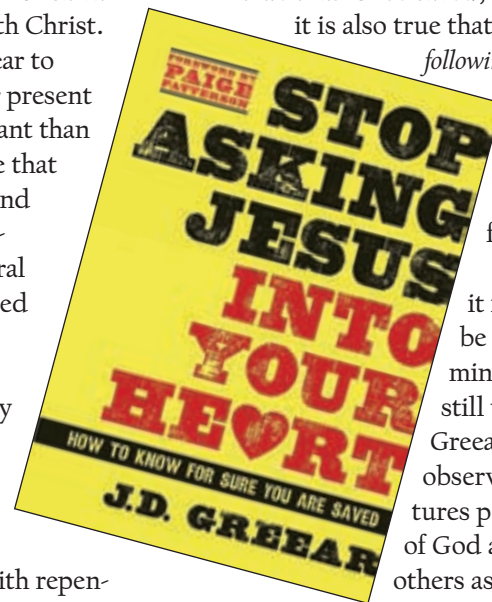
Greear contests it is vital for both to be present in pastoral ministries. For those still with questions, Greear lays out a simple observation: the Scriptures point to our love of God and our love for others as evidence of our salvation. These are present

in the heart and life of the believer.

Paige Patterson, author of the book’s foreword, declares that *Stop Asking* is a book that he had needed recently to place in the hands of a “young man who was concerned about the state of his soul.”

I agree that it would be expedient to keep this close at hand as it is a most helpful tool to encourage those who are often heavily weighted down by doubt.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Micheal Pardue is pastor of First Baptist Icard.) **BR**



MICHEAL PARDUE
Book Review

Reaching people in their cultural/ethnic context

Do you have a favorite restaurant for you and your family, or an automobile you like to drive? On television, what’s your favorite program? At church, do you prefer the wonderful, traditional hymns that teach great theology, or do you prefer contemporary music with the drums, guitars and the band lifting hearts toward God? Relative to sermons communicating God’s Word, do you prefer the preacher reading the message from a well-thought-out manuscript, or do you anticipate a challenging sermon without the use of notes or outline? What’s the point? We all have preferences. It’s not that our preferences are either right or wrong; it’s just that we are different.

God has been bringing the world to our state, and it has become incredibly diverse. The 2010 census indicates that of North Carolina’s population of 9,535,483, a total of 3,006,533 are non-Anglo. The growth rate among non-white ethnicities in the state is 33.94 percent, a rate nearly double that of the total population growth. Many of these new residents are coming from places like Mexico, El Salvador, India and Vietnam. N.C. Baptists have been given the opportunity and responsibility to reach everyone with the gospel. The Bible says we are to



ANTONIO SANTOS



MARK GRAY

Guest Column

be “fishers of men,” and a smart fisherman knows the fish he is fishing for.

Language is a major consideration in reaching people with the gospel. Presently, there are over 235 languages spoken in the state. People are most responsive to receiving the gospel and growing as disciples in their own “heart language.”[1] When first generation immigrants come into the country, they may be able to speak limited

English, but their desire is to improve their English skills. For Christians this means purposely attending an English-speaking congregation. However, that is precisely when the lack of cultural context becomes very obvious. Even though they can understand most of the words coming from the pastor’s mouth, they do not seem to understand why the people around them are laughing. They do not get the jokes, the idiomatic expressions, and the nuances of the language. Why is this true when they understand most of the words coming from the pastor’s mouth? Those words are void of appropriate cultural context and, therefore, no true communication is taking place. We sometimes forget that language is not simply the expression of thoughts. In reality, it is fundamentally a social instrument and therefore should not be void of context.

Another significant issue in “fishing for men” is an understanding of culture. This state is blessed from the Appalachian culture in the rolling mountains, to the quaint fishing villages of our shorefront coastal waters. We have the quiet life of farmers in the rural areas and the high-density urban centers of our busy and growing

See Reaching page 13

Without self-government, liberty perishes

When most people think of government, they think of civil government with its various laws and controls. But in the most basic of terms, there are essentially two kinds of government – internal and external. Internal government, or self-government, is the most important and always shapes the nature of external government.

Self-government comes from the heart and the conscience, one's character, motives, affections and convictions of life. Self-government affects everything in a person's life: the way one relates to his fellow man, his speech, his aspirations, his conduct, his hopes, his future. And every sphere of civil government is just a reflection of this internal sphere.

No government can be good or just unless its rulers and citizenry have learned to govern themselves. In fact, the more self-government the people possess, the less external forms of government are actually needed. The book of Proverbs in the Bible states this principle, arguing, "He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city" (Proverbs 16:32).

America's fourth President, James Madison stated the concept well when he declared:

"We have staked the whole future of American civilization, not upon the power of government, far from it. We have staked the future of all our political institutions upon the capacity of mankind for self-government; upon the capacity of each and all of us to govern ourselves, to control ourselves, to sustain ourselves according to the Ten Commandments of God."

Whenever people in a nation are not given to the principle of self-government, this inevitably precipitates the need for more laws, more rules, greater exertions of power, more government – much of which begins to reach far beyond its jurisdiction and role – the spending of more money, greater centralizations of power that threaten and even destroy both individual and corporate liberties.

No person argued this principle more passionately

than Samuel Adams, also known as the "Father of the American Revolution." Adams advocated that freedom could not be maintained outside of virtue and morality – the nuts and bolts of internal government. In a letter to James Wren in 1779, he wrote:

"A general dissolution of principles and manners will more surely overthrow the liberties of America than the whole force of the common enemy. While the people are virtuous they cannot be subdued; but when they lose their virtue they will be ready to surrender their liberties to the first external or internal invader. ... If

virtue and knowledge are diffused among the people, they will never be enslaved. This will be their great security."

Adams further contended:

"Neither the wisest constitution nor the wisest laws will secure the liberty and happiness of a people whose manners are universally corrupt."

America's Constitution is the greatest compact of government ever written in human history. Our nation's laws have served its people, providing

more liberty and prosperity for its citizens than any other, making us the envy of the world. Yet, we have never seen a time when there was more lawlessness in our streets, our economy in greater peril, more corruption in government, and the shredding of our constitutional freedoms.

The Democrats have blamed the Republicans. The Republicans have blamed the Democrats. One presidential administration blames a previous one for all the current woes, while it demonstrates no policy initiatives superior in its own right. The people have blamed their leaders. Nevertheless, the primary source of our trials and tribulations is the darkness of

our own hearts. We are, without question, a wayward and sinful people.

What commandment of God is not so spurned by our culture that it does not appear that we have sought to generally abolish its supremacy over us?

Idolatry? Secularism and Humanism supplant the God of heaven with a new authority that says that every man should be his own god and each should do that which is right in his own eyes.

Taking the Lord's name in vain? Not only is His precious name used constantly as a profanity, but worse still even clerics put untrue words in the mouth of the Almighty and attribute those falsehoods to Him.

Observance of the Lord's Day as a holy day – the one day we make His business our primary business – the one day we desperately need for worship, rest, and family? Sunday in our culture is basically now like any other day of the week.

Honor your father and mother? Gay marriage thumbs its nose at this command by making one or the other irrelevant.

Don't murder? Over 50 million babies have been destroyed before they could see the light of day.

Don't commit sexual immorality? It's so much a part of the fabric of our society, we even teach our kids in school how it supposedly might be done safely.

You shall not steal? Gambling, which is swallowing up every state in the nation, is nothing more than a sucker's game of mutual theft – a fleecing of the most vulnerable among us.

Don't bear false witness – don't lie? We've lied to one another so long the truth has become an insult, a joke, or an offense – the victim of political correctness.

Don't covet? This is the mother of all sins among us. The greatest of our affections, our pursuits, is for more

See Creech page 16



MARK CREECH
Guest Column

"Self-government comes from the heart and the conscience, one's character, motives, affections and convictions of life. Self-government affects everything ..." – Mark Creech

Summer youth weeks at Caswell

In recent weeks I have been able to participate for a day in some of the Convention's summer Youth Weeks at Fort Caswell and interact with staff, students and church leaders who are participating in these five-day camps. Each summer about 7,000 middle and high school students representing about 300 churches attend our Youth Weeks, which includes worship, Bible studies, missions involvement and opportunities for fun and fellowship. It thrills me to see a thousand students in Hatch Auditorium so excited about worship and so engaged in hearing the preaching and teaching of God's Word. I am encouraged when I tour the classrooms and observe how involved the students are in learning how to ap-

ply biblical principles in issues they face daily and how to disciple their friends. Thank you pastors, youth leaders and van drivers for investing your vacation time in bringing students to Caswell.



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive director-treasurer

I am grateful for our Convention's youth ministry leader, Merrie Johnson, who coordinates the summer Youth Weeks. Months in advance, she invests many hours of praying, working and planning to design the camps by working with a planning team from churches across the state. Merrie also enlists, trains and leads the "BeDoTell" ministry team of college students. This dynamic team helps lead the

Youth Weeks through Bible studies and worship that incorporates music, drama and media. They are remarkable worship

leaders, and they are passionate about helping students accept Christ as Savior and discover the joy of courageously following His daily and lifelong plan.

In 2012, 622 campers professed faith in Christ during Youth Weeks at Caswell. In these same weeks, 597 acknowledged a calling to some aspect of Christian service and an additional 4,000 students made commitments to Christ. During Youth Weeks the campers also gave enough in missions offerings to provide 300,000 meals to feed displaced and starving people in Haiti.

Contemporary culture is forcefully trying to distract our youth. Even good things become dangerous when they consume our attention and dare to shift our attention from Christ. According to a 2011 study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly half – 47 percent – of high school stu-

dents in the United States have had sexual intercourse. A survey by the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project indicates that 1 in 5 teenagers have participated in sexting, meaning they have sent or received inappropriate sexual messages.

As church leaders, youth leaders, parents and grandparents, you must mentor and help our younger generation stay focused in their walk with Christ so they can grow, mature and reach their potential. The devil is deceptive and he intends to deceive and destroy our kids. Pray that God will guard their hearts and minds. Be a good example so that you do not distract them from their call to honor and serve Him.

"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12 **BR**

Kids' magazine stirs the pot on homosexuality

World News Service

You know something's wrong when your 10-year-old won't let her 9-year-old brother read her latest copy of *Stone Soup*.

Touted as a magazine for children ages 8-13, *Stone Soup* features stories, poems, artwork, and book reviews by children. I bought my budding writer a subscription when she was 8, in hopes she might submit her own work.

Normally, both children enjoy the magazine, and, until this issue, I have had no qualms with it. But when my daughter yanked it out of her brother's hands, I knew something was up.

That something was an 11-year-old girl's review of *My Mixed-Up Berry Blue Summer* by Jennifer Gennari. The book's protagonist is a girl whose mother is planning a wedding with her future wife. The backward townspeople object, but in the end achieve enlightenment and embrace the lesbian couple who then marry and live, apparently, happily ever after.

The young writer of this review lets us know her own views on the issue: "Just like in the book when Eva says, 'We won't keep quiet about homophobia,' I think that people shouldn't be afraid of homosexuality, and if they are they should talk about it so they aren't so uncomfortable with it. I think homosexuals should get the same rights as everyone else, the right to be in the military, the right to get married, and the right to have children."



AMY HENRY
Guest Column

While I was appalled to find such overt propaganda in a children's magazine, given today's heated debate over homosexual marriage, I certainly wasn't surprised.

Our children are exposed to homosexuality in some form nearly every day – no longer is it a forbidden topic. To wit:

TV Guide reports that a future episode of Disney's "Good Luck Charlie" features a homosexual drama. Seeing two men kiss may shock parents today, but after seeing it a few hundred times, our children may not so much as glance up from their smartphones for such things.

Although I was disappointed with

Stone Soup (and planning a strongly worded letter to the editor), this book review gave me just what the reviewer hoped it would: the opportunity to talk with my little ones (but far sooner than I would have liked) about homosexuality. They know the Bible says it is wrong, but how then do we treat a family member or friend (both of which we have and love) who is homosexual? Do we shun or shame, or is there a better, more effective and loving way to approach them?

With the recent Supreme Court decision to strike down the Defense of Marriage Act, such questions are more apropos than ever.

As much as we'd like to, no longer can we act like homosexuality is an issue we

can hide from our children, even within the supposed "safety" of a children's magazine. As much as I disagree with *Stone Soup* for their political correctness on the issue of homosexuality, I agree with the reviewer that indeed we need to have more conversations with our children about it.

But the end result of these conversations may not be quite what she had in mind.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Amy Henry writes for *WORLD Magazine*. A married mother of six, Henry lives in Kansas and is the author of *Humpty Dumpty Just Needed a Nap: What Children's Stories Teach Us About Life, Love, and Mothering*. She blogs at wholemama.com.) **BR**

Reaching Continued from page 11

cities. There are motorcycle riders who rev their engines as new believers are resurrected from the baptismal waters and cowboys where the arena may be dusty and hot, but the gospel is proclaimed and people are regularly coming to Christ. Is there anything wrong with these cultures and the churches designed to reach them with the gospel? Probably not! And the gospel that reaches and transforms their hearts remains the same.

What about worship styles? Some prefer churches where, at the conclusion of the message, the pastor's shirttail is hanging out and he is sweating just a bit. Otherwise, "the pastor wasn't too with it today."

Some North Carolinians prefer a worship style that is more instructional with less emotion, where the Greek and the Hebrew are articulated, and where lives are quietly changed and communities are significantly impacted with the gospel. Interestingly, most choose a church worship style which best fit themselves, and sometimes wonder why everyone doesn't "get it" just like they do.

Bottom line, this state is overwhelmingly filled with people who are unchurched and far from God.

On any given weekend, only 21 percent of people will be found in any

church. Studies indicate that 75 percent of these unreached people live within the greater eight urban centers of N.C. Only 40 percent understand the meaning of "the gospel," while 60 percent may have no relevant understanding of the meaning of the term "saved." Unfortunately, this 60 percent is the growing group in the state.

What shall we do? It takes different kinds of churches to reach different kinds of people.

If we are to reach the growing diverse population of our state, we must communicate God's Word in a variety of styles, languages, and approaches in order to reach the numerous cultural groups in our communities. If we are to be

effective fishers of men, we must know the fish we are fishing for and utilize the most effective tools available to reach them. The key is to catch the fish you are best at catching. But, one thing we must do is "Go fish!"

[1] <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/quick-facts/students/>, "Student Information - Demographics"

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Antonio Santos is a consultant for Hispanic ministry for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), and Mark Gray is a team leader for church planting with BSC.) **BR**



Submissions for Tar Heel Voices (letters to the editor)

Please send no more than 300 words, along with contact information, to editor@BRnow.org or *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512-1185. Letters can be anonymous but only with approval by the editor. Each submission will be subject to style, length and clarity adjustments. Only one letter from the same writer will be published in a 90-day period. Like the *Biblical Recorder* fan page on facebook and follow us on Twitter: @biblicalrecord.

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July 28

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

August 4

God Promises the Messiah

Focal Passage: Isaiah 53:2-12

Our modern American society has some rather shallow ideas about beauty; the right height, weight, shape, hairdo, and smile define “beautiful.” According to Isaiah, Jesus could not pass the modern cultural test for American beauty. He lacked the swagger and suaveness to be considered attractive, and was despised and forsaken. Jesus became like us in the flesh to provide righteousness, that which is so unlike us in spirit. God knew that lost people needed a Savior who was beautiful because of His divine nature and perfect obedience to the Father – not a passing handsome face. The true beauty of Jesus was put on display by God the Father when He offered His Son as the once-for-all sacrifice for sins. Far from being a victim of circumstance, Jesus was God’s sin offering from the foundation of the world. Many people suffered the physical torment of crucifixion, but Jesus suffered both physically and spiritually as he experienced the never before known horror of separation from the Father. Jesus never ceased to be God

the Son, but He experienced a break in His eternally perfect fellowship with the Father that we cannot fully comprehend. Some Christians tend to limit the scope of Jesus’ healing (Isaiah 53:5) to temporal physical healing, but His stripes brought healing that went far deeper than our physical ills. He came to redeem sin-sick souls who had rejected the One who could meet their greatest need – eternal spiritual healing from sin. How often do we consider that Jesus, the sin bearer, never committed the first sin, qualifying Him to cleanse us and make us the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:17)? God’s own sin offering takes away His righteous anger toward all who believe and allows us to have fellowship with Him. We rebelled and yet God provided the solution to our hopeless predicament so that we might be reconciled to Him. Of all the rescues we’ve experienced (broken down car, fire, flood, etc.), none compares to our spiritual rescue through Christ.



TROY RUST
Senior pastor,
Somerset Baptist Church,
Roxboro

Focal Passages: Matthew 4:17-24; John 1:1-2, 11-14, 18, 29

Heresies both ancient and modern have arisen over the rejection of the biblical teaching of the person and work of Jesus Christ. John clearly declared His deity as God the Son. Jesus is not one of three gods (Mormonism), a unique created being (Jehovah’s Witnesses), or one of god’s relational modes (Oneness Pentecostalism). Jesus is the unique Second Person of the triune God, coequal and coeternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. He has existed from the beginning in His deity so that He did not begin to exist in a stable Bethlehem. Rather, God began there to display the Son’s incarnation. As a result of divine conception by the Holy Spirit, Jesus took on human flesh in order to tabernacle among us and to display His glory.

Although many people believe that all people are children of God, John 1:12-13

tells us that we as sinful human beings are children of wrath (Ephesians 2:3) who may join God’s family only through faith in His Son.

This faith comes from God and allows us to affirm the person and work of Jesus. As people who were not eyewitnesses of Jesus, we are placing our faith in the Bible, the only authoritative and inerrant source on the nature of Jesus. The Bible teaches us that Christ’s atoning death served, as Chris Rice sang, to “rob our sin and make us holy.”

Joining God’s family isn’t about being the long lost cousin or strange uncle that the rest of the family knows but never sees. We must actively meet with the family of God in worship and fellowship, and regularly walk alongside those family members to do the work of evangelism, discipleship and ministry.

We must be walking billboards carrying the eternal message of Jesus Christ as King of kings, and Lord of lords. May God give us the boldness not to cave in to the rising tide of political correctness, but to consistently proclaim the gospel of repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ.

July 28

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

August 4

Why Do I Feel Empty?

Focal Passages: Ecclesiastes 3:1, 10-14; 4:9-12; 5:1-7

Depression is difficult to predict and understand. When I was a student at the local community college many years ago, I became interested in playing tennis. For the first time in my life I observed the game, and there was one young man in particular who was worthy of observation. Although I knew him only by name, he was an extremely good looking and talented athlete, probably the best tennis player in the area.

My perception was that he had it all. Fast-forward a couple of years. I’m working a summer job in a Christian camp, and our lifeguard tells me the sad story of this same young tennis star committing suicide.

I was dumbfounded; she was suffering, and she asked me about his eternal destiny. I gave her the best answer I knew at the time. In retrospect I probably gave her a poor answer, a non-comforting answer. She and her friends were unaware of their friend’s internal struggles. This hurting young man obviously felt empty

inside. I surmise he asked the question “why?” Sadly, he did not discover a reason to live.

The Teacher’s theme is that God has made everything appropriate in His time. He acknowledges we only partially understand the ways of God. Just as there are seasons in nature, there are seasons in life. We cannot fully predict or control them, yet we must learn to accept them. One of his conclusions is that the best we can do is to rejoice and enjoy life. Another insight, found in 4:9, is to not make life’s journey alone. Good companions are compared to the increased strength of a three-strand cord.

Unlike a single strand (the solo life), it is not easily broken. God made us relational, and having good friends certainly is a good deterrent to loneliness and depression. Furthermore, in 5:1-7 the Teacher calls for personal integrity. Fear God. Fulfill your spiritual vows. What you do is of far greater value than what you say.



WAYNE PROCTOR
Pastor, Eure
Baptist Church

Focal Passages: Ecclesiastes 5:8-16, 18-20; 6:7-12

When one hears the name Enron one thinks of scandal. Until the scandal was revealed in October 2001, many people lauded Enron and its brain-trust as examples of exceptional leadership. Enron, founded by Kenneth Lay in 1985, was an energy (natural gas) company based in Houston, Texas, that rapidly grew to become one of the largest U.S. companies. In 2000 its stock price rose to a high of \$90 per share. After shareholders filed a \$40 billion lawsuit, the share price plummeted to less than \$1 per share. On December 2, 2001, Enron filed for bankruptcy protection. Its assets of \$63.4 billion made it the largest corporate bankruptcy in American history at the time. The result was that some of Enron’s top executives were indicted for fraud and sent to prison. Corporate greed is a reality. When Enron collapsed many

investors lost much or all of their life’s savings.

The Teacher describes a situation where the fabulously wealthy lose it all. On the one hand it is a “sickening tragedy” (5:13). Any number of factors can cause wealth and its lifestyle to disappear – a bad business deal, a collapsing economy, a compromise of integrity. The man who loses the ability to provide for his family invariably feels like a failure. The man who intentionally breaks rules and defrauds his own business can expect no pity.

While unpleasant, failure is an important part of living. It can cause us to reexamine, refocus and reorder our lives. It can lead to making healthier life adjustments and choices. The Teacher found that it is far wiser to prize happiness, hard work and a good family over possessions that may disappear in our lifetime – and that will surely disappear from us at our death. In a society that largely glorifies instant gratification, success and wealth, it is sobering to consider what often happens when possessions are lost. The Teacher says a better course is to be content with that which will endure.

Am I Headed for Failure?

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Pastor

Our GBBC family is a versatile, talented, loving group in Brevard, NC, that is seeking a **full-time pastor** with a desire to help us grow and share the love of Christ. Gladly Branch Baptist Church is located in the Blue Ridge Mountains, an area of natural beauty and resources. We are a casual, team-minded congregation and desire a candidate with a heart for service and great communication skills. Applicants should possess a seminary degree. We offer an attractive compensation package with housing. Please send resume to the attention of the Pastor Search Team at Gladly Branch Baptist Church, 1156 Rosman Hwy., Brevard, NC 28712.

Pilgrim Baptist Church is seeking a **Senior Pastor** who's a spiritual leader with strong family values. Candidate should be an effective communicator, gifted teacher and leader of his congregation. Pilgrim Baptist Church believes God has a plan for our church and new pastor. PBC feels strongly that preparing to preach and teach, engaging in personal prayer and study time, visiting the sick and lost in their time of need are pastoral responsibilities. Please send personal testimony with resume to Pilgrim Baptist Church, PO Box 1517, Millers Creek, NC 28651, or pbcpastorsearch2013@yahoo.com.

Forest Hills Baptist Church of Wilson, NC, is seeking a **senior pastor** to lead our congregation's growth in the Word and reach the lost in our community. Please send resumes to Senior Pastor Search Committee, 1407 Forest Hills Drive, Wilson, NC 27896.

Green Creek FBC in Polk County, NC, is searching for a **full-time pastor** with a seminary/divinity school degree (minimum M.Div.) and at least five years pastoral experience. Please send resumes to GCFBChurch@yahoo.com.

Congregation seeking **part-time pastor**. Asking for college and some seminary experience. Must be of the Baptist faith. Qualifications: must be filled with and led by the Holy Spirit; must be licensed and ordained. How to apply: submit a current resume. Include three reference/recommendation letters. Submit to: Deacon Clyde Mangum, New Mount Zion Baptist Church, P.O. Box 964, Roxboro, NC 27573. Deadline: August 9, 2013.

Jonesboro Heights Baptist Church in Sanford, NC, is searching for a **senior pastor** with strong leadership skills, capable of leading a pastoral staff of four members. JHBC is very mission minded both internationally and locally. We are a diverse/intergenerational congregation of 400+. Our focus is on building relationships and family ministry. Our church is dually aligned with CBF and SBC. We require ministry preparation credentials from an accredited university/divinity school. We offer a competitive salary and benefit package. Send all resumes to 316 W. Main St., Sanford, NC 27332, or electronically at pastorsearch@jhbc.org. Check out our website for more information about the position www.jhbc.org.

Valdese First Baptist Church, in western North Carolina, is seeking a gifted teacher to become our new **pastor** and lead a fulltime staff of two pastoral and three administrative members. Our mission activities extend from local to international. We average 150 attendance in Sunday School and 225 in our blended worship service. Our church is aligned with both CBF and SBC. We provide space and support for a local Hispanic congregation and a 5-Star Child Development Center. For more information, visit www.ValdeseFirstBaptist.org; submit resumes by July 31.

Lower Creek Baptist Church (<http://lowercreek.org>) is seeking **full-time pastor**. LCBC Southern Baptist is aligned with the SBC. We're seeking a graduate of an accredited seminary or divinity school with minimum of five years pastoral experience. Our congregation currently is approximately 150 worshipping in a blended worship style. Send resumes to LCBC Search Committee, PO Box 3300, Lenoir, NC 28645. Email lbc3300@yahoo.com.

FULL-TIME PASTOR. Big Island Baptist Church, Big Island, Virginia, located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains and in sight of the historic James River, is seeking a full-time pastor. A seminary degree is required. We are associated with BGAV and have ties to both CBF and SBC, and support the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message. Our church needs a compassionate minister with effective preaching abilities, visionary and inspirational leadership, strong organizational skills, and a passion to be involved in community activities and outreach. Please submit resume by August 30, 2013, to: Big Island Baptist Church, Attn: Pastoral Search Committee, P.O. Box 348, Big Island, Virginia 24526.

Church Staff

Associate Pastor of Music and Children Ministries. Elizabethtown Baptist Church is an exciting growing church desiring a candidate who will bring enthusiasm, energy and excitement to the music and children's ministries. This is a full-time, salaried position with benefits. Minimum 4 year degree preferred. Interested individuals should send a resume to Tommy Hatcher at tommyhatcher@me.com.

New Hope Baptist Church in Earl, NC is seeking a **full-time Youth and Children Minister**. Send resume to New Hope Baptist Church, Attention: Search Committee, P.O. Box 116, Earl, NC 28038, or russandmo@aol.com.

Yadkin Baptist Church in the Foothills of NC is seeking a **full-time Associate Pastor in Youth/Children and Education**. This position requires college and seminary degrees from accredited institutions. Five years experience preferred. We are seeking someone with a sound biblical theology and a passion for sharing Jesus with others. Must enjoy working with youth and children and have good organization skills. Resumes may be submitted to Yadkin Baptist Church, PO Box 37, Patterson, NC 28661, or melanie@yadkinbaptistchurch.org.

Associate Pastor of Youth and College Students. Morningside Baptist Church, located in Spartanburg, S.C., is seeking a full-time associate pastor of youth and college students with a heart for God and students. The candidate will plan, implement and lead a balanced and creative ministry to youth and college students. This person will need to have a proven record of effective student ministry, an outgoing personality, team-building skills, communication excellence and administrative skills. He or she will need to be willing to work collaboratively with the other pastors on staff and incorporate the youth in the overall life of the church. The candidate will have a master of divinity from an accredited seminary and at least 5 years full-time ministerial experience in a church. Go to msidechurch.org to learn more about Morningside. If interested, send your resume to randbhill@bellsouth.net.

The First Baptist Church of Matthews, North Carolina, is seeking a **full-time Minister to Students**. The successful candidate will have a seminary degree or a Bible college degree, a contagious enthusiasm for student ministry and have significant experience as a minister to students at a midsized or larger church. They should possess the ability to develop, communicate and implement a vision and strategic plan for student ministry within the overall vision for family ministry at First Baptist Matthews. We desire a philosophy of ministry that is God-centered, Biblically saturated, and culturally relevant. Your cover letter and resume should be sent to Frank Norwood at fnorwood@fbcmatthews.org. Please see our website at www.fbcmatthews.org. Please do not call the church or send your information by snail mail. If you feel the Lord may be leading you to such a ministry position please send a cover letter in a MS Word document as an attachment to your email.

Temple Baptist Church, Raleigh, N.C., is seeking a **full-time Family Minister** responsible for the spiritual development of children, preschool, youth and their families. Please send letter of interest and resume including Statement of Faith to: Chairperson, Family Minister Search Committee, Temple Baptist Church, 1417 Clifton Street, Raleigh, NC 27604, or info@templeraleigh.org.

Mountain View Baptist Church of Hamptonville, NC, is seeking a **full-time Associate Pastor of Students**. Our church is theologically conservative and actively involved in missions. Email resume to mvbc@yadtel.net.

Wallburg Baptist Church is seeking a **part-time Minister of Music** who would coordinate all church music activities. Send resume to Wallburg Baptist Church, PO Box 595, Wallburg, NC 27373.

CHURCH ACCOMPANIST NEEDED! Organist preferred. Spencer Baptist Church, Spindale, NC. Responsibilities: Sunday morning worship, some Sunday evening services, Wednesday night choir rehearsals, accompaniment for small ensembles as necessary. Salary negotiable, based on experience. For a job description and to apply, please send resume with references to ktsettlemyre@aol.com or Spencer Baptist Church, 187 N. Oak Street, Spindale, NC 28160, Attn: Music Position.

Catawba Valley Baptist Church, located in Morganton, NC, is seeking a **Minister of Music and Worship**. This position is one that involves working and leading the worship choir, praise team and instrumental ensemble. This position is part-time and could potentially lead to a full-time staff member. We are seeking a person that has a heart to serve the Lord, desire to reach people through music and one that will lead worship in a blended format. A musical background is preferred. Interested candidates should submit resumes to Music Search Committee, P.O. Box 1580, Morganton, NC 28680, or via email to cvbcsecretary@att.net.

Flemings Chapel Baptist Church is seeking a **Part-Time Director of Ministry for Youth and Young Adults**. This position will primarily work with our students in middle and high school and minimal involvement with our college students. In addition, this position will seek to grow stronger families through our student ministries. Please send resumes by email to pastorscott@flemingschapel.org or mail to 4430 Littlejohn Church Rd., Lenoir, NC 28645, Attention Dr. Scott Shoffner, Senior Pastor.

Mount Gilead Baptist Church, Fayetteville, NC, is seeking an individual to serve as our **part-time youth director**. Some experience working with children and youth is required. Qualified applicants please send resume and photo to Youth Director Search Committee, Mount Gilead Baptist Church, P.O. Box 26719, Fayetteville, NC 28314, or email: pastorpierce35@yahoo.com.

Miscellaneous

NCBAM needs wheel chair ramps funded and built across the state. Provide nails, boards or manpower. The need is great; no action too small. Call North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry: 877-506-2226.

Placing a classified ad in the *Biblical Recorder*

Choose one of three avenues:

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

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

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

Creech

Continued from page 12

money, more materialism, more, more, more. Many might seek to deny it, but we certainly judge most of life by the things we possess.

It's most unfortunate that these descriptions fall enormously short in describing the severity of our decline. But any current newspaper today will reveal headlines that the majority of us who have lived for 50 years or more never dreamed we would see.

What about the role of our churches in the nation's moral delinquency?

Unfortunately, our churches have contributed significantly, either by our own various forms of unbelief, corruptions of Christian doctrine, or neglect to make disciples – our failure to faithfully address the educational, economic, social and political institutions of our time with the Word of God.

In 1799, the Father of American Geography, Dr. Jedediah Morse, who was also a minister, eloquently expressed in a sermon the responsibility of the church, coupled with a solemn warning:

“To the kindly influence of Christianity we owe that degree of civil freedom and political and social happiness which mankind now enjoys. In proportion as the genuine effects of Christianity are

diminished in any nation ... in the same proportion will the people of that nation recede from the blessings of genuine freedom, and approximate the miseries of complete despotism. I hold this to be a truth confirmed by experience. If so, it follows, that all efforts made to destroy the foundations of our holy religion, ultimately tend to the subversion also of our political freedom and happiness. Whenever the pillars of Christianity shall be overthrown, our present republican forms of government, and all the blessings which flow from them, must fall with them.”

A return to the great principles of self-government is the only hope of saving America from the ever creeping advancements of tyranny and despotism. This cannot – this will not happen unless the churches are clean and the nation turns to God in Christ. Without a revival in the churches, without a spiritual awakening throughout the land – self-government – the foundation of a civil government that protects the unalienable rights of the people shall perish from the earth.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Mark H. Creech is executive director of the Christian Action League of North Carolina. This column originally appeared on The Christian Post website.) **BR**



Baptist Children's Homes leader honored

Michael C. Blackwell, right, thanks the crowd for his 30th anniversary ceremony June 27. Thomasville named a street on the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina Mills Home campus after the longtime president. The Blackwell Boulevard sign was unveiled as a surprise. The street that is being renamed is Watson Avenue, which is the main road on campus. A cottage on the campus was named after Blackwell in the early 2000s. Before the unveiling there was an anniversary celebration with many guests honoring Blackwell for his service. During the ceremony, Thomasville Mayor Joe Bennett read a proclamation from the City of Thomasville making June 27 the official “Dr. Michael C. Blackwell Day” in Thomasville. (BCH photo)

Mike Huckabee



44th Governor of Arkansas

David Jeremiah





The Oak Ridge Boys



Sevier Heights Choir & Orchestra



Jason Crabb



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