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N.C.'S LARGEST
CHURCHES

BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

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OSBORNE CHURCH PRAYS AND FASTS FOR SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

Steve Griffith, senior pastor of Osborne Baptist Church in Eden since 1992, received a phone call last October that launched a movement of prayer and fasting in the church.

The call came from Terry Daniel, a 17-year church member and local family physician, who described his concern for the spiritual growth of men in the church and the need for spiritual awakening in the nation.

Daniel and a small group of men had been praying and fasting every Monday for several years.

He said they focused on “our own relationship with the Lord, our lives, our family, our work and the country.”

He sensed that God was up to something greater.

“About mid-year last year as I was studying and praying, the Holy Spirit laid

on my heart a burden for our country,” Daniel said.

“In looking at the country I started thinking how we are really no different from most governments in the world – power, politics, money and those type of things seems to rule everything.”

He said the Holy Spirit impressed on him the need for many in this country to fast and seek God.

“So we prayed about it, and around early October I called Pastor Steve,” Daniel said.

“I told him what the Lord had laid on my heart and he got the same burden.”

The movement first targeted the men in the church.

Griffith said, “I want to challenge the men in the church to fast and pray for spiritual awakening the first three days of every month for the entire year of 2014.”



STEVE GRIFFITH

Along with church leaders, they developed a schedule to call the men to prayer and fasting on the first Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of each month.

“We didn’t know what to expect from that,” Griffith said. “The first month I challenged our men to come back on Sunday night. We don’t have a Sunday night service, but about 400 men came. The number who actually show up each month has dwindled down quite a bit, but a lot of men are staying with it.”

Griffith emphasized that the movement did not begin with his initiative. “It all really started with Dr. Daniel and his passion for this,” he said.

“We’re praying for spiritual awakening in our own hearts, in our family, in

our church and in our nation.”

Daniel said, “We have a burden to see revival and to see people get saved, to see people get right with the Lord, to see our families improved and to see our country change in a positive way and see people get saved and the Lord being magnified. That’s really how it came about.”

Although the number of men involved

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TERRY DANIEL

Bordeaux will not seek second term

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

C. J. Bordeaux, president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), announced he will not seek a second term as president at the coming November annual meeting.

In a letter to the *Biblical Recorder* Bordeaux said, “I will not be nominated for a second term as your president for several reasons, but in particular because of some health concerns that have arisen in my life.

“Sometimes we have to step back and look at the whole picture, and even determine to give up some things that we thoroughly

enjoy,” he said. “My wife and I have concluded that it would be best for me to set aside this responsibility as your president.”

Last November Bordeaux, pastor of Gorman Baptist Church in Durham, and Bobby Blanton, senior pastor of Lake Norman Baptist Church in Huntersville, ran for the office.

He served two years as first vice president and two years as second vice president before being elected to the office of president.

“From the depths of my heart, I wanted you to know how humbling it has been to travel across this state, representing you,” he said.

“I have always been a North Carolina Baptist, and will continue to

See Bordeaux page 3



C.J. BORDEAUX

Each church is unique

Churches come in all sizes. Across the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) there are churches that will see a dozen people in weekly worship attendance. Then there is the largest SBC church, NewSpring Community Church in Anderson S.C., that reported 27,158 in weekly attendance last year.

Every year Thom Rainer, president and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources, collects the data churches submit in the Annual Church Profile (ACP) and publishes a list of SBC churches that report 1,000 or more in weekly church attendance. His complete list of the 563 largest churches can be found on *ThomRainer.com*.

We identified 31 North Carolina churches on Rainer’s list and published them on page 10 of this issue.

Many will rejoice with these churches. I am among them. But I know that some will look with skepticism on methods employed to reach the lost, unchurched and disillusioned. Some will criticize them and even attack the churches’ leaders or elements of the churches’ styles. I’ve learned that I should not to be surprised at what people say and how harshly some believers will criticize other believers. At the risk of being the target of such critics, I would like to put some things in perspective.

Let’s begin by stating the obvious: churches are very different. Each is unique and does ministry in a variety of ways. I believe that’s why we call our churches “autonomous.”

A church does not have to be large to be strong in missions involvement, plant new churches or send someone from the congregation to an overseas assignment. A church does not have to be large to give generously to the Cooperative Program (CP) or mission offerings. Being a large church is not a prerequisite for winning the lost or making disciples.

In fact, some will be quick to point out that a significant number of churches on Rainer’s list do not give the largest sums to CP or national and international missions. Many other churches shine brighter than the largest churches in that category.

Some large churches excel in church

planting and disciple-making. For others this is a serious weakness. And let us be quick to point out, the same can be said of smaller churches. Strengths and weaknesses abound in churches of every size. There is no perfect church. There



K. ALLAN BLUME
Editor

are great small and medium-size churches, and there are great large churches.

Worship attendance does not tell the whole story. Numbers represent people gathered for worship in one location, or, in some cases, in multi-site locations. But there is more to talk about in the big picture of Kingdom activity.

For this reason, I asked LifeWay to provide additional

numbers that look at all Southern Baptist churches. The chart on this page lists the information they shared. A quick glance shows that churches reporting less than 100 in weekly attendance make up approximately 49 percent of SBC churches. Those who count 100-999 in weekly services make up 26 percent. Churches above 1,000 represent 1.2 percent of all SBC churches.

If you study the figures carefully, you will notice that the totals do not add up.

The percentages do not add up to 100. The total number of churches in the chart is 35,130. But there are 46,125 churches who identify with the SBC. The difference is the 11,000 churches, almost 24 percent, who did not complete the

ACP last year. That is a very broad “we don’t know” factor. It is an information gap that leaves an incomplete picture and invites speculation.

Some have suggested that perhaps our baptisms and attendance numbers have not declined. The ‘perceived decrease’ is lost in the unreported 24 percent. That’s my point – speculation always grows in the absence of facts.

We can fix that. Between now and the first of October every Baptist church should give attention to completing their ACP. This simple action will provide an honest picture of who we are.

I know there are some who break out in hives over reporting statistics. The aversion to reports is typically justified as more spiritual.

There is nothing uniquely spiritual about filling out the ACP. But neither is it unspiritual. It is simply a truthful list of basic information.

SBC Weekly Worship Attendance (2013)

Weekly Worship Attendance	Number of churches	Percent of churches
1-49	11,878	25.8%
50-99	10,601	23%
100-249	8,482	18.4%
250-499	2,640	5.7%
500-999	966	2.1%
1,000-1,999	384	0.8%
2,000+	179	0.4%

This table does not include churches that reported zero, left the item blank, or did not submit an Annual Church Profile (ACP).
Source: 2013 ACP

Some pastors have said, “I refuse to play the numbers game.” Sounds spiritual, doesn’t it? Well, not really. Has anyone called for the removal of the book of Numbers from the Bible?

Consider this hypothetical conversation: “When I visit my doctor all he cares about is numbers. He wants to know my weight, height, blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, triglycerides and a long list of other numbers that I don’t understand. He doesn’t really care about me. He just wants my numbers!” Such a statement about your doctor would be absurd.

Of course your doctor cares. That is the very reason for gathering the necessary information.

It provides vital data so medical professionals can make an intelligent, informed diagnosis of one’s physical

condition. Numbers are a not just a helpful assessment tool – they are absolutely essential. Without accurate numbers, serious – even fatal – decisions are possible.

Let’s be reasonable. Everyone gains when a church completes the ACP.

Your church will have a valuable record of information to track your history and envision your future. The local association can do a better job of developing a mission

strategy and designing ministries for your community.

The state convention will have necessary data for planning and evaluating mission partnerships with churches and associations. The Southern Baptist Convention will know where we stand – factually – instead of guessing between information gaps.

Thank God for churches of every size who are faithful to the Word of God, impacting their community with the gospel, making disciples and taking the gospel to the ends of the earth!

If you have any questions about completing your church ACP and filing it with your local association or with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, please contact Russell Schwab at *rschwab@ncbaptist.org* or (800) 395-5102, ext. 5582. **BR**

“A church does not have to be large to be strong in missions involvement, plant new churches or send someone from the congregation to an overseas assignment.”

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Bordeaux

Continued from page 1

lead my church to support the causes of our state convention and our Cooperative Program. Thank you for your trust in me. I look forward to seeing you in November in Greensboro.”

Bordeaux said he believes the coming BSC annual meeting will be a time of “joyous worship and information.”

The sessions will be Nov. 10-11 in the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro. The theme is “Greater Things.”



TIMMY BLAIR

The *Biblical Recorder* contacted Timmy Blair, first vice president of BSC and pastor of Piney Grove Chapel in Angier. Blair said Mark Harris, former president of BSC and pastor of First Baptist in Charlotte, will nominate him for the office of president.

Blair, who has led Piney Grove for 26 years, said he was saddened that Bordeaux was stepping down, but understood his concerns over health-related needs.

Bordeaux offered his support to Blair. “Timmy is a good man, a strong servant

and he loves North Carolina Baptists,” he said.

Cameron McGill, the BSC’s second vice president and pastor of Dublin First Baptist Church (FBC) said he plans to run for the office of first vice president at the November annual meeting.

“After praying with brother C.J. and brother Timmy over the past few months, and seeking discernment of the Holy Spirit, I feel led to pursue the office of first vice president,” said McGill, who has pastored Dublin FBC for 14 years.

“I believe with all my heart that the best days for our state convention are ahead of us. I would like the opportunity to continue to serve the churches across the state as a vice president.”

Nominations for any of the state offices can be made up until the actual annual meeting in November. Nominations can come from the floor of the convention hall during the time for business slated for that particular office. **BR**



CAMERON MCGILL

Rick Speas to nominate Joel Stephens for 2nd VP

BR staff

Rick Speas, senior pastor of Old Town Baptist Church, Winston-Salem and a former president of Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), said, “I am happy announce that I will nominate Joel Stephens to the office of 2nd vice president of the BSC. I believe Joel is a dedicated servant of the Lord. He is a strong supporter of North Carolina Baptists and the Cooperative Program, and he has served our convention in many capacities already.”

As senior pastor of Westfield Baptist Church, Westfield, Stephens said the church is active in reaching the surrounding community and has taken the challenge to investigate ways to impact lostness in the Piedmont Triad area through the BSC’s new strategy.

Stephens said, “Our congregation has also supported me whole-heartedly in my role as a founding faculty member of the Roma Bible Institute – a school established by North Carolina pastors to train Roma pastors in Hungary, Romania and Ukraine that partners with Baptists on Mission and Hungarian Baptist Aid. Beyond all this, Westfield gladly gives over

11% to the Cooperative Program.”

Speas believes Stephens “will bring great insight and vision to that position and to our convention. It will give me joy to stand before our convention in November and nominate him.”



JOEL STEPHENS

Stephens received his master of divinity and a doctor of ministry degrees from South-eastern Baptist Theological Seminary. In 2007, he began serving on the BSC Board of Directors and as a member of the Council on Christian Higher Education – now the Christian Higher Education Special Committee. Stephens was elected in 2009 as chair of the Christian Higher Educa-

tion Special Committee placing him on the Executive Committee, also. In January 2012, he was elected to serve as the chair of the Committee on Convention Meetings, and has filled that position the past two years.

He said, “I am so excited about what God is doing through our convention, and I whole-heartedly support the new strategy and the leadership of our convention. God’s hand is blessing and moving among us in these days.”

He and his wife, Lisa, have four children: Carson, Carrie, Cooper and Cathryn. **BR**

Meriam Ibrahim gains freedom from Sudan

By MYRIAH SNYDER | Baptist Press

Meriam Ibrahim, the Sudanese woman whose death sentence caused an international outcry, arrived safely in Italy on July 24.

Ibrahim, also known as Mariam Yahia Ibrahim Ishag, was flown on an Italian government jet to Rome with her husband, Daniel Wani, and two young children, Martin and Maya.

Ibrahim was arrested in February and Sudanese judge Abaas Al Khalifa set Ibrahim’s death sentence for “apostasy” (leaving Islam) May 15. However, in June, the ruling was overturned and she was released from prison only to be detained at the airport and denied permission to leave the country. The family met with Pope Francis who “thanked her for her faith and courage,” according to a Vatican report.

“The court has sentenced you to be hanged till you are dead,” Al Khalifa told Ibrahim on May 15 after Islamist crowds shouted for the court to punish her. Al

Khalifa had given her 15 days to recant upon announcing his original sentence April 30. Because she married a Christian, she was also sentenced to 100 lashes for apostasy.

Ibrahim was born to a Sudanese Muslim father who disappeared from her life when she was 6 years old and an Ethiopian mother who was Ethiopian Orthodox. Though her mother reared her as a Christian, Islamic law asserts she is Muslim by birth because her father was Muslim. She gave birth to her daughter Maya on May 27 in a Sudanese prison for women. Her not-yet-2-year-old son also remained with his mother in prison. She was released from prison and her court rulings were stayed on June 23.

However, when attempting to leave Khartoum for South Sudan the following day, she and her husband were detained for “falsified” travel documents.

Ibrahim was staying at the U.S. embassy for her safety and was unable to leave the country until Italian intervention.

Full story online at BRnow.org. **BR**

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Pastor Tracy Smith, far left, speaks to the attendees for the groundbreaking of Bethel Baptist Church's multi-ministry building in Hertford. The church has been using its current facility, see below, since 1837. (BR photos by K. Allan Blume)

Bethel Baptist thinks big with small congregation

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

Organized in 1806, Bethel Baptist Church in Hertford is one of the oldest churches in North Carolina. With an average worship attendance around 100, its size matches the majority of Southern Baptist churches. (See editorial on page 2.)

Characteristic of worship services in many Baptist churches, every Sunday Pastor Tracy Smith gives the greeting, leads the congregational music, directs the choir, makes the announcements and preaches the sermon. That is a small portion of his full load of pastoral responsibilities.

However, unlike many churches, Bethel is intentional about reaching their rural community.

Sunday, July 13 was a day of celebration and groundbreaking for a new multi-ministry building that will broaden the church's outreach. It is their first building project since a fellowship hall was built in 1977. "This is big for a church our size," Smith said. "I'm excited about this building. But I'm not nearly as excited about this building as I am about the hundreds of people who will come to know Jesus Christ as a result of it. ... I want to see the baptismal waters stay stirred."

He became the church's pastor in February. In his Ground-breaking Day sermon from Joshua 1:1-9, Smith told the congregation they should expect to see great things happening that will change the face of the church and the community.

"Great things are happening now," he said. "But I guarantee you as we follow God, there's going to be greater things to come. ... I'm excited about what God is going to be doing five, 10, 15 and 20 years down the road."

Smith told the biblical story of Israel's wandering in the wilderness after God delivered them from 400 years of slavery in Egypt. "We must avoid the mistakes the children of Israel made," he warned. "God's best would only be attained by listening to the voice of God."

Smith said the Hebrew people were only an 11-day journey from the land of promise. But because of their disobedience, it took 40 years. Ten spies who investigated the Promised Land said the cost was too risky, and it should not be attempted.

"But two spies said it is the promise of God, and the people should take the land," he said. "They did not listen to the voice of God, but listened to the voice of 10 opinions. The Israelites missed the Promised Land for 40 years because they saw the opposition and not the opportunity."

Listing the many ways Bethel church has been blessed, Smith said, "We can't be blessing hogs. Because He is blessing us, we need to be a blessing outside these walls. The overflow of our blessings should pour out to the community at large. ... We have to honor God's Word and share God's Word."

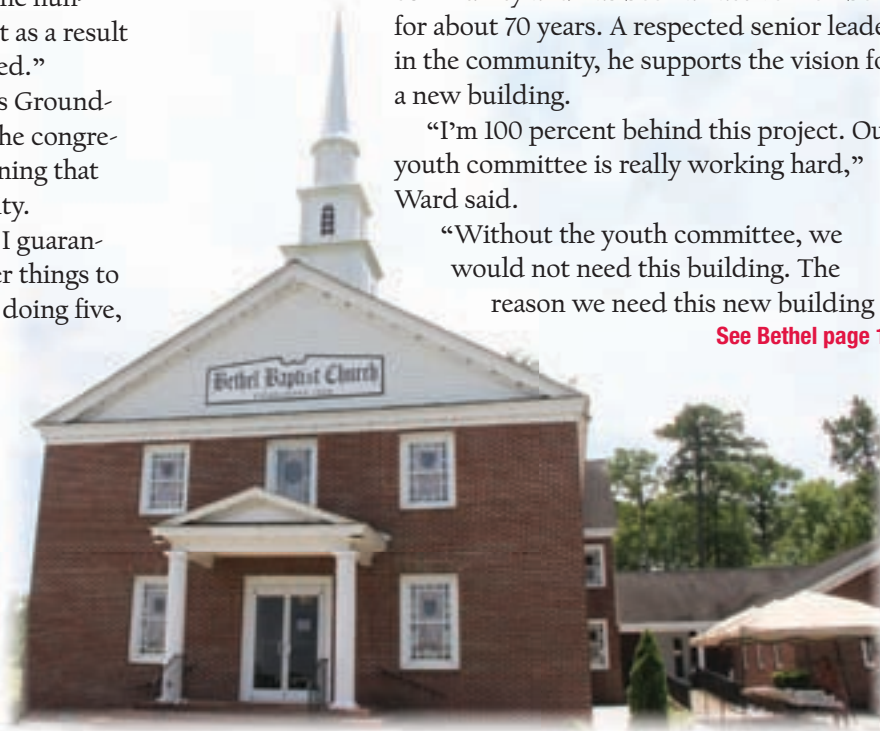
"I see this building as another tool in our toolbox of opportunities to serve God and to reach the lost people in our community," said Jonathan Nixon, chairman of the building committee. "I think it's going to be another way to do that, especially to our younger people. It will give us a calling card to meet their physical needs and then meet their spiritual needs. You know Christ did that. And I think this might be a great opportunity for us to do that."

Charles Ward, a trustee of Bethel church was born in the community and has been an active member for about 70 years. A respected senior leader in the community, he supports the vision for a new building.

"I'm 100 percent behind this project. Our youth committee is really working hard," Ward said.

"Without the youth committee, we would not need this building. The reason we need this new building is

[See Bethel page 11](#)



Fruitland's associate degree now online

Fruitland Baptist Bible College Communications

Students enrolling at Fruitland Baptist Bible College (FBBC) in the Fall of 2014 have the option of completing their entire associate of religion in Christian ministries and world-view degree online.

"We are very excited to offer this program online, and we believe it will enable vast numbers of people to receive a Fruit-



DAVID HORTON

land degree who are unable to attend the main campus in Hendersonville," said David Horton, Fruitland's president.

The online curriculum consists of 64 courses offered over eight quarters, which will enable a full-time student to

graduate in two years.

Fruitland began to expand its educational outreach four years ago with the addition of the first satellite campus in Monroe. Satellite locations now include Monroe, Wilkesboro, Rocky Mount, and the Hispanic satellites in Sylva, Statesville, Charlotte and Wilmington.

Fruitland ventured into online education two years ago with its first online course.

Ben Tackett, the registrar/librarian at FBBC played a key role in getting the school's curriculum online. "Before Ben Tackett came to Fruitland, we desired to have an online program, but lacked the technical expertise to do so," said Scott Thompson, Fruitland's vice president of academic affairs.

Fruitland uses an online educational delivery system referred to as "Moodle," which is also used by numerous colleges and seminaries in their internet-based programs.

Moodle is "student friendly" and offers professors an opportunity to use a "wide variety of educational techniques in the presentation of the course," according to Tackett.

Students from any location around the world can benefit from Fruitland's online program.

One of the current participants lives in Kenya and wants to train other pastors with the knowledge he gains from his

[See Fruitland page 15](#)

Caraway offers new camps, focuses on disciple-making

By C. WALTER OVERMAN | BSC Communications

At the B.W. Jackson outdoor chapel on the grounds of Camp Caraway, there is a plaque in honor of Jackson reminding people of the purpose of Camp Caraway – to introduce children to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In 1999, when the chapel was named after Jackson, more than 6,000 boys received Christ as their Lord and Savior at Camp Caraway. Fifteen years later, that number is now closer to 10,000, says Mark Moore, Caraway's summer camp director.

"That's why we exist. Every camper who comes to Camp Caraway is going to receive truth from God's Word and they are going to receive opportunities to respond to God's Word," Moore said. Camp Caraway first opened in 1963 and until last year it was exclusively a camp for boys.

Through its Camp Caraway for Boys, a weeklong camp offered during four weeks throughout the summer for boys 9-17 years old, campers are introduced to Christ through a variety of means, including daily Bible studies with a camp pastor and through interactions with missionaries and counselors.



Mothers and sons enjoy one of the activities during a mini-camp at Caraway Conference Center. Camp Caraway has expanded its camping options to allow more people to be part of the experience. (BSC photo by C. Walter Overman)

The camps also include numerous activities including team building games, swimming in the lake or pool, zip line and paintball. "We use fun, first of all, to share the love of Jesus, to develop healthy relationships, to share the importance of missions and to create lasting, teachable moments," Moore said.

Last year Caraway expanded its summer camp experience by offering its first ever co-ed children's camp, Camp Caraway for Children. The weeklong Christian children's camp is for boys and girls who have completed grades 1-6.

The camp was offered for one week last year, but this year Caraway offered it

for two weeks to accommodate a growing interest in the children's camp.

"Our numbers for children's camp has nearly doubled this year," Moore said. "We are excited about what God is doing through Camp Caraway as we explore ways to reach as many children as possible for Christ."

To that end, Caraway introduced two additional first-time camps this summer: a father-daughter and mother-son mini camp. Moore said the purpose of the two-day camps is similar to the week-long boys and co-ed camps, but with the added emphasis of helping parents learn how to be disciple-makers in the home.

"The connection between family and faith development is important," Moore said. "The purpose of these camps is to create intentional time for parents to be together with their children to do fun things with them that lead to spiritual growth."

Moore said many parents in today's

world are burdened by hectic schedules that leave little room for true rest and discipleship moments with their children. "We want parents to feel welcome here, to find rest here and to focus on their relationship with their child and their relationship with God while they are here," he said. "We also want parents to be reminded that these are the most important relationships they'll ever have and that God has entrusted them with the responsibility of raising their children to be godly adults."

The new camp experience, Moore said, is also designed to instill disciple-making in the children, too.

"We are intentional in challenging and encouraging both children and parents to follow Christ and be godly people who make disciples," he said. "Like church, camp is a ministry that, when used properly, fuels discipleship at home."

In addition to the four weeklong boy's camps, two weeklong children's camp, and the father-daughter and mother-son mini camps, Caraway is hosting four father-son mini camps in 2014.

Going forward, Moore said the camps for boys would continue to be a central focus of Caraway's summer camp experience. "We love boy's camps, and we will continue boy's camp so long as God allows us to do it," he said. "But our new camps are important, too, because they are an avenue that we can use to reach more people for Christ than we have ever done before."

Visit www.baptistsonmission.org/camps/camp-caraway or contact Mark Moore at mmoore@campcaraway.org. **B3**

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Diversity itself is theological, professor says

By MICHAEL MCEWEN | BR Content Editor

Since August 2013, the Kingdom Diversity initiative at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) addresses two issues: raising the voice of diverse cultures and of women on its campus.

Bruce Ashford, provost of SEBTS, said, “At the cabinet level, we began to discuss how we in the seminary community could best reflect God’s love for His world and best minister to our given context.

“In order to do so, we need for our seminary community to reflect the future kingdom, which will be composed of worshippers from every tribe, tongue, people and nation ... To be able to minister to multiple cultures and ethnicities in the United States that God has sent us, we need to have stakeholders from those cultures and ethnicities – such as non-Anglo faculty members – who speak into the life of our seminary helping to shape our curriculum, our courses and our campus environment.”

Toward that end, Southeastern hired Walter Strickland, special advisor to the president for diversity, Edgar Aponte, director of Hispanic leadership development, and two female faculty members, Denise O’Donoghue, assistant professor of ministry to women and Adrienne Miles, assistant professor of English and linguistics.

Strickland said SEBTS is trying to equip “each faculty member to apply the content of their discipline to contexts beyond their own, as well as draw upon the cultural experiences in the classroom to enhance the ‘reach’ of the course content.”

This will be done through faculty

development workshops and curriculum reform. SEBTS believes its faculty will assist students to better serve people who do not share the same ethnic and cultural background.

The school has added “Black Theology” (January 2014), “Hermeneutics in Spanish” (January 2014), “Reaching Hispanics Around the Globe” (January 2014), “Ministry in an Urban Context” (Summer 2014); and expects to add “Multi-Cultural Church” (Spring 2015) to its course content.

Southeastern wants to raise historically underrepresented voices on campus by working to be comprised of 20 percent culturally diverse faculty, staff and students. Currently, 26 percent of the students are women and the seminary is seeking to increase that number to at least 35 percent by 2022.

Outside of the school’s parameters, SEBTS’s goal is to build and strengthen partnerships with diverse churches, church networks and educational institutions.

This means being a servant to Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) churches as a resource to help foster diversity within the church and the broader denominational environment.

“Diversity itself is theological ... In the doctrine of creation, God created ... multiplicity – a profusion of variety – so theologically, there is value in diversity. Period,” Ashford said. “The unity-in-diversity we see in the Trinity is reflected in the unity-in-diversity we see in creation.”

Recently, SEBTS awarded 23 individuals with Kingdom Diversity scholarships, a fund established to honor president, Daniel Akin. These gifts range from nine full-time, 13 part-time and one \$1,000 partial scholarship. Seven scholarships



Walter Strickland works as Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary’s special adviser to the president for diversity. (SEBTS photo)

were awarded on the doctoral level, 10 on the master’s level and six on the collegiate level.

“On average, students of color tend to be more financially in need and Southeastern seeks to help relieve the financial burden of ministry preparation,”

Strickland said. “These scholarships are another way to demonstrate that the recipients are valued on Southeastern’s campus.”

The individuals receiving these scholarships come from Central America, Korea and the Dominican Republic. They represent a variety of cultures such as African-American, Asian and Hispanic.

Eight of the scholarships were awarded to women and 15 to men. Two of the most sought after scholarships went to African-American and Hispanic women, one pursuing a doctor of education and the other a master of divinity.

In an article at *ChristianityToday.com*, Strickland said, “We are simply more comfortable [with] people who are like us. The challenges that thwart meaningful relationships between diverse believers are real, but by God’s grace and an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, God’s people are enabled to display His redemptive power by simultaneously embracing and transcending the differences that enrich the tapestry of the Kingdom.” **BR**

No regrets

Peter Cartwright was a rough and tough frontiersman with a passion to see the Great Commission fulfilled in his Jerusalem. Born in 1775, his family moved west from Virginia and settled in Kentucky. At age 16, Cartwright was destined for ministry and licensed to preach with the Methodist Episcopal Church. He later married and fathered nine children. He supplemented his education by continual reading. He was a circuit-riding preacher and became very well-seasoned and known as an excellent evangelist and church planter. He was also known for his ability

to handle difficult ministry situations. He had a booming manly voice and was a leading organizer in camp meetings. Throughout his life he preached more than 14,500 sermons, planted hundreds of churches and received some 10,000 members into the church. His honest, simple, yet passion-filled preaching allowed him great rapport with his audiences. He was genuine and real in his beliefs and mannerisms, well known for his integrity in ministry. He later served in the Illinois circuit and was elected to the Illinois legislature. He continued to proclaim Christ until his death at age 87. He truly lived a full, transparent and genuine life, serving faithfully the Savior

he loved with no regrets.

Paul had no regrets. His ministry was an open book before the Sanhedrin. He had just previously declared the resurrected Jesus to a group of soldiers and a mob. His life was certainly hanging in the balance, yet he continued to bear witness to Jesus. That was Paul, a former Pharisee of Pharisees, now a faithful, passionate witness to the resurrected Christ, persecuted and falsely accused, yet faithful and unwavering in his faith. If that day was to be his last it was fine. He knew he was in his Father’s hands.

He was confident of the integrity of his walk, witness and mission and now sure of his eternal destiny. As it turned out, that was not the end but only another open door that allowed greater witness and impact for Jesus – for Paul was headed to Rome. That seems to be the case with witnesses who live with no regrets. Their influence is usually far-reaching and long lasting. What about you?

(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

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Leaders offer advice for when same-sex attraction hits home

By DAVID ROACH | Baptist Press

It's a moment many Christians have had to face: a family member's announcement that he or she is gay.

Amid feelings of sorrow, guilt, fear and anger that families may experience surrounding such an announcement, biblical counseling experts say believers must have hope and realize that Jesus always changes those who come to Him in repentance and faith.

The "lie" that "change is impossible" for people who experience same-sex attraction "is an offense against the gospel because change is Jesus' gig," Heath Lambert, assistant professor of biblical counseling at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, told Baptist Press. "We need to be infusing people with hope. We need to be infusing them with the deep conviction that Jesus has been changing people for 2,000 years and He will change you if you have faith in Him."

Lambert; John Babler, associate professor of counseling at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; and Sam Williams, professor of counseling at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, suggested several ways Christians can help family members struggling with same-sex attraction.

Develop a culture of honesty where family members can confess their sins and ask for help.

"In view of the mercy of God, if there is a gospel, it makes no sense to avoid, deny or minimize same-sex attraction," Williams, a member of the SBC Executive Committee's Mental Health Advisory Group, told BP in emailed comments. "I would like to propose that there is a properly Christian form of 'coming out of the closet.' Should we not all come out of the closet with anything we find inside that is broken and wrong? We do this so that we can repent more thoroughly, and receive all the help and healing that comes through authentic Christian relationships."

It's important for families not to act more "creeped out" by a confession of same-sex attraction than they are by confessions of other sins, Lambert said.

"Christians forget that sin is sin," he said. "We have to be really careful not to move someone beyond hope and beyond help or think that they have a higher 'ick' factor with their struggles than we do with ours."

Express love and explain that homosexual lust and behavior are sins.

Families must avoid the twin mistakes of either blowing up at a confession of same-sex attraction or avoiding conversation about the topic for fear of damaging relationships, the biblical counselors said.

A statement of unconditional love is a good starting point for any conversation about a family member's homosexuality, Babler told BP, but that must not be the only thing said.

"Say that homosexuality is clearly a sin issue, as the Bible teaches," Babler said, although it is not "some ultra-sin that is worse than anything else."

Speaking truth about homosexual sin is difficult, Babler conceded, but the consequences of being silent are far worse.

"Ultimately this loved one's eternal destiny may rest in" their family's willingness to confront sin, he said. "Even if they have made a profession of faith, they're at least blinded enough that they're not following godly counsel from scripture."

Clarify that our identity is not determined by our sexual desires.

"We want to help people understand that while those same-sex desires – just like opposite-sex desires – can be strong, they don't define who you are," Lambert said. "God defines who you are, a person who's made in the image of God. And if you are a saved person, [you are] a person who is being redeemed into the image of Christ."

Babler noted that culture "frequently encourages people to find identity in something beyond themselves – whether it's 'I'm gay' or it's 'I'm obsessive compulsive.'" But true identity "is in regards to being created in God's image and a person that God desires to have a relationship with."

Teach the gospel truth that Jesus changes sinners.

"Real and substantive change can be expected for people with same-sex attraction and same-sex orientation, as it can and should be for all who have chosen to follow Christ," Williams said.

As with other sins though, God does not always change a believer's inclination to same-sex attraction overnight, Williams said. Much change involves "a long obedience of faith down a narrow and often difficult road."

"As it is with many root sins that are lodged deeply within us, change may or may not be associated with a complete elimination or reversal of same-sex

attraction, for now," Williams said. "But make no mistake about it: under the cross and in Christ neither the past nor our desires determine our identity or our future. Paul's instruction in Romans 6 is to be who you are, in Christ."

Use the same ministry techniques you employ to help people struggling with other types of sin.

Accountability relationships with godly people of the same gender, confession of sins, trust in the gospel, participation in a local church and meditation on scripture all help individuals struggling with same-sex attraction, the biblical counselors agreed.

"As much of a problem as homosexuality is, it can be dealt with in the same way as if they had a family member who was dealing with heterosexual sin outside of a marriage relationship," Babler said. Ultimately a concerned family needs to "call their family member to the pages of scripture."

It can be helpful to send a struggling individual brief scripture messages through email and social media, Babler said. All of the scripture shared should not focus on sexual sin but cover a variety of topics from God's character and the gospel to the Great Commandment and personal purity.

Talk to a pastor or godly counselor if you find that helpful.

It's a myth that only professional counselors and clergy members are equipped to help people with same-sex attraction, Lambert said, although some biblical counselors and pastors can provide spiritual guidance.

"There are plenty of professionals who don't know how to appropriate the gospel of Jesus in the change

process," Lambert said. Such counselors "may have some helpful tips that somebody can use, but they're not going to be able to help someone change in a way that honors Jesus Christ."

The choice "isn't between a professional and a non-professional," he said. The key is to find a godly Christian "who knows the biblical dynamics of change and how Jesus uses His powerful grace in practical categories to see people be different than they were."

Even when families give the best help possible, the sad reality is that not all

homosexuals repent and follow Jesus, the biblical counselors noted. Husbands sometimes leave their wives for other men.

Wives sometimes leave their husbands for other women. And godly parents have children living a homosexual lifestyle.

In such cases, it's important for families not to blame themselves for their loved one's sin, Lambert said, adding that dealing with a homosexual spouse generally is more emotionally difficult than coping with a gay child or sibling.

"Sin doesn't happen in a simplistic way; it happens in a complex way. It could be the case that very faithful parents who love their kids and talk with them about the gospel and were present with them and directed their behaviors and interests toward gender-appropriate things" still have a homosexual child, Lambert said. "In a world full of sin, people go off the rails and parents need to not have an instinct of blaming themselves."

Whatever the outcome of a family's ministry efforts, they must hold to God's truth and not let the experience of having a homosexual loved one distort their interpretation of God's Word, Babler said.

"One of my concerns in working with family members is that I want to encourage them to keep their theology and their biblical belief intact," Babler said, "and not accommodate due to the fact that it's one of their loved ones and say, 'Now I'm going to change the way I look at the Bible and I'm going to redefine my conclusion about what scripture says in regards to homosexuality.' That's a big temptation."

Additional resources for families of those struggling with same-sex attraction include the Restored Hope Network, a group of ministries that address sexual and relational issues, and the books *Understanding Sexual Identity* by Mark Yarhouse and *Is God Anti-Gay?* by Sam Allberry.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – David Roach is chief national correspondent for Baptist Press.) **BP**

(freeimages.com photo)

At border, Baptist leaders see hope among child detainees

By TOM STRODE | Baptist Press

Southern Baptist leaders recognized something when they toured federal government facilities for children who have fled to the United States without their parents – hope.

Ronnie Floyd, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and Russell D. Moore, the SBC's lead ethicist, joined others in tours Tuesday (July 22) of two centers established to address the crisis of unaccompanied minors crossing America's southern border.

The centers in McAllen and San Antonio, Texas, are part of the response to a wave that includes more than 57,000 underage children who have been apprehended at the border with Mexico in the last nine months. Most of the children – and sometimes children accompanied by a young parent or parents – have fled Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, which are plagued not only by poverty but by violence among gangs involved in

When many Americans think of immigration they think of ancestors taking ships across oceans and arriving at New York's Ellis Island where the Statue of Liberty greets them. But increasingly impoverished and threatened people from south of the United States are trying to reach for a better life by entering across Texas, New Mexico, Arizona or California. (*freem-ages.com* by Shan Dwyer)

drug trafficking. "I was struck as we were walking through the facility with two things: a sense of fear and a sense of hope," Moore, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC), said in a written statement. "A sense of fear when I asked the kids why they made the trek up to the United States. And a sense of hope: I saw many crosses and Bibles. Many people are desperately hoping for an end to the violence where they come from."

Floyd said, "These are real people who are looking for hope, and we have the greatest hope that anyone can give them. ... [W]e need to provide them that hope – hope that we love them, hope that we care for them, hope most of all in the gospel of Jesus Christ that will change their life and give them hope forever, whether they remain in the United States or they go back to their

homeland.

"People will go a long way and tackle obstacles when they feel that hope is possible. They are hoping for a better life," Floyd said.

Floyd and Moore were among pastors and other religious leaders who walked through a U.S. Customs and Border Protection detention center in McAllen and a Department of Health and Human Services shelter in San Antonio. Among those participating in one or both of the tours hosted by the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention were Jim Richards, the SBTC's executive director; Daniel Flores, the Roman Catholic bishop of Brownsville, Texas; and SBTC pastors.

About 65 children are in the detention center in McAllen, which is a major border crossing point near the southern tip of Texas, but that number will mushroom. The center, opened only a few days earlier to alleviate overcrowding in other McAllen detention centers, can house 1,000 children. The shelter at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio has more than 1,100 children. The McAllen center had children ranging in age from about 5 to 17, while the San Antonio shelter is for 12- to 17-year-olds.

Floyd and Moore had expressed concern for the children before going to Texas but they said touring the facilities personalized the issue for them.

"It makes it really real to me," Floyd told Baptist Press.

"It's no longer about something ... that I hear on the news or stories that I read. But now I've seen real people who have real moms and dads, who have real grandparents, who have taken long treks across the country ... all looking for a better life, all looking for hope, all looking for safety. They want safety because many of their lives have not been safe."

Moore said the visit "put a human face on a moral crisis for me. These children are not issues to be resolved but persons bearing dignity and needing care. The issues involved in this crisis are complex, but our first response should be one of compassion and justice, not fear or disgust."

After touring the San Antonio shelter, Richards said, "We as a state convention are compassionate to these children. It is our obligation under the gospel to minister to them and help them, regardless of the circumstances in which they



Russell D. Moore, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, speaks at a news conference in McAllen, Texas, after Southern Baptist and other religious leaders toured a detention center for unaccompanied children who have crossed the border with Mexico. (Photo by Guthrie Graves-Fitzsimmons)

came or their future. Our main concern is to care for the children."

Baptists in Texas with both the SBTC and Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) have been ministering as they are able, but the federal government has strictly limited access to unaccompanied children. HHS is responsible for custody of such children once they are moved from detention centers.

It permits only federal authorities and federal contractors to be in contact with the minors, according to the Southern Baptist Convention's North American Mission Board.

For now, Baptist churches are primarily working to help children and adults crossing the border together by serving them at a processing center; providing food, clothing and showers; and doing laundry. A Hispanic pastor affiliated with the BGCT is conducting worship services for unaccompanied children in one shelter, according to that convention.

Moore said he is "deeply encouraged by the response of Christians to this crisis. We need to be praying for a just resolution, and quickly."

Floyd expressed gratitude "for the churches who have helped along the way, and I want to encourage all of our Southern Baptist churches to see what's happening and think about what you can do to help as a church. Do what Jesus would do: He would care for the children and show them compassion while we have them in our nation."

The federal government has moved some of the children to other states for housing, sometimes by faith-based organizations.

The McAllen detention center is designed to house children no more than three days before they are transferred to an HHS shelter, according to the ERLC. Many of the children at the San Antonio shelter said they had

See Border page 10

Osborne

Continued from page 1

has fallen, those participating are not discouraged. Daniel said, “I know there are some other guys fasting. A group of us meet weekly and there’s probably a dozen of us studying the disciplines of the Christian faith.”

Many of the men admitted they had never fasted before and are amazed to see how God is working in their lives. “They talk about a closer relationship with the Lord and with their families,” Daniel said. “Another nice thing is that the physical health of many of them is improving. God’s dealing with issues of eating, obesity and many other things.”

For the month of July, Griffith challenged the ladies to join the men. The Sunday evening service grew to around two-hundred men and women. Now many of the church’s women are fasting and praying.

The dates are set to finish out the year, but Griffith and Daniel want to go into next year and beyond.

“I really believe scripture is clear that revival only comes when Christians sacrifice to deal with sin, be right with Him, have our hearts broken and living holy lives, while talking to people who don’t know Jesus,” Daniel added.

“When you look back through history and study prayer and fasting, there are a number of Christians, including John Wesley, that fasted two days a week,” he said. “Actually, Wesley would not even sit on ordination council for any Methodist minister unless he agreed to fast each week.”

Bill Moody is a laymen who has participated in the monthly prayer and fasting journey. “I’ve been a Christian since I was nine years old. I’m 67 now. I haven’t always lived for the Lord. I was backslidden for a while when I was in the service.”

“We want to challenge other people and encourage them to come together in corporate fasting and prayer, praying for our individual hearts, our families, our church and our nation. The issues of the nation are a symptom of the people.”
— Ronnie Bullins

But Moody has grown spiritually. He said “I don’t think it’s changed my prayer life, it’s the same. It just puts more emphasis on the nation and the leadership.”

Every day Moody has the same routine. “I get up, read my Bible and pray every day,” he said.

“That hasn’t changed. Other men in our group have said the same thing. But what it does is it focuses your emphasis on what it should be – the leadership of the church, the community and the country. Every time a hunger pain comes up it prompts me to say a prayer.”

Ronnie Bullins, adult discipleship director for the church, said, “We want to challenge other people and encourage them to come together in corporate fasting and prayer, praying for our individual hearts, our families, our church and our nation. The issues of the nation are a symptom of its people.”

Ultimately Bullins is praying for nationwide revival that begins in individual



(BR photo)

Christians and the restoration of the biblical family unit.

He said. “I think the burden here in the local body is to start with us, and to examine ourselves, and repent of what we need to repent of, and encourage each other and help each other along.”

Osborne’s worship pastor, Jason Wilson, is committed to expanding the spiritual vitality of men.

“When Jesus began His ministry, He fasted 40 days and nights,” he said. “When I got started in ministry nobody told me to do it, I was just compelled to fast. I said, ‘God I don’t want this to be about me. I want this to be about what You want me to do – surrender.’ Fasting has a way of bringing all of that into perspective.”

“We have a burden to see revival and to see people get saved, to see people get right with the Lord ...”

— Terry Daniel

and emotional health.”

He admits that corporate fasting is rare. The sixth chapter of Matthew’s Gospel describes prayer and fasting as primarily a private matter. “But I think

there are times for corporate fasting,” Daniel emphasized.

“This is just something the Lord has laid on our hearts, and we would love to see it spread to churches all over the country, where there are men who

are willing to sacrifice and improve their relationship with the Lord, their marriages, their communities, and more than anything, see our country turn back to the Lord.”

Church leaders are concerned about the condition of the nation. “We are in deep, deep trouble,” Daniel stressed. “We are imploding and it’s going to continue down this course no matter who we elect unless there is a turning to the Lord by His people.

“There will never be massive amounts of people getting saved until the Lord’s people get right.”

Daniel wants the end result to honor God, not the church or the leaders.

“I would just love to see people say ‘It’s amazing what the Lord has done in changing people’s hearts, and He didn’t exercise human power, and we didn’t have to spend loads of money. It was just the Holy Spirit moving people’s hearts and breaking their hearts.’ If that occurs, wow! It will just bless my heart. If it doesn’t spread across the country, I know it has still helped me and a lot of other guys, and that’s a great accomplishment.” **BR**



“I’ve been a Christian since I was nine years old. I’m 67 now. I haven’t always lived for the Lord. I was backslidden for a while when I was in the service. [Prayer and fasting] puts more emphasis on the nation and the leadership.”
— Bill Moody

Border

Continued from page 8

been there from 30 to 45 days, an ERLC staffer reported. The children at the San Antonio shelter receive schooling and medical care among other services.

A study released July 22 shows that the rate of apprehensions of children 12 and younger at the border has grown faster than that of teenagers. The analysis of government data by the Pew Research Center revealed a 117 percent increase in the number of unaccompanied children less than 13 years of age since Oct. 1. The apprehension of minors 13 to 17 has increased by just 12 percent during the same span. Still, 84 percent of the minors apprehended at the border since Oct. 1 have been teens.

In that time period, 27 percent of the unaccompanied children apprehended have been from Honduras, according to Pew. Meanwhile, 22 percent have been from El Salvador, 10 percent from Guatemala and 3 percent from Mexico.

Moore signed on to a July 22 letter from the Evangelical Immigration Table (EIT) urging members of Congress to provide the necessary resources and policies to address the border crisis while not weakening a law combating human trafficking. The EIT is a coalition of evangelical leaders promoting immigration reform.

Floyd and Moore have called not only for a compassionate response to the plight of the unaccompanied children in this country but for repair of what is generally acknowledged is a broken immigration system.

The ERLC has called for reform that would provide border and workplace security; uphold the rule of law; respect family unity; and establish a path to legal status to those who want to live in this country permanently and are willing to pay penalties and meet the requirements.

Flaws in both the system and its enforcement have resulted in an estimated 11 to 12 million undocumented immigrants living illegally in the United States.

In 2011, messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention in Phoenix approved a resolution on immigration reform that called for Christians to advance the gospel of Jesus while simultaneously calling on our government to secure the nation's borders and pursue a just and compassionate solution to the immigration crisis.

The U.S. Senate passed broad reform legislation last year, but the ERLC has said it needs improvement. So far, House of Representatives committees have approved bills dealing with such matters as strengthening border and national security, providing visas for guest workers and requiring employers to use the E-Verify system to check employees' eligibility. The full House has yet to act on those bills, however.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Tom Strobe is the Washington bureau chief for Baptist Press.) **BP**

Largest Southern Baptist churches in North Carolina			
Each year Thom Rainer, president and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources, publishes a list of Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) churches that average 1,000 or more in worship attendance. These numbers are drawn from the 2013 Annual Church Profile (ACP) data self-reported by churches. This year Rainer identified 563 North American churches that averaged 1,000 or more in worship; 31 of those churches are in North Carolina.			
As a reminder, be sure to fill out your church's ACP. Without it, your church cannot register any messengers for the SBC annual meeting or the annual meeting of North Carolina Baptists.			
N.C. ranking	National ranking	Church name, location	Weekly worship attendance
1	8	Elevation Church, Matthews	11,708
2	26	The Summit Church, Durham	6,518
3	32	Biltmore Baptist Church, Arden	5,558
4	59	Hickory Grove Baptist Church, Charlotte	3,834
5	76	Calvary Baptist Church, Winston-Salem	3,304
6	78	Mud Creek Baptist Church, Hendersonville	3,220
7	87	First Baptist Church, Indian Trail	2,888
8	103	C3 Church, Clayton	2,671
9	109	First Baptist Church, Jacksonville	2,608
10	142	Bethlehem Baptist Church, Gastonia	2,287
11	145	Word Tabernacle Church, Rocky Mount	2,250
12	189	Temple Baptist Church, New Bern	1,935
13	249	Lee Park Baptist Church, Monroe	1,637
14	301	Lawndale Baptist Church, Greensboro	1,400
15	323	North Asheville Baptist Church, Asheville	1,350
16	331	First Baptist Church, Hendersonville	1,341
17	345	Parkwood Baptist Church, Gastonia	1,313
18	350	Arran Lake Baptist Church, Fayetteville	1,300
18	350	Daystar Church, Greensboro	1,300
20	371	Scotts Hill Baptist Church, Wilmington	1,284
21	372	Hopewell Baptist Church, Monroe	1,275
22	403	Faith Baptist Church, Youngsville	1,200
23	439	Englewood Baptist Church, Rocky Mount	1,134
23	439	Life Community Church, Jamestown	1,134
25	454	Northside Baptist Church, Wilmington	1,100
25	454	Pleasant Garden Baptist Church, Pleasant Garden	1,100
27	472	Village Baptist Church, Fayetteville	1,087
28	475	Western Avenue Baptist Church, Statesville	1,082
29	499	Bay Leaf Baptist Church, Raleigh	1,050
30	509	Center Grove Baptist Church, Clemmons	1,043
31	513	Green Street Baptist Church, High Point	1,039

Source: thomrainer.com

Golden Gate finalizes campus sale, ready to secure new site

By **BEN M. SKAUG** | GGBTS/Baptist Press

Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary has finalized the sale of its property near Mill Valley, Calif., setting aside funds both to purchase a new campus in Southern California and add \$50 million to its endowment.

The sale agreement for Golden Gate's

Mill Valley property included a base price of \$85 million, along with other terms financially advantageous to the seminary, including a favorable lease-back rate; the ability for the seminary to remain fully operational in the Mill Valley location for two years; and the seminary retaining revenue earned through rentals and other uses of the property during the lease-back period.

Jeff Iorg, Golden Gate's president, praised the seminary's board of trustees for their fiscal discipline in reserving significant proceeds from the sale for the seminary's endowment. "It took us 70 years to gather an endowment of \$21 million," Iorg said. "Increasing our endowment by another \$50 million in such a short time is amazing."

The board also approved an allocation

of resources for new facilities in Southern California, Iorg reported. The seminary is finalizing plans for its new primary campus in Southern California and a new regional campus in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Full story online at [BRnow.org](#).

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Ben M. Skaug is vice president for institutional advancement for Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary.) **BP**

Chapter on alignment most helpful in *People of God*

The People of God: Empowering the Church to Make Disciples by Trevor Joy and Spence Shelton (B&H, May 2014)

If you are numbered among those who believe that the church in the United States has problems, you have probably spent at least some time contemplating the root of those problems. We might trace it to theological impurities brought about by the abandonment of orthodox Christianity in many realms of Christendom. Others may claim that we simply live in the most secular age of history and therefore the task of pointing people toward our Savior is harder than ever. Still another group may say we have left our old-time religion and replaced it with contemporary notions that look better than the unregenerate world around us.

These and countless others can be offered up as the reason for the decline of growth and the lack of influence the church has in our context. However, they are not the root cause. They are merely symptoms of a nearly systemic problem found in the vast majority of our churches: we have ignored the Great Commission's call to make disciples.

The People of God provides us with an encouraging and practical call to take seriously the way God has ordained for people to come into a relationship with Him and grow in their knowledge of His Kingdom. The

authors build on the premise that human beings have been created for community, both with God and with one another. The church has been created by Christ to be a community and the growth of Christ's followers through the disciple-making process is done within this context. For Joy and Shelton this is an intentional, theologically-driven process.

These authors explore the distinctives of a gospel community while also presenting us with the common hindrances to that same biblical community. Within any context of discipleship, the gospel must be at the forefront.

For me, the most helpful chapter in the book is the authors' discussion of alignment. The book calls for churches to align together their teaching/preaching/discipleship/small group activities. While this is not new or revolutionary, it is a seemingly radical idea.

For most churches, there is very little connection between the focus of the sermon and the teaching that takes place during Sunday School. Small groups are not connected to the spiritual emphasis of the worship service. Children have lessons that are completely different from their parents.

There is no alignment of the things that are taught. This method of conducting the teaching ministry of the church provides very little opportunity for depth and growth. However, when discipleship is intentional and the ideas of the worship gathering are reinforced in Sun-

day School or small groups the people in our churches have a chance to understand more deeply the things of God.

When we are intentional about aligning our sermon, Bible studies, small group lessons and discipleship efforts, we will find that the mission and vision of the church will be constantly reinforced and remain abundantly clear to those who participate in the life of the community of faith.

I was thoroughly impressed by the relevance of this book for churches of all sizes. While both authors serve on staff among the largest churches in the country, their ideas are relevant and useful for my church that is small and in a rural context. We are all aware that this is often not the case with books produced in mega churches.

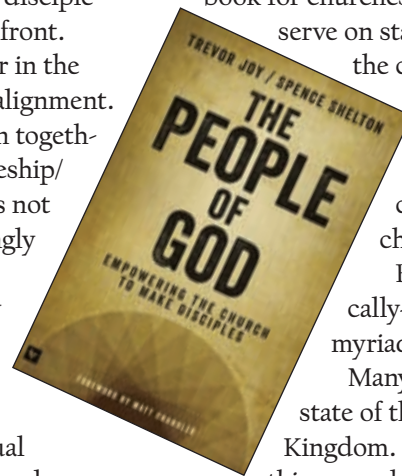
Because these concepts are so biblically-based, they are functional within a myriad of church contexts.

Many of us stand concerned about the state of the church and the work of the Kingdom. We are weary from trying to make things work the way we want and convincing people they need to do better. The heart of our problem is often a lack of discipleship. It is not a "cure-all" secret formula. It is, however, Christ's pattern for growing His church and expanding His Kingdom.

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



MICHEAL PARDUE
Book Review



AROUND THE STATE

Obituary

JIMMY D. HINSON, 79, died July 22 at the Hospice Home in High Point. He became a Christian and was baptized at age 10. After high school he was called to the ministry. He received a bachelor's degree from Wake Forest University and graduated from the School of Pastoral Care in Winston-Salem. He also received a bachelor of divinity, master of divinity and doctor of divinity in evangelism degrees from Southeastern Seminary.

He had served as associate pastor at his home church, Pilot View Baptist Church where he was ordained and interim pastor at Hilliard Memorial Baptist Church, Albertson Road Baptist Church, Reavis Memorial Baptist Church, Abbott's Creek Baptist Church, Morningside Manor Baptist Mission, Wise Baptist Church, and Green Hill Baptist Church. Hinson also pastored at Union Cross Baptist Mission, Jewel Baptist Church, Blaise Baptist Church, and Green Hill Baptist Church. He was a youth director at Green Street Baptist Church, chaplain at Army Reserves and National Guard and associate director of the division of evangelism for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

He and his wife Margaret started the Jimmy Hinson Evangelism, Inc., and Reach Out Evangelism Ministries, Inc., and had conducted church related revivals in more than 800 churches in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, West Virginia, Alaska, Brazil and India. He was also the senior adult pastor at Old Town Baptist Church. During his ministry he had radio and television ministries, "Echoes of Evangelism," "Religious News" and A Time for Truth."

He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Margaret Collins Hinson; son, Jimmy D. Hinson Jr. of High Point; daughter Phelecia Corpening of Tryon; a grandson; and a brother, Tony D. Hinson of San Diego, Calif.

Bethel

Continued from page 4

because of the youth. They want to come here."

Ward said, "I've seen churches with hardly any young people involved, and we've seen the time when we didn't have too many involved here." He said today the youth in the Bethel community go to church.

"And, the Good Lord sent us Tracy Smith, our preacher," Ward added. "I see God's hand in sending him here. All my life I've been trying to get people to do more work, but [pastor Tracy] is the only guy I've ever asked to slow down."

Garry Mickey, Bethel's pastor for 11 years until his retirement in August 2013, attended the celebration. "This is exciting," he said. "But this was the church's project and something they had the vision for. It is a wonderful feeling as the retired pastor to see this finally happen."

Ray Bass, chairman of the deacons, has been involved with the project since the planning committee was named more than four years ago. "We've been doing a lot of meeting, and a lot of praying and a lot of work. The church has been backing us and giving us good support. May God use this new facility to reach the lost in our community," Bass said. The congregation set a goal of having \$275,000 in hand before beginning construction of the \$660,000 building. On March 3 the fund topped \$276,000. Site work begins immediately with completion scheduled for late February 2015. Bethel church has a significant history. Martin Ross, the church's founding pastor, was instrumental in establishing the Chowan Baptist Association in 1805 and is credited with a significant role in the organiza-



CHARLES WARD

"... I'm not nearly excited about this building as I am about the hundreds of people who will come to know Jesus Christ ..."
— Tracy Smith

tion of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in 1830. Livingston Johnson's 1908 book, *History of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention*, begins the first chapter with these words, "The Baptist State Convention was conceived in the consecrated brain of Martin Ross. In the minutes of the Chowan Association, held in May, 1908, Elder Martin Ross submitted a motion, 'embracing an inquiry as to the propriety of establishing a meeting of general correspondence, to be comprised of the neighboring associations.'"

Pastor Smith is committed to Ross' mission-focused vision. He commented on Bethel's history saying, "The churches that have been established from this congregation are not because this congregation had a split. There's a Hertford Baptist Church and there's an Edenton Baptist church that were birthed from this church because this church was following God. That excites me because that tells me that in the future there's going to be other churches that will be birthed from this church, because we are following the Lord." **BR**

Prayer and revival: yesterday and today

Prayer and revival always go together, whether in the scriptures or in church history. In 2 Chronicles 7:14, a verse that has inspired countless Christians to pray for revival, the Lord says to King Solomon, if “My people who are called by My name humble themselves, pray and seek My face, and turn from their evil ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land.”

When God’s people humble themselves, repent of their sins and seek greater intimacy with Him, He brings renewal to individuals, families, churches and even nations. We see this pattern play out over and over again in church history. In this post, I want to recount two of those revivals.

The Teschen Revival

In the 1700s, Central Europe was divided between Catholic states and Lutheran states. As a general rule, the religion of the ruler was the religion of the people. But in Silesia, which is now mostly part of Poland, a Catholic dynasty was forcing all of the Lutheran Pietists in their kingdom to convert to Roman Catholicism.

In 1708, Pietist children in southern Silesia began holding large outdoor prayer and song services. The phenomenon soon spread all over Silesia and included adults as well as children. The children called their prayer services “camp meetings,” a term that was famously adopted by Methodists in America about a century later.

With some military help from Sweden, the Pietists gained religious freedom from their Catholic rulers and planted the Jesus Church in the village of Teschen, which had become the center of the prayer revival. The Jesus Church had between 5,000 and 10,000 worshipers

every week and conducted services in German, Polish and Czech.

The Teschen Revival spread to other newly formed Pietist churches in Silesia and then to other parts of Central Europe. John Wesley in England and Jonathan Edwards in New England followed the Teschen Revival and began to pray for similar outpourings of the Spirit in their lands. Today, most historians consider the Teschen Revival to be the beginning of the transatlantic awakening that swept across Europe, the British Isles and North America off and on during the 18th century. We call the American version the First Great Awakening.



NATHAN FINN
Guest column

The Businessman’s Revival

In 1857, America went through its worst depression prior to the Great Depression of the early 20th century. Millions of Americans were without work and seemingly without hope; things were especially bad in big cities.

Jeremiah Lanphier was a lay missionary who worked for the North Dutch Reformed Church in New York City. In September 1857, Lanphier invited businessmen all over New York to come to the North Dutch Church for one hour during their lunch break every Wednesday to do nothing but pray for revival. The lunch prayer meetings were a smashing success. By January 1858, similar prayer meetings were being held at churches all over New York City. Some churches were even hosting daily prayer meetings during the lunch hour.

The New York prayer meetings inspired similar prayer movements in other cities such as Philadelphia, Penn., Cincinnati, Ohio, and Charleston, S.C. By the time the revival ebbed in the fall of 1858, around 1 million Americans had converted and joined churches—almost all of

them lived in cities.

Between 1859 and 1861, the prayer revival spread to the British Isles, where it is estimated another 1 million people were converted. Because of the rise of the modern missions movement in the previous two generations, the prayer revival also spread to parts of Africa, the Pacific islands and the East Indies—it was a global revival. The famous evangelist D. L. Moody and Hudson Taylor, the pioneering missionary to China, each began their ministries during the prayer revival.

Prayer and Revival Today

The Teschen Revival began when God answered the prayers of Pietist children. The Businessman’s Revival began when He answered the prayers of urban businessmen. While pastors became leaders in each of these revivals, they began when everyday Christians prayed for the Lord to move in mighty ways. Before they ended, each of these revivals “went viral” and affected several nations. I strongly believe we should pray for revival more than we do. We should humble ourselves, seek the Lord’s face and turn from our wicked ways. We should pray for revival in our personal lives, in our families, in our local churches, in our communities, in our nation and, ultimately, among every tribe, tongue and people.

When is the last time you prayed, earnestly and intentionally, that the Lord would bring a revival? Why not pray that way today? The same God who shook the world in 1708 and 1857 can bring a spiritual awakening in our own day.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Nathan Finn is associate professor of Historical Theology and Baptist Studies at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, as well as a fellow of the L. Russ Bush Center for Faith and Culture. He is now a featured contributor at Facts & Trends, where this blog first appeared. He is also on the Biblical Recorder Board of Directors.) **BR**

Multiple colleges in one community

Over the last three decades college campuses and cultures have changed more than nearly any other sub-culture in America. Schools offer more, enroll more, and cost more, while lowering the standards for students in most areas outside of the classroom. Through all of this change what remains true is the cultural variations from one campus to the next.



STEVEN ACKLEY
Guest column

In our community we have six colleges and universities with extremely diverse cultures: a nationally recognized private university, a historically black

See Ackley page 16

Gideons get the Word out

One of the ways we can get the gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth is by churches supporting The Gideons International (www.gideons.org). Gideons living in foreign lands are calling for more scriptures; the call far exceeds the supply.

Beginning last year Gideons in The People’s Republic of China began legally distributing 100,000 Bibles a month in the official churches. For some time now Gideons in India have been distributing one million Bibles a month! One of every three persons alive today live in China and India.

Gideons ask for church support ... prayers ... new members ... and money to purchase scriptures for distribution. \$100 pays for the placement of 80 New Testaments out in the world; \$1,000 pays for 800 and so on.

Harry Harkey
Winston-Salem

TAR HEEL VOICES

Submissions for Tar Heel Voices

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

Afraid of being labeled ‘homophobic’?

As a Christian since 1954, I was appalled by the letter from the S.C. pastor, a graduate of Gardner-Webb University, who remarked that the SBC should get over their obsession with homosexuality. I was even more stunned that no pastor or church leader would refute this irrational and un-Biblical statement! Are we so afraid of being labeled “homophobic” or “hateful” that we don’t stand on the truth of God’s Word?

Anyone who reads the first chapter of Romans, among many other verses, can come to no other conclusion that this is a sinful lifestyle.

Have we reached a point in our church

life that we are afraid to call sin of every description sin? The late Dr. Vance Havner said in a sermon he preached at the First Baptist in Spartanburg, S.C., in the 1970’s that the late Charles G. Finney had a sermon entitled “How to preach so as to convert nobody.” Finney said to preach about sin, just don’t name any!

The last word from Christ was not to go into all the world, but to repent (Revelation 2:14-16). In 1 John 1:9 forgiveness is assured if we CONFESS our sins. It’s about time we agreed with God that we are a sinful people and repent!

Robert Helton
Stanley

OPPORTUNITY CORNER

Mission celebrations in August

This month North Carolina Baptists on Mission will host a series of Mission Celebrations across the state. These celebrations will highlight the North Carolina Missions Offering and the mission work N.C. Baptists are doing in our state, our nation and around the world. There will be worship, testimony, mission video and a prayer time for missions. Everyone interested in missions is encouraged to attend. A meal is provided at no charge, but reservations are necessary to ensure an accurate meal count. The cut off date for reserving a meal for each Celebration is one week prior to the event.

- **Aug. 18 (Region 5)** – Bethany Baptist Church, Winston Salem
 - **Aug. 18 (Region 7)** – Wilkesboro Baptist Church
 - **Aug. 19 (Region 3)** – Salemburg Baptist Church
 - **Aug. 19 (Region 4)** – Emmaus Baptist Church, Pittsboro
 - **Aug. 25 (Region 8)** – Second Baptist Church, Mt. Holly
 - **Aug. 25 (Region 10)** – FBC Bryson City
 - **Aug. 26 (Region 1)** – Edenton Baptist Church
 - **Aug. 26 (Region 9)** – North Ashville Baptist Church
 - **Aug. 28 (Region 2)** – FBC Kinston
 - **Aug. 28 (Region 6)** – FBC Troy
- To register, go to <http://baptistsonmission.org/Events/Regional-Rallies/Mission-Celebrations> and click the link listed below each rally site.

To register by phone or email contact Mary Alica Landis at mlandis@ncbaptist.org or (800) 395-5102, ext. 5596.

Baptists on Mission offers leader training

Five hours of training is available for Royal Ambassador Leaders, Challengers Leaders and Baptists on Mission Leaders/Men's Ministry Directors. All church Brotherhood leaders and pastors are encouraged to attend one of the statewide events Aug. 23 or Sept. 20. Royal Ambassador and Challenger leaders will receive updates on the new curriculum as well as tips on beginning or enhancing the program for the boys and young men in your church. Men's Ministry leaders will learn how to have a vibrant, well-rounded ministry that leads men to grow spiritually while involving them in missions and ministry.

Cost is \$10. Registration will open at 9 a.m. Training will begin at 10 a.m. Lunch will be at noon. Training will conclude by 4 p.m. One training is offered Aug. 23, at Highland Baptist Church in Hickory, and a second is offered Sept. 20 at New Hope Baptist Church in Raleigh.

Visit baptistsonmission.org to find out

more about these statewide trainings as well as opportunities for training within each age level: Royal Ambassadors, Challengers, etc.

Volunteers needed in India

For many years, N.C. Baptists on Mission have partnered with the Ladakh Development Foundation in India. Through this effort, teams have taken portable barley threshers into remote villages in the Himalayan mountains of India. The thresher project has provided an open door to build relationships among the Buddhist people. Two teams of 8-10 people are needed to assist in the construction of a small factory for portable, gas-operated threshing machines. Teams will construct a thresher factory in Dimapur, Nagaland, India. The structure will be cement block with a tin roof, approximately 30' x 60'. The October 2014 team (12-25) will primarily be involved in block laying. Team will need at least three knowledgeable block layers and several strong backs. The January 2015 team (18-31) will put the roof on, install doors, etc. The estimated cost of the trip will be approximately \$2,600-2,800, depending on the cost of airline tickets and includes round-trip airfare, in-country transportation, lodging, meals, volunteer insurance, and Indian visa.

Visit <http://www.baptistsonmission.org/Projects/Outside-US/India/Mission-Teams> or contact Mark Abernathy at (919) 291-3657 or at mabernathy@ncbaptist.org.

Churches, individuals host Harvest America

Hundreds of churches and other venues have been signing up around the country to host local Harvest America events for their communities, with hundreds more individual families planning to open their homes to friends and neighbors. Harvest America has made it easy this year, providing kits that include planning instructions, recipes, an apron, crafts and party games for guests, and new believers' guides for any guests who might make a commitment to Christ that evening.

The event is being broadcast and simulcast live from American Airlines Center in Dallas on Oct. 5. Greg Laurie, senior pastor of Harvest Christian Fellowship, based in Riverside, Calif., is the speaker with music from MercyMe and Phil Wickham.

More than 1,300 locations are already registered as host sites at www.harvestamerica.com, with hundreds more likely to be signed up by Oct. 5. Harvest America is conducting training with hosts and pastors around the country to prepare them to counsel individuals who make faith commitments.

Help with Appalachian Christmas Outreach

One of the greatest ministry needs in the Appalachia area occurs at Christmas-time. North Carolina Baptist's on Mission are calling on churches statewide to respond to this need through Appalachian Christmas Outreach in 2014. The goal is to collect 15,000 backpacks full of items to be distributed to needy Appalachian children in December 2014. Collection areas will be set up across the state for churches to bring their backpacks.

These zippered school backpacks should each include: 1) School supplies such as crayons, notebook paper, pencils, pens, composition books, folders, erasers and rulers; 2) Small items of new clothing such as winter hats, gloves, socks, underwear; 3) Small pop-top canned food such as ravioli, tuna, beef stew, vegetables, fruit; 4) At least one new, age appropriate non-breakable toy; 5) Hygiene items including toothpaste, toothbrush, soap, washcloth, brush or comb, shampoo, deodorant (these items may be placed in a one gallon Ziploc bag); 6) A children's Bible; and 7) Fresh, wrapped candy.

Before delivery a copy of the Christmas story will be placed in each bag as well as an enrollment card for the Appalachian Regional Ministry Mailbox Bible Club.

This is an ongoing correspondence discipleship program that has been very effective throughout Appalachia.

Each backpack should be labeled boy

or girl as well as the appropriate age. We suggest the age groups to be 3-5, 6-9 and 10-14. We ask that you prepare your backpack as you would for your own child or grandchild, with new items not used ones. This quality gift may be the only Christmas present this child receives and will be a witness of Christ's love.

Visit the following website for more information: <http://www.baptistsonmission.org/Projects/United-States/Appalachian-Coal-fields/Christmas-Outreach>.

N.C. Baptist secretaries plan annual event

Join the 2014 North Carolina Baptist Secretaries Association for its annual conference Nov. 3-5 at Ridgecrest Conference Center.

Marilynn Chadwick will share how "Embracing the Seasons of Lives" makes stronger, filled vessels to be used of Him. The event will include fellowship around the fireplace, a silent auction, prayer and door prizes.

Breakout sessions will be offered on different topics involved with spiritual enrichment, professional development and personal effectiveness. The cost of the conference is \$220 for shared room, \$290 for private room and \$160 for commuters due by Sept. 30. You can hold your place with a \$50 deposit.

Make checks payable to NCBSA and mail them to Trish Church c/o Asheville Baptist Association, P.O. Box 850, Jefferson, NC 28640.



Latina Leadership Institute of North Carolina

Ten Hispanic women finished a three-year study June 1 with a graduation ceremony at Camp Mundo Vista near Asheboro. The women were part of the Latina Leadership Institute of North Carolina. Several of the women have ties to the Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina (WMU-NC) and have served in leadership with the Hispanic Women's Fellowship (UFM) of WMU-NC. Graduates include Sandra Acevedo-Duarte, Rosa Luz Alemán Hinojos, E. Lina Cosío, Dunia M. Medina, Marlins Cuellar Molina, Edys Oneyda Cuellar Montes, María Pilar Ocampo, Morena Bessy Pleitez, Linda Ramírez Treviño and Raquel C. Villatoro. The Latina Leadership Institute is housed at Baptist University of the Americas in San Antonio, Texas. N.C.'s institute was organized by Veronica Gallegos, who served as UFM president in 2004-2005. The purpose of the institute is to "train Latinas from a Latina perspective by providing educational opportunities; mentoring/coaching opportunities; and networking avenues providing support, connections and resources for Latina leaders." WMU-NC, Campbell University and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina helped with finances for instructors. (WMU-NC photo)

August 10

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

August 17

Joyful Faith

Focal Passage: 1 Peter 4:12-19

“This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it” (Psalm 118:24).

It was unbearably warm in that small, one-room church building. I felt weary and tired from very little rest the night before. My stomach was in knots from unfamiliar food and spices. I felt grumpy and wanted to dwell in it ... this was the day that I was responsible for training the South Asian Christians on how to share the gospel. Yet my attitude that morning reflected little of the Good News of great joy that was for all the people (Luke 2:10). The local missionary opened our training session by playing a simple song on his guitar. And immediately I felt the conviction of the Holy Spirit in regards to my sinful attitude and ungratefulness.

“This is the day that the Lord has made; I will be glad and rejoice in it. This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made.”

It was a new day full of God’s mercies. It was a day made for the sole purpose of bringing Him glory. In my weakness, I had a choice: to wallow in self-pity or to rejoice in the day that belonged to Him.

I chose the latter and He gave me the strength to joyfully teach the gospel.

In our passage in 1 Peter 4:12-19, Peter gives the early believers an imperative, or command, in verse 13 and says, “[You] rejoice.”

Rejoice in the midst of suffering. In verse 14, he shares that those who suffer and go through trials because of the name of Christ are blessed. “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake” (Matthew 5:10). Finally, he encourages those who are being persecuted to persevere because their suffering brings praise and glory to God.

How have you faced suffering, trials or persecution for your faith? Have you been mocked for being a Christian? What is your response? Do you respond with anger, feistiness or passive resignation? Do you respond with self-pity when things get tough? Remember Peter’s imperative, “[You] rejoice.” What does that look like in your life this week? How can you choose joy in the midst of life’s difficulties?



HILARY RATCHFORD
Writer, Southeastern
Seminary student

Victorious Faith

Focal Passage: 1 Peter 5:6-11

Madonna once said, “No matter who you are, no matter what you did, no matter where you’ve come from, you can always change, become a better version of yourself.” Our culture believes the lie of self-improvement. This lie parades on our television and computer screens and is evident in talk shows, books and movies.

C.S. Lewis said it much better, “A proud man is always looking down on things and people; and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you.” If you’re looking down at someone, or if you’re looking inward to yourself, as Madonna hints above, you’re not looking in the right place. You’re not looking to God.

Peter directs our gaze in the right direction. In the preceding verses, he is giving instructions to the elders and young men scattered throughout Asia Minor. He charges them to humble themselves

under God’s mighty hand (v. 6). Notice the contrast from the prideful, self-improvement stance above. They are to cast all their anxiety upon Him (v. 7). In doing these things, God will lift them up. Peter is emphasizing “God-help.”

He also issues three imperatives in verses 8 and 9: “[You] be self-controlled; [You] be alert; [You] resist Satan.” Last week, we talked about how imperatives in the Greek are direct commands. Yet instead of focusing on self-effort, Peter explains how these believers are to obey these imperatives in verse 9 by “standing firm in the faith.” Read about standing firm in the armor of God in Ephesians 6:10-18.

Peter encourages the believers by giving them hope for the future. He promises God will restore them and make them strong, firm and steadfast because of their present suffering (v. 10). As believers, we too can take hope that regardless of our trials, God will strengthen and restore us. We should not look to “self-help” advice that is inwardly-focused. Instead, we should rely on “God-help,” and recognize that He has given us a victorious faith that is rooted in our triumphant Savior.

August 10

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

August 17

Tell It Like It Is

Focal Passages: Daniel 5:1-6, 16-17, 23c-28

In our culture it seems that the ultimate insult is to warn that a behavior is sinful. Admittedly, some have “warned” with tremendous insensitivity or even condescension. But, in the face of obvious sin, what is a Christ-follower to do?

In the first four verses of Daniel 5 we learn Belshazzar stoops to a new low. He takes the gold and silver vessels Nebuchadnezzar had removed from the temple in Jerusalem and uses them as dinnerware for a big party. Fundamentally, Belshazzar takes items set aside to bring glory to God and uses them to further the frivolity of his guests.

God does not take such action lightly. Rather than simply striking Belshazzar or his partygoers, God issues a warning of His impending judgment with a hand that appears and begins writing on a wall (5:5-6). God warns prior to judgment because He loves us and desires that we repent. Sometimes those warnings are as dramatic as handwriting on a wall. Sometimes it is as simple as the warnings in God’s Word. And sometimes it is as controversial as a believer unwilling to

concede biblical morality for the sake of popular opinion.

When the king discovers that no one is able to interpret the writing, he becomes terribly frightened. Finally, someone mentions that maybe Daniel can do it. Belshazzar brings Daniel in and offers him royal clothing, gold chains and a position of power, if he could just interpret the writing. But, Daniel rejects the trappings of the king. Rather than fall victim to pride, he recognizes that he is but an instrument to be used by God. His humility in warning the king who held him captive was borne out of his understanding of the king whom he ultimately served. Rather than bravado or condescension, such knowledge was humbling to Daniel.

Be not mistaken, however, such humility does not result in passivity. Humility does not ignore sin or its consequences. Rather, humility demands that a warning of the judgment to come is issued. We do not love if we do not warn. But humility is the key: if we do not love, our warnings fall on deaf ears.



ROB POCHEK
Senior Pastor, Raleigh
Road Baptist Church,
Wilson

Focal Passages: Daniel 6:3-7, 10-11, 16-23

Pray. When surveyed, most Americans will acknowledge prayer is important in their life. Indeed, since researcher George Barna began asking about people’s prayer habits, more than eight out of 10 Americans have consistently said they prayed in the previous week. Other polls indicate people are often confused as to the purpose of prayer. For example, according to a Beliefnet poll, only 38 percent said intimacy with God was the primary purpose of prayer, while 56 percent indicated their families were the primary focus of their prayers.

We can learn much about prayer from Daniel’s experiences in Daniel 6. Following his interpretation of the handwriting on the wall, King Darius ascended to the throne. Daniel was one of the 120 satraps (provincial governor) Darius appointed. His character was impeccable and he possessed an “extraordinary spirit.”

The satraps set themselves against

Daniel and sought to destroy him. They decided to use his faithfulness in prayer as a weapon against him. They played on the king’s pride by suggesting that no one be allowed to pray to anyone other than him for a period of 30 days. The king agreed and issued the decree, with the lion’s den as punishment.

Consider for a moment that Daniel’s enemies knew him and his prayer life so well that they were aware he could not go 30 days without praying. Could you? If some act of Congress or a local government made it illegal to pray for 30 days, what would you do? What if it was only for a week? A day? How long would you be willing to not pray, under the threat of persecution? Who knows you well enough to know whether you would avoid praying, especially at the threat of death? For too many of us prayer is an add-on to our spiritual lives. It is something we do at mealtime or during a worship service, but it is not an indispensable part of our lives. It was for Daniel. He faced the lion’s den with confidence because he knew his God. That knowledge was derived through his prayer life. For Daniel, prayer was essential for his life. Is it for you?

Never Give Up on Prayer

Fruitland

Continued from page 4

coursework at Fruitland.

Horton and Thompson encourage prospective students to make the main campus in Hendersonville their first choice when working on a FBBC degree.

Thompson emphasized, “There is an experience on the Fruitland main campus that cannot be replicated elsewhere, no matter how hard we try.”

If students cannot attend the main campus, we “encourage them to consider one of our satellite locations, and now they have the option getting a Fruitland degree online,” Horton added.

The cost of each online course is \$225, plus the cost of textbooks, which makes Fruitland’s online courses

both affordable and accessible.

Thompson said FBBC is a quality educational choice for those preparing for ministerial careers as well as those who desire a Bible-based two-year degree that can be foundational to a secular vocation.

“The curriculum at Fruitland gives those who serve in law enforcement, nursing, business, and other fields, the core knowledge in worldview, history, language, and critical thinking to evangelize and disciple the unchurched in a global and multicultural context,” he added.

To learn more about the online program, visit www.fruitland.edu or call the office: (800) 696-2215. **BR**

Wildfire relief imparts hope in Washington state

North American Mission Board

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteer Gerry Roe and 20-plus Northwest Baptist Convention volunteers have been providing meals in Twisp, Wash. – about 1,200 a day – since July 18. More than 1,500 firefighters and support staff are now battling the blaze, called the Carlton Complex Fire, which started on July 14 as four separate fires. Donations can be sent through the local Baptist convention or visit <https://donations.namb.net/dr-donations>. Also, call (866) 407-NAMB (6262) or mail checks to NAMB, P.O. Box 116543, Atlanta, GA 30368-6543. Designate for “Disaster Relief.” **BR**

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Association

The McMinn-Meigs Baptist Association in South East Tennessee is actively seeking our next **Director of Missions**. Resumes will be accepted until August 15, 2014. We look forward to hearing from you. DOM Search, McMinn-Meigs Baptist Association, 350 North Congress Parkway, Athens, TN 37303, or McMinnMeigsBaptist@gmail.com.

Pastor

Mary’s Chapel Baptist Church in Clinton, N.C., is in search of a **Bi-Vocational Pastor**. We are a small rural church with an average attendance of approx 45-50 in Sunday School and 50-75 in Worship Service. We desire a community-minded pastor whose goal is to help our church grow by helping us spread the gospel of JESUS Christ. Please send resume, references and contact information to Pastor search committee, Mary’s Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, 2336 Keener Rd., Clinton, NC 28328.

Middendorf Baptist Church seeks **Bi-vocational Pastor**. Conservative SBC church in Chesterfield County. Average attendance: worship 88 and Sunday School 42. Send resumes: Middendorf Baptist Church, 2202 Middendorf Church Road, Hartsville, SC 29550. Contact: (843) 335-8385.

Ephesus Baptist Church, Chapel Hill, NC, is prayerfully seeking a **bi-vocational pastor** with a passion for church growth. The church is in a growing community and is near several college campuses. Experience and seminary necessary. We are affiliated with Yates Baptist Association, BSCNC, SBC and CBF. Please send resumes to Pastor Search Team, Ephesus Baptist Church, 2025 Ephesus Church Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27517.

Bible-believing SBC church in Eastern Randolph County prayerfully seeking **Full-Time** mission-minded, community focused **Pastor**, preferably with five or more years in a Southern Baptist church and a degree from a Southern Baptist college. Shady Grove Baptist Church, Staley, NC 27355: Parsonage, Family Life Center, Sanctuary/classrooms. Church founded 1755. Pictures/info on shadygroveonline.net. Resumes by mail or email only. Send resume and sermon sample to Ray Johnson, 1327 Langley Road, Staley, NC 27355, or to Ray at betty3159@aol.com. Must be post marked or emailed by August 29, 2014.

Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Alexis, NC, is prayerfully seeking a **full-time pastor**. Five years of pastoral experience is preferred. The church is in the South Fork Baptist Association and is situated approximately 20 miles west of Charlotte in southern Lincoln County. Please send resume and cover letter to: Pastor Search Committee, Mt. Zion Baptist Church, P.O. Box 70 Alexis, NC 28006.

Full-Time Pastor. Sandy Plains Baptist Church in Gastonia, NC, is prayerfully seeking the man whom God has chosen to lead and shepherd our congregation as our Pastor. We are a Bible-believing, Bible-teaching Southern Baptist church located 20 miles SW of Charlotte, NC. Experience and seminary preferred. Looking for a Pastor who is biblically grounded and mission minded. Send Resumes to: Pastor Search Committee, Chairman David Lynn, 4211 Beaty Rd., Gastonia, NC 28056; 704-962-4403; davidlynn2014@outlook.com.

Church Staff

Mount Olivet Baptist Church of Franklinton, N.C., is seeking an **Associate Pastor**. For further information please see website: www.mtolivetchurch-franklinton.com.

Holly Springs Baptist Church, Broadway, NC, is prayerfully seeking a **full-time Minister of Youth, Children and Outreach**. Detailed job description available upon request, gmcneill@harnett.org, (910) 890-6039. Position will minister to pre-school through high school and work through neighborhood and school outreach to help the growth of our church body. Submit resume to Personnel, 385 Holly Springs Church Road, Broadway, NC 27546, or gmcneill@harnett.org.

Full-Time Minister of Students and Outreach at Coggins Memorial Baptist Church, Lexington, N.C. Send resume to searchcommcoggins@gmail.com or 1306 S. Main Street, Lexington, NC 27292. To learn more about our church, visit our website at www.cogginsbaptist.org.

Church Pianist needed. Become a member of the worship team at Forest Hills Baptist Church in Wilson, N.C., as Pianist. Needed Sundays, Wednesdays and special events. Contact Rev. Grant Stanley – gstanley@foresthillsbaptist.org or (252) 243-4149 during the hrs of 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. for application & job description. Applicants need to be 18 yrs or older with experience in church setting w/background of piano.

West Edgecombe Baptist Church Rocky Mount, N.C., is seeking **part-time Worship leader/Choir director** that would be responsible for leading the congregation in worship as well as working with our choir and musicians. This person will create an inviting, energetic, and passionate atmosphere of worship to prepare the hearts of the people. They will need to prepare a blended selection of music every Sunday traditional and contemporary. Congregation size 200+ for more information about the church please go to: www.westedgecombebaptist.com or contact the office at: (252) 442-7041.

Green Hill Baptist Church, Rutherford County, is looking for a **Part-time Student Pastor**. Experience preferred with knowledge and principles of Christian education. Send inquires and resumes attention: Student Pastor Search to: robinkeith@nctv.com.

Magnolia Baptist Church in Stedman, NC, is seeking a **part-time youth minister**. Please send all resumes to Magnolia Baptist Church, 1021 Magnolia Church Rd., Stedman, NC 28391; Attn: Jason Whitfield.

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

Calvary Baptist Church, Gastonia, NC, seeking **Part-time Worship Leader** – Must be qualified to lead congregation in blended services, lead and instruct choir & praise band rehearsals and have a personal relationship with God. If interested send resume to ccalvarybaptist@carolina.rr.com. For more info on Calvary go to www.calvarygastonia.com.

Blackwell Baptist Church, Elizabeth City, NC, seeking **part-time Youth Leader/Director**. Student or bi-vocational, 15-20 hrs week with salary. Looking for neighborhood and school outreach to help growth of church body. Submit resume to Buck Jolly, Blackwell Baptist, 700 N. Road St., Elizabeth City, NC 27909.

Miscellaneous

Gardner-Webb University is seeking a **Director** for its new Five-Year Pastoral Degree Program, offered through the School of Divinity and Department of Religious Studies, scheduled to begin enrolling students in the Fall 2015 Semester. This is a faculty level position which may include teaching. Master’s degree required. The director will oversee the program and have advising responsibility for the students enrolled. Please see the full position description at <http://gardner-webb.edu/current-openings>.

NCBAM will conduct Leadership Training at Caswell’s Summer Fest in August. Senior adult leaders will be encouraged and trained to provide effective ministry for the coming “age wave.” Call (877) 506-2226 for more information.

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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.

Ackley

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university, a women's college, a nationally known arts school, a small Christian college and a technical college. Making a list of the differences between these schools – all within 10 minutes of our church's central campus – would take much longer than visiting all six in a single drive. So, with many unique demographics, how is it possible to reach the lost and mobilize ministry?

This dynamic keeps countless college ministry leaders like myself up at night. Do you target one school, hire staff to reflect the needs of each, or simply ignore the needs of all the campuses hoping someone shows up at your church?

Gospel ministry isn't marketing, so why limit ourselves to one demographic on one campus? Your church budget is probably like ours – tight. Hiring more staff is certainly out of the question.

The average college student won't happen upon our church campus. The question becomes, "What is an effective college ministry to do?"

Determining our efforts requires careful consideration of our purpose. Only then can we establish the appropriate steps forward in our context to maximize our effectiveness. What

then, is the purpose for your college ministry?

Reach the lost. The Bible demands it, and the growth of the church hinges on it. Everyone must be sharing the gospel. This requires us to provide a place where lost students can come and to be where lost students are.

Don't worry college pastors, this doesn't mean you need to go to frat parties. But it does mean you might need to buy a parking pass, stay up until 1 a.m. or cheer against your favorite school as you discover intentional ways and reasonable environments to engage.

Equip the saints. Ephesians 4:12 clarifies our role as apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers is to "equip the saints for the work of the ministry." That means investing, counseling, guiding, challenging, teaching and modeling what it means to be a faithful follower of Christ – no matter the environment or vocation.

Sometimes this will be the difficult rebuke of a student walking in open sin, and sometimes it means the vulnerability of allowing a college student to be the teacher. This won't be a program with a date of completion, either. This will be

needed until the day we enter eternity, for as Paul says in Ephesians 4:13, this continues, "until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ..."

Honestly, this is harder than reaching the lost, but it seems to be one of the most widely missing elements among struggling churches.

Celebrate sending. There are times I wish I could stand as Moses did before Pharaoh with a message from God and say to pastors, "Let My people go!" Too many tears have been cried, hearts been broken and feelings been hurt over the natural transitions that come in life.

What if we began celebrating sending students to graduate programs in different parts of the country or the world? What if we began celebrating students transferring to another school or spending a summer, semester or year studying abroad?

What if we understood our white-knuckled grip on "our" students caused them and us tremendous heartache, when God intends for us to not only expect them to leave, but to actually encourage them to go?

Let's face it, rarely does anyone under the age of 30 stay in the same place for an extended period of time. Recent reports from the Bureau of Labor Statistics suggest the average length of time an American holds a particular job is 4.4 years and the number cuts in half when looking at an organization's youngest employees.

To not encourage and celebrate sending is to miss both the reality of our culture and the mandate of scripture.

If there is any hope of having effective college ministries in our churches – no matter how many schools are in your community or demographics are represented at each school – we must begin with what our purpose is and continue to revisit it often in order to measure what we are doing.

Out of the mandates for the church, we learn ministry. Learn your cultures and activate this mission mandate for all ministry.

From these intentional efforts our college ministries will experience the flourishing He desires for His Kingdom.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Steven Ackley is associate pastor of college & young adults at Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem.) **BR**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Obama: LGBT rights for federal contractors

President Barack Obama issued an executive order July 21 that bars federal contractors from discriminating based on "sexual orientation" and "gender identity."

"While we don't know the full implications of this executive order, I am disappointed that this administration persistently violates the freedom of conscience for religious organizations that provide necessary relief for the poor and endangered," said Russell D. Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

Advocates for LGBT rights have been unable to convince Congress to pass the Employment Non-discrimination Act (ENDA), which would grant civil rights to all employees on the basis of homosexual, bisexual or transgender status. The U.S. Senate passed ENDA in November, but the House of Representatives has refused to act on it. See story at BRnow.org.

Spurgeon's lost sermons slated for release

Charles Spurgeon preached to more than 10 million people and baptized more than 14,000 believers. More than 50 million copies of his sermons were sold. Spurgeon's fans nicknamed him "the Prince of Preachers."

In 2015, B&H Publishing will release The Lost Sermons of Charles Spurgeon, a multi-volume edition of early Spurgeon sermons and sermon outlines.

LifeWay President Thom Rainer said he is excited to make the sermons available to pastors and scholars alike. "This project is the most recent example of the tremendous impact B&H is having on evangelical publishing," Rainer said. "As we constantly endeavor to faithfully serve the church, we believe the Lord will bless our efforts." See story at BRnow.org.

Criswell College names new president

The Board of Trustees of Criswell College voted unanimously July 7 to appoint Barry K. Creamer as the college's seventh president. Creamer, 51, has served as Criswell's vice president of academic affairs since 2011 and as professor of humanities since 2004. He began his presidency Aug. 1. "[Barry Creamer] has poured his life into this school for 10 years and has proven his ability as a scholar, administrator and effective leader," said James T. Draper, Criswell's interim president, said of Creamer's appointment. See story at BRnow.org.