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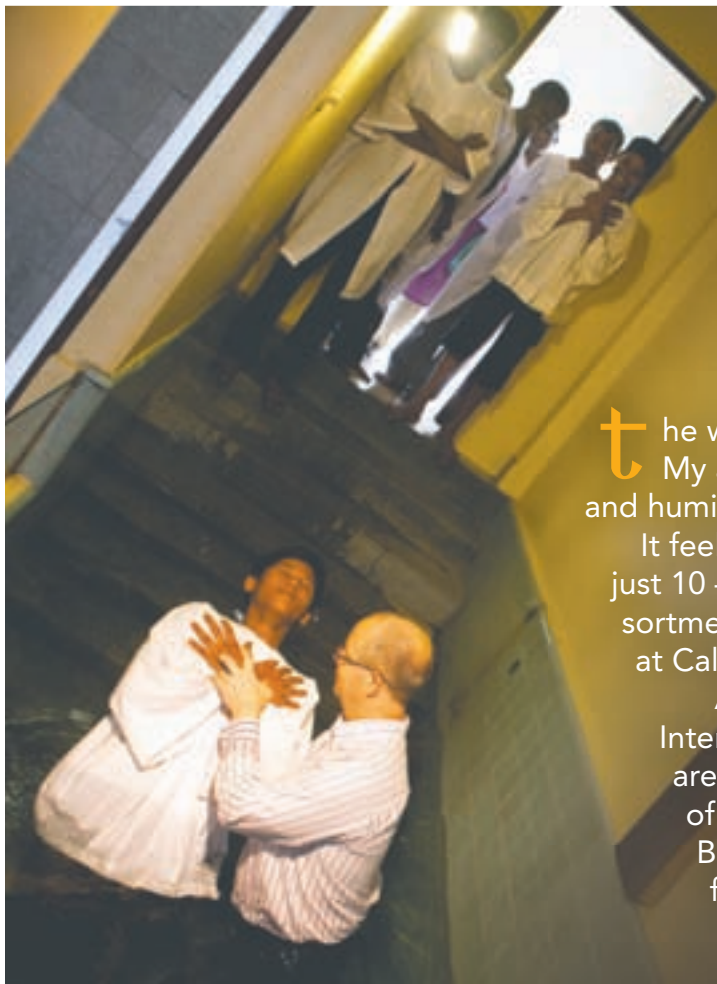
Discipleship Q&A

Learn how to engage people groups in your neighborhood.
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BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

AUGUST 4, 2012 • News Journal of North Carolina Baptists • VOLUME 178 NO. 16 • **BRnow.org**



N.C. couple ministers to SOUTH ASIAN REFUGEES

By SUSIE RAIN | Baptist Press

The white gunnysack keeps slipping out of my hands. My arms feel like wet noodles in this Bangkok heat and humidity.

It feels like I'm carrying 70 pounds of rice, but it's really just 10 – plus spices, cookies, canned meat and an odd assortment of extras from the "world hunger food closet" at Calvary Baptist Church in Bangkok.

A group of us – including North Carolinian and International Mission Board missionary Carrie Chappell are taking the food to a refugee family. With the help of Southern Baptist World Hunger Funds, Calvary Baptist established a food closet supplied with a few comfort foods from various countries.

See Refugees page 6

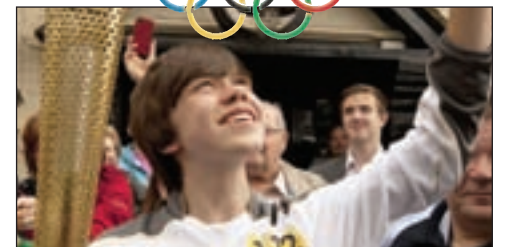
Aurora churches kindle hope after the horror

By AARON EARLS | Baptist Press

Almost as soon as the gunfire ceased in the Century Theater in Aurora, Colo., local churches began meeting the needs of the hurting in the community and their own congregations.

"I immediately felt the same anxiety that many others felt," said Mitchell Hamilton, pastor of Mississippi Avenue Baptist Church, "as I considered the very real possibility that one of our members might be directly affected. My second thought was to get to the church and

See Aurora page 5



Joe Cross, 14, carried the flame through Dorking as one of the 8,000 inspirational torchbearers.

Multicultural London ideal missions ground

By ELAINE GASTON | Baptist Press

For more than 200 years, London has been a repository for some of the globe's most remarkable cultural treasures.

In an hour's stroll through the British Museum, a visitor can view Greek statues from the Parthenon; colossal stone-winged lions from an Assyrian palace; the Rosetta Stone, the world's key to

See Olympics page 9



interview stirs media storm, debate continues

By MICHAEL FOUST & SHAWN HENDRICKS |
Baptist Press & BR

Though the amount of coverage has thinned in recent days, coordinated efforts to both boycott and embrace Chick-fil-A continue to surface in response to comments made by the company's president in the *Biblical Recorder's* July 7 issue.

The brunt of the media storm began soon after the *Recorder's* story was re-posted by Baptist Press July 16. Since then the story, in which Dan Cathy takes a biblical stance for the traditional family, has been mentioned on networks such as CNN, Fox News and referenced by the *Los Angeles Times*, *Washington Post*, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, Associated Press and *Huffington Post*, just to name a few.

The *Recorder's* editor, K. Allan Blume

has described many media reports of his conversation with the company's president as "distorted."

During a call-in radio interview July 19 with WORD-FM in Pittsburgh, Blume discussed his conversation with Cathy as "very positive," unlike how it was being portrayed in a variety of news reports that used the term "anti-gay."

"He was not saying 'guilty as charged anti-gay,'" Blume said.

"[Cathy] never even brought up that subject. Everything he stated was on the positive side ... He never stated anything negative."

Blume asked Cathy about opposition to the company's support of the traditional family, and Cathy responded, "Well, guilty as charged."

Cathy continued, "We are very much supportive of the family – the biblical definition of the family unit. We are a family-owned business, a family-led business, and we are married to our first wives. We give God thanks for that."

The media drama grew larger when on the same day Baptist Press re-posted the story, a radio program spotlighted Cathy discussing the need for children to have a mom and a dad.

"As it relates to society in general, I think we are inviting God's judgment on our nation when we shake our fist at Him and say, 'We know better than You as to what constitutes a marriage,'" Cathy said on "The Ken Coleman Show."

"I pray God's mercy on our generation that has such

See Chick-fil-A page 7



New initiative teaches students to be leaders in missions

By MELISSA LILLEY | BSC Communications

The Holy Spirit's presence so overwhelmed Hannah Davidson that she left the meeting and went to pray. On this night, she knew God was calling her to devote her life to full-time international missions.

"I felt God was saying, 'You are a missionary. You have to go. You have to do this,'" said the freshman at North Carolina State University.

Davidson thought she had her life figured out. But that changed when she heard Tom Billings, executive director of Union Baptist Association in Houston, Texas speak about giving God control.

"I had it all planned out," she said. "I wanted to become a teacher, get married and have kids. But Tom said that control is an illusion, and God is the only one in control. That really opened me up. I felt like Tom was talking right to me."

Davidson heard from Billings during a July 9-13 retreat at Caraway Conference Center in Asheboro. She joined four other high school and college students for a week of missions leadership training and hands-on missions. The week marked the culmination of year one for students in the inaugural Next Generation Missional Journey (NGMJ) class.

Sponsored by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's (BSC) Office of Great Commission Partnerships, the training initiative is part of a three-year effort to help raise up passionate mission leaders. In addition to the summer retreat at Caraway, students read assigned texts and attend three one-day training sessions throughout the year. They learn from pastors, missionaries and missions strategists.

Michael Sowers, BSC senior consultant for Great Commission Partnerships, started the initiative out of burden to help train students to be strategic missions leaders. He said he hopes they will have a renewed burden for the lost and a strong biblical missiology that will allow them to help lead their church to engage a people group that has never heard the gospel.

"These students can lead the way," Sowers added. "If they are willing to do the hard work, others will see that they can do it, too."

"Instead of focusing on the masses, we need to model this after Jesus and focus on a few and really pour into their lives and their missiology," he said. "We can enhance what a small group can do by investing in them and coming alongside them as they go and serve where God calls them."

As year one of the training is focused



Mike Sowers, Baptist State Convention consultant for Great Commission Partnerships, talks with youth and college students about being strategic in reaching communities. The Next Generation Missional Journey just finished its first year as part of a three-year training to raise up passionate, missional leaders. (BSC photo by Melissa Lilley)

on underserved and unreached areas of North Carolina, the students spent two days in training at Caraway and three days serving in North Carolina. They worked alongside BSC Asian, Hispanic and African-American church planting consultants to identify people groups, survey people about needs in their community, and share the gospel throughout Greensboro, High Point and Winston-Salem.

These three cities are included in the Triad metro area, one of the state's top eight metro areas. About 75 percent of North Carolina's population lives in one of the eight metro areas.

During the week, students met people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds, such as Sikhs and Muslims. They had an opportunity to share their faith, one day in an Asian market, another day in a mosque.

"I had never even seen a mosque before," Davidson said. "We were able to witness just by asking different questions."

Strategy is crucial

NGMJ students are learning how to develop strategies to reach different ethnic groups with the gospel, and how those strategies will vary depending on people and context.

"We usually just have events at our church, or we pass out flyers about one of our events," Davidson said. "Churches often think that's all they have to do to get people to come to church. We don't try to go to them."

As students visited neighborhoods and apartment complexes in the Triad, church planters taught them to observe

the culture around them and to always be ready when God provides opportunities for spiritual conversations.

Students said they learned they don't have to take a trip somewhere to engage in missions – God is bringing people from nations all over the world to North Carolina. They also learned that if a church

isn't willing to change and do whatever it takes to reach the people in their community, the church will eventually die.

The students are already working on creating a strategy to reach people in one of the Triad communities they visited. At the end of the three years, they will have developed a strategy to reach an unengaged, unreached people group with the gospel.

"We have to get over ourselves and get out of our comfort zones," said NGMJ student Rebecca Nivens. "It's not just a one-time conversation. You have to invest time."

Investing in the future

Each NGMJ class will spend the first year learning about church planting in North Carolina and their responsibility to help fulfill the Great Commission.

In year two of the journey, students focus on North America and spend three weeks in the summer serving in New York City. In their final year they learn about reaching the ends of the earth and serve in Southeast Asia.

NGMJ students are eligible to earn 13 credit hours from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest. Spots are still open for the fall. Applications are available at ncbaptist.org/gcp. **B**

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OPPORTUNITY CORNER

N.C. Baptist Men offer leadership training

A five-hour training conference designed for Baptist Men's directors, men's ministry directors, pastors, or anyone who works with men in the church will be Sept. 7-8 at Shelby Mission Camp, Shelby. It will also include training for Royal Ambassador and Challengers leaders. The cost is \$30 including lodging and meals. Register with N.C. Baptist Men. Visit ncmissions.org; call (800) 395-5102, ext. 5607 for more information.

Learn disciple-making strategy

The Baptist State Convention will hold two Looking at Your Church in 3D train-

ing events this fall. The training focuses on discovering, developing and delivering a Christ centered disciple-making strategy for your church. Dates and locations are Sept. 13 at Southside Baptist Church in Greensboro and Oct. 4 at First Baptist Church in Swannanoa. Workshop hours are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. with a \$5 fee for lunch. Visit ncbaptist.org to register. Contact Brian Upshaw with questions at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5632, or bupshaw@ncbaptist.org.

Retreat for pastors & wives in October

Pastors and wives are invited to the Pastor's Juggling Act, a getaway conference for renewal on Oct. 25-27 at Fort

Caswell, Oak Island. The event is open for all paid pastoral staff.

The cost is \$99 per couple including meals and lodging; attendance is limited to the first 30 couples who register. Visit ncbaptist.org/jugglingact.

Contact Eddie Thompson at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5644, or ethompson@ncbaptist.org.

Embrace plans leadership training

Bobbie Rankin, wife of former International Mission Board president Jerry Rankin, will be the speaker Oct. 26-27 for the Embrace Leadership Training: Worthy of the Calling. The event will be at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, and it is open for all women called into leadership roles in their churches and associations. The cost is \$45 until Sept. 14, then \$60 until Oct. 12. Register at ncbaptist.org/embrace-training2012. Contact Embrace ministries at embracenc@ncbaptist.org, or call (800) 395-5102, ext. 5561.

Fall student retreats focus on being godly

God Girl, God Guy is the theme for the Student Fall Retreat at North Carolina Baptist Assembly at Caswell on Oak Island. Dates are Oct. 26-28 and Nov.

16-18. Girls will learn about what it means to be a woman of God in every area of life. Guys will learn about developing the character and principles of a man of God. The cost is \$123; register at bedotell.com. For questions, contact the student ministry office at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5566, or student.evangelism@ncbaptist.org.

Senior adults to sing at festival

All senior adult choir members are invited to sing at the Senior Adult Choir Festival, Oct. 29-30, at Gateway Center Hotel in Hickory. The event will include food, fellowship, "Share-a-Tune" and a closing concert. Choirs must learn the music before attending the concert. For Baptist State Convention affiliated churches with choirs of at least seven people, the rate is \$250; \$300 for non-affiliated groups. It is \$40 per person for choirs of six people or less. Choirs that recruit other churches to attend can receive special rates. Choirs must arrange their own lodging and meals. Register by Oct. 12 online or by mail. Visit ncbaptist.com, click "worship and music," for more information. Contact Sherry Thompson with questions: (800) 395-5102, ext. 5634, or sthompson@ncbaptist.org.

CHURCH NEWS



N.C. Bivocational Ministers Association

The North Carolina Baptist Bivocational Ministers Association elected new officers during its July 13-14 retreat at Caraway Conference Center near Asheboro. From left: Randy Shuler, pastor of New Hope Baptist Church, Brevard, was elected secretary-treasurer; David Willis was chosen as vice president-program; Gary Henderson, pastor of Orrum Baptist Church, Orrum, was picked as vice president-membership; and Tony Medlin, who works with Union Baptist Association's bivocational ministries, was elected president. For more about bivocational ministries, contact (877) 224-5615 or email levans@ncbaptist.org.



Rutherwood Baptist Church, Boone

On June 3, Pastor Gary Lawrence, right, burns Rutherwood Baptist Church's note with contractor and member Herb Cook. The church financed \$120,000 of the \$900,000 fellowship hall the church built. The two-story building also includes a choir room, kitchen, two classrooms and four bathrooms. On July 8, the church presented a plaque to retiring groundskeeper Stewart Brown Jr. for his 45 years of service.

AROUND THE STATE

Obituaries

LONNIE ROSS "BILL" BROCK JR., 88, died June 29.

Brock was a graduate of Mars Hill College, Wake Forest University and Southern Seminary. He was former pastor of Hunton Baptist Church, Glen Allen, Va., and served as a Foreign Mission Board (now International Mission Board) missionary for 25 years in North Brazil. He also was director of missions of the Green River Association, Rutherfordton.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Barbara Howard Brock; daughters, Karen Ramalho Miranda, Katherine Simmons and Virginia Reynolds; and six grandchildren.

Memorials to: North Carolina Baptist Foundation, 201 Convention Dr., Cary, NC 27511-4257.

Staff changes

Knightdale Baptist Church, Knightdale, has called **TRENT SESSOMS** as senior pastor and **JOE JOHNSTON** as youth pastor. Sessoms previously served Garland Baptist Church, Garland. This is Johnston's first church staff position.

KEVIN QUALLS has been called to First Baptist Church, Charlotte, as next generations pastor. Previously, Qualls served as a church planting pastor for First Baptist, Indian Trail, in Pageland, S.C.

Refuge Baptist Church, Dana, has called **ROY PERRY** as pastor. Perry was pastor of First Baptist Church, Glendive, Mont.

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Submissions

The *Biblical Recorder* is pleased to publish staff changes, church news and events with a statewide interest. Please send information immediately following an event, or for opportunity corner, send at least two months in advance.

Because we are a statewide newspaper, events included are usually beyond the local church level.

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

‘Trust the trustees’ editorial stirs responses

By DIANA CHANDLER | Baptist Press

An editorial written by *Biblical Recorder* Editor K. Allan Blume has opened a dialogue on the role and accountability of the various boards of trustees governing Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) entities.

In a July editorial, “Trust the trustees,” Blume encourages Southern Baptists to operate under the system of leadership established through boards of trustees governing LifeWay Christian Resources, the mission boards, GuideStone Financial Resources, the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission and the six SBC seminaries.

Blume referenced LifeWay President and CEO Thom Rainer’s response to a question a messenger raised at the 2012 SBC annual meeting, writing that Rainer’s statement was worth repeating.

Rainer was responding to a messenger’s inquiry about LifeWay’s decision-making process in choosing which books, videos and other products to sell. For instance, LifeWay this year chose to continue selling the New International Version 2011 Bible, and chose to discontinue selling the movie “The Blind Side.”

“You see, you Southern Baptists have elected 57 trustees to represent you at LifeWay. ... They are pastors, educators, directors of missions, homemakers, businessmen, businesswomen and so on,” Blume quoted Rainer as saying. “They have a common love for the Lord, the inerrancy of the Word of God and the commitment to you, the Southern Baptist Convention. They ask us the hard questions.”

Rainer continued, “They hold us accountable. ... Please allow us to be

represented by your trustees, some of the greatest men and women I have ever known. How do we decide certain books? How do we decide certain videos? How do we decide what we do? It is your trustees who hold us accountable. Trust the trustees. That’s how we make our decisions.”

Bart Barber, a trustee of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and pastor of First Baptist Church in Farmersville, Texas, posted on the *Biblical Recorder*’s website a comment defending messengers’ right to question trustees.

“I do not think that anyone is out of line to ask the boards of trustees or the various entity administrations to explain themselves to the messengers and to answer our questions,” Barber wrote.

“I hope that LifeWay has a good uniform standard by which it makes decisions about what to sell and what not to sell. An entity that large in that particular business and with this particular constituency ought to have such a standard, approved by the trustees.

“I just can’t see any reason why that standard ought to be kept a secret from the messengers.”

Barber added, “‘Trust the trustees?’ Certainly. Great answer, just not to this particular question, which, as I understood it, attempted not at all to wrest power away from the trustees or control sales policy at LifeWay, but instead merely asked for a report of what document or principles underlie that policy.”

Barber pointed out he is in favor of selling the NIV 2011 Bible and “The Blind Side.”

Bill Tomlinson, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary trustee and pastor emeritus of Arlington Baptist Church in Rocky Mount, N.C., responded to Blume by referencing the conservative resurgence the SBC experienced in the 1980s and 1990s.

“As we struggled trying to bring about the conservative resurgence, the one

argument we heard over and over again from those who opposed us was that we [should] ‘trust the trustees,’” Tomlinson wrote on the *Recorder*’s website. “If we had listened to them then, there would have been no conservative resurgence.”

In response, Blume defended Rainer.

“I believe Dr. Rainer’s comments were reflecting the fact that the resurgence is history,” Blume wrote in a response supporting his editorial.

“He implied that today, we not only have good conservatives serving as trustees, we also have a CEO at LifeWay who is a solid conservative. So, hopefully the trust levels should be high for our boards.”

In his editorial, Blume pointed out the importance of openness and trust in SBC dealings, encouraging messengers to work harmoniously.

“Having worked within the process for several decades, I learned that most trustees are outstanding Baptist men and women,” Blume wrote.

“I’ve encountered a few who did not seem to fit. But they are in the minority. Most trustees are dedicated to the goals and mission of the entity. Their purpose is to make that entity effective in Kingdom work.

“Their desire for service is not motivated by prestige or power, but to see

souls saved and lives changed. Board members give their valuable time without pay to offer wise counsel. Blanket accusations against boards or general statements critical of the leadership are counterproductive.

“We are free to disagree, but we do not need to be disagreeable,” Blume wrote. “Remember that the SBC is made up of an eclectic membership representing believers of diverse backgrounds, traditions and methodologies. Our commonality is set by parameters within the Baptist Faith & Message.”

Blume noted that trustees are elected to four-year terms and that no single trustee can control a board.

Brent Hobbs, pastor of Severn Baptist Church in Severn, N.C., posted a comment emphasizing the integrity of the trustee system.

“Unless some egregious instances surface, we should let the trustees determine what they sell and relax about it,” Hobbs wrote.

“If there becomes a pattern of irresponsibility, then some action can be taken at that point.

“If ‘The Blind Side’ is the biggest problem – then we really do have more important things to worry about.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Diana Chandler is staff writer for Baptist Press.) **BP**



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Women's conference to focus on God's redeeming love

By MELISSA LILLEY | BSC Communications

During the time leading up to the Babylonian exile the Israelites continually turned away from God, refusing to repent of their sins and to follow God's commandments. The exile could have marked the end of the Jews.

"Jerusalem was decimated and the temple was burned. It seemed like that was it," said Kelly Minter, a popular writer, speaker and worship leader whose latest women's Bible study is on Nehemiah. "But we know God was gracious because God brought the Jews back."

Minter is the featured speaker for the 2012 Women's Prayer and Evangelism Conference, Sept. 7-8 at Ridgecrest Conference Center.

The conference theme is "Redeeming Love," which Minter explains can be seen throughout the book of Nehemiah.

"God was not just going to send Nehemiah to build, but to help him rebuild," she said. "God is a rebuild-er. He helps rebuild the lives of His people."

Her latest women's Bible study focuses on God's redeeming love for His people, and how God has called believers to be ministers of that redeeming love. "It requires a sacrifice; it requires a cost," she said. "I love Nehemiah's heart and compassion for his people, and his willingness to sacrifice."

Throughout the conference Minter will encourage women to seek what the Lord has put on their heart to do, and to then be obedient.

"This will be a great opportunity for us to get a bigger perspective of Kingdom living and who Christ has

called us to be," she said. "I won't say it will be easy. But it will be an encouraging, inspiring call to action."

This year's theme Scripture passage is Psalm 103:1-5, which addresses different situations in life, such as praising God and remembering all the good the Lord has done: pardoning iniquities, healing diseases, redeeming His people and crowning them with loving kindness and compassion, and satisfying the years of His people with good things.

Breakout session leaders will share their personal experiences and what God taught them in order to encourage others going through similar situations. They also will share how God's redeeming love impacts their lives, said Ashley Allen, director of Embrace Women's Missions and Ministries. "While there are women who have professed Christ as their Lord and Savior, we desire for them to fully experience what this relationship means in every aspect of who they are as women," she said.

Paula Hemphill, women's missional strategist for the International Mission Board, will lead a breakout session titled, "The God who heals all your diseases: What about when God doesn't heal?"

As a two-time breast cancer survivor, Hemphill has learned the importance of making sure that each day is lived for God's glory. "All of us should be asking, 'What really is my contribution to this life? Am I really living abundantly?'" she said. "Jesus came to give us abundant life."

"I have a ministry to other women who are going through cancer," Hemphill said. "I have felt the nausea and sickness, but I have also sensed God's power and

presence. As He has touched me through illness, He has given me the capacity to share Christ's love, whether in cancer centers or in chemo chairs. People are listening," she added. "They often listen best when we are not at our best. It's often during times of pain and suffering that we really have the most powerful

message."

Kimberly Merida, adjunct instructor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and Justice Advocate with International Justice Mission, will lead a breakout session on "The God who redeems life from the pit: Even the pit of human sex trafficking."

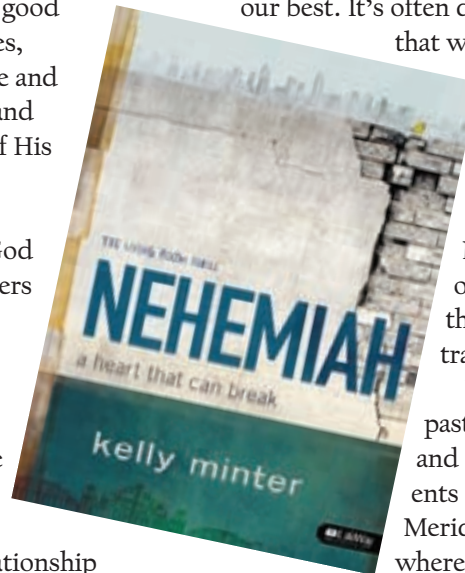
Merida and her husband Tony, who pastors Imago Dei Church in Raleigh and is the author of *Orphanology*, are parents to five adopted children. Kimberly Merida has traveled overseas to areas where children and youth are repeatedly exploited. Her desire is to help women understand the issue of human trafficking nationally and globally, and how they can help make a difference in the lives of others.

"Our God is a great God, and He calls us to action," she said. Often women do not act because they are afraid, or because the despair of the situation is so overwhelming they don't know what to do. Merida encourages women to be prayer warriors and to remember that God is the redeemer and restorer. "We must pray according to who He is – we tend to minimize that," Merida said. "God is jealous for His people."

To register or for more information visit ncbaptist.org/wpec. A detailed listing of all the breakout sessions is also available on the website. **BR**



KELLY MINTER



Aurora

Continued from page 1

begin organizing a response."

The church, located less than a mile from the scene of the shootings, opened its doors for prayer vigils and counseling. All of the church staff members have been involved, Hamilton said, and other counselors were brought in, including one who had ministered following the Columbine shooting.

During one counseling session, Ham-

ilton was faced with a teary eyed 6-year-old girl asking why her cousin died.

"It was tough," Hamilton said of talking with the little girl and her mother. "The mother came to our church because that was the first place she thought might could help her daughter."

After sharing some about heaven and praying with the family, Hamilton scheduled an appointment for them later that

day with a professional grief counselor.

While several people came by the church and received counseling, others simply wanted a place to mourn and pray.

"A young Marine came by in tears. He ran in and just wanted to go to the altar," said Allie McNider, associate pastor at Mississippi Avenue. "We lost two local servicemen, and he was grieving for them."

Besides providing on-site help for the community, the church has empowered their members to minister to those around them. "We offered any resource they may have needed," McNider said, "anything from counseling to a gift card for family members to eat at local restaurants while they are here."

"This is the essence of Ephesians 4:11-12," Hamilton said. "Our members were able to touch our community in ways the staff never could."

Rose Lamb, a Mississippi Avenue member, has been helping a co-worker who lost her son. "Parents are not supposed to bury their kids," Lamb said.

While prayer was the most important

need, Lamb said she and other co-workers have been able to meet some of their friend's immediate needs of "food, hugs, errands and daily visits to the home for emotional support."

While the church may not always have the answer to the "why" questions, Lamb said Christians "can offer comfort and support through listening, prayer and just being there for a hurting world."

For Lamb, reaching out to the hurting should be how believers respond during tragedies. "Bottom line," she said, "it's what Christians are called to do."

Lamb said her friend needs prayer to have the strength to keep going and her community needs to regain a sense of security that was ripped away.

Despite the tragic events, both Lamb and Hamilton also expressed amazement at seeing God's hand at work since the shooting and even during those tragic moments in the theater.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Aaron Earls is a writer based in Wake Forest, N.C. With additional reporting by Amber Cassidy, Colorado Baptist General Convention correspondent.) **BR**

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Refugees

Continued from page 1

Volunteers from the congregation distribute the food during their free time.

“We decided early on that we didn’t want to have the refugees come and stand in a distribution line,” says Chappell, whose husband, Martin, was the associate pastor of Corinth Baptist Church in Elizabeth City, N.C., from 1991 to 1999.

“We wanted to really connect one-to-one,” she adds. “We want to have personal contact and meet each family in their home.”

Today, the Chappell family still maintains a close relationship with the Chowan Baptist Association and its many churches. Chappell says she hopes this story will educate others on the needs of the refugees they work with in Bangkok.

Relationships with the refugees are a key part of their ministry.

“Jesus is so compassionate that we want to share His compassion with others,” she explains. “This often starts with a bag of food and a listening ear. They just want someone to talk to ... someone to share their stories with. They want to know that somebody cares about them.”

While walking the backstreets of Bangkok, Chappell spies one member of the family we are looking for – a smiling William* – waving to us. The man quickly invites us out of the scorching sun and into the oven he calls home.

This concrete block room is no bigger than a child’s bedroom in most American homes, yet a family of five lives here. It isn’t quite what you expect when you think of refugee life.

The iconic image of refugees is rows of white tents in a sprawling emergency camp, not a dingy apartment in a megacity. But the reality is only one-third of

the world’s 15.4 million refugees live in camps. Like most of the world’s population, refugees have steadily moved into cities and towns. Urban refugees are among the fastest-growing population segment globally.

Thousands of people like William and his family live in Bangkok, where the United Nation’s refugee agency, UNHCR, has an office. They estimate that 90 people seek asylum each month in Thailand, fleeing some form of persecution or war.

William lifts his chin to show us a shiny scar from a knife wound. His 13-year-old son peels back his shirtsleeve to reveal a scar from a bullet. They’ve been threatened for being Catholic. The family fled to Bangkok in the hopes of not only safety but for a better future. What



IMB missionary Carrie Chappell shops in the local market for fresh fruits and vegetables to take to Bangkok’s International Detention Center. Southern Baptist World Hunger Food Funds provide a special gift bag for Christians to take to refugees and asylum seekers in the detention center.

they didn’t know was that urban refugees often face dangers and hardships those in the traditional camps never experience.

Thailand is one of the few countries that does not honor the international human rights laws protecting those who flee persecution and seek asylum outside of traditional camps.

Instead, urban refugees are considered illegal migrants.

William explains they knew it would be difficult to leave everything behind in the South Asian country where they

once lived – the family business, their home, dishes, clothes, friends and family — but no one warned them about the isolation, depression, fear and hunger that most suffer when seeking asylum, especially outside of the large refugee camps.

William says his family lives in constant fear of being arrested, so they stay in the small cement-block room they rent.

In an urban environment, the UNHCR cannot always provide services, protection or support as easily as it can in a camp. Filling this gap is the reason our group is traipsing around Bangkok carrying a gunnysack of food. Chappell explains that asylum seekers are not allowed to work or earn money. Once the UN has granted them refugee status, they receive a small stipend for rent until they leave for their new host country or are repatriated to their old one.

Navigating through the UN paperwork can take years. In the meantime, families like William’s struggle to survive. For

reason Chappell and church members from Calvary visit refugees’ homes. She invites the family to church, mentioning several families attend a small group in their language.

Calvary’s church has many small groups studying the Bible and offering each other support in language groups from Africa, South Asia and Southeast Asia.

Some of the small group leaders are trained pastors who are also refugees.

For believers, Calvary’s ministry provides a safe place to worship their Savior. For those who have never heard, the church introduces them to the gospel.

When it’s time for us to go, no one wants the visit to end.

Our new friends walk with us to the main road and promise to drop by Calvary on Sunday.

Back at the church, we meet a group of refugees sweeping the parking lot and raking leaves. They do this every week as a way to say thank you and serve the Lord. A 19-year-old who was baptized a few weeks ago asks if we have just come back from visitation. I give a tired nod and his smile grows wide.

“Someone came to our house,” he says. “That’s how I met Jesus.”

*Name changed **B3**

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“Jesus is so compassionate that we want to share His compassion with others. This often starts with a bag of food and a listening ear.”
– Carrie Chappell

Chick-fil-A

Continued from page 1

a prideful, arrogant attitude to think that we would have the audacity to try to redefine what marriage is all about.”

The *Los Angeles Times* story carried a headline, “Chick-fil-A’s anti-gay-marriage stance triggers online uproar.” The *Washington Post* included an online poll asking readers, “Will you continue to eat at Chick-fil-A?”

The Human Rights Campaign – the nation’s largest gay activist group – posted a Chick-fil-A logo on its website with a fake tagline, “We Didn’t Invent Discrimination. We Just Support It.”

Boston Mayor Thomas Menino and Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel went as far as saying they would work to block a Chick-fil-A from opening in their city.

Since then they have backed off these comments.

Chick-fil-A issued a statement July 19: “Going forward, our intent is to leave the policy debate over same-sex marriage to the government and political arena,” and that its tradition is “to treat every person with honor, dignity and respect – regardless of their belief, race, creed, sexual orientation or gender.”

It also noted that it has applied “biblically-based principles” to business management and will continue to do so. It remains to be seen how much damage Chick-fil-A will endure over the long haul, but the company likely will survive and might even pick up some new customers.

Former presidential candidate and Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee launched a nationwide Chick-fil-A appreciation Day for Aug. 1.

He urged people to visit the restaurant that day or to make their support known via social media. Evangelist

“We are very much supportive of the family – the biblical definition of the family unit.” – Dan Cathy

Billy Graham also declared his public support of Chick-fil-A and planned to participate in the Aug. 1 event.

A *Washington Post* poll – although not scientific – showed that 66 percent of respondents say they’ll continue eating at the restaurant.

Within days of Chick-fil-A releasing a statement in response to the controversy, about 30,000 comments were posted on the company’s Facebook page. Most of the comments offered encouragement and support.

The company, which has 1,600 restaurants nationwide, could thrive because its base remains in conservative states. Many of those who oppose Cathy’s statement’s regarding the traditional family may not have a store to boycott.

Texas has the most Chick-fil-A restaurants at 262. Including Texas, five states have more than 100 restaurants, and they’re all in the South.

North Carolina, which has 143 Chick-fil-A restaurants, passed a constitutional marriage amendment in May defining marriage as between a man and a woman. By contrast, the entire state of New York has one Chick-fil-A restaurant. Washington state doesn’t have any. Neither does Oregon. Or Vermont.

This year especially, Chick-fil-A’s stance on traditional values stands out.

In June, General Mills – whose products include

Cheerios, Pillsbury and Green Giant vegetables – announced that it is opposing a Minnesota constitutional amendment defining marriage as between a man and a woman.

Voters will decide the issue in November. Also in June, Nabisco’s Oreo brand posted on Facebook a picture of an Oreo cookie with six colorful layers representing the gay pride rainbow. The caption: “Proudly support love!”

Target has sold gay pride T-shirts this year and recently began selling greeting cards with gay marriage themes. And JC Penney has placed pictures of gay dads in its catalogue.

“We hear almost monthly of new major companies announcing their support for the gay community, regardless of what most of their customers want,” said Focus on the Family’s Glenn T. Stanton, who often debates the issue of gay marriage and takes the traditional side.

“And here we have the CEO of a clearly on-the-record traditional values company simply saying he supports the traditional family and how tampering with it is contrary to God’s will.

“And the split-second reaction from these activists is to slander him and his company in the press and blogosphere. It just takes one company taking an alternative position to make the gay activists and liberal press hit the ceiling. But that’s where we are today.”

Stanton said the message by some opponents of Chick-fil-A apparently is, “Speak up for the natural, traditional family and we will come after you.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE: Michael Foust is associate editor of Baptist Press. The Biblical Recorder also contributed to this story.) **BR**



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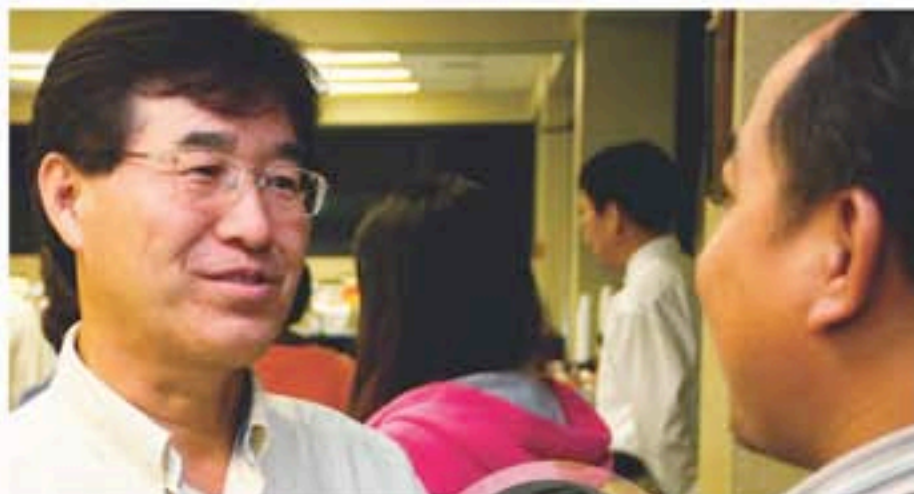
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Be a missionary Disciple a people group in your neighborhood Q&A with Ken Tan, BSC multicultural team leader



in the area of dealing with the ethnic churches. For one thing, if I don't – if we don't – address them it's easy for us to overlook them. ... There is a [need] toward addressing the resources ... for the ethnic churches. We work with Asians, African Americans, Hispanics ... Middle Eastern people, Arabic churches ... any other church that may not be considered Anglo.

We try to cater to them in terms of making sure we have resources that may be found in their language. Because most of every-

thing we do is in English, we had to make sure we had the materials for them. But also we tried to find people who can be a good resource for them, too. Part of our goal here is to be able to train leaders ... not only think of ways to reach them, but once you reach them, how are you going to disciple them.

Q: What are some ways you've seen God moving among ethnic congregations throughout the state?

A: The church I'm working ... with right now is called Glory of God Christian Fellowship [in Raleigh]. [We] even pioneered ... an online discipleship class. We decided since people are so busy, why don't we do something online every Wednesday night from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

[One man in our group] decided that he's going to use the same materials that I'm teaching. ... He started Skyping his relatives back in the Philippines, using the materials. He was teaching it. He was able to lead [his] family ... using materials through Skype. ... When you teach a series of lessons with the family, it is with the expectation that they themselves would reproduce. ...

Bible study is also something to be reproduced. We help to make sure that when we're teaching these classes it's reproducible. That it doesn't just become a class.

That has become part of our challenge because many times people look at disciple making as a class. It's more than that. It's people ... they apply it in their lives ... they reproduce it.

Q: What do churches need to do to make a difference among ethnic groups in their community?

A: It's not about comfort. ... The Lord never called us to be comfortable. If you look at scripture, crossing cultures is difficult. When you share the gospel with other cultures it's going to mean that you need to have a missionary mindset. You'll have to learn the language. You need to be able to learn the customs. I even tell people you need to learn to accept some of their food that they have. Our people, they get so picky. They say, "I'm not going to touch that." I [asked], "Have you ever thought what it means to be a missionary?" By doing that you start to relate to them. You start to understand who they are. ... You start to know their needs and the challenges. ...

For you to be able to step into that world where they are, it almost comes to the point that you kind of earned a right to become part of their family. ... And then you bring them into your family. All of that takes a while. It takes an intentionality – a willingness to say, "I'm really wanting to engage your culture." ... God has brought them here. ... You don't even need a passport. They're here. And we go all over the world trying to reach them. But when they're here, it just seems like we [don't want] to connect with them. There seems to be a disconnect. How are you willing to be a part of the answer ... for the lost people in your community?

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Contact Ken Tan at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5641, or ktan@ncbaptist.org.)

In the July 21 issue, the *Biblical Recorder* focused on discipleship and its role in the church. In this article we are following up on discipleship among ethnic churches throughout the state. Ken Tan is the team leader of the multicultural team for

Congregational Services with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Tan shares his passion for his work and how God is moving among ethnic congregations across the state. He shares suggestions for how churches can become more involved.

Q: What are some ways your team is helping to disciple ethnic groups in the state?

A: My role right now is to help our convention to have a more intentional approach of doing ministry that is inclusive ... making disciples of all people. That word "all" has been a focus for me ... the fact that the gospel is inclusive. When it comes to that approach, it means I deal with all the different churches, all 4,300 churches if you want to put it that way, ... [specifically]



Ken Tan

Project identifies 8 attributes of discipleship

Baptist Press

LifeWay Research surveyed 7,000 churches in 2008 to discover the principles involved with healthy congregations. Last year, LifeWay's researchers went back into the field to focus on individual believers, asking more than 4,000 people about their spiritual lives and level of maturity.

The project has identified eight biblical factors that consistently show up in the life of a maturing believer. Those "attributes of discipleship" are:

1. Bible engagement
2. Obeying God and denying self
3. Serving God and others
4. Sharing Christ
5. Exercising faith
6. Seeking God
7. Building relationships
8. Unashamed transparency

"Jesus called us to make disciples of all nations, so we wanted to discover the common traits for those maturing in their faith," said Ed Stetzer, president of LifeWay Research, a division of LifeWay Christian Re-

sources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"We have collected and analyzed a huge amount of data about how each of these attributes leads to transformational discipleship in an individual believer," Stetzer said. "Due to the sheer volume of material [for each factor], it will take several months to complete our analysis and release."

Stetzer said the project's purpose is to assist church leaders in discovering how to help their members grow, because "spiritual growth does not happen by accident."

"God shapes congregations through the shaping of the individual members' lives. This shaping doesn't just happen; it's through intentional effort on the part of both leaders and church members," Stetzer said. To help pastors, churches and individuals measure their spiritual development, LifeWay Research used the survey data to develop a questionnaire for believers, the Transformational Discipleship Assessment (TDA).

Available online, the TDA results in a report on spiritual maturity using the eight attributes of biblical discipleship. It also provides helpful and practical suggestions for individuals to take the next steps in their spiritual development.

Scott McConnell, director of LifeWay Research, said the new assessment tool zooms in to the personal level.

"The Transformational Discipleship Assessment helps people see how they are doing with those eight attributes. It answers, 'Are you growing? Are you consistently following Christ?'" McConnell said. "It also helps leaders know where to focus sermons, Bible studies, events and other discipleship-building activities."

McConnell said the research was conducted in three phases. First, recognized discipleship experts were interviewed. Their input was used to revise a set of questions that have been effective in measuring dozens of specific biblical principles that may be reflected in a believer's actions, attitudes or

beliefs. Then 1,000 Protestant pastors in the United States were polled. In the final phase, more than 4,000 Protestants from both the U.S. and Canada were surveyed in three languages, English, Spanish and French.

The transformational discipleship project is the next phase in LifeWay's long-term research project called the Transformational Initiative focused on discovering common traits of churches experiencing transformation in the lives of individuals, the church and the community. The first findings were compiled in the book *Transformational Church*, released in June 2010 by LifeWay's B&H Publishing Group, providing a big-picture scorecard for the church. Now, transformational discipleship is examining the details at the individual disciple level.

To learn more about the transformational discipleship research, visit LifeWayResearch.com. The TDA is available at <http://tda.lifeway.com>.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Reported by the communications office of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.)



Devoted to a revived life

After being expelled from Yale University in 1743 the prospects of David Brainerd's fulfilling his call to the pulpit were growing slim. Especially since a law had recently been passed that stated no minister could be installed in a church unless he was a graduate of Yale, Harvard or a European university.

Brainerd was crushed when his appeal was rejected and his expulsion became final. Yet, despite this ruling, he continued to labor earnestly in prayer for God's direction and open doors for ministry. As providence would have it, Brainerd was later licensed to preach during the Great Awakening, and he was appointed by a group of ministers as a missionary to the American Indians.



Dr. Chris Schofield

Brainerd labored night and day in prayer and on foot taking the gospel to the American Indians. He would often do so while enduring physical and weather-related hardship. On one such occasion, Brainerd hiked for miles through deep snow, praying for those he would visit, coughing and spitting up blood from his illness, asking God for their souls. Like Epaphras, the Christian preacher who spread the gospel among fellow Colossians, he truly was "laboring earnestly" for the souls of men. Soon after that event Brainerd died of tuberculosis. When awakening comes, the result will be lives that are devoted to living out the revived life. Keep praying. It is worth it.

Prayer Points

- Ask the Lord to give you tears in prayer over your sin and the condition of the church in your community.
- Pray for the Lord to raise up believers who pray fervently for revival and awakening in North America.

EDITOR'S NOTE – Chris Schofield is with the Office of Prayer & Spiritual Awakening. For more information you can reach him at (800) 395-5102 ext. 5514 or cschofield@ncbaptist.org.



Olympics

Continued from page 1

unlocking the language of the pharaohs; and a plethora of other incomparable, priceless treasures.

Yet other treasure has found a home in London outside the secure walls of a world-class museum. That treasure is on the streets, in the neighborhoods, riding the buses and underground trains, heading to an Olympics venue, working in the restaurants or attending the schools.

It's the people.

There's Asuntha*, for instance. Her Sri Lankan husband brought her to London just after they were married. As is common in this sort of arranged marriage, she didn't know him well, and family difficulties followed. A few years and two daughters later, her husband left her, a bank repossessed her home, and she had to move into government housing.

But Asuntha stayed in London, living in a small flat above a gym, to build a better life for her girls. Her girls attend British schools and speak flawless English.

She knows that by staying in London, her girls will have a more promising start to life than they ever would have had back in their home country.

Asuntha is one of an estimated 100,000 Sri Lankan-born U.K. residents, the majority of whom live in London. They bring with them not just their culture but also their religions, which include Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism.

In a 2007 article, *New York Magazine* likened modern-day London to the New York City of the early 1900s, its great age of immigration. For decades, different ethnic groups have found reasons to immigrate to London.

Turkish Cypriots began to settle in the city's Camden area in the 1950s. Now in the Haringey area there's a concentration of about 30,000 to 40,000 Turkish speaking people – and more than 200,000 in all of London.

Pakistanis, because of historical and colonial links with Britain, have flowed into London in large numbers, especially in the 1960s. Now there are more than a million in the U.K. The largest number of Portuguese outside their native country live in Stockwell, numbering 27,000.

Clothing factory work attracted Vietnamese refugees in Hackney in the early 1980s. Wars and conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and elsewhere have brought more refugees to London in the last decade.

Most recently, workers from the European Union (EU) have flowed into Britain since it opened to member states in 2004.

Originally the government predicted 13,000 EU workers would enter Britain annually; but instead, 329,000 arrived in the first 18 months of the policy, many

from Poland, Lithuania, Slovakia, Latvia and the Czech Republic.

The result? The city has become a "multilingual capital," according to the London-based National Centre for Languages.

Schoolchildren in London speak more than 200 languages and more than 40 percent of all London schoolchildren speak a language other than English at home, the center estimates. In east London, the percentage of elementary school students that speak only English as a second language is as high as 78 percent, figures show.

A spiritual dynamic of this ethnic tapestry is expressed in the diversity of religions finding their footing in London. Mosques are evident in many parts of the city as well as in outlying towns. Hindu and Sikh temples dot the cityscape where once only Christian churches stood.

Instead of being a "melting pot," first coined for the assimilation of newcomers to the United States into a homogenous whole, London labels itself as "multicultural," a place in which different cultural identities are maintained, ideally within a unified society. It was this multicultural aspect of London that brought International Mission Board (IMB) missionary Patrick Sims* to the city in 2002.

"London is an amazing place to get to relate to people from all over the world," said Sims, IMB strategy leader for London. He and his wife Sarah* lead a team of missionaries reaching out to the city.

Rachel Carter*, an IMB missionary in London, got to know Asuntha, the Sri Lankan mother of two girls, through a preschool group Carter's son attended. It was there that she noticed two South Asian women, one wearing an Islamic headscarf, standing apart from the English moms.

"I would try to stand next to Asuntha and I would talk about the weather or whatever I could think of," Carter said.

As their friendship deepened, Asuntha shared her difficult times with Carter.

"She said I was the only one she could talk to," Carter said. "Building relationships with Muslims and Indians is so much easier here than even with some British women. It is an incredible opportunity for Christians to befriend people (from so many places). It's so noticeable when you're just a genuine, humble, kind, caring person."

*Names changed.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Elaine Gaston, a Woman's Missionary Union writer, lived in London with her family in the mid-1990s. To download a copy of the WMU International Mission Study on London in which this article appears, visit www.newsfromeurasia.com/?p=629.) **BR**

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Is there a Calvinist agenda to reform traditional Southern Baptist churches?

Recently, I [spoke] with a pastor search committee about a pastor search they were conducting. When I mentioned that Calvinist candidates may not be forthcoming in regard to their true beliefs, they asked, “What is a Calvinist?”

I wasn’t surprised that a small rural church was not aware of the Calvinist plan to reform [Southern Baptist Convention] SBC churches.

What is a Calvinist? Calvinists believe in five specific doctrines regarding salvation which are framed in the acronym: TULIP. Here’s what TULIP stands for:

T = total depravity. Man is incapable of coming to Christ without first being regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

U = unconditional election. Before time began, God predestined who He would save. Unless one is a part of this special group, known as the elect,” one will not be saved.

L = limited atonement. Jesus did not die for the whole world. He died for the elect.

I = irresistible grace. In the case of the elect, they will ultimately come to Christ because God will cause them to come through an irresistible pull from Him.

P = perseverance of the saints. The elect of God will persevere in their faith in Christ and will not fall away.

Now let me make a couple of points regarding this doctrine of salvation which Al Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, says is our “future.”

Here are some of the logical conclusions to what Calvinists believe. If God chose who was going to be saved before time began, then nothing can change His sovereign decree. Thus, if you are not one of the elect, you will not come to Christ. You can hear the word of God preached but it will have no saving effect on you because you are totally depraved and cannot come to Christ unless God causes you to come to Christ. And if you are not one of the elect, God will not cause you to come to Christ. The flip side of this theology is that God does nothing to draw the non-elect to Himself, thus they will not come to Him through Christ.

The majority of these Southern Baptist

Calvinist pastors are coming from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (Louisville, Ky.) and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (Wake Forest, N.C.).



LES PURYEAR
Guest Column

In North Carolina, small rural churches have been particularly vulnerable to Calvinist graduates from these seminaries because of their close proximity to churches in our state.

If Calvinist candidates, who are seeking pastoral positions in traditional Southern Baptist churches, would be honest about their beliefs, then I would see no problem. Our churches are autonomous and can choose to hire whom they please.

If a church wants to hire a Calvinist pastor, then God bless them. Unfortunately, many Calvinist pastoral candidates are not revealing their Calvinism during the pastor search process in order to secure a pastoral position. Many times after the Calvinist is called as the pastor of the church, they begin to teach Calvinism in order to “reform” the traditional Baptist church in ecclesiology, polity, and worship. In many of these churches, the result is either a church split or the church is traumatized by the process of firing the pastor.

Is there an issue with pastoral candidates not being truthful to search committees about their beliefs? Apparently it is an issue that Danny Akin, president

of Southeastern Seminary, thought was worthy of comment. [In an article published on the Between the Times website] he wrote: “Act with personal integrity in your

ministry when it comes to this issue. Put your theological cards on the table in plain view for all to see, and do not go into a church under a cloak of deception or dishonesty. If you do, you will more than likely split a church, wound the Body of Christ, damage the ministry God has given you, and leave a bad taste in the mouth of everyone. ...”

Is there a Calvinist agenda to reform traditional Southern Baptist churches? Absolutely.

Ernest Reisinger, the chief architect of Founders, a Calvinist ministry, describes in great detail [in an article on the Founders Ministries website] how to “reform” a traditional church. He even

See Puryear page 15

Response: SEBTS agenda is Great Commission

Is there a Calvinist agenda to reform traditional Southern Baptist churches?

Les [Puryear] and I agree in three important areas. First, neither of us embraces the Calvinist understanding of salvation. I’ve written extensively about the subject where I’ve argued against the typical Calvinist doctrines of limited atonement and irresistible grace. My view of salvation is closer to what he calls “the traditional Baptist view” (with a few notable exceptions) than to the five points of Calvinism (TULIP) that he enunciated.

Second, both of us agree that pastor search committees need to be better informed about the theological issues of the day. Some have claimed they were misled by pastoral candidates when actually they didn’t understand fully the answers they were given.

And third, we both believe that pastoral candidates must present their views with candor and integrity. They need to tell prospective congregations where they stand on issues such as the inerrancy of scripture, gender roles in the home and in the church, church governance matters (i.e. plurality of elders versus the single elder model), and of course, where they stand with respect to the five points of Calvinism.

Les and I strongly disagree on one point: he intimates that Southeastern is complicit in a Calvinist attempt to takeover [Southern Baptist Convention] SBC churches. Absolutely not. Perhaps others have such a scheme; SEBTS does not.

Even though he doesn’t say so explicitly, Les seems to imply that Southeastern is a major player in a Calvinist coup when he warns that a “majority of these Southern Baptist Calvinist pastors are coming from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (Louisville, Ky.) and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (Wake Forest, N.C.).” Does Southeastern have Calvinists on its faculty? Yes, as do all six SBC seminaries.

Calvinism is a part of our Baptist heritage, so Calvinists deserve a place at the SBC table. But the majority of faculty at SEBTS do not subscribe to TULIP. And we have no faculty members who evangelize more for John Calvin than they do for Jesus Christ. Puryear also seems to assume that the typical rural church in North Carolina is a “traditional” Baptist

church (“traditional” as defined recently in a statement published by Eric Hankins). Maybe; maybe not. During the 10 years I have lived in the Carolinas I have had the opportunity to preach in many rural churches. Instead of finding many



KEN KEATHLEY
Guest Column

“traditional” Baptist churches, to my dismay I have encountered numerous churches with practically no theological moorings at all. Many historic churches have had pastors who held to a low view of biblical authority with few doctrinal commitments, and the results have been very damaging.

Without apology I contend that I would rather see the pastorate of those churches filled with mission-minded, Spurgeon-type Calvinists than to have those congregations remain in the theological murkiness in which many are wandering.

Southeastern Seminary does have an agenda – the Great Commission. When we say that SEBTS is a Great Commission school we are not pitting obedience to the Great Commission against commitment to doctrine. Quite the opposite: few things are more doctrinal than the Great Commission. The Great Commission

entails certain powerful theological truths: all humanity is lost and is in need of salvation, Jesus Christ is the only Savior, people can get saved only

if they hear the gospel, and our Lord has commanded us to preach the gospel to everyone in the world. These are the truths that motivate us.

Every professor at Southeastern, without exception, affirms these Great Commission truths (and those faculty members who have theological affinity with the teachings of John Calvin would not subscribe to the five points the way Puryear presents them). Every professor affirms that God loves the world and every human being in it. Every faculty member believes that God genuinely desires the salvation of all. Everyone teaching at Southeastern affirms that the blood of Christ is sufficient to save every man, woman and child who’ve ever lived. We all believe that every person who hears the gospel has a genuine opportunity to be saved and has only himself to blame if he rejects it. Every one of us is broken hearted by the lostness of humanity and by the reality that lost people go to hell. We believe in and practice soul winning.

See Keathley page 15

“Southeastern Seminary does have an agenda – the Great Commission.”
– Ken Keathley

Opt out of the gay marriage debate? That's no longer an option

Baptist Press

There's been a lot of talk about evangelicals opting out of the culture wars recently. Some of that could be good. Few of us want to identify the church with the Republican Party, or to act as if anything is more needful than the promotion of the gospel.

But some of this discussion has been deeply harmful. Why? Because there is a desperate need for the church to be the church in this fallen world. Now is not the time to back off from a robust cultural ethic. Now is the time to engage.

Some still think that they have the luxury of sitting out the national debate over homosexuality. They think, "Well, the battle over marriage is for those frothy-mouthed Christians who send out the weird newsletters and are always sounding the doomsday bell. I don't really have the stomach for that; I don't want, after all, to be weird, or unliked, or out of tune with *The New York Times* and NPR crowd. I'm educated and above the fray.

"Culture wars, as I've come to understand from the media, are for hillbillies and fear mongers, the God-and-country set. Nope. No thank you."

Others are more biblical in their convictions, but still think they can opt out of the conflict over marriage and homosexuality.

They think, "I don't want my Christianity to be political. The church should do what the church does. I'll sit this one out, as I usually do, and go on my way, trusting in a sovereign God."

Both positions suffer from a common flaw: lack of moral realism as it relates to our cultural moment. You see, there is not going to be an "opt out" option in the coming days. Actually, let's change that – there no longer is an "opt out" option.

The conflict over homosexuality and marriage is here to stay. It's only going to pick up steam. Barring a miracle from God, the clock will not be turned back.

Most every Christian in every place in America is going to face a direct, confrontational challenge on this issue. You can't escape this.

Do you see this? It's different from abortion, which everyday Christians didn't have to really get involved with. Because abortion happens behind closed doors in nondescript clinics, Christians like you and me could pretend it didn't happen. We could occasionally pray, and occasionally give and serve, but because this menace was unseen, we didn't have to get whipped up about it. We could leave that to "weird," "in-your-face" Christians, whom we might subtly demean for their outspokenness.

But things have changed. I just learned on Facebook that gay pride groups marched in my hometown of Machias, Maine (and other Maine towns). Machias is a tiny coastal town. It's a long ways

from Manhattan, culturally speaking. But just a few weeks ago, in the Fourth of July parade, a group of gay and lesbian supporters marched, just as they did in numerous other small Maine towns.

I'll ask this again: Do you get

what's happening? This is a Fourth of July parade. Over the years, there's been no more "safe" cultural event for Americana. Everyone cheers the Shriners, the small-but-vigorous community band, the fire department as it blares its siren and throws candy to skittering children. Everyone. But that all, in a flash, changed in Machias, Maine. Here's what I can guess: This will happen all across America.

There is no perfect nonbiblical argument we can make to repudiate and

oppose same-sex marriage. We can cite statistics and studies, and we should. We can offer sound logic and clear moral guidance. But at the end of the day, you and I have a choice as Christians: We either can sit this one out and let our society embrace a flagrantly sinful lifestyle. Or we can stand up and oppose these efforts. That's it. Two options: capitulation or challenge.

This doesn't mean that we can't fully trust our sovereign God to work out His perfect will, which may mean hardship and many earthly defeats for American and Western Christians. Sometimes God wills this for His people, who are then challenged to remember that we serve a spiritual Kingdom, not an earthly one. Our hope is the gospel, not a political end.

But these glorious truths should not cause us to retreat from the world. Pastors, churches and individual Christians will all have to work out their own unique ways to engage this and other pressures. There is not a one-size-fits-all approach here. Churches are not to be political bodies or political action committees. But no Christian should excuse himself or herself from this fight – and

make no mistake, it is a fight. You can engage the other side in a godly manner, yes, and you must as a believer. But do not stoop to such breathtaking naïveté as to think that if you are clear on the issue of same-sex marriage you can avoid being disliked and even hated by unbelievers.

An hour of winnowing is coming and has come to America, even as it has already come to other western countries. Those who have previously defended marriage from a "neutral" set of presuppositions are not going to last; examine one-time traditional marriage advocate David Blankenhorn's recent defection. That will happen in increasing measure in coming days, I think. Get ready to feel lonely, Christian, and to be unliked. It's unavoidable for ethical, gospel-driven evangelicals who know that they cannot sit this one out. Actually, we may even see a measure of unity in this battle; complementarians and egalitarians, for example, must and surely can find common cause on this issue, to cite just one common point of division. We need to do so. This is by no means only a complementarian issue.

Step up. Contribute to organizations

See Strachan page 16



OWEN STRACHAN
Guest Column

TAR HEEL VOICES

A story of advancing in the SBC

The election of Fred Luter as Southern Baptist Convention president is a great story of God's work. Franklin Avenue Baptist Church has advanced from a church that would not allow its mission church to baptize African Americans to the largest Baptist church in Louisiana, made up [mostly] of African Americans.

The story of this advancement can be seen in the relationship between Franklin Avenue and Florida Avenue Baptist churches. In the mid 1950's Franklin Avenue and the Home Mission Board started a mission near the Florida Avenue housing development (mainly Caucasian). Later there was an influx of Cuban refugees, and then in the 1960's mostly African American. In the mid 1960's, [a group of African American children], were passing by the mission on their way to a church down the street. As they walked by they [asked] the mission pastor if they could come to church there. He answered "Yes." When I began working with the mission church in 1971, there was one elderly white member. Others from the community began to attend and when time came for the next baptism there were African Americans who had accepted Christ and asked to be

baptized. When the mission asked to use Franklin Avenue's baptistry, the leadership refused.

In the 70's, this attitude began to change. I think it was in 1974 that we baptized in [that] baptistry. [The church later] became a mission of Gentilly Baptist where we had baptized when not able to do so at Franklin Avenue. I led Florida Avenue to call an African-American student from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in 1974. In 1975, they called a bivocational pastor-taxi driver. I did not know Fred Luter, but did know John Henry Thomas who was one of the African-American pastors of Franklin Avenue before Luter.

What a moment to recollect our connection to these moments in God's story of grace!

**William E. McCall, retired IMB
 Mooresville**

Questioning support of football

Great article about Chick-fil-A. They are truly an honor to our Lord. I especially appreciated Dan Cathy saying organizations can't be Christian; only people are Christian. Jesus did not die for businesses; He died for people. I have a "however," however. I noticed their unbridled support of football. Sports

are one of, if not the biggest, gods in America. If one takes time to notice every kind of immoral behavior connected to and stemming from sports, even down to elementary school level, one cannot deny the pagan religious nature of "the game." In our small town, there are more people "worshipping" on Sundays at our local "temple to the sports god" than go to worship the One True God. And they worship a lot louder; we can hear them several blocks away.

The money spent on sports far outweighs the money spent on education. The sports budget of every school dwarfs the academic and arts budgets. And we wonder why our children are so poorly educated?

Oh, I know to great lengths people go to defend sports and how they are character building. But, I ask, what did people do to build character before all the – baals: foot-baal, basket-baal, base-baal? What character-building sports did our founding fathers play? What about the great Christians of history, the preachers, evangelists and missionaries? And just what kind of character is being developed in kids whose parents brawl on the sidelines?

Anyway, thanks for reporting on a truly admirable organization and family!

**David Pence
 Hillsboro, Ill.**

A stunning reminder: the darkness lives in me

Baptist Press

I had a shocking conversation with an old friend recently. He told me that his wife, whom I had known as a vibrant, passionate, committed Christian, had abandoned her family, her faith and embraced a life of sin with wild abandon. I would have never believed that it was possible. I'd preached to her, talked with her about deep spiritual matters, and watched her grow. What happened?

As I pondered that chilling event, my mind cast back to a pastors' conference I attended nearly 20 years ago. The prominent pastor who hosted the conference was discussing the ongoing problem of moral failure among pastors. And then he said something that shocked me: "That is never going to happen to me. It is not in me to cheat on my wife, to commit adultery. I just do not have that in me."

To my knowledge, this pastor has remained faithful to his wife. But that doesn't change the fact that I think his confidence was foolish. I am a redeemed sinner, indwelt by the Holy Spirit and in the process of transformation to become like Jesus. One day I will be free from sin, from temptation and from any chance that I would ever fall into sin.

This is not that day. Whenever I hear of a Christian brother (or sister) who falls into sin, I am reminded that the darkness that brought their fall lives in me.

I have never cheated on my wife, not before marriage or since. I do not think I ever will. But I've talked to more than one person, looking up from the floor, who said, "I never thought it would happen to me." I don't plan to fall. I really don't. But it would be foolish of me to believe that I cannot.

I had a long conversation in my office several years ago with a Christian leader who was trying to hold his marriage together after he fell headlong into adultery. He was nearing his retirement years, had been a respected leader, one of those guys who no one would ever believe could fall. He did. I asked him to tell me how it all happened. It hit him like a storm – unexpected and powerful. He had no idea what happened.

But perhaps the root of his problem was his failure to understand what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10:12:



DAVE MILLER
Guest Column

"Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall."

Overconfidence, especially confidence in my own character and ability, is a serious problem. As long as I live in this world, as long as I still await the consummation of my salvation, the darkness lives in me. I need to fight it. I need to walk in Christ's power and make wise choices and draw near to God and resist the devil and be filled with the Spirit and ... well, you know what I'm getting at.

I make an assumption every time a command is given to believers in God's Word:

1) In the power of Christ, I can obey the command. The light of Christ is in me!

2) In the power of the flesh, I can fail. The darkness of sin is not gone from me.

I wish I could give you three or four devastatingly

pithy secrets to resisting temptation. I would if it were that easy. Every saint who falls into sin has this in common – they never thought they would. So, keep your marriage strong. Stoke your passion for Christ. Don't do stupid things (like hanging out alone with a woman to whom you aren't married). I'm sure there are others who can give better advice on this than I can.

But I write this to remind myself (and you) of the truth – the darkness is in me. Though Christ has made it possible for me to resist temptation, I must never forget that the darkness that has consumed other committed Christians is never fully banished as long as I draw breath.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – This column first appeared at SBCVoices.com. Dave Miller is pastor of Southern Hills Baptist Church in Sioux City, Iowa, editor of SBCVoices.com, and second vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention.) **BR**

What guests see when they visit your church

Baptist Press

In the context of serious theological discussions, it may seem trivial to write about first impressions of guests when they visit your church. But if we could understand that a returning guest has more opportunities to hear the gospel and experience Christian love and fellowship, we might take the issue a bit more seriously.

Prior to assuming the presidency of LifeWay Christian Resources, I led a church consulting company. One of our first steps in the consultation was to send one or more first-time guests to the church. Those individuals would then report back to us on their experiences. Many times those we enlisted were unchurched non-Christians. As I write this, I am working at home because a handyman is working on several small items around my house. I love his approach. When he first enters our home, he asks for permission to take a quick tour.

Within minutes, he commented on several items that might need his attention, items that weren't on the list I gave him. I appreciated his thoroughness, and it was good for his business as well.

The handyman did something very basic and very simple. He looked at my house through outside eyes. I am in my house every day, so I don't notice those things that may not be just right. The same is true for church members and leaders. They see their church on an ongoing basis, so they don't have the benefit of outside eyes.

What they see

After two decades of church consultation, a clear pattern emerged. These were the areas that engendered more comments and concerns from first-time guests.

These areas are listed in order of frequency of response, and they deal only with physical facilities.

- The women's restrooms. Almost 100 percent of the female guests we retained addressed this issue. They noticed first and foremost the cleanliness of the restrooms. Then they noticed the convenience of getting to the restrooms. Finally, they noticed the capacity of the restrooms. Did they have to wait in line?

- The preschool and nursery area. This area was a focus of near unanimity of young families. Is the area secure? Is it clean? How do I know someone else won't

pick up my child? Do the workers appear concerned and qualified?

- Parking. Guests often commented on the difficulty or ease of finding a parking spot. Was there a covered drop off if the weather was bad? Were there guest parking spots? Were there reserved places for young mothers and expectant mothers? Were there sufficient handicapped parking places?

- Signage and information. Recently my wife and I were in a mall we had never visited. The first thing we did was go to a sign that had all the stores and their locations on it. Even small churches can be intimidating to first-time guests. Do you have adequate signage throughout the facilities? Is there an obvious information booth or table? Members know where to go; guests don't.

- Worship seating. First-time guests desire to find a place to sit as quickly as possible. They feel awkward otherwise. Is your worship center more than 80 percent full? If so, the guests perceive it is completely full. Are your members trained to move to the middle of pews or seat rows so guests don't have to climb over them? Are their ushers or greeters available to lead guests to seats?

It is important

When a guest has a good experience, he or she is more likely to return. When they return they are more likely to hear about and experience the love of Christ.

When I was a pastor of a church with 70 in worship attendance, we decided to do something about our deplorable restrooms. We had a workday and almost half the church showed up. People donated materials, labor and even toilets. At the end of the day, we had some of the nicest and cleanest restrooms in town. I don't know how closely it's related, but our attendance bumped up to 90 immediately and never went back in my tenure. Maybe it was the church working together. Maybe it was the community observing the unity of the church. Or maybe we just had clean restrooms. It is that important.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Thom S. Rainer is president of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. This column first appeared on his website, www.ThomRainer.com.) **BR**



THOM RAINER
Guest Column

Submissions for Tar Heel Voices (letters to the editor)

Please send no more than 300 words, along with contact information, to editor@BRnow.org or *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512-1185.

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Sin still pays its wages

The world takes the concept of sin lightly. But God's Word reveals the truth about the nature of sin. Sadly, every sinner is deluded into thinking that he or she will never be caught. The sinful heart confidently declares, "No one will ever know." "I can get by with this," says the arrogant man. The result is a marital affair, cheating on a test, lying on a resume, stealing from an employer, and the list goes on.

Can a person do wrong and never be caught? The Bible says, "No." Numbers 32:23 records this chilling truth, "But if you fail to do this, you will be sinning against the LORD; and you may be sure that your sin will find you out." You can be certain that your sin will find you out.

At the foundation of all sin is this statement from Jesus, "You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44 NASB).

Jesus said the sinner *wants* to do Satan's desires, and the sinner lives in the domain of lies.

It is a lie to believe we can sin without being caught. The truth behind the proverbial "caught with your hand in the cookie jar" is published every day in the headlines. This is the story of Jerry Sandusky and the tragic consequences facing the Penn State athletic program. This is the story of John Edwards' affair and "love child" while running for the office of president of the United States. Bernie Madoff's securities fraud scheme, the Enron scandal, Watergate – the well-populated list is never ending – political scandals, academic scandals, sex scandals, sports scandals, religious scandals and corporate scandals.

Christians should remember that we are represented on those lists. We grieve to see names like Jimmy Swaggart, Jim Bakker, Ted Haggard, youth evangelist Sammy Nuckolls, and lesser known leaders among the exposed. Anyone can choose to believe the lies of Satan. Human pride shields the arrogant from the reality of inevitable ac-

countability. You can be certain that your sin will find you out.

In 2 Samuel 11-12, King David's failures are recorded. His sins of lust, adultery and robbery are exposed. David followed the desires of his flesh, probably convinced he was above being caught. After all, he was popular, successful, and a respected leader. Absent of a sense of accountability, he succumbed to sin's lies.

We know David repented and was forgiven completely. But repentance does not ensure the removal of the consequences of sin. God did not remove the pain David would endure as a result of his wrong choices – the death of his child, his son's incest, one son murdering another son, and a kingdom filled with violence. You can be certain that your sin will find you out.

You and I are not immune from Satan's deception. While our personal failures may not make the headlines, they are just as real and significantly destructive. We will not escape the ultimate exposure. Jesus said, "But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment" (Matthew 12:36, NKJ).

Someone has said, "If you don't want it published in the newspaper, don't do it."

With the presence of the Internet, we can say, "If you don't want the whole world to know, don't do it."

Does everyone get caught? Ultimately, I believe so. Does it always show up in the media? Of course not. But scripture is clear. There is a day of accountability. Reckoning will come. The word "judgment" may sound extreme to some, but it is a sobering reality. You can be certain that your sin will find you out.

Our confidence in this eternal principle should resolve any personal desires that may erupt within us to get even with those whom we know have done wrong, but have not been caught. We are prone to help God settle the score. Paul reminded the Roman church, "Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, 'VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY,' says the Lord" (Romans 12:19, NASB).

This is a primary two-pronged truth of scripture. Sin will find you out, and God is in charge of the scorecard. Maybe we are not proclaiming this warning from the pulpit, but we should be. The responsibility for this prophetic word falls in the lap of the Christian church. No one else can or will do it. **BR**

More churches needed to reach N.C. with the gospel

Year after year I continue to be reminded of God's great power and grace as He works through new church plants across North Carolina. In these church plants God is changing lives and doing wonderful things that can only be the result of His working.

By the end of 2011, the Baptist State Convention Church Planting Team reported 89 new church plants, which included Anglo, Hispanic, Asian and African-American churches. Other types of churches included cowboy, Montagnard, Haitian and Burmese. Our Asian church planting consultant works with 37 different language groups. There are presently more than 230 languages spoken in North Carolina. Over one-half of the churches we assist in planting speak a language other than English.

Our church planting team tells me we are well on our way to another fruitful year in church planting, and for that I give God all the praise. I thank you for supporting missions through the Coopera-

tive Program, the Annie Armstrong Offering and the North Carolina Missions Offering in order to make church planting in North Carolina possible.

Often times I hear people ask why we need to plant churches when we already have many churches in North Carolina doing great things for the Kingdom. One reason is population growth; if we do not plant new churches, we will not reach our state's growing population. I believe church planting is so important that I have included it as one of our Convention's 7 Pillars for Ministry.

Tom Billings, executive director of Union Baptist Association in Houston, Texas, shared last month during a meeting with North Carolina Directors of Missions that in order to reach the unchurched population of North Carolina we need to plant a minimum of 25,815 new churches based upon these new churches averaging 200 in attendance. Mark Gray, our church planting team leader, says that new church plants reach people

for the Lord at three times the rate of existing churches. Therefore, if we do not plant churches, we miss a critical opportunity to reach people with the gospel. Our prayer is that healthy church plants will multiply by planting other healthy churches. Last year our new churches reported 2,651 professions of faith, as well as 79,550 evangelistic and cultivative contacts during the year. Our church plants also report an 82 percent survivability rate over four years, making the average survivability of church plants in North Carolina higher than the national average.

Church planting is not easy, and your church can make a tremendous difference in the lives of new churches and church plants by becoming a church planting partner. There are various ways you can do this, and I invite you to visit ncbaptist.org/churchplanting to learn more. You can also contact Mark Gray at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5550, or mgray@ncbaptist.org.

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." 1 Peter 2:9 **BR**



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August 12

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

August 19

Let Your Heart Be Broken

Focal Passages: Jeremiah 8:4-13, 18-9:1

Christians sometimes know they are guilty of sin, but don't want to admit it. However, we can become so calloused toward sin that we don't realize what we've done and don't avail ourselves of the Word of God, prayer, and other channels of the Holy Spirit's conviction. Although David should have seen his relationship with Bathsheba as adultery, he was blinded by an ongoing whirlwind of sin. This dullness remained until he was confronted by the story about a stolen lamb to declare the bone-chilling words, "You are the man" (2 Samuel 12:7).

In Jeremiah's day the spiritual leaders of Israel claimed to uphold the Word of God, yet God revealed they had less discernment than animals. God declared that He would take their wives and their land because even the prophets and priests were greedy and deceitful. The only healing they offered was the declaration of a peace that did not exist. Jeremiah grieved the people's lack of shame and inability to blush. They embraced the law of God in theory, but rejected its proper application. In the 20th century,

liberalism crept into the Southern Baptist Convention through theological double speak. Liberal scholars taught students to use the same Bible but greatly alter their interpretation. Consequently, bad theology led to bad practice. Many Baptists began to use the same vocabulary but a different dictionary.

Chuck Swindoll tells the story of a teacher who wrote the words "ignorance" and "apathy" on the chalkboard. Afterward one student asked his friend, "A-path-y? What's a-path-y?" His friend replied, "I don't know. Who cares?" Ignorance and apathy often appear like two peas in the same rotten pod. If we don't realize we're dishonoring God, we're not going to care about the consequences. When God shines the light of His Word on the darkness of our sin, how can we not share Jeremiah's broken heart over sin and its devastation? As people who have been transformed by the blood of Jesus and the life-giving power of the Spirit, let us pursue biblical knowledge and true repentance!



TROY RUST
Senior pastor, Somerset
Baptist Church,
Roxboro

Rise Above Discouragement

Focal Passage: Jeremiah 20:1-13

The sources of discouragement seem endless at times. Sometimes we are discouraged by what we lack, and other times by what we wish we could unload. One of my seminary professors told about a church plant he once pastored which included one of the most negative people he'd ever met. He said there were Sundays when he wanted to ask, "Ma'am would you please open us with a word of criticism?" In hindsight such trials may bring laughter, but when we're walking through them they provide overwhelming discouragement. Jeremiah endured both negative words

and physical suffering, but he continued to stand firm on the Word of God. In order to follow Jeremiah's example we must focus on our unchanging Lord instead of our temporary circumstances.

Discouragement causes us to turn inward. Even Jeremiah began to believe that God had deceived him. In the midst

of mockery and the vengeful plotting of his friends, Jeremiah simply got honest before God. When was the last time you did that? Jeremiah wasn't informing God but humbling himself, admitting he couldn't stop preaching the truth no matter how he felt. As we confess our frustrations to God, He draws near to us and we begin to understand His purpose for them. As Laura Story's song, "Blessings," asks, "What if my greatest disappointments or the aching of this life is the revealing of a greater thirst this world can't satisfy?"

Although Jeremiah continued to struggle with discouragement, he knew victory would come. The circumstances that produced this spiritual depression in his heart were overshadowed by the truth of God's Word. He had already warned in 17:9, "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick."

John also reminds us that when our heart condemns us "God is greater than our heart and knows all things" (1 John 3:20). When you become heart sick over the weight of God's calling, remember that the same truth that set you free is all-sufficient to sustain you in the valleys of life.

August 12

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

August 19

The Domino Effect

Focal Passages: Judges 17:1-21:25

Our lives that we live are a living instruction book to others on how to live. Someone has said that the Bible is not a book on how to make a living, but on how to live. The way we present ourselves to others becomes a workbook on how to live. We become examples and mentors, even if we don't want to. And this is even more true in our families.

Consider these contrasting families. Family "A" had 10 dedicated, godly children. A study of their 729 descendants over five generations showed that 300 were preachers, 65 were college professors, 13 were university presidents, 60 were authors, three were congressmen and one was a vice-president.

Family "B" had 1,026 descendants which over five generations had 300 who died prematurely from wicked lifestyles, 140 spent an average of 13 years in the penitentiary, 190 were prostitutes, and 100 were alcoholics. They cost the State of New York \$1.2 million to take care of them. The first family mentioned was that of the spiritual giant Jonathan Edwards.

The second was the atheist Mack Duke's family. You decide for yourself, does living a godly life as an example for others hold any importance? The sinful behavior of the Dukes led their children and other descendants astray. As we consider the whole picture, besides the immediate family that was away from God, consider how many others followed their example.

We might think that those little acts are harmless, those little white lies, taking the world's way of achieving success, but who is watching? Casting Crowns have a song entitled "Slow Fade." In this song we find the words, "People never crumble in a day, Daddy's never crumble in a day, families never crumble in a day. Oh be careful little eyes what you see, oh be careful little eyes what you see. For the Father up above is looking down in love, oh be careful little eyes what you see."

As a line of dominoes falls when the first one topples, homes, families, and nations fall because of one living astray.



THOMAS MARSHALL
Pastor, New Hope
Baptist Church,
Laurinburg

Focal Passages: Ruth 1:1-2:23

Leo Tolstoy is quoted as saying, "All happy families resemble each other, but each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." In my studies

I have seen that many believe that well over 60 percent of American families can be called dysfunctional. This is the cause behind the violence, broken relationships and divorces in our country.

I believe that in actuality, we are looking at 100 percent. Why? Because all families are made up of dysfunctional people. You and I are dysfunctional because we have the sin nature. This sin nature causes us to put ourselves first over others. We put our needs over anyone else's needs.

God wants us to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:39). God wants us to understand that love is not an emotion; it is an action verb. It is the words and actions we use with each other.

Expressing Love

So, how do we build a better relationship? We can start by seeking to build better communication. Don't be critical; be constructive. Is what you are about to say necessary? Will it build up or bust up? Today, seek to speak words that improve those around you.

Another way is to refuse to hold a grudge. Has someone done something against you? Welcome to this world we live in. What was done is not as important as how we dealt with it. I realized one day that I had done something horrible to One who loved me so much. But, to my delight He didn't hold it against me. He forgave me. Of course you know I am talking about God. No one could ever do as much to me as I have done to God. When I am tempted to hold a grudge now, I think about how God has dealt with me.

Finally, we show our commitment to our loved ones by spending time with them. To say we love them is not as important as showing them that we love them. And, as has been said, love is spelled T-I-M-E.

Build a better relationship by communicating, forgiving and spending time.

Puryear

Continued from page 10

gives the agenda a name: “The Quiet Revolution.” Make no mistake, there is an intentional effort to “reform” traditional SBC churches into “reformed” (code word for Calvinist) churches.

Traditional SBC church leaders and their churches need to be informed about this Calvinist agenda. They need to be informed on how to ask the right questions to determine the true theological positions of their pastoral candidates. Not only would this process identify Calvinist candidates but other candidates who may not be a good fit for their church, such as candidates who speak in tongues, candidates who believe that one can lose their salvation, or candidates who believe that the Ten Commandments are no longer valid.

But the main difference between Calvinists and other non-traditional Baptist candidates is that only Calvinists are actively trying to change local SBC churches to their beliefs.

In response to the Calvinist efforts to reform non-Calvinist

churches, a group of traditional Southern Baptist leaders and scholars wrote a “Statement of the Traditional Southern Baptist Understanding of God’s Plan of Salvation.” The list of signatures includes over 250 pastors (representing small, medium, and large churches in 29 states), six former SBC presidents, seven state Baptist convention executives, four members of the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 committee, over 20 associational directors of missions, five Baptist seminary and college presidents, and hundreds of other evangelists, church staff members, and lay ministers. After the release of this statement, many Calvinists said they wanted unity in our convention.

Traditional Southern Baptists also desire unity, and I believe that unity is an attainable goal but only when Calvinists cease trying to reform traditional SBC churches to their views.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Les Puryear is pastor/church planter at Cornerstone Community Church in Lewisville.) **BR**

Keathley

Continued from page 10

Any faculty who taught otherwise would find himself or herself giving an account to Dr. [Danny] Akin and me. The [SBC] exists for the purpose of enabling churches to collectively obey the Great Commission. We at Southeastern take seriously our role in fulfilling that mission. SEBTS has one mission and one mission only: to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ by equipping students to serve the local church and fulfill the Great Commission. That is our agenda.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Ken Keathley is senior vice president of academic administration/dean of faculty at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.) **BR**

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Pastor

West End Baptist Church, Williamston, NC. Small rural church is seeking a **full-time senior pastor**. Send resumes to WEBC, Jeff Harrell, 1505 West Main St., Williamston, NC 27892.

Bi-Vocational Pastor. Bethel Baptist Church, Pleasant Hill, NC, is seeking a bi-vocational pastor to lead a small Southern Baptist church in rural Northeastern NC. Church parsonage provided. Submit resume and references to: Pastor Search Committee, Bethel Baptist Church, 1010 Bethel Church Road, Pleasant Hill, NC 27866.

Buckhorn Baptist Church, Como, NC, a multigenerational congregation seeks a **pastor** with minimum of 5 years pastoral experience and graduate of a seminary, divinity school, or Bible college. We’re searching for a pastor who is passionate about working with all areas/ages of the congregation along with our local community to grow our church. Buckhorn Baptist Church is a Bible based worship, believing the Bible was true yesterday, true today, and true always. Congregation focuses on reaching local community, home, and missions. Resume deadline August 31, 2012. Include statement of faith, personal testimony and audio or visual of recent sermon. Mail to: Buckhorn Baptist Church Pastor Search Team, c/o Deb Capps, 749 New Hope Church Road, Como, NC 27818.

Church Staff

Stallings Memorial Baptist Church seeks **Director of Children and Youth**. Candidate should have experience in developing and leading children/youth ministry in innovative, yet biblically-based perspectives and practices. Must possess passion and skill for guiding children/youth through their faith journey. A college or seminary degree in children/youth ministry or related field. Send resume: Personnel Committee, Stallings Memorial Baptist Church, 817 South Main Street, Salisbury, NC 28144; or email: sybilary@hotmail.com or pastor@stallingsbaptistchurch.org.

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

Full-time Minister of Music and Education (with emphasis on children) for Rocky Hock Baptist Church, Edenton, NC. Seeking college graduate with music leadership training. If interested, see job description at rockyhockbaptistchurch.org.

First Baptist Church, Concord, seeks **Part-time Music Director** with a heart for the Lord. The position has potential of becoming full-time. Must lead by example and have strong interpersonal and administrative skills. Responsible for planning and implementing blended style music program, including children’s choirs, adult choir, hand bell choir, men’s and women’s ensembles. Bachelor’s degree or higher, minimum of three years’ experience with proficiency in piano/vocal skills. For more details, visit fbconcord.org. Send resume to FBC Concord, ATTN: Music Director Search Committee, PO Box 643, Concord, NC 28026 or jhannigan@fbconcord.org.

Full-time Minister of Worship and Outreach. Shady Grove Baptist, Belton, SC, is a theologically conservative SBC church with multiple services and blended styles of music. Prefer minister to be vocally and instrumentally talented in music. Church information can be found at www.sgb.net. Candidates should mail resumes to Shady Grove Baptist Church, P.O. Box 806, Belton, SC 29627, or email to daryle@sgbc.net. Deadline to submit resumes: 08/31/2012.

Part-time Minister of Youth and Children. Spring Branch Baptist Church is a rural church in Sampson County near Dunn, NC. Average attendance is 90 with good potential for growth. We are a conservative Southern Baptist church. Send resume to Spring Branch Baptist Church, 2391 Spring Branch Road, Dunn, NC 28334 or e-mail sbbc@intrstar.net to the attention of Chairman of Deacons.

Grace Baptist in Asheville has a **part-time student minister** opening. We are looking for someone who has a bachelor’s degree or higher, experience working in a student

ministry, and a passion for students. If you are interested please send your resume to graceemployment@hotmail.com.

The First Baptist Church of Shallotte is seeking a **full-time Associate Pastor, Youth and Young Singles**. FBCS is affiliated with the Brunswick Baptist Association, the Baptist State Convention of NC, and the SBC. To learn more about FBCS and the position, visit the church website at www.fbcschallotte.com/about-us. Resumes and inquiries should be sent to fbcsyouth@atmc.net or mailed to FBCS, 4486 Main Street, Shallotte, NC 28470, Attention APYouth. Resumes will be received through August 31, 2012.

Miscellaneous

NCBAM needs window and free-standing fans for aging adults suffering in summer’s heat. We can help you bring them blessed relief. Call North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry: 877-506-2226.

Aluminum Crosses & Metal Coins: perfect for witnessing and mission trips! God Loves You (2 different imprints), Jesus Christ is Lord, and blank pocket crosses. Also John 3:16 coins for sale. Per 1,000 Crosses .18 cents - coins .25 cents. Other price breaks. Custom message cards available in any language. Call Anchor Associates, 828-256-9979 or email hjmikels@yahoo.com.

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Caraway celebrates 50 years

Former camp staff members gather to swap tales, relive summer memories

BR staff

Former Camp Caraway staff members brought their families to a special event July 21 at Caraway Conference Center and Camp near Ashboro. Directors, counselors and others gathered to reminisce and celebrate 50 years of Camp Caraway.

Located on nearly 1,100 acres, the camp began as a ministry for RAs (Royal Ambassadors) in 1963. “There were staff members from the very first summer up to this summer,” said Jeremy Jackson, Caraway’s associate director, who estimated about 130 people attended the event. About half of the people were former staff members. Some chose to stay overnight in cabins to extend their time together.

During the program several speakers



Former and current Camp Caraway staff members gathered recently with their families for a special time of remembrance. (Camp Caraway photo)

shared their Caraway experiences. They also dedicated the Clyde Davis Sr. dining hall and showcased the stones commemorating past Camp Caraway directors that will be placed near the flagpole.

Many who are familiar with Caraway’s history know of Bill Jackson’s involvement in getting Caraway started, but Director Jimmy Huffman also highlighted Davis’ involvement in finding a location and “in making Caraway a reality,” Jeremy Jackson recalled. “Both men were heavily involved in making Caraway a reality.”

A slide presentation shared photos and information about Caraway over the years. During the program the Bill Jackson historical wall also was recognized.

“It was just a neat experience,” said Jackson, who described a camp ritual of eating moon pies and drinking grape soda. And like other camp experiences, participants swapped stories sitting around the campfire.

Caraway is in the process of raising support for a \$7.5-million campaign to build a new three-story facility that will be used to accommodate more guests. In September 2011, Caraway dedicated the Powell/Warren Mountain House that serves as a minister’s retreat.

Jackson said the most common story shared during the event involved boys who began a faith walk with Jesus or made other decisions for Christ at the camp. On the Caraway website, Kendell Cameron, pastor of First Baptist Church of Mount Holly who directed the camp from 1990-1993, said “My favorite moment each week was the commitment service at the chapel on the lake. I loved watching 200 campers converge on that beautiful, holy spot. Ultimately, what made that spot holy for me was not the beautiful vista, but the view of watching boys make commitments for Christ.”

For more information about Camp Caraway, visit campcaraway.org. **BR**

Strachan

Continued from page 11

that are contending in the political realm for biblical marriage. Contact friends to alert them to this hour of need. Figure out a way in your own corner of the world to get involved here. Collect signatures for petitions and send them to your legislators. Do whatever you can. Above all, pray. And do not – please do not – opt out. As always, engage this issue and those with whom you disagree with the love of Christ. We’re not opposing flesh and blood here, and even as we contend for biblical truth (Romans 1), we seek to win those who are lost just as we were lost before God’s marvelous grace saved us.

Lastly, remember Matthew 5:10-12. Let these familiar words ring in your ears,

and let the resurrection hope of the One who said these fateful words wash over you even as you celebrate righteousness and oppose darkness:

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

“Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Owen Strachan is assistant professor of Christian theology and church history at Boyce College in Louisville, Ky. This column first appeared at his website, <http://owenstrachan.com>.) **BR**

discipling young adults

The conference features personalized advice based on the newest research from LifeWay, including the “four markers” young adults are looking for most:

- Connection:** Friends in the church
- Responsibility:** Hands-on ministry
- Depth:** Engaging Bible study
- Community:** A place to belong

Edify is a day of training for church leaders working with young adults.

October 6, 2012
9:15 am – 3:45 pm
Crosspointe Baptist Church
Concord, NC
Leader: Jason Hayes
ncbaptist.org/edify



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2012 Annual Meeting

Baptist State Convention of North Carolina

This year’s annual meeting will be focused on spiritual awakening. A prayer toolkit (right) is being mailed to your church to help you prepare for the November 12-13 meeting.

We’re asking North Carolina Baptists to commit to praying during October for spiritual awakening. Sign-up at ncannualmeeting.org.

Will you accept the challenge to Pray for 30 Days?

ncannualmeeting.org

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