



BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

AUGUST 17, 2013 • News Journal of North Carolina Baptists • VOLUME 179 NO. 17 • **BRnow.org**

SEND CONFERENCE connects churches to vast mission field

By JOE CONWAY | Baptist Press

More than 4,200 church planters, pastors and church leaders flooded the hallways of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, Texas, for the North American Mission Board's (NAMB) second Send North America Conference July 29-30.

The gathering was marked by masses of participants praying in response to speakers, hundreds of connections between churches and church planters, and individuals seizing their moments to penetrate lostness in North America. Many attendees expressed the belief they were witnessing momentum building toward a movement to reach the continent.

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Jonathan Falwell leads a small group in prayer for a church planter during the 2013 Send North America conference. (NAMB photo by Susan Whitley)

BSC consultant: Background checks, policies protect churches

By SHAWN HENDRICKS | BR Managing Editor

While many church leaders may be reluctant to impose background checks and detailed child protection policies on their staff and volunteers, it could save them and their congregation from terrible, even tragic, consequences in the future.

Background checks and establishing strong policies related to children's ministries are essential, said Cheryl Markland, a childhood ministry consultant with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. When given the opportunity, Markland leads training sessions for churches looking to better protect their members who are involved in children's ministry.

"It's interesting how many churches don't realize that they need something in writing," Markland said. "And they ... need to be doing background checks."

According to the Church Law & Tax website (www.churchlawandtax.com), 3 million children in the United States have been sexually abused.

One in five boys will be sexually abused before they turn 18, and one in three girls will be sexually abused before they turn that same age. Last month, a 68-year-old chaperone, who accompanied a church group to the North Carolina Baptist Assembly at Fort Caswell on Oak Island, was charged with more than 20 counts of sex offenses with minors.

Background checks and policies are not guaranteed to prevent abuse, but they can help provide protection. Most screenings only cost about \$10 to \$15 per person. "If you've done your legwork, if you've done your due diligence, ... you're going to be covered [legally]," Markland said. "That's not the primary reason you do it; it is part of it."

While churches tend to focus on background checks to provide safer conditions, Markland said the screen-

ings should be part of a thorough children's ministry policy.

Every church, she said, needs to have a written policy that includes how to handle everyday situations that involve children – how to handle situations involving sick or injured children, allergies and picking up and dropping off children.

Policies also could include assigning monitors in hallways, making sure every room has a window in the door, and that there is visual access into all classrooms and offices.

Too often churches are apprehensive about enforcing policies or conducting background checks, Markland said.

"You're afraid you're going to insult somebody by asking them to do a background check," Markland said. "[Or], there's a sense that the church is a safe place."

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New partnership stirs excitement around ASU ministry

By SHAWN HENDRICKS | BR Managing Editor

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) will partner with a network of churches in the Western part of the state in an effort to strengthen campus ministry at Appalachian State University (ASU) in Boone.

The three-year agreement comes a few months after the BSC rolled out a new structure and strategy to impact lostness throughout the state. The BSC's strategy includes an effort to increase campus ministry across the state by equipping churches and associations to impact more

colleges and students for Christ.

"This is the first group that has stepped up to the plate," said Milton A. Hollifield Jr., BSC's executive director-treasurer.

"This is a group of churches that [is] taking responsibility to say, ... 'We're going to work to provide a ministry on the campus of Appalachian State University.'"

Led by the Three Forks Baptist Association (TFBA) in Boone, a network of churches are working to create a self-sustaining non-profit organization that will support and guide campus ministry at ASU.

The BSC's partnership funding and new structure and strategy will officially launch Jan. 1, 2014.

Some churches and associations, including those with TFBA, voiced concerns earlier this year when BSC's leadership announced plans to no longer fund full-time campus ministers.

In addition to ASU, the BSC's decision directly impacted eight campuses in the state. Those other campuses include: East Carolina University, Greenville; North Carolina State University, Raleigh; University of North Carolina (UNC), Chapel Hill; UNC-Asheville, UNC-Charlotte, UNC-Greensboro,

UNC-Pembroke, and Western Carolina University, Cullowhee.

BSC leadership contended its purpose is to expand, not limit, the reach of campus ministry across the state.

"I want to reach more students," Hollifield told the BSC's Board of Directors when they affirmed the strategy in May. "I want to keep the students connected to the churches."

That's a challenge Seth Norris, pastor of Perkinsville Baptist Church in Boone, said he can support. This fall, the church is expecting about 30 ASU students to return to the congregation. Many of the

See Partnership page 10

VBS impacts lostness, encourages discipleship, leaders say

By BUDDY OVERMAN | BSC Communications

After serving in children's ministry nearly 20 years, Cheryl Markland never tires of seeing a child understand something new about God.

"The greatest joy is seeing a child's eyes light up when they grasp a new truth of who God is," she said. "That gives me the greatest personal and professional joy, knowing that their life has been impacted for the Kingdom of God."

Markland, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) childhood ministry consultant, believes the future of the church is dependent upon how well parents, adults and the church partner together to reach children.

"From Deuteronomy 6 on, if the parents did not teach the children well, the faith would die," she said. "It's still that way. 'If adults are not teaching and modeling and joyfully serving, the faith will die.'"

Teaching, modeling and serving requires adults, not just parents and church staff, to work together to reach the next generation.

Yet, a common challenge in children's ministry is convincing adults that children can understand theological concepts and experience a relationship with God.

"People don't understand that kids can go to these places," Markland said. "When you understand the special relationships children can have with God, and when you could experience that with them, how could you not want to be there?"

Markland points to Vacation Bible School (VBS) as a model of cooperation that also demonstrates the potential for children's ministry. VBS, which often requires adult lay leaders, parents, church staff and sometimes multiple churches to cooperate together for its success, also returns high numbers of professions of faith each year.

In 2012, 771 North Carolina Baptist churches reported their participation in VBS, with a statewide enrollment of 100,950 children and 2,252 professions of faith. Preliminary 2013 statistics will be available in December.

On average, the number of professions of faith reported from VBS is about 25 percent of the annual baptisms recorded by the Southern Baptist Convention.

This fact alone makes VBS an important outreach for the church and demonstrates that children can respond to the gospel. "There is a very clear presentation of the

gospel during Vacation Bible School that we don't do anywhere else," Markland said. "Bible School is so intentionally evangelistic, the gospel is so clearly presented, that it has a huge impact on lostness."

Ryan Chapman, children's pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Youngsville, said the annual success of VBS speaks for itself. "If you just look at statistics, year after year VBS continues to be one of the largest outreaches among Southern Baptist churches," he said.

"More people come to know Christ as a result of VBS than many other outreach opportunities."

Chapman added that VBS pays dividends for the church in multiple ways, namely because it results in discipleship among the adults who serve.

"VBS is one of those events where it takes a lot of people to come and serve. It takes the church to pull together as a body," he said. "So you get a rally factor of the church serving together and out

of that come relationships that are built among people who are serving, and out of those relationships come discipleship relationships."

Chapman sees God moving through VBS every year through its impact on the lives of children, their families and the overall health of the church. He said many times the results go unnoticed because they happen weeks, months or even years later.

"I've seen families who have come to church as a result of their daughter being involved in VBS or their son being involved in VBS who join the church a year later," he said. "But then I see the discipleship and growth of our own people who serve and they begin to see that God can use them as they serve. You begin to see those relationships develop and the church becomes closer."

Link-Ups

One way churches can partner together to impact lostness through VBS is by participating in link-ups, which is when one church helps another church host VBS by sharing its resources.



Faith Baptist Church members lead Vacation Bible School, one of the leading ways churches can reach the lost in their communities. (Contributed photo)

"More people come to know Christ as a result of VBS than many other outreach opportunities."
— Ryan Chapman

Every year Faith Baptist gives away its decorations and curriculum materials to various churches. Chapman connects with churches that need VBS materials through Faith members who know about a church in need or through the local association.

"It helps them and it's a blessing to us to be able to serve. We are glad to pass along anything we can to help other churches any way we can," he said.

Gail Ledbetter, BSC VBS specialist, said link-ups are critical for many churches.

"Churches that participate in a link-up share much needed resources such as curriculum, decorations and volunteers to assist another church in providing a VBS," she said. "In most cases, without that help, a VBS would not have been possible."

"We praise God for that cooperation."

In 2012, link-ups accounted for about 25 percent of North Carolina Baptist churches that participated in VBS. Chapman said it's important for churches to partner together for the sake of the Kingdom.

"I encourage other churches to be good stewards of their resources," he said.

"It's not just about our church. It's about the Kingdom and doing Kingdom ministry."

For more information about VBS, including church report forms and link-ups, visit www.ncbaptist.org/vbs. **BR**

CHURCH NEWS



Webbs Chapel Baptist Church, Macclesfield

Pastor Dennis Love, left, presents Hilda Webb with a plaque celebrating her 64 years of faithful service to the music ministry of Webbs Chapel Baptist Church, Macclesfield. She has played piano and organ at the church since she was 9 years old. The church had a special service July 14 with singing, personal testimonies, and a special presentation from the choir.



Ross Baptist Church, Windsor

Howard K. Taylor and Jared E. Russell were licensed to preach for the gospel ministry on June 30 at Ross Baptist Church, Windsor. Taylor is a master of divinity student at Liberty University and co-director of Beth Emet Messianic Synagogue meeting at the West Chowan Baptist Association Mission Resource Center. Ross sponsors the mission work. Russell is a student at The College at Southeastern and is minister to youth at Ross. This is the first time since 1933 that the church has licensed anyone to preach from the church. Pictured, from left: Melissa and Howard Taylor; Pastor Jeffery Russell; his son, Jared Russell; and Jared's wife, Heather Russell.

Campbell provost named president of Kentucky college

Campbell Communications

Georgetown College named Campbell University vice president for academic affairs and provost Dwaine Greene its 24th new president after approval from its board of trustees Aug. 5.

The Watauga County native and Campbell alumnus will assume his role as head of the small, private Baptist college on Oct. 21. Chartered in 1829, Georgetown College in Georgetown, Ky., has a total undergraduate enrollment of 1,273 and postgraduate enrollment of 545 students.

"I hold deep respect for what Georgetown has accomplished during its many decades," said Greene.

Greene was a 1979 magna cum laude graduate of Campbell University, where he earned his bachelor's degree in religion. He received his master's in New Testament from Wake Forest University and completed his doctorate in New Testament and early Christianity from the University of Virginia. He is married to the former Carolyn Michael, a Campbell alumna whom he met while a student. The couple has two daughters. **BR**



DWAINE GREENE

OPPORTUNITY CORNER

WMU-NC hosts new minister's wives event

The Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina (WMU-NC) is sponsoring the New Ministers' Wives Retreat, "The Story Lives On," Oct. 11-12 at Camp Mundo Vista near Asheboro. The retreat will feature Bible study, skits, music and fellowship.

Bring comfortable walking shoes, casual clothes, toiletries, a flashlight, a Bible, a camera and willingness to participate.

Registration costs \$55 and includes the program, lodging and three meals. It is nonrefundable but transferrable. The registration form can be found on www.wmunc.org.

Register by Sept. 30. For more information, contact Betsy McSwain at rwmcswain@gate811.net or WMU-NC at (866) 210-8602, ext. 209.



Pastor, wife getaway offered

Husband and wife team Eddie and Janet Thompson are leading a marriage getaway for pastors and their wives called, "The Pastor's Juggling Act," on Oct. 24-26 at Fort Caswell, Oak Island.

Eddie Thompson is the family ministry consultant for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC). Janet has extensive experience in women's minis-

try and worship leadership. The couple has led marriage enrichment conferences and retreats since 1992. Russell and Kristi Johnson will lead worship.

The cost is \$99 per couple and includes lodging, materials and meals.

Sign up online and view the full schedule at <http://www.ncbaptist.org/index.php?id=954>. For more information, contact Eddie Thompson at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5644. Register by Sept. 24.

Ministry assistants encouraged to 'Set Sail'

"Set Sail for Serving," an event designed for ministry assistants, is scheduled Nov. 4-6 at Fort Caswell on Oak Island. It is sponsored by the North Carolina Baptist Secretaries Association.

Renea Henderson will be the keynote speaker. Breakout sessions are planned on spiritual enrichment, professional development and personal effectiveness.

The total cost is \$200 (includes \$25 membership and conference fee, room at conference center, and meals). A private room is an additional \$70. Commuters pay \$145 (includes membership and conference fee, Monday dinner, Tuesday lunch and dinner, Wednesday lunch).

A \$50 deposit, along with the completed registration form, reserves your spot. Remainder due by Sept. 30.

Make checks payable to NCBSA. Mail to: Drema Hill, c/o Randolph Baptist Association, P.O. Box 2167, Asheboro, NC 27204. Visit ncbaptistsecretaries.net. Mail or email choices for breakout sessions to dremahill@triad.rr.com.

AROUND THE STATE

Obituaries

MARTHA ANN MCALISTER, 70, died July 15.

Growing up, McAlister attended Biscoe Baptist Church, where she became interested in missionary service through Girls Auxiliary and Acteens. After high school, she graduated from Rowan School of Nursing. As a missionary nurse with the International Mission Board, she gave her life to serve her Lord and the people of Africa. She spent nearly 30 years treating sick children and teaching mothers how to care for their little ones. Later she served as medical coordinator for the continent of Africa.

She is survived by four sisters, Nancy McInnis of Rockingham, Carol Myers of Biscoe, Jane Greene of Star, and Rebecca Allison of Indian Trail.

Memorials to: FirstHealth Hospice House, 251 Campground Road, West End, NC 27376; Baptist Men's Ministry, c/o First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1066, Aberdeen, NC 28315; or charity of your choice.

EUGENE E. JOHNS, 87, died July 26 at Caromont Regional Medical Center. He served in the U.S. Army before graduating from Furman University and Southeastern Seminary. He pastored Col-lin's Grove Baptist Church near Raleigh, Riverside Baptist Church in Merry Hill, Prospect Baptist Church in Albemarle and retired from First Baptist Church in Cramerton after 24 years of service. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Helen Smith Johns; daughters, Sylvia Barkley Trimble of Hickory and Sharon Johns; brothers, Robert E. Johns of Emporia, Va., and Charles W. Johns of Fresno, Calif.; three grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Memorials in the name of Rev. Eugene E. Johns may be made to the church or charity of donor's choice.

Staff change

Sorrells Grove Baptist Church, Morrisville, welcomes **GLENN DAVIS** as pastor. He was pastor of Christian Community Baptist Church, Morrisville, which merged with Sorrells Grove.

Retirement

JERRY WELCH has retired after 37 years of ministry, the last 23 he served as pastor of Carpenter's Grove Church, Lawndale. He and wife, Vickie, will live in Cleveland County. He will be available for interim and pulpit supply. Contact (704) 720-0076 or revwelch@gmail.com.

Pastors' Conf. seeks to build 'lasting legacy'

By LIZ TABLAZON | BR Editorial Aide

With the theme "A Lasting Legacy," this year's Pastors' Conference aims to encourage pastors to influence others in ways that will endure past their own lifetimes. In a world where people seek immediate success, pastors are called to keep an eternal mindset.

The conference will be held Nov. 10-11 at Lawndale Baptist Church in Greensboro. It will begin at 6 p.m. that Sunday and will end the following day at 3 p.m., leading up to the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's (BSC) annual meeting.

This year's theme is based on 1 Corinthians 3:6; "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow."

"What we're doing in the churches in which we pastor, we're trying to build up something ... for the coming generation that will come behind us," said Scott Faw, conference president. Faw is pastor of Moon's Chapel Baptist Church in Siler City.

Faw said he hopes the next generation will remember today's pastors for having "preached the word of God" and having left "a legacy of truth and righteousness behind us."

"My expectation is to encourage pastors to leave a legacy, to preach, to really make a difference for the



Kingdom in their respective areas of ministry, and for younger and older pastors and preachers to build something lasting," he said.

This year's speakers include:

- Lee Pigg, senior pastor of Hopewell Baptist Church, Monroe
- Jeff LaBorg, east campus pastor of First Baptist Church, Indian Trail
- Junior Hill, Southern Baptist evangelist
- Mike Whitson, pastor of First Baptist Church, Indian Trail

- Ken Trivette, president and director of Native American Baptist Missions

- Herb Reavis, pastor of North Jacksonville Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla.

- David Gallamore, pastor of Rock Springs Baptist Church, Easley, S.C.

Mark Walker, associate pastor of music and worship at Lawndale Baptist Church, will lead the worship time.

The conference is free to attend, and no registration is required. For more information, visit <http://www.ncan-nualmeeting.org/index.php?id=43>. **BR**

Youth Weeks challenges students to stand up for their faith

By MELISSA LILLEY | BSC Communications

At age five Mac Johnson's dad left him, his younger brother and his mom. Johnson said he watched his father's mental illness drive his father away from those who loved him most.

"My dad was my hero. I didn't know why God would take such a valuable person away from me," Johnson said. "I was so angry with my dad. I didn't think there was any way God could love me."

During his teenage years Johnson's grades slipped, he was depressed and physically starved himself. Yet, through

mentors and a mother who continued loving and teaching him about Christ, he came to trust in God's love.

"I realized I didn't have to let my background define me," he said. "I could live a life of significance in Christ."

This summer Johnson shared his story with students during youth weeks at Fort Caswell. Johnson, who will graduate from the College at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in December, led large group Bible study sessions for each of the seven youth weeks.

Youth weeks, sponsored by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), draws nearly 7,000 middle and

high school students each year.

For Johnson, Caswell is like a second home, as he has spent nearly 12 summers at Caswell helping with Youth Weeks. His mom, Merrie Johnson, is the BSC senior consultant for student evangelism and ministry and coordinates summer youth weeks. "Caswell and Youth Weeks have taught me about being a man of integrity and about leadership. I've learned more about what it means to follow Jesus," he said. "Our words paint a picture of our testimony. Don't just be a Christian on Sunday and Wednesday; make your life line up everyday."

This year's Youth Weeks theme was "Speak Up, Step Up, Stand Up," based on 1 Timothy 4:12. Students were challenged to live in a manner that honors and glorifies God. They learned how to be witnesses for Christ in their speech, conduct love and faith.

"Are we living in the name of Jesus?" said Chad Poe, who served as the camp speaker one week this summer. "God works through limited people to make Himself known."

Poe encouraged students to trust that Jesus will work in their lives to accomplish His Kingdom purposes, even during difficult situations.

"In the midst of this broken world, Jesus provides comfort" he said. "Everything that is broken about this world points to the idea that we need someone

to fix it."

In order to stand up for their faith students must continue growing in their knowledge of Christ, yet they must not forsake growing in their relationship with Christ. "We're so caught up in being self-righteous that we've confused being a spiritually mature person with knowing stuff," Poe said.

Ashley Huneycutt, minister of students at Hopewell Baptist Church in Monroe, has brought youth to Caswell for about 11 years.

"Caswell is a time for our youth to be disciplined, and it gives them a chance to be who they are," he said. "It is a developing ground for them to begin owning their faith."

As a result of participating in Youth Weeks, Huneycutt has traveled twice to Haiti to help deliver food with Change This World.

In 2011, Merrie Johnson led youth weeks students to partner with Change

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Ashley Seagle, left, and Jonathan Wyndham, right, lead worship at Youth Weeks. The worship team is made up of college students, and they spend the summer facilitating Youth Weeks at Fort Caswell. (BeDoTell photo by Lou Owoc)

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Planters form partnerships at Send Conference

By ADAM MILLER | Baptist Press

New York City church planter Patrick Thompson started New City Church in Queens only a few months ago and wasn't exactly sure what to expect when he arrived at the 2013 Send North America Conference.

Joined by fellow North American Mission Board (NAMB) church planter apprentices Jon Carr, Jason Jasper and Scott Stallard – all serving in New York City, Thompson had hoped to learn more nuts and bolts, and to make some good contacts with existing churches.

Thompson said what he gained at the conference, held at the Dallas-area Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano July 29-30, in terms of connecting with potential partners was priceless.

"We probably accomplished more in 30 minutes eating our Chick-fil-A sandwiches than we would have in exchanging emails for three weeks," Thompson said.

These connections included churches in South Carolina and Georgia who



Creating environments for connections was one of the primary goals of the North American Mission Board's Send North America Conference at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, Texas. A late-night fellowship allowed church planters to spend time with pastors and other church leaders at a more relaxed pace. (NAMB photo by John Swain)

expressed potential for financial and other partnership. Thompson said he also spoke with a Hispanic leader who could connect him with leaders to serve the Spanish-speaking population New City

Church is trying to reach.

Additionally, Thompson said, he and several other New York City church planters were able to exchange notes on ministry, family and other important factors affecting planters in hard-to-reach areas of the Northeast.

"New York is a big place," said Thompson, laughing at the obvious statement. "It's more difficult than you would think to have ongoing connection with other leaders in the city."

"It was cool that we just got to sit down together and talk about how ministry is going, how our families are doing and just to connect on a personal level like that."

Connections like these were an important element in planning the Send North America Conference, said Aaron Coe, NAMB's vice president for mobilization and marketing.

"When I was a church planter I would have loved more opportunities to have planters and partners under one roof," Coe said. "I'm excited to see what opportunities and partnerships emerge from our time in Dallas."

The church planting track included breakouts and workshops led by seasoned church planting leaders and practitioners discussing everything from bivocational planting to leadership development to dealing with the emotional and spiritual burdens of church planting in tough mission fields.

Planters also had an opportunity to attend workshops addressing needs and opportunities in 30 of the 32 Send North America cities represented at the conference.

Thompson said the workshops connected him with New York planters he'd not met in person and gave him opportunities to hear the heart of established churches already partnering in the city.

"A big part of what made it so powerful was just seeing how many leaders were praying for and partnering with and just thinking about the work [in New York City]," Thompson said. "It just feels like we've turned a huge corner as Southern Baptists. Can't wait to see what happens next."

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Adam Miller writes for the North American Mission Board.) **BR**

This little light of mine

Who didn't have a glow-stick as a kid? I know I always thought the "glowing jewelry" I wore around my neck, wrist, head and fingers looked really cool in the dark and inevitably my friends would say, "Let me see!"

Imagine a lot of glow sticks shining in the dark. While individually these tiny sticks provide some illumination, collectively they make a big impact in the darkness and also prove to be an attraction to others who want to see.

I was challenged recently when the main speaker for a ministry event challenged moms, their daughters and teenage girls. Each person received a glow stick that had not been snapped to make it glow. The speaker had us turn off all the lights and for several minutes we sat in pitch darkness. Sitting in darkness was both uncomfortable and a bit frightening and several of the girls began to whimper. The speaker reminded the group that more than 6 billion people in our world live in darkness – a spiritual darkness that is both uncomfortable and frightening.

She then challenged the girls – of all ranges of ages – that if they were sincere

about living as a light for Christ in a dark world to snap their glow stick. She also cautioned the moms that they were not allowed to break their daughter's glow stick – this was a personal decision that everyone would have to make individually. What began as a few sparse lights shining in a very large, dark room soon became a room illuminated with multi-colored lights. The group began to sing, "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine."



ASHLEY ALLEN

We live in a dark world.

However, if we know Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, we are to live in this world as one who shines in the dark. Imagine if we all committed to live as lights for Christ in this dark world. I snapped my glow stick that day as a commitment to live for Christ. Would you do the same?

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Ashley Allen is director of Embrace Women's Missions and Ministries for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. For more information you can reach her at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5559. Read her blog at www.worthyofthecalling.com.)

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Send

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The conference opening combined video, graphics, precision projection and an individual performance that traced the significant moments Southern Baptists have seized throughout history. Afterward, Aaron Coe, NAMB's vice president of mobilization and marketing, told attendees his prayer was that the conference would be seen as a turning point in SBC history.

"Will this be a defining moment or will this be a forgotten moment?" Coe asked. "The difference between a defining moment and a forgotten moment is a seized moment."

"We're praying that we are able to give you the tools over these next days for you to seize the moment."

Large group sessions, workshops and breakout meetings all were built around the effort to equip individuals and churches for growing the Kingdom.

Prestonwood pastor Jack Graham closed Monday afternoon's session by encouraging church planters.

"Church planters, you are on the front lines in cities across this continent, and you are taking the gospel into the cities to penetrate lostness here and around the world," Graham said.

"Thank God that NAMB is saying, 'Plant churches. Make disciples.' NAMB does a lot of good things, but it is important that they now say, 'Plant churches. Make disciples.' And we support them in it."

The Monday evening session closed with Jim Cymbala, pastor of The Brooklyn Tabernacle, calling for attendees to come forward if they felt God leading them to step out into a new dimension of service. Thousands came forward as Cymbala led in prayer.

"If you don't want to be in a fight, get out of the ministry," Cymbala said. "The ministry is nothing but a fight. Paul didn't say at the end of his life, 'I have danced a good dance.' He said, 'I have fought a good fight.'"

More than 100 breakout and workshop sessions included offerings for ministry wives, students and worship leaders as well as language tracks in Spanish, Korean and Chinese. At least 1,300 attendees registered for ethnic tracks.

Monday evening events for students included a hip-hop concert by Grammy award-winning artist Lecrae.

Multiple environments were created for churches and church planters to network. Thirty of NAMB's 32 Send cities hosted sessions for attendees to explore partnership and planting opportunities.

Daniel Akin, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and evangelist Luis Palau were the closing session speakers. Akin, who approached the platform following a time of praise and worship led by Christy Nockels and Brett Younker, put aside his prepared remarks.

"I want to speak to you about your life under the lordship of Jesus Christ," Akin said.

"Why do we need a gospel? The world is dead in sin. God is angry with sin. God judges sin. God killed His Son so He would not have to kill me. As you come to Christ there are some things you will become alive to, and some things you will die to."

Palau challenged attendees to "dream great dreams for God," "pray great prayers for God" and "obey great commands of God."

He introduced his son Kevin, who is on the forefront of community transformation in Portland, Ore.

He has worked with his father for almost three decades, and their efforts have brought together 27,000 Christian volunteers from 49 of the 50 largest evangelical churches in metro Portland.

They've completed 350 projects,



This drawing summarizes the message by church planter Matt Chewning at the 2013 Send North America conference. Illustrator William Warren drew sketchnotes on each speaker's presentation. Chewning, lead pastor of Netcast Church in Beverly, Mass., was a conference speaker at Send. The *Biblical Recorder* featured a story on Chewning in our Oct. 13, 2012, issue. Warren's sketchnotes of other speakers are available on www.namb.net/sendnetwork/.

and the ministry was so impactful that every public school in Portland has been matched with a church for support.

Coe closed the conference with encouragement and a challenge.

"How do we go from this moment to a movement?" Coe asked. "It takes people. There are entire communities in the United States and Canada that have no churches. We've got a lot of work to do. As we leave this Send North America Conference, I hope you leave encouraged that Jesus is for you."

"Let's agree together as the people of God not to leave complacent or go back to the status quo, but to leave this place to make a difference in the world for the glory of God. Join me in not letting this be a forgotten moment," Coe said.

NAMB President Kevin Ezell said he was "ecstatic about the turnout" for the event. "Not only the energy and electricity among the participants, but the passion and heart of pastors and planters – it all exceeds our expectations. The ethnic diversity is fantastic. Obviously this confirms the launch of a new day. It is a new day and a new NAMB."

Most important, Ezell said, were the partnerships and commitments that were made at the conference.

"We've had more than 500 participants say they want to take the next steps in church planting. And more and more churches are stepping up to say they will partner with our planters. So the ongoing impact of these two days will really be the measure of success," Ezell said. **BR**

COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS

BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION OF NORTH CAROLINA

All resolutions should be submitted in writing for consideration by the committee no later than **September 10, 2013.**

Send by mail to Committee on Memorials/Resolutions

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Background

Continued from page 1

“Nothing bad is going to happen here just because it's the church”; and yet it happens all of the time.”

Markland advises all churches to conduct across-the-board background checks on those who volunteer to work with children and all staff members. This should even include volunteers who have served the church for many years.

“Even if you serve for 25 years, you still need to be screened so that it's a level field,” she said. “A church could grandfather certain folks but the best policy is to screen everybody.”

Churches should be particularly vigilant when it comes to Vacation Bible Schools (VBS), Markland said.

“You'll have people who volunteer for VBS [who] won't volunteer for anything else,” she said.

“As you enlist these people to help, ... you need to make sure that a background screening has been done or is up-to-date.”

“A lot of people think we just need to [screen] the people that we hire, ... but your volunteers are the ones who have more direct interaction with the children and the youth.”

Congregations should also rescreen those involved with the ministry at least every three years, she said. “I wouldn't go more than three years before I re-screened, because you don't know [if] somebody gets charged with something else after the initial screening,” she said.

A key to creating a successful policy, however, must start with the support of church leadership.

“If your senior leadership are not on board with it, it's not going to happen,”

she said. “You have to have support from the top down for this because somebody is going to object to it. Everybody ... needs to be on the same page.”

After a policy is created it needs to be followed. “If you are not enforcing the policies you have created, you ... could be in more trouble than if you didn't

have a policy at all,” she said. “Once a church acknowledges that they should have a policy and they don't put one in place, they are liable.”

For those concerned about a background check digging up something embarrassing

from the past, such as a bounced check or speeding ticket, Markland said most people can relax.

“They're not checking for ... that kind of stuff,” she said. “They're looking for information that would pertain to ... involvement with children.”

Also, churches usually set the parameters for the information they receive from the background screening company. Many of the screenings simply show that a person passed or failed the test.

“If there is a domestic abuse charge ... that matters,” she said. “If there's a drug issue, that matters. But if you got caught speeding, unless you're driving the church van, it doesn't matter. There are people who will freak out because it's something they did in college, but that's not what churches are concerned with.”

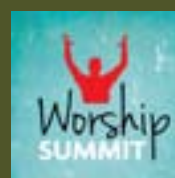
Ultimately, Markland said, the little bit of expense and effort involved with providing a safer environment is well worth it.

For more information, contact Markland at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5645, or cmarkland@ncbaptist.org. **B3**

“You're afraid you're going to insult somebody by asking them to do a background check. [Or], there's a sense that the church is a safe place.”
— Cheryl Markland

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Many have read about the Calvinism debate among Southern Baptists, and some have followed related discussions on blogs. At the *Biblical Recorder* we have received questions from Baptists in the pews and many pastors asking what the discussion is really all about.

In an effort to clarify the Calvinism controversy, the *Biblical Recorder* is publishing an article by Danny Akin, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, that was first published in *SBC Life* in 2006. We believe Akin's article will assist in bringing understanding to those who don't have time to follow this issue and will encourage cooperation among Baptists.

In August 2012 Frank Page, CEO of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee, assembled a 19-member advisory committee to examine disagreement within the SBC on the matter of Calvinism and to advise him on developing "a strategy whereby people of various theological persuasions can purposely work together in missions and evangelism."

The committee was composed of Baptists who are Calvinists and non-Calvinists. Union University President David Dockery, chaired the committee. The report, which was released in May 2013, lists areas of agreement and disagreement between the two camps, saying "we do indeed have some challenging but not insurmountable points of tension."

The report says, "We affirm that Southern Baptists stand together in a commitment to cooperate in Great Commission ministries. We affirm that, from the very beginning of our denominational life, Calvinists and non-Calvinists have cooperated together."

The report also adds, "We must not only acknowledge but celebrate the distinctive contributions made by the multiple streams of our Southern Baptist heritage. These streams include both Charleston and Sandy Creek, the Reformers and many of the advocates of the Radical Reformation, confessional evangelicalism and passionate revivalism. These streams and their tributaries nourish us still." – *BR* Editor

The Calvinism advisory committee released a report earlier this year that calls for unity among Southern Baptists.

**"... we do indeed have some challenging but not insurmountable points of tension."
– Calvinism advisory committee**

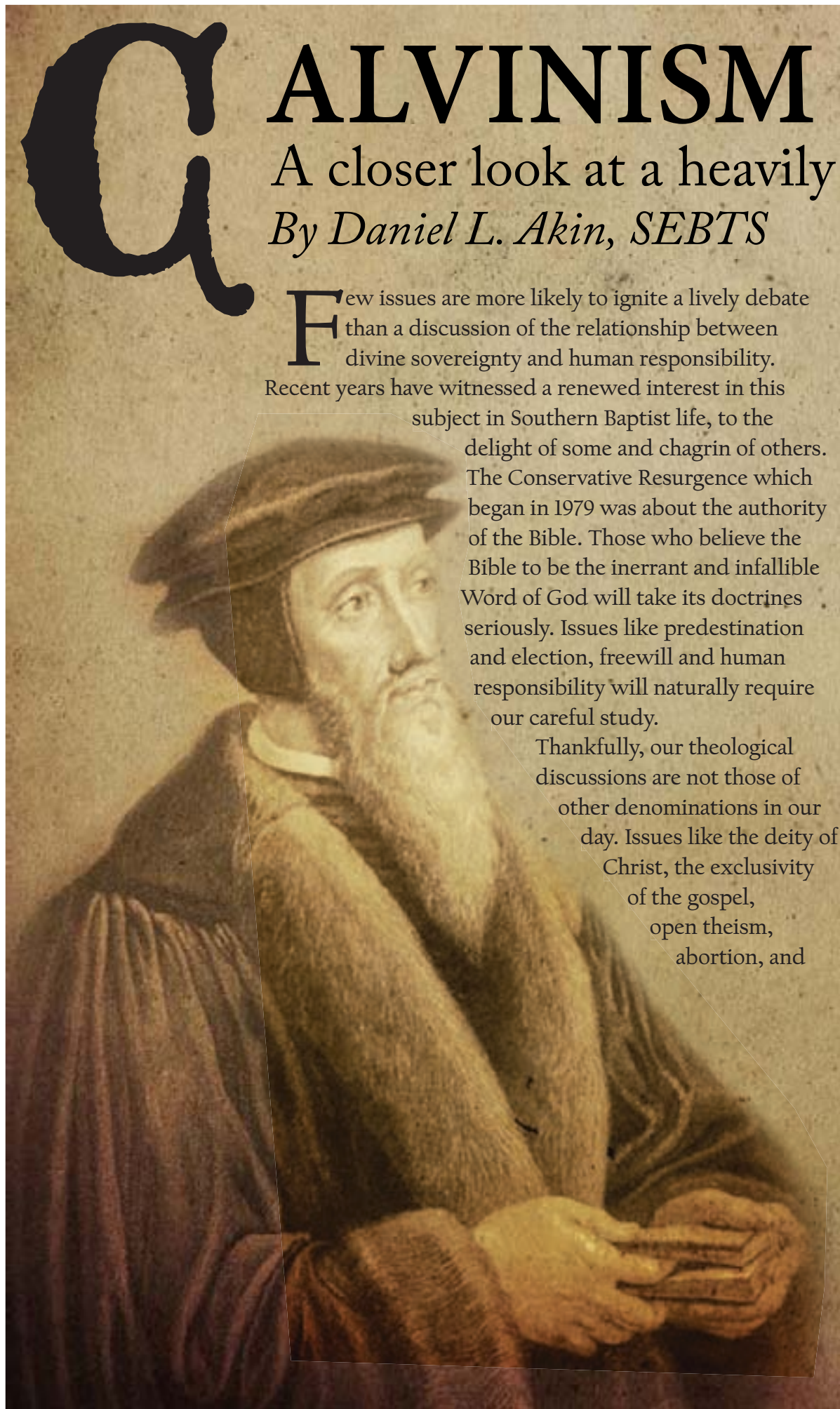
Q ALVINISM

A closer look at a heavily

By Daniel L. Akin, SEBTS

Few issues are more likely to ignite a lively debate than a discussion of the relationship between divine sovereignty and human responsibility. Recent years have witnessed a renewed interest in this subject in Southern Baptist life, to the delight of some and chagrin of others. The Conservative Resurgence which began in 1979 was about the authority of the Bible. Those who believe the Bible to be the inerrant and infallible Word of God will take its doctrines seriously. Issues like predestination and election, freewill and human responsibility will naturally require our careful study.

Thankfully, our theological discussions are not those of other denominations in our day. Issues like the deity of Christ, the exclusivity of the gospel, open theism, abortion, and



"As the statement affirms, these tensions have been present within the Southern Baptist Convention from the very beginning of our life and work together. We are people who take theology seriously. But we are also people who take seriously our joy and privilege in working together in service to the Great Commission."

– **R. Albert Mohler Jr.**, president, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.*



"My love for the unity in essentials among Southern Baptists for the purpose of getting the [g]ospel to every human on earth has wrung my signature on this document from my heart. The most important aspect to me is the provision for honesty and integrity for all."

– **Paige Patterson**, president, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas*

AND SOUTHERN BAPTISTS

debated issue

Part 1

homosexuality are settled for Southern Baptists because of our commitment to the clear teachings of scripture.

However, some issues in the Bible are more obscure. There is often a mystery and tension to what we find when we examine all that the Bible says on some subjects. This is clearly the case when it comes to understanding God’s sovereignty and human responsibility in salvation.

Unfortunately, there is more heat than light in many instances with shrill voices and unhealthy rhetoric – on both sides of the issue – getting too much attention. On one side you hear people saying that God hates the non-elect and damns babies to hell. They say that Jesus was a Calvinist and that Calvinism is the gospel. On the other side you hear voices stating that Calvinism is heresy and that Calvinists do not believe in missions and evangelism. Some even suggest that the Southern Baptist Convention could split over this issue, though I am convinced this will not happen.

I believe we need to tone down the rhetoric. We need to seek biblical balance, theological sanity, and ministerial integrity in the midst of this discussion. Let me attempt to set the playing field for this important issue and then make some theological and practical suggestions as we work

together for the glory of God and the cause of Christ.

A Look at Calvinism

The issue that is being debated today almost always revolves around the idea of Calvinism. To some, this is a theological landmine to be avoided at all cost, even if they are not sure what it means. For others it signals a recovery of biblical truth growing out of the Reformation of the 16th century and its emphasis on the great solas: scripture alone, Christ alone, grace alone, faith alone, for the glory of God alone. John Calvin (1509-64) was the great theologian of the Reformation. An outstanding biblical scholar, he heralded the theology of both Paul and Augustine (354-430). Like Martin Luther (1483-1546), he emphasized the sovereignty of God, the sinfulness of man, and the necessity of grace for salvation.

Later in the 17th century, followers of Calvin would systematize his theology and go beyond what Calvin himself taught. This system would ultimately be codified through the now famous acrostic TULIP.

The history of Southern Baptists includes those on one side of the theological spectrum who have flatly rejected three or more of Calvin’s five points and those at the other who have

See Calvinism page 11

Glossary of theological terms

Calvinism - A theological tradition named after sixteenth-century French reformer John Calvin that emphasizes the sovereignty of God in all things, man’s inability to do spiritual good before God, and the glory of God as the highest end of all that occurs.

Doctrines of grace - Another term for the theological tradition commonly referred to as Calvinism.

Arminianism - A theological tradition named after seventeenth-century theologian Jacob Arminius that seeks to preserve the free choices of human beings and denies God’s providential control over the details of all events.

Supralapsarianism - The belief held by some Calvinists that God decided first that He would save some people then decided to allow sin to enter the world so He could save them from it.

Double predestination - The belief that God predestines some to salvation and others to damnation.

Atonement - The work Christ did in His life and death to earn our salvation.

Providence - The doctrine that God is continually involved with all created things so that He maintains their existence, guides their actions, and directs them to fulfill His purposes.

Pre-tribulational/pre-millennial - The view that God will rapture believers into heaven secretly during Christ’s first return prior to the great tribulation.

Amillennial - The view that there will be no literal thousand-year bodily reign of Christ on earth prior to the final judgment and the eternal state.

Pelagians - Those holding the theological beliefs of the fifth-century monk Pelagius, who believed that man has the ability to obey God’s commands and take the first steps to salvation without God’s assistance.

Open Theists - Those who believe that God does not know with certainty all future events.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – While most pastors would recognize and understand the theological terms used in this article, we have a growing number of readers who have not had formal theological training and might be unfamiliar with such terms and phrases as these.)



“I believe [the advisory committee report] effectively articulates and models the way forward, taking seriously both our theological unity and diversity as a truly positive component of our ‘one sacred effort.’”

- Eric Hankins, senior pastor, First Baptist Church, Oxford, Miss.*



“This group had the difficult task of dealing with a subject that many Southern Baptists have very strong opinions about. My personal prayer is that this report will be an example of how believers can come together to impact the Kingdom of God and not personal agendas.”

- Fred Luter, president of the Southern Baptist Convention; senior pastor, Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, New Orleans, La.*

* All are members of the Calvinism advisory committee

Youth Continued from page 4

This World, a ministry to help send food to people all over the world who have little to eat. Through Change This World, organizations, churches and individuals can feed someone for a quarter a meal.

She decided that all of the money given by students to the Youth Weeks missions offering would go toward providing meals for people in Haiti. In 2011, students provided for 200,000 meals and last year they gave \$80,000, making it possible to send 300,000 meals to Haiti. This summer students not only sent meals to Haiti, but are helping support orphanage children and teachers.

Earlier this year Huneycutt and a group from Hopewell delivered meals in Haiti that they packaged with their church. "It could have ended at Caswell, but we took it home," Huneycutt said. "Other people saw the need. We wanted to be the hands and feet of Jesus. Caswell has helped give my church an opportunity to serve."

Merrie Johnson recognizes the need for parents and youth leaders to be more active in discipling their youth and helping them find ways to serve in their community and around the world.

"We've got to do more to equip our adults," she said. "If no one is living the Christian life out before our students, they won't know how to do it."

Visit www.bedotell.com. **BR**

NCBM responds to flood, needs volunteers

By **MIKE CRESWELL** | BSC Communications

Teams of North Carolina Baptist Men (NCBM) volunteers are responding to a flood that damaged more than 800 homes and destroyed several of them Aug. 3, across random spots in the Newton, Conover and Hickory areas of Catawba County and in parts of Iredell, Alexander and Cabarrus counties.

More than 12 inches of rain fell in some areas within just a few hours, creating walls of water that overwhelmed drains, knocked out several bridges and closed more than a dozen roads.



Two North Carolina Baptist Men volunteers repair a water pipe in a Newton home in which the basement was flooded. James Strickland, left, is a member of Penelope Baptist Church in Hickory, and Scott Bell is a member of New Life Church in Conover. (BSC photo by Mike Creswell)

Creeks and rivers were clogged with trees, limbs and debris.

NCBM set up a command center at First Baptist Church in Newton the next day, sharing several rooms of the church's educational building with American Red Cross workers. Assessment teams worked Sunday and Monday to identify situations needing help. Some homes received more than six feet of water and heavy damage; others took in only an inch or two of water.

Dacia Jones, site administrator at the command center, said they identified more than 600 homes needing repair.

"We need 200 volunteers right now," she said on Aug. 5. She is a member of First Baptist Church, Hickory.

Richard Brunson, NCBM executive director, issued email appeals to volunteers across the state, appealing for teams to come help.

One team responded to a damaged home that was designated "critical" in need: A woman suffering from cancer and struggling to keep her elderly mother with dementia. The basement of the home took in several inches of water, creating mold and potential for health hazards.

David Whitaker, Larry Gragg and Truey Benfield arrived and began removing damaged wall panels so they could be replaced. Whitaker and Gragg are members of Double Springs Baptist Church near Shelby; Benfield is from Ichter.

Volunteer Wayne Parker visited a fabricating shop in Newton which received about five feet of water.

Owner Rowe Bollinger said a wall of water struck the shop with so much force it bent open a steel door and poured across the concrete floor and out bay doors on

See NCBM page 16

Partnership Continued from page 2

students lead a tutoring program for at-risk middle school students.

"This is our Jerusalem," said Norris, who pointed out that ASU has a slightly larger student population at about 17,000 than the town of Boone. "I look up and I see the signs for our university right in front of us. ... If we deny that, my question is 'are we being faithful to the Great Commission?'"

Norris will help lead the new campus ministry partnership involving BSC and area churches. He is the chair of a task force that was formed by TFBA to create a non-profit organization that will rally support for ASU campus ministry.

Questions still remain on the details of the partnership. For now, the network plans to use funding received from BSC's partnership agreement to help support a part-time campus ministry position through at least the 2014 spring semester.

By the end of the three-year partnership, the non-profit will be expected to be fully self-sustaining.

The non-profit will not be a ministry of the association, said Barry Nealy, TFBA's director of missions. To avoid "turfism," he said the non-profit will need to consist of representatives from associations and churches beyond TFBA. "If [TFBA] leads this ministry then other associations and churches may feel that it's our territory, and they're not invited to the party," said Nealy, who is on the task force.

"And that may minimize the funding that [the non-profit organization] need[s]. ... It would be very difficult to do this ... unless we get some funds beyond our borders."

"It's a lot of work," added Norris. "[But]... I've never seen our churches unite in the short time I've been in our association around anything like this before. It's been just powerful to watch."

Both Norris and Nealy admit they were initially troubled by the BSC's new approach to campus ministry.

After the BSC's Executive Committee approved the new strategy in April, the TFBA sent a letter to BSC leadership. The letter voiced concerns about losing their full-time campus minister Jonathan Yarboro.

Yarboro had led the campus ministry from a handful of students in 2006 to later filling a chapel on campus with more than 200 students. Many of those students have become actively involved in missions, and the ministry has partnerships with at least 13 churches in the area.

"When I first heard about [the new strategy], I was a skeptic," Norris said. "We've seen so many beautiful things happening through campus ministry, so when I hear that the most visible work of the state convention in our area is having its funding removed, obviously I became a skeptic, initially. ...[But] it's becoming real and so my skepticism is now turning into encouragement."

"There was a disappointment there," added Nealy.

"We just felt like this was an exceptional [ministry]."

"Maybe God has a better plan," he said. "That kind of helped me turn the corner, recognize that this didn't have to be negative, unless we all wanted to make it negative."

Since then, Yarboro has accepted a position under the new strategy as the western region consultant for BSC's new Collegiate Partnerships team. His duties as a consultant began Aug. 1.

In addition to consulting on campus ministry at ASU, Yarboro's role has expanded to helping other campuses throughout the western part of the state.

Since Yarboro began his new duties, Mike Puckett, a former ASU campus ministry intern, has accepted a part-time, interim campus ministry position at ASU.

For now Yarboro, a third member of the task force, remains optimistic about the future of campus ministry.

"The excitement over what's gonna happen ... is building," he said. "There are a lot of ways that we don't know what the specifics are going to look like, but I think we can partner together to make things even better than what they have been."

"We're hoping that ... Appalachian will become contagious [and] breathe some hope into some other areas."

For more information contact Yarboro at (828) 264-7641, or gyarboro@ncbaptist.org. **BR**

Calvinism

Continued from page 9

enthusiastically embraced all of them, with many Baptists falling somewhere in between.

The reality is that the SBC has included “Five-Point Calvinists” and “Modified” Calvinists from the start. It should be stressed here that, from a denominational standpoint, in this discussion there is no “right or wrong.” Southern Baptists have always been diverse in many regards, and the theological realm is no exception. Neither the Southern Baptist Convention, nor its seminaries, endorse or promote a particular theological system or stance on areas not addressed in the *Baptist Faith and Message*.

Frankly, I don’t foresee that ever changing. So what follows is not an endorsement or promotion of Calvinism, but rather a review and condensed explanation of what some of our Southern Baptist brethren believe on the five points of the Calvinistic system. My hope and prayer is that a fuller understanding will help set the stage for what follows in the final section.

● **Total Depravity** – This view holds that man is born with a nature and bent toward sin. Every aspect of man’s being

is infected with the disease of sin so that he cannot save himself, neither can he move toward God without the initiating and enabling grace of God. Man is not as bad as he could possibly be, but he is radically depraved. Most Baptists would agree on this point, at least in some measure. It is hard to deny it in light of Romans 3:9-20 and Ephesians 2:1-3.

● **Unconditional Election** –

According to this view, God, in grace and mercy, has chosen certain persons for salvation. Those who hold this view believe that His decision is not based on human merit or foreseen faith, but in the goodness and providence of God’s own will and purposes.

Many would add, however, that the electing purpose of God is somehow accomplished without destroying human freewill and responsibility. Accordingly, no one is saved apart from God’s plan, and yet anyone who repents and trusts Christ will be saved. The French theologian Moise Amyraut (1596-1664)

“[Perseverance of the Saints] is one point of Calvinism that almost all Baptists affirm.”
– Danny Akin

referred to this as God’s secret or hidden decree. There is an admitted tension in this position, but a tension that need not be viewed as contradictory. Calvinists commonly cite John 6:37-47 at this point.

Of course, this view is hotly debated among some Southern Baptists, with alternative interpretations of scriptural passages being offered and both sides genuinely believe they are operating from a biblical basis.

The reality is Southern Baptists will likely debate this point until the Lord returns, but there is certainly no need for division or ill will over it.

● **Limited**

Atonement – Most

Calvinists view this as an unfortunate phrase, preferring the term “particular redemption” instead. The original stance of Calvin’s followers was that the intent of the atoning work of Christ was to provide and purchase salvation for the elect.

Thus the work of Christ would be limited to the elect, and His atonement was made for a particular people (e.g. His sheep, the Church, His Bride).

This is a real point of contention for many, and, in fact, most Modified Calvinists cannot embrace this teaching in its classic form.

However, let me offer a crucial observation that hopefully will foster some unity on this point. All Bible-believers limit the atonement in some way. To not do so is to advocate Universalism, the view that eventually everyone will be saved. Most Baptists would say the Bible teaches that the atonement is limited in its application, but certainly not its provision.

In other words, in His death on the cross Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world (John 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:4-6; 4:10; 2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 2:1-2; 4:9-10) making a universal provision. However, the application is limited to those who receive the free gift of salvation offered to them by their personal faith in Christ. One can see then that all evangelicals limit the atonement in some sense, but do so in different ways.

● **Irresistible Grace** – Most Calvinists would see this as another unfortunate choice of words that stirs up unnecessary debate. Instead, they would prefer the phrase “effectual calling.” This doctrine asserts that those who are predestined to be saved are called to salvation (Romans 8:30) effectually or effectively. They are not forced to come but are set free to

come and they do so willingly. Timothy George strikes the balance of this teaching with human responsibility when he writes, “God created human beings with free moral agency, and He does not violate this even in the supernatural work of regeneration. Christ does not rudely bludgeon His way into the human heart. He does not abrogate our creaturely freedom. No, he beckons and woos, He pleads and pursues, He waits and wins” (*Amazing Grace*, p. 74).

● **Perseverance of the Saints** – Those God saves, He protects and preserves in their salvation. Baptists have historically referred to this as the doctrine of “eternal security,” or in popular terminology as “once saved, always saved.”

This is one point of Calvinism that almost all Baptists affirm. Sometimes misunderstood and falsely caricatured by those rejecting this doctrine, perseverance of the saints does not teach people can live any way they want and take advantage of God’s grace. Rather, because of the greatness of the gift of our salvation, true believers will be grieved when they sin and will pursue a life that is pleasing to the God whom they love and Who keeps them safely in His hand (John 10:27-29).

This is a summary of “five-point Calvinism” or what its advocates call “the Doctrines of Grace.” Though it is not as popular among Southern Baptists as it was in the past, there has been a rise in interest in its teachings. And one should honestly acknowledge many wonderful and significant Baptists in the past followed these doctrines. This includes men like William Carey, Andrew Fuller, Luther Rice, Adoniram Judson, Charles Spurgeon, John L. Dagg, Basil Manly Jr., and James Boyce. John Broadus and B. H. Carroll would also have considered themselves Calvinists, though both would have affirmed only four of the five points. They did not advocate particular redemption.

How then should Southern Baptists, with such a rich and diverse theological heritage, respond to this controversial issue at the dawn of the 21st century? As people of The Book who rejoice in a remarkable history, how might we move forward together in unity in the days ahead?

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Daniel Akin is president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest. The second part of Akin’s article will be featured in the Biblical Recorder’s Aug. 31 issue. This article is being used with permission of the Southern Baptist Convention. The article was originally published in the April 2006 SBC Life, news journal of the SBC’s Executive Committee.) **BR**

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A policy to adopt and live

I appreciate the concern of the recent Biblical Recorder article (Aug. 3 issue) to address church issues arising out of recent Boy Scout and gay marriage court decisions. I concur with much of what was presented. However, I have a rather different view of the essential task facing churches. Perhaps it's a difference in emphasis or priority, but it does suggest a quite distinctive challenge to churches, and our resulting counsel to them.

The article seemed to suggest a priority issue was establishing some policies on gay marriage. Certainly, having articulated policies on a host of topics is essential for churches to assure sound and consistent practices, avoid arbitrariness as well as minimize undue risks.



LYNN R. BUZZARD
Guest Column

Effective policies, however, must not be merely emotive driven – quickly drafted statements that have little careful thought, or worse, have been adopted without any serious biblical and principled basis.

In the context of issues raised by so-called “gay rights” and the broader set of vast sweeping cultural challenges facing churches, the urgent need is not, I think, for crafting quick homosexual-focused policies. The critical fact is that homosexual related issues are part of the much broader challenge of collapsing sexual ethics, and profound marriage and family trends. Within the church itself, we have been too passive and even functionally accepting of explosions of sexual dysfunction and failures within our church life – adultery, groundless divorce, sexual addictions, premarital sex, pornography, broken families, abandoned kids and a near pagan focus on sexuality. It's an epidemic, and we have not been immune. Our deeper “problem” and challenge is not focused toward gay

marriage. And it's not just “them.” It is not just the outside culture, but one that has infected all our society. And the family/marriage/sexuality is itself part of a larger materialist, humanist, relativist wave of moral and religious rebellion.

We have in the church two distinct and urgent crises. One is an internal church problem of discipleship, accountability, healing and spiritual nurture in the context of brokenness among many of our members and families. Internally we must recover being the church. That means standing firm, resolute and faithful in affirming truth. But it also means redeeming ourselves and addressing our broken lives. The church as has been observed is no hotel for saints, but a hospital for sinners.

And last I noticed, we still need emergency rooms and critical care wards.

Externally, our challenge is to be “in but not of” the world and to engage a culture that has no history with us, no sense of the real gospel message, or of our lofty view of marriage and sexuality. They need to hear not just what we oppose, but what we affirm and celebrate. Most of our members might easily declare their opposition to gay marriage, but are ill-equipped to respond to a generation bathed in hedonistic relativism and a deluge of media that attacks the church as homophobic, bigoted, prejudiced and hateful.

I see the current context as a great opportunity to

See Policy page 15

TAR HEEL VOICES

Respect missing in Martin-Zimmerman confrontation

In reference to the featured opinion articles by Drs. [Russell] Moore and [Al] Mohler in the Aug. 3 edition, I was sad to see that both allowed themselves to be lured into the race trap.

Yes, there were racial implications of the [Trayvon] Martin-[George] Zimmerman case, and Christians do need to engage the issues of race relations in America. Yes, the central tragedy was that a person needlessly died.

But, the case was not about racial profiling or racial injustice of a “normal, happy, 17-year old boy,” who, by the way, happened to have been at the time under the influence of an illicit drug while being on a two-week suspension from school for possession of that same illicit drug.

Even though the racial issues might be politically expedient targets for high-profile editorials, they com-

pletely miss the true “macroscopic” viewpoint of the case and fail to identify its most valuable lesson. The tragedy could have been completely averted with the application of a basic value that all of us should have been taught from the time we were the youngest of children: respect.

If the teenage Martin had displayed appropriate respect for his elder, and Zimmerman had returned that gesture with the respect properly due any other human being, there would have been not even a scuffle, much less a death.

No, we cannot ignore the social issues our Christian faith demands we engage, but let us not allow ourselves to be lured into engaging those that are more politically expedient at the expense of those that are of even greater fundamental value.

Joe Cappar, Jacksonville

NCMO helps support Kingdom missions and ministries

An article was recently published in the *Biblical Recorder* (July 20 issue) and on our Convention website about the first Pakistani church plant in North Carolina. This is a testimony to God's power and grace, as He has brought a man all the way from Pakistan to help North Carolina Baptists reach Pakistani Muslims with the gospel.

This story is just one of many that can be told about how God is working among new church plants across our state. Another vibrant church plant called Campus Church is having great results in reaching and discipling college students and adults. It began earlier this year on the campus of Western Carolina University.

Last year, the Convention's church planting team participated in helping start 101 new churches. You help make

these church planting efforts possible through your gifts to the Cooperative Program budget and the North Carolina Missions Offering (NCMO).



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive
director-treasurer

NCMO provides about a third of our church planting budget.

Your financial support of the NCMO makes it possible for North Carolina Baptist Men to stay in business. The missions offering underwrites the 14 ministries of Baptist Men, including disaster relief. Baptist Men has sent thousands of volunteers to help New Jersey and New York residents recover from Hurricane Sandy. Soon after a disaster strikes, our disaster relief volunteers pre-

pare meals, engage in recovery projects, provide child care and offer assistance in numerous other ways. Forty-one percent of the missions offering supports Baptist Men.

NCMO also helps fund the two Baptist

Men mission camps in Red Springs and Shelby. Each year volunteers come and stay at the camps, become equipped for doing mission projects and then go out into the community to serve and share in Jesus' name.

Ten percent of the NCMO is given back to North Carolina Baptist associations for use in mission projects. The amount returned to each association is contingent upon how much churches in an association contribute to the NCMO.

The theme for this year's NCMO is “Compelled by Christ – Proclaiming Release, Relief & Redemption.” This theme is based on Luke 4:18. The offering goal is \$2.1 million.

We want to send your church some great resources to help you understand why it is so vitally important to support this missions offering. We have produced videos you will enjoy watching, posters, bulletin inserts, PowerPoints, offering envelopes and a promotion planning guide. You can access these resources at



www.ncmissionsoffering.org
or call the Baptist Building at (800) 395-5102 for materials.

Although this offering promotion is highlighted in September, you are welcome to give anytime during the year.

Thank you in advance for asking your church family to pray for and to give to the North Carolina Missions Offering. This offering is vital to what we can do through North Carolina Baptist Men and to push back spiritual darkness in this state, where almost 80 percent of residents are not active in any church and 5.8 million residents do not profess Christ as Savior.

“...preach the gospel ... heal the brokenhearted ... set at liberty them that are bruised ...”
Luke 4:18 **BR**

August 25

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

September 1

God Completes the Story

Focal Passages: John 14:1-3;
Revelation 21:1-4; 22:1-5, 12-14

Many Christians under the age of 40 can be heard complaining about an overemphasis on heaven in the songs and sermons of their youth. While the criticism is true on many fronts, the critics must not respond by minimizing the subject of heaven to near insignificance. Who wants to run a race with no finish line? The splendor of eternity with Christ caused the Apostle Paul to proclaim, “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21). Just as Jesus comforted His disciples in preparation for His departure, we must comfort fellow believers with reminders of His promised return (1 Thessalonians 4:18). Whether at the bedside of a dying loved one or taking inventory of what matters in life, we must take heart in knowing that Jesus has prepared a place for His church and will take them home someday.

The concluding chapters of Revelation bring us to a truth often overlooked: we will spend eternity on the new earth. The destruction of the current heavens

and earth (2 Peter 3:10-13) will open the way for the eternal heavens and earth in which righteousness dwells and all the effects of sin and the curse (separation, mourning, crying, pain) are absent. While we don’t understand all the details, we know it will be beyond anything we’ve experienced. Paradise lost will become paradise regained! The throne of God and Christ will be the centerpiece, and free access to the tree of life will be granted to everyone. God and His people will enjoy eternal uninterrupted fellowship as they worship Him.

As John neared the end of Revelation, Jesus reminded him that there will be no general admission to eternity with Him. By the grace of God we don’t have to worry about getting the price right because Jesus paid it all! However, we must recognize the cost and the reason it was paid. We must “wash our robes” by demonstrating repentance and faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ.



TROY RUST
Senior pastor,
Somerset Baptist Church,
Roxboro

The Pressure of Trials

Focal Passage: James 1:1-4

I grew up singing, “I’ve got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart,” but it was always easier to sing at church than in the midst of life’s hard knocks. Even as

we grow to understand that joy is not altered by circumstances, we are still tempted at times to sing the song through clenched teeth.

However, James states that we count it “all joy.” We must learn to find full joy in all the trials God allows us to face. James tells us that the trials are “various,” coming in many shapes and sizes, and that they all serve to produce endurance in the faith that leads to maturity.

Referring to himself as a bondservant of the Lord, James reminded his readers that he did not write things that he did not practice.

As a slave of Christ, he knew his life, warts and all, belonged to the Lord Jesus Christ and should bring glory to Him.

Most people would like to avoid the

pressure cooker of trials altogether, and lead a free and easy life.

However, a pressure cooker without pressure is just another pan. Whether she was preparing a tough piece of meat or a package of frozen peas, my mother often depended on her pressure cooker to tackle difficult delights.

God in His mercy does not place us in a pressure cooker without a regulator. That’s a recipe for an explosion! The regulator allows pressure to build to a certain level so that cooking is accomplished and disaster avoided.

God allows us to face enough trials to produce His desired outcome without destroying us by more pressure than we can endure.

How have well-seasoned saints arrived at the maturity that marks their witness? They have been tried by fire!

Just like steel gains great strength in the fire of the forge, God’s people become mature and complete in the faith by facing and enduring the trials that challenge their faith in God and His Word. The more we find Him faithful the more we trust Him and obey His Word.

August 25

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

September 1

What’s the Answer?

Ecclesiastes 11:1-5, 9-10; 12:13-14

John Maxwell once spoke about the time he and some friends were philosophically discussing wealth. They were addressing the question, “How much do you have to have in order to be rich?”

One man said \$1 million. Another said \$5 million. Still another said \$10 million. Maxwell said he believed they were all wrong, because the right answer is not a dollar amount, because richness is to be evaluated instead by how we invest in life.

What does that mean? It means creating positive relationships, serving others and making the most of the time we have. In other words, richness is not based upon material possessions, but in that which defines and completes who we are as humans created in the image of God.

Today’s scriptures speak of three worthy objectives. First, the Teacher tells us to invest fully in life. We are to be giving

people. The concept in 11:1-3 is that if the bread (grain) is generously cast upon the water in the flood season, there is a much greater chance of the grain taking root and yielding a bountiful harvest, grain that will help feed the poor and needy.

Give God a chance to work. We can’t always see and know what He is doing. Second, it tells us to have a right relationship with God.

A consistent biblical theme is for believers in God to “fear” Him (12:13). Fear is the strongest word that could be used to describe the holy respect and reverence we are to have for our Lord. In His sovereignty, God will correctly judge every action, whether good or evil.

Third, it provides a model for church evangelism. We should take the command to sow in the morning and the evening to heart (11:6), using whatever means we can to share the Good News with as many as we can without overlooking the opportunity to share Christ with the one. That’s the answer.



WAYNE PROCTOR
Pastor, Eure
Baptist Church

God Revealed

Focal Passages: John 1:1-5, 9-14, 16-18

How do you show appreciation for someone? There are so many ways from which to choose. You can give gifts, words of encouragement

or demonstrate appreciation through service and loyalty. As a wife and as a mom to five children, I have six special people that I like to show appreciation to on a daily basis. Through almost 25 years of marriage and children growing into young adults, it has been fascinating to learn the best ways to show appreciation to each one. I am also aware that we have the privilege to show appreciation to Jesus, each and every day. John 1 provides a beautiful, strong description of Jesus. He is the Word, the light and the revelation of God!

Knowing Jesus is the Word, has always been there and that all “things were created through Him,” is such an encouragement to us as we appreciate His creation. Recently in social media, I have seen a

beautiful picture of a double rainbow and adorable pictures of twins. Both these families praised Jesus for the gifts in their lives. How can we not smile and thank Jesus for what He has created?

As Jesus entered this world, in bodily form, He came as the light to the world. Light is a gift as it reveals truth and the deeds of darkness and righteousness. We need light and can thank Jesus daily for what He allows us to see.

We can also show appreciation to Jesus for being the revelation of God to us. We demonstrate gratitude for how He has revealed himself when we share a testimony. Our pastor will periodically provide a time to share testimonies during the Wednesday night prayer meeting. At first, some were shy about sharing, but when we all began to see a testimony as an opportunity to share our gratitude for what Jesus has done, we wanted to jump up and share often! So, how can you show gratitude today for who Jesus is in your life?



SHERRA STILL
Writer, University
Hills Baptist Church,
Charlotte

Policy

Continued from page 12

do what churches rarely, but must urgently now do. We must do our biblical and theological work first. We must know who we are and our message, understand what it means to love and care deeply for the most hurting and distorted in our communities, while standing against pretensions and illusions of the day. We must not avoid or hide from the spiritual alien and stranger, but engage and call them to wholeness. We must be light and life, and be as attractive as Jesus was to the broken and discarded of His day.

This involves more than a one-night church business meeting or adopt-a-policy task!

This is not the first time the church has had to live in a culturally hostile world; it was Rome a long time ago. It was Corinth. And it is ours. We better get used to it. It is in fact our mission field. The relativism, narcissism and hedonism of the age produces a harvest of sadly broken lives – and we better be there – as Christians picked up the abandoned children on the hills outside Rome.

Policies? Yes, but they must be products of more than well-crafted legal statements.

They must reflect the fullness of Good News – not merely condemning one particular sin and illusion of the day. We must be sure the clearest “policy” – the really big policy – is one reflected in the welcoming and care that comes from Jesus being known as the “friend of sinners.”

Our real policy is hopefully much more what we earnestly seek to do for those in and out of the church, and to be lovingly redemptive.

The consistent biblical word is not “Stay Out” but “Come.” Yes, come and find a joyous place of repentance, grace and life. Now there’s a policy to adopt and live!

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Lynn R. Buzzard is Professor of Law at Campbell University’s School of Law, and author of the Baptist State Convention’s Church Policy Manual that is now in the process of being updated. He has served as interim pastor of several Baptist churches in North Carolina.) **BR**

ECFA recognizes IMB’s financial integrity

Baptist Press

The International Mission Board (IMB) has received accreditation from the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA).

This recognition acknowledges IMB’s demonstrated compliance with established standards for financial accountability, fundraising and board governance.

“IMB has always been conscious of its financial responsibility to Southern Baptists who sacrifice in order to help take the saving message of Jesus Christ to those who haven’t heard,” IMB President Tom Elliff said.

“We are pleased to add ECFA accreditation as continued assurance to our constituents that we consistently conform to the highest standards of accountability.”

IMB passed all of ECFA’s evaluation criteria, including financial accountability, transparency, sound board governance and ethical fundraising, according to ECFA’s president, Dan Busby. **BR**

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Association

West Chowan Baptist Association in rural northeast NC will accept resumes for **Director of Missions** until Sept. 15, 2013. Send resumes to Search Team, West Chowan Baptist Association, PO Box 215, Ahoskie, NC 27910, or revdwr@yahoo.com.

Pastor

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

Parkway Baptist Church, Greensboro, NC, is seeking a **full-time Senior Pastor** preferably with 7+ years of pastoral experience. A seminary degree or masters in divinity degree is required. Ideal candidate should be a strong, spirit-filled leader who can guide our church as we cast a vision for what God has called us to be. Must be able to relate to and help reach young families; one who is gifted and interested in pastoral care and committed to teaching and preaching from the Bible, God’s Holy Word. We are a missions-minded church which averages approximately 115 in Sunday morning worship services. We support the Cooperative Program and women in leadership roles. Submit resume to Parkway Baptist Church, Attn: Pastor Search Committee, 1411 Benjamin Parkway, Greensboro, NC 27408.

Berea Baptist Church of Mooresville, NC, a medium-sized, traditional, conservative SBC church who has completed the intentional interim process, is seeking a **Senior Pastor** who is led by the Holy Spirit, and with a clear sense of God’s calling to the ministry. He must have at least 10 years in the ministry, at least 5 years as a Senior Pastor, at least a 4-year degree from a Bible college, be an empowering leader, and accept the Baptist Faith and Message of 2000. A seminary graduate is preferred. Visit our website at bereabaptist.net and click on the Pastor Search link. Send resumes to conbeam@windstream.net.

Lawrence Road Baptist Church in Hillsborough, NC, is seeking a **full-time Southern Baptist Pastor**. Average attendance is 60. The candidate must have attended seminary or divinity school and have previous pastoral experience. Send resumes to Search Committee, PO Box 249, Hillsborough, NC 27278, or judyrbcb@gmail.com. No later than Sept. 7, 2013.

First Baptist Church, Murphy, seeks **Senior Pastor**. Seminary degree with Pastoral experience preferred. We’re 167 years old, multi-generational, with attendance around 150. Associated with Truett Association, BSCNC & SBC. Send resume to First Baptist Church, Attn: Pastor Search Committee, 517 Hiwassee Street, Murphy, NC 28906. Deadline: Sept. 15, 2013.

Northside Baptist Church is seeking a **full-time Pastor**. Northside is a rural, conservative Southern Baptist church which was established in 1954 and is located in Bladenboro, NC, with approximately 100 active members. We are a congregation that believes deeply in reaching out to the lost and unchurched in our community while equipping and encouraging life-changing teachings and ministries to our members. We are a people who deeply respect and value the office of pastor and strongly believe in the role of laity in mission and ministry. We seek a Pastor willing to share our values and beliefs, that the Holy Bible is the infallible and inerrant Word of God that should not and will not be compromised or altered in any situation and follow the Baptist Faith and Message of 2000 by the SBC. Candidates must possess strong leadership skills and the ability to communicate and minister to all ages and be proficient in biblical teachings from the KJV. It is preferred that our prospective Pastor be a graduate of a seminary school and previous pastoral experience is desired. Please submit resumes by mail to: Northside Baptist Pastor Search Com., c/o T. Horton, 3366 Cabbage Road, Bladenboro, NC 28320, or by email to northsidebaptsearchcom@yahoo.com.

Church Staff

Penelope Baptist Church located in Hickory, NC, is seeking a **Minister of Music**. This position is part-time with the potential of becoming full-time. Interested candidates can mail their resume to the church: 3310 Main Ave. NW, Hickory, NC 28601, or email pastorking@penelopenbaptistchurch.org.

Position Available: Church Business Manager – First Baptist Church, Shelby, NC. Applications accepted through Sept. 15, 2013. To apply: 1. Download and complete Employment application available at www.fbcshelby.org. 2. Submit a resume along with the application. 3. Either mail application and resume to Pastor, First Baptist Church, 120 N. Lafayette Street, Shelby, NC 28150, OR email application and resume to fbcshelbybusiness@gmail.com.

FBCOI is seeking an **Assoc. Pastor/Music Director**. Degree in church music or related field with five years experience preferred but not required. Respond to search@fbcoi.org or mail to Search Committee, FBCOI, 4608 E. Oak Island Dr., Oak Island, NC 28465.

Miscellaneous

NCBAM will conduct Leadership Training at the Fall Festival of Fellowship at Caraway in October. The focus will be on new models of ministry where aging adults take the lead and are engaged. Call 1.877.506.2226 for info.

Share the Biblical Recorder — FREE. Order a three-month free subscription. Contact Erin Gandy at (919) 459-5693 or erin@BRnow.org to make arrangements.

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Placing a classified ad in the Biblical Recorder

Choose one of three avenues:

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

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

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



North Carolina Baptist Men volunteer Wayne Parker, right, talks with business owner Rowe Bollinger about water that surged into his workshop in Newton. So much rain fell so quickly that a wall of water bent open a steel exterior door and poured through the shop. Bollinger said the flood also ruined basement carpets in his nearby home. He said he is 76 years old and this is the first time his property was ever flooded. (BSC photo by Mike Creswell)

NCBM Continued from page 10

the other side, before flooding the basement of his nearby home.

Baptist Men coordinators said volunteer teams would likely be needed for several weeks to help families recover from the flood's effects. Such disaster response is possible because of the financial support NCBM receive from N.C. Baptists through their North

Carolina Missions Offering (NCMO). NCMO funding supports coordination, equipment, training and other aspects of disaster relief carried out year-round by more than 14,000 trained volunteers, plus 13 other ministries.

For more information about volunteering, contact Tommy Styers at (828) 244-5686 or styers@att.net. **BR**

Largest Continued from page 13

numbers can tell a huge story. They may reveal weaknesses, even failures. We will be poor stewards and irresponsible to ignore the message communicated by numbers. Not long ago I listened to a pastor rail about his distaste for "the numbers game." He boasted that his church does not submit numbers to the denomination. He was not interested in being party to "competition" through numbers.

The next words out of his mouth described how his church was celebrating a specific, numbered anniversary. That number matched the number of new churches they would plant in a specific number of years.

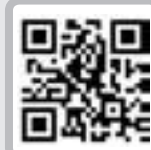
He identified the number of new groups they would start, and set the goal for the number of people they would have in attendance. I sat in disbelief as he

rolled out another half-a-dozen numerical goals. His distaste for reporting numbers sounded more like a love affair with numbers when talking about his goals and ambitions.

It's easy to be sanctimonious when talking about numbers. We can get hung up over numbers, and we can get equally hung up over ignoring numbers. Whether they are perceived as good or bad, they are what they are.

It's time to prepare to fill out your church's ACP. Without it, your church cannot register any messengers for the SBC annual meeting or the annual meeting of North Carolina Baptists. It is important for many reasons. We hope you will take time to complete the ACP. There is no need to fear or ignore the numbers. **BR**

BRnow.org



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