

Taking the lead

WMU-NC at top of missions game

By Dianna L. Cagle

BR Asst. Managing Editor

Staying true to missions. That's how Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina (WMU-NC) has stayed at the top in enrollment among Baptist state conventions affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

"We have a lot of people who want to start it because it's what they grew up with," said Ruby Fulbright, WMU-NC executive director-treasurer. "It's been good."

In a report of statistical leaders released recently, WMU-NC leads the nation in enrollment. It is the only church program area in which North Carolina was listed as a national leader.

The 2009 SBC statistics list WMU-NC's enrollment at 99,041, topping Georgia (81,249), Alabama (72,324), South Carolina (73,284), and Texas (60,784 — which includes both conventions).

In 2009 WMU-NC added 149 groups in 69

(See Taking Page 7)



BR photos by Dianna L. Cagle

CHATTING — Club SHINE, held during the Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina's annual Missions Extravaganza, was meant for women ages 18-35 to network. During the weekend event SHINE volunteers, sporting pink T-shirts, helped with set up/take down, music, and logistics.

Young women should let their light



By Dianna L. Cagle

BR Assistant Managing Editor

When ladies involved in Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina started asking how to reach and keep women ages 18-35, they talked and prayed a lot.

What emerged is SHINE, a new group within Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina (WMU-NC).

The acronym represents Serving God, Helping others, Inspiring believers, Networking community and Experiencing Christ.

"We just talked a lot about how we can challenge inspire and teach young women to fulfill the Great Commission and just to be a light in places of dark-

ness," said Diane McClary, a Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary student involved in SHINE.

SHINE was originally just an event last year in Charlotte — based on Matthew 5:16 — "let your light shine before men."

It was a retreat for young women but the idea took on a life of its own and now local WMU leaders want to start SHINE groups in their areas.

SHINE: myMISSION NC is a cross between a small group Bible study, prayer group, and missions organization.

The group encourages missional living.

SHINE builds on a national WMU effort called my MISSION fulfilled (mymissionfulfilled.com). It emphasizes reaching women where they are and offers Bible studies and articles for women at various life stages.

Ruby Fulbright, WMU-NC executive director-treasurer, said the key to growth has been giving the women "permission to try to chart their course rather than fit them into our WMU mold ... giving them permission to rise to the top."

"It's not your grandmother's WMU," said Deanna Deaton, South Carolina WMU associate, who is a former North Carolina resident and a facilitator of the SHINE Facebook fan page.

Deaton knows there is an awareness gap for young women about WMU missions and education opportunities.

A key rallying point is to form a ministry partnership with a local non-profit. WMU-NC is encouraging churches or associations or even women in that age range from various denominations to start these groups to encourage community missions.

(See Young Page 7)



BR photo by Dianna L. Cagle

LEADING — Ruby Fulbright, executive director-treasurer of Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina, has been challenged and blessed.



MISSIONS — Bert Yates, left, an International Mission Board missionary in Kenya, talks with SHINE volunteers Esther Shin, center, and Deanna Deaton at Missions Extravaganza in April.

Crouse trades blueprints for sermon notes

Goes to loading dock so he can man pulpit

By Rick Houston
Special to the Recorder

To some, Justin Crouse's decision might have made little sense. For more than seven years, Crouse worked his way up from the mailroom in the Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse corporate offices to the point where he was drawing blueprints for new stores. With annual sales of more than \$47 billion, Lowe's is the second-largest hardware chain in the world.

The job was a good one, stable and relatively secure.

Crouse had also served as youth minister at West Yadkin Baptist Church in Hamptonville since February 2008. When the previous pastor left in 2009, the church asked Crouse to step in as interim and then called him permanently. Going full time made Crouse an even busier guy.

"It was time intensive," says Crouse, 30, who is evidently a master of understatement.

Crouse always had to walk the balance beam between work and ministry. Countless bi-vocational ministers around the world can relate with Crouse's situation.

"For two years, I did both — I did the store plans and served as youth pastor," Crouse remembers. "The store planner job was mentally intensive



WORKING — Justin Crouse gave up his full-time job at Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse and now works on the loading dock.

during the day, and then I would come home and work some nights until I went to bed, trying to study and research for youth lessons. It was tough. You come home and you're just mentally drained, and you sit down and flip on your other computer again."

In the midst of all that, Crouse continued to coach football at local schools. Something had to give.

In May Crouse stepped down from his role in the Lowe's home office in Mooresville. And while he stayed with the company, the 2002 graduate of Piedmont Baptist College now works part time on the loading dock in the chain's Elkin store.

On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, Crouse clocks in at 5 a.m. and typically finishes by noon to allow time for his ministry duties.

Any questions?

His wife, Jessica, was cautious but supportive of what her husband was about to do. Asked if anyone else questioned the move, Crouse simply laughed.

"For me, I knew it was what God wanted me to do," the young pastor says.

"In that respect, it was an easy decision for me. Several people said, 'Are you sure this is what you want to do? Are you sure this is a good decision? You're giving up this and giving up that.' I said, 'I'm safer giving that up than I am holding on to it.'"

The decision to scale back at Lowe's was not made lightly. Crouse began work as a temporary employee in the mailroom in October 2002, and he eventually joined the store environment and operations departments. He helped set up new stores, which led to designing the layout for locations about to be opened.

"It was a great job," Crouse says. "It could be stressful at times, but it was a really good job. I came in, did my work and went home. I had a really good experience."

As busy as he had been, actually shepherding a flock in his first full-time pastorate is yet another huge leap in responsibility. Ready or not, Crouse was willing to take the plunge.

"There were second- and third-hand conversations where people said, 'Is he ready for that?'" Crouse admits.

"Satan would put thoughts in my mind, 'You're not ready for this. You're just 30 years old,' that type of thing. I finally got to the point where I said, 'You know what? If I wait until I'm ready, I'll never do it.'"

"It doesn't matter whether I'm ready

of audio/visual materials.

During Wiggins' tenure Campbell added five professional schools: the Norman Adrian Wiggins School of Law, the Lundy-Fetterman School of Business, the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, the School of Education and the Campbell Divinity School.

Mildred "Millie" Harmon Wiggins defined the role of First Lady of Campbell University, working quietly behind the scenes.

A member of Campbell's class of 1948, Millie Wiggins is a native of Coats and a graduate of Campbell College, Wake Forest College and Columbia University. She taught in the Rocky Mount and Winston-Salem public school systems.



Photo by Ginger Wagoner

GREETING — Justin Crouse, right, shakes hands with Brad Myers following worship service at West Yadkin Baptist Church.

or not, anyway. Moses wasn't ready when God told him to go. It's whether God's ready for me, not whether I'm ready for God."

Full-time ministry had always been a goal of Crouse's, although he probably didn't expect it to happen as quickly as it did. He'd been an interim pastor at a church in Wilkesboro and he'd served as music leader for a Charlotte congregation. Step by step, he was being prepared.

"The Lord's really made it clear to

me that I need to work on His timetable and quit trying to force my timetable on Him," Crouse says.

As Crouse closes in on a year at the helm of West Yadkin Baptist, members of the congregation have been there for their new pastor and he's been there for them. He calls the last several months "wonderful."

"I think things are going well," Crouse concludes. "I don't have any agenda, other than to promote harmony and hold the body together."

Campbell to name library for Wiggins

Campbell University will name its new library the Wiggins Memorial Library in memory of former president Norman Adrian Wiggins and in honor of his wife Mildred Harmon Wiggins.

Wiggins, Campbell's third president, died in 2007, after leading the school for 36 of his 83 years.

The new library will occupy the space that formerly housed the Norman Adrian Wiggins School of Law, which relocated to Raleigh in 2009.

The library, which also occupies part of Kivett Hall, contains 59,000 square feet and more than 241,000 books, journals and government documents, a wireless network of about 110 computers and approximately 1 million microforms. It also contains a vast inventory

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North Carolina hotspot for human trafficking

By Norman Jameson
BR Editor

While news reports, movies and documentaries spotlight sex tourism in Asia, the No. 1 destination for American men looking for sex with a child is — America.

Speakers in a daylong awareness event about human trafficking Aug. 11 in Greenville for medical, social work and law enforcement workers reeled off a long list of similarly shocking statistics.

With five interstate highways slicing through North Carolina, this state is well located for its earned reputation as a hotspot for human trafficking in both the sex and farm labor arenas.

Knowledge of how far this trade in human beings reaches is only beginning to surface, due in part to the efforts of Pam Strickland, founder of the Eastern Carolina Stop Human Trafficking Now coalition, and a member of Oakmont Baptist Church in Greenville. She learned of the problem in a 2006 missions conference and has been motivated ever since to stop it.

With its interstate system, immigration and labor intensive agricultural jobs, North Carolina is a ripe area for human trafficking, which is defined as the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud or coercion.

You see victims in restaurants and fields, in yards and processing plants. You don't see them as domestic slaves or in brothels in neighborhoods much like your own. But they are there, enslaved by men who promised them transportation to America and good, honest work in exchange for a high fee.

Life did not turn out that way and they instead find themselves strangers in a strange land; their documents confiscated; unable to speak the language; no money to flee and in debt to their handlers at levels they will never overcome.

Human exploitation is Woman's Missionary Union's area of special study the next two years.

Human trade has become more lucrative than drug trafficking, according to law enforcement officers at the conference. Drugs are sold and consumed.

A human body can be resold many times and those who trade in human



ORGANIZER — Pam Strickland, founder of Eastern Carolina Stop Human Trafficking Now coalition, put together the daylong training on human trafficking.

slave labor are said to profit by \$32 billion annually.

Even at just \$30 a “trick” in a North Carolina brothel, a victim can earn \$75,000 to \$250,000 a year for her pimp. As many as 17,500 persons are trafficked into the U.S. each year and from 100,000 to 300,000 persons in the U.S. are at risk of commercial sexual exploitation. That includes web based pornography.

Signs

You see them every day and don't notice them, according to conference presenters. What are some signs that people are being held against their will, even though they are not physically restrained? Look for security measures around a house that don't fit the neighborhood, like barbed wire designed to keep people in, not out.

Does your foreign waiter's name tag reflect a likely name from his or her country? State Trooper Mark Nichols, a member of New Bethel Baptist Church in Garner, said he was eating at a Chinese restaurant and his waitress had a French name and she had “not a clue” what her name was or what the word on her name tag meant.

Are they working excessive hours with no time off? Do they have any knowledge of the surrounding area? Victims are kept moving so they cannot establish relationships in a particular area.

Are they fearful, anxious, submissive?

There are barriers to identifying and stopping trafficking, including the stereotypes about undocumented workers and women who have been prostituted. There are language and psychological challenges; fear, shame and self loathing by the victims; and lack of awareness of resources even by those who would like to help.

If you suspect a person is a victim of human trafficking, call the hotline at (888) 373-7888. North Carolina has several rapid response teams that can move quickly when such human bondage is verified.

The root cause for human trafficking is demand for cheap labor and for access to the bodies of women and children. Strickland said if there was no buyer, there would be no seller and consequently, no victims.

Learn more at her web site www.combathumantraffickingnow.com.

“We need to be talking about sex, pornography and human trafficking in church,” Strickland said. “We know that men who are behind selling and buying sex and pornography are sitting in the church pew.”

A large part of her drive is to decrease the vulnerability of children to being trafficked, as 300,000 American children have been forced into the sex trade. Runaways often end up in the trade, enticed and embraced by pimps who haunt youth shelters.

Sensuality only talent

Girls everywhere are becoming sexualized because their main role models identify sexuality as their primary tal-

ent, not their intellect or spirit or work ethic or dependability.

When sexuality runs into conflict with the law, as in the Super Bowl incident with Justin Timberlake aggressively ripping off Janet Jackson's bustier, Jackson and the network were punished in the marketplace, but Timberlake was not.

There is a double standard. Girls obviously too young to have chosen a life on the streets are arrested for prostituting, but their customers are too often told only to “go home to your wife.”

One in five girls, and one in 10 boys will be sexually abused in the U.S., according to presenters. That doesn't mean they will be raped, but it means they will endure unwanted sexual touch.

A 2006 survey revealed an estimated 650,000 kids in the U.S. have exchanged sex for drugs or money. Many were “marketed” in their own homes before they ran away. Or they were abused by mom's boyfriend, but he paid the rent so mama wouldn't throw him out. Then the child had to use the only method she knew to survive once she hit the street.

International human trade is shocking, but distant. Knowing that thousands of humans are in physical bondage in North Carolina is frightening because it is here, and it includes our children. The only way not to see signs of human trafficking in any community in North Carolina is simply not to look for it, said presenters.

And the best person to help put a stop to it is anyone who will call the human trafficking hotline.

Early puberty study has spiritual implications

By Erin Roach
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Some girls are reaching the onset of puberty at an earlier age than in the past, according to a new study; and parents and churches can play key roles in helping such girls mature emotionally and spiritually, Christian experts say.

The study, which appears in the August issue of the journal *Pediatrics*, examined 1,239 girls ages 6 to 8 and found that 10 percent of whites, 23 percent of blacks and 15 percent of Hispanic girls had breast development by age 7.

Earlier development, the researchers said, puts girls at higher risk for behavioral problems as adolescents and for breast cancer as adults. The risk of cancer increases with a longer lifetime exposure to the hormones estrogen and progesterone.

Bill Cutrer, professor of Christian ministry at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, said early puberty onset is more prevalent in heavier girls.

The obstetrician/gynecologist explained that fatty tissue makes estrone, a weak estrogen, so young girls with a tendency toward obesity would develop breast changes sooner.

It is a phenomenon observed primarily in industrialized nations, he said, adding that in third world countries where malnutrition is rampant, girls develop later.

He also said it was important to note that the age of menstruation has not changed, so whatever has contributed

to earlier breast development “hasn't seemed to alter that part (menstruation) of the pubertal clock.”

Cutrer said the study has implications for ministry.

“Some of the references cited in this *Pediatrics* article found an association between earlier maturation and lower self esteem, worse body image, eating problems, suicide attempts, depression, influence by ‘deviant peers,’ earlier sex and earlier norm breaking behaviors,” Cutrer said.

Churches can help girls appreciate themselves as made in the image of God and help them view their bodies as gifts and use them as temporary vessels for His glory, he said.

It's also important to have conversations with boys about how to interact with girls.

“If the boys can learn to treat young girls with respect and not sexualize and objectify them (as society tends to do) perhaps the girls can mature in a more healthy fashion and avoid all those terrible consequences,” Cutrer said.

“Our youth leaders simply must know this stuff and act aggressively to prevent the early bloomer from being ostracized, isolated, intimidated or belittled,” Cutrer said.

“Girls maturing at a younger age will naturally call attention to themselves and heighten boys' interests. That makes it important for parents (especially fathers) to help their sons deal with their feelings and teach them how to respectfully treat younger girls,” said Jimmy Hester, developer of the “True Love Waits” campaign.

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► **South Roanoke Baptist Association** has been certified by Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary to operate a Contextualized Leadership Development (CLD) Center. Above: Golden Gate's Don Beal, far right, presents the certification notice to Abdias Mora, second from right, who is the South Roanoke Hispanic Training Center director. John Rosal, far left, is the association's church strengthening team leader and Miguel Rodriguez, second from left, is registrar for Golden Gate's CLD centers, which offers theological training in a contextualized setting. The South Roanoke Center is the first in North Carolina. It will offer diplomas in Christian ministry, theology and church planting.

Obituary

FRANCES J. RILEY, 84, died Aug. 19 after a lengthy illness.

Riley was a writer and producer at the Baptist State Convention for 25 years before retiring in 1988.

She is survived by her husband of 66 years, Robert E. Riley of Cary; four children, April Riley Bolejack of Shelby, Mary-Michael Riley Fajardo of Columbia, S.C., Barry Riley of Po-ko-moke, and Kevin Riley of Fuquay-Varina; nine grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

Memorials to Hospice of Wake County or another charity.

Staff changes

Emerywood Baptist Church, High Point, has called **GLENN ADKINS** as minister of music, worship and fine arts. He is returning from the international mission field and is former minister of music at First Baptist Church, Greenville, S.C., and FBC, Augusta, Ga.

GIL GULICK has been called as pastor of First Baptist Church, High Point. A graduate of Wake Forest Divinity School, he was on the FBC staff as ministerial resident. His wife, Gay, is staff minister to children at FBC.

Hephzibah Baptist Church, Wendell, has called **AARON WALLACE** as pastor. He was on the staff as associate pastor and has been at Hephzibah in various capacities for 13 years.

LISA JONES has been called as director of weekday preschool at Central Baptist Church, Wendell.

Crossroads Church, Lillington, has called **JAY MARTIN** as family ministries pastor, **ELAINI AREVALO** as director of children's ministries, **WENDY POLKY** as preschool coordinator, and **CALEB BATTS** as student ministries pastor.

DANIEL GLOCKLE has been called as associate pastor of Beulah Baptist Church, Bennett. He was at Pensacola Campus Church, Pensacola, Fla.

Highland Baptist Church, Raleigh, has called **DAVID BRINKLEY** as minister of youth. He was a senior pastor at a church in Virginia and a youth pastor in Georgia.

JONATHAN BEHLER has been called as senior pastor of Cherry Branch Community Church, Havelock. He was youth minister and interim pastor.

Retirement

LARRY KING has announced his retirement after 31 years of service. He is retiring from Rawls Baptist Church, Fuquay-Varina. He has also worked at Bethany Baptist Church, Wendell; Vision Baptist Church, Knightdale; Corinth Baptist Church, Rose Hill; and Mt. Gilead Baptist Church, Clinton. He and his wife Pat will remain in the Fuquay-Varina area. He will be available for revivals, interim and supply work.

N.C. Campers on Mission plan fall rally

The N.C. Campers On Mission (NCCOM) State Fall Rally will be held Sept. 16-19 at Denton Farm Park in Denton. Pre-rally activities are planned for Thursday with the rally officially beginning Friday and ending after Sunday worship.

For registration information call Ed Parks at (252) 977-7357 or Pete Butler at (252) 972-7828. Visit www.nccam-personmission.org.

Conference focuses on local church diversity

"Ethnic Blends Conference: Moving Diversity into your Local Church" is set for Sept. 25 in Greensboro.

Church News



Contributed photo

► **Athens Drive Baptist Church**, Raleigh, sent a team of 22 people to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, July 1-13. The team, above, helped or visited 11 of the 12 churches Athens Drive has worked with over the last 21 years.



Contributed photo

► **West End Baptist Church**, Henderson, honored Geneva W. Harris, right, with Ralph E. McGowan, senior pastor. Harris has been the church's organist for 40 years. The church gave her a plaque and monetary gift July 18.

Opportunity Corner

Mars Hill plans Ireland trip

Mars Hill College alumni and friends are planning "An Ireland Adventure" in the summer of 2011. The school's cloggers will be part of the tour. The trip is June 24-July 5, 2011. Contact Ophelia DeGroot at (828) 689-1438, or fdegroot@mhc.edu.

Opportunity Corner

It is designed to create healthy awareness about the multicultural challenges faced in North Carolina and provide ways to respond to these challenges.

Mark DeYmaz, pastor and founder of Mosaic Church of Central Arkansas, will be the main speaker.

The event will be held at Immanuel Baptist Church and costs \$25 (includes book and meal). Deadline to register is Sept. 23.

Contact Ken Tan at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5641, or ktan@ncbaptist.org.

way Baptist Church in Sanford.

Rick Hughes of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina is one of the leaders.

This workshop, which costs \$10 (for materials and lunch), is designed for churches with 150 or fewer in worship.

It is sponsored by Little River, Sandhills, and Sandy Creek Baptist associations.

Register by Sept. 13. Contact (910) 893-4282 or missions@lrba.net.

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Cyclist seeks to break record for BCH children

Endurance cyclist and Bakersville resident Chris Boone will attempt to break the North Carolina cross-state record by pedaling his bicycle 564 miles in less than 40 hours Sept. 8-9.

In addition to his goal to set a new record, Boone is using the opportunity to raise support for the boys and girls living at Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina (BCH).

"Chris' efforts are an inspiration to every child and every staff member at Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina," said BCH President Michael C. Blackwell.

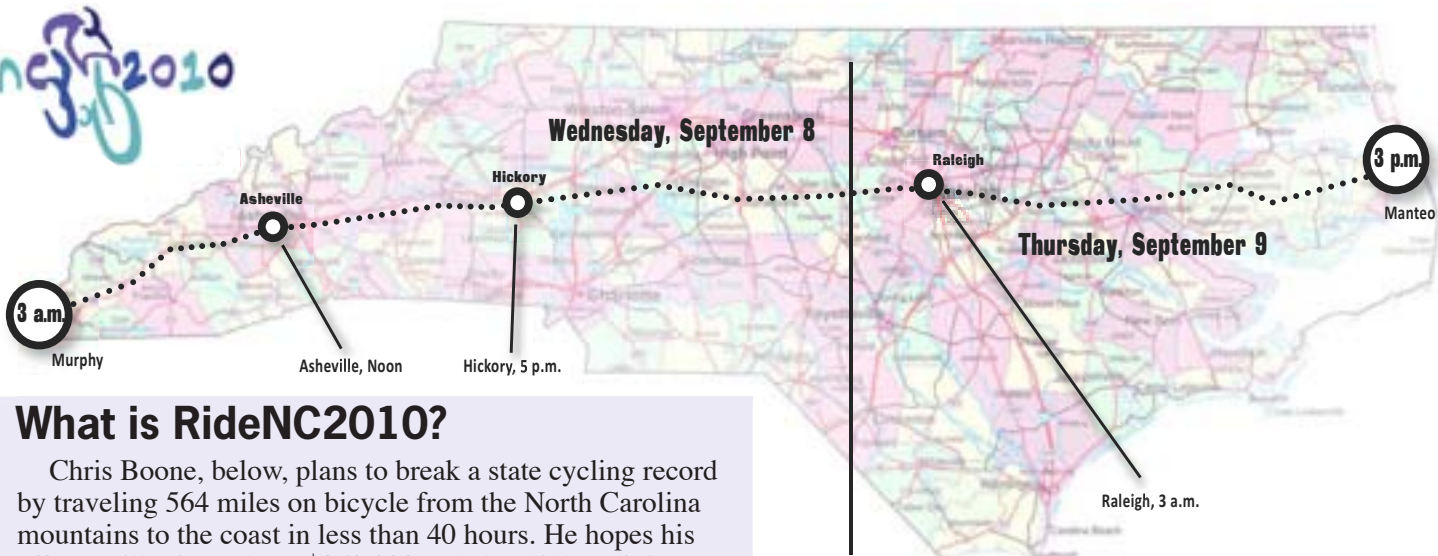
"This ride is a testament of will, desire and the incredible lengths one is willing to undertake to make a difference in the lives of children."

Boone's endeavor is being promoted as "RideNC2010" and is organized as a part of BCH's 125th anniversary. He will leave the post office in the mountains of Murphy and travel non-stop to his finishing destination of Manteo located at the Outer Banks.

Boone currently holds the city-to-city/point-to-point record, as certified by the Ultra Marathon Cycling Association, for riding the 470-mile length of the Blue Ridge Parkway from Cherokee, N.C., to Rockfish Gap, Va., in 29 hours and 36 minutes.

"I believe God has given me a gift for riding a bike, and I don't want to use that gift selfishly," said Boone, 44, a member of Rebels Creek Baptist Church.

"I hope the children at Baptist Children's Homes are inspired to find their



What is RideNC2010?

Chris Boone, below, plans to break a state cycling record by traveling 564 miles on bicycle from the North Carolina mountains to the coast in less than 40 hours. He hopes his efforts will raise at least \$250,000 to help children living at Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina's (BCH) state-wide homes. Chris' ride, named "RideNC2010," is a part of Baptist Children's Homes year-long 125th anniversary celebration.

BCH was established Nov. 11, 1885, with its first campus in Thomasville. Today, BCH provides residential homes in 18 communities across the state.

own gift, run with it, and use it to make themselves better."

As Boone trains for the ride, BCH staff is securing RideNC2010 sponsors hoping to raise \$250,000 or more. BCH operates residential homes in 18 communities across the state.

"I hope everyone who hears about Chris' efforts will root for him, pray for him, and show financial support by becoming a RideNC2010 sponsor," Blackwell said. "It is through that financial support that we can offer hope and



Route Information

The ride begins at 3 a.m. at the post office in Murphy. Take 19 to Andrews and to Bryson City. Then 74 to Sylva and Waynesville and then Ratcliff Cove Road to Clyde. 19-23 to Enka and around Asheville to 70. Oteen to Black Mountain.

Get permission to take 40 at Old Fort Mountain and to Old Fort on 70 to Marion. 70 to Marion and Morganton, East Street around Statesville junction 64 to Mocksville. Old 64 through Lexington junction 64 outside Moleta. 64 to Asheboro, Siler City, Pittsboro, and to Cary to Tryon Road to Garner to East Garner Road to Clayton. 42 to Wilson and Conetoe junction 64 to finish at 212B U.S. Highway 64 and 264 in Manteo.

Call RideNC2010 coordinator Lewis Smith at (828) 421-9300 for up-to-date information about Chris' location during RideNC2010 on Sept. 8-9.

healing to Baptist Children's Homes' boys and girls."

Boone's riding team will include as many as 20 support staff members and a caravan of vehicles.

One of his most important team members is his wife Lisa who is director of nursing for Hospice of Mitchell County.

She will oversee her husband's health and nutrition along the ride literally handing him food and beverage through her vehicle window while he is cycling.

"She was with me for my Parkway ride and knows what it takes for me to get across the state," Boone said.

"My riding team will experience everything I experience and be right there with me.

"They will be my family during the ride."

To meet the time goal of less than 40 hours Boone must maintain an average cycling speed of 15 mph through both mountains and flats.

This includes all scheduled stops for quick bike maintenance, bathroom breaks, and a clean change of clothes. At that rate Boone would complete the ride in approximately 36 hours.

At ride's end, Boone hopes he will be hold a new cycling record, but most of all he hopes his efforts will succeed in transforming lives.


"I want the children to see that there are people out there who are willing to help them by stepping up to meet their needs," Boone said.

To support Boone's efforts call RideNC2010 coordinator Lewis Smith at (828) 421-9300 or give online at www.ridenc2010.org.

Baptist Children's Homes will provide updated news and information during the ride on its page on Facebook.

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Paula Hemphill

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Sowers to lead BSC Great Commission office



BSC photo by Melissa Lilley

BALLOONING — Mike Sowers, left, makes balloon animals for children in Honduras as part of North Carolina Baptist Men's Deep Impact. Sowers, who was a consultant for youth mobilization for NCBM, is now senior consultant for the newly created Office of Great Commission Partnerships for the Baptist State Convention.

By Melissa Lilley
BSC Communications

North Carolina Baptist Men's Consultant for Youth Mobilization Mike Sowers will become senior consultant for the newly created Office of Great Commission Partnerships for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) Sept. 1.

The BSC Executive Committee approved the new office July 15.

Sowers will continue to coordinate the Metropolitan New York Baptist Association partnership which he has from its beginning. New York is one of five current BSC partnerships which Sowers will oversee, including Appalachian Regional Ministry, Eastern Canada, New England and Thailand.

Before joining N.C. Baptist Men, Sowers served five-and-a-half years as pastor of Hope Mills Baptist Church and three years as youth pastor at Guilford Baptist Church in Greensboro.

As youth missions consultant Sowers was responsible for developing and leading Deep Impact mission weeks, which have grown in number and variety.

"Deep Impact is an important part of introducing students to missions and to what God is doing in their community and in the world," Sowers said. Sowers led Hope Mills to increased mission involvement locally — starting a homeless ministry — and nationally and internationally.

"We developed a comprehensive missions strategy," Sowers said. "You can't just go on a mission trip or give to missions or pray about missions. There needs to be a comprehensive strategy that encompasses all of that if the DNA of the church is going to change." Sowers' goal is to help pastors become missions strategists who lead congregations in local, national and international missions. He will also develop young leaders training in intentional missions leadership.

"I have seen the urgency people have to do missions and to make a difference, but they do not always have the tools they need," Sowers said.

Sowers graduated from UNC Greensboro and earned his MDiv from Campbell University Divinity School. Sowers and his wife Sara have two children, Andrew, 13 and Luke, 10.

Associations: Changing lives with NCMO funds

By Mike Creswell
BSC Communications

Pastor Francisco Ortiz is quite healthy, but thousands of North Carolina Baptists help him step into the pulpit each Sunday.

His small but growing congregation is "Iglesia Bautista Hispana Cristo el Salvador," or Christ the Savior Baptist Church, in Jefferson. Most of the Spanish-speaking members are from Mexico, Ortiz said.

They meet Sunday afternoons in the building of partnering Fletcher Memorial Baptist Church in Jefferson and are receiving start-up funds from **Ashe Baptist Association**, the local fellowship of 44 Baptist congregations.

Ashe, in turn, received the funds to help the new church from North Carolina Baptists through their North Carolina Missions Offering (NCMO).

Each year 10 percent of the North Carolina Missions Offering is distributed to the state's 79 Baptist associations from which they came for use in area missions and ministry projects.

Here are samples of the diverse and life-changing ways associations put those NCMO funds work.

NCMO: New churches

The Cooperative Program provides two-thirds of the funds used by the Baptist State Convention for church planting.

The NCMO supplements Cooperative Program funds by providing the other one-third.

Together, these funds supported 98 new churches in 2009.

But associations also use NCMO funds to start other new churches locally.

Greater Gaston Association, based in Gastonia, was one of the leaders in church planting — they worked with 19 new church plants in 2009, said Larry McElreath, associational missionary.

"Some of these received NCMO funds," McElreath said.

"Thousands of people's lives were impacted with the gospel message. Without these funds, we as an associa-

tion could not have made much of an impact in the community."

NCMO funds also helped Greater Gaston send out summer missionaries to hold Vacation Bible Schools and Backyard Bible Clubs.

"I am more thankful every year that we have an opportunity to be part of the NCMO. I believe that doing together what we can't do alone makes a huge difference in Kingdom growth," McElreath said.

Sandhills: New church plant in Pinehurst, new Hispanic ministry in Robbins, plus lifestyle evangelism training for pastors.

Sandy Creek: New cowboy church and purchase of witnessing tracts for use in public events.

Raleigh: New church plants: The Creek Church in Cary and The Passage Church in Wendell.

New churches are needed throughout the Raleigh area as the capital city's population has topped 400,000, exceeding the populations of cities such as New Orleans, St. Louis or Cincinnati.

NCMO: Outreach, ministry

Yancey: Witnessing booth and diaper-changing station in downtown Burnsville for the Mt. Mitchell Crafts Fair last year.

"We had 33 professions of faith," said Harvey Sharpe, missions director.

Catawba River: Ministered at the Historic Morganton Festival last September, partnering with volunteer teams from Hull's Grove Baptist Church, Vale.

"Hull's Grove sent their Horseshoe Ministry Team and we passed out over

600 horseshoes, each with the person's name stamped on it. While they waited (on the stamping), we were able to share the gospel message,"

said Phil Oakley, associational missionary. He said 28 people prayed to receive Christ that day.

Catawba River also used NCMO funds to support their annual Christmas toy store.

In 2009 the association helped 504 families and gave toys to 1,069 children and 49 people prayed to receive Christ.

Randolph: Held a Sports Expo in

March which drew a whopping 1,200 hunters and fishermen for a meal and evangelistic message.

"Sixteen were saved and about 13 made rededications to Christ at the event," said Steve Sells, director of missions.

Robeson: Supported Hispanic mission in Raeford, constructed wheelchair ramps and repaired roofs on area homes.

Metrolina: Supported three college students for 10 weeks to work with Vacation Bible Schools, youth camps, outreach projects, ministry in multi-housing areas.

"NCMO has been the primary funding tool for our summer missions effort in Metrolina Association," said Bob Lowman, missions director.

Green River: Sponsored worship services during the summer at two campgrounds in the Chimney Rock recreational area.

NCMO: Missions trips

Stanly: Sent dozens of area Baptists on their first missions trips, including some to overseas.

New South River: Helped high school seniors make mission trips with Baptist Student Union, sponsor a youth crusade, bought resources for churches.

West Chowan: Sending missions team to Quebec, Canada, this summer.

Beulah: Sending missions team to Rhode Island; supporting a local pastor and his family serving two years in Turkey. Sent pastor on missions trip to Peru.

"Each of these has produced Kingdom purpose results and we are so grateful we were able to help," said Danny Glover, associational missionary.



NCMO: Meet needs

South Fork: Funded local missions projects by Baptist Men.

"So far, we have helped purchase a used mobile home and renovate it for a woman," said associational missionary Bob Wise. Her previous house was in such poor condition that Social Services deemed it unsafe; the agency took the woman's children.

Three Forks: Local missions projects, including home repairs, handicap ramp construction, roof repair and providing food and heating costs to needy families. "The majority of our funds are set aside for our Oct. 2 Operation Inasmuch Community Blitz Day," said Barry Neely, associational missionary.

Macon: Planted garden to feed needy families; ministered to carnival workers.

Surry: Supplemented support for their Surry Christian Counseling Center, seeing more people because of high unemployment. "Thanks for helping us to help our community with Christian counseling," said Billy Blakley, associational missionary.

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Young women should let their light

(Continued from Page 1)

"When you start all this it's just messy," said WMU associate Julie Keith. "It's so much harder than you think." That's why SHINE leaders put together a packet of information to help.

Because ages 18-35 covers "just about every stage of life," Keith said, reaching all these women where they are can be challenging.

"It's been such a blessing," to be involved in developing SHINE, McClary said.

"This is sort of the next generation of WMU. We really want young women to be on board with the greater movement of WMU."

Keith hopes SHINE develops into a diverse group linked with the older professional women network for mentoring purposes.

"I hope that we can be the catalyst for that," she said. "If people are passionate about it they'll find a way."

Contact WMU-NC at (919) 882-2344 or info@wmunc.org. Also visit the SHINE Facebook page.

Upcoming event

Little River Baptist Association's WMU has organized SHINE: refuel, a two-day retreat Sept. 24-25 in Harnett County with breakout sessions and hands-on mission projects.

Dorothy Barham, associational WMU director, points out that the event at Antioch Baptist Church has been planned by younger women with some guidance from WMU leaders.

"Missions is what WMU is all about," Barham said. It's "not necessarily doing exactly as we've always done" in order to reach a younger generation.

Visit lrba.net; click on WMU for registration form. Register by Sept. 1 for \$25.

They will be offering child care if it's needed. Barham said they were still looking for volunteers — kitchen, registration, etc. — to make the event happen.

Deacon killed while preparing missions house

MORGANTON — Joe Ingram, deacon chair of Catawba Valley Baptist Church in Morganton, died Aug. 17 when a trailer broke loose and ran over him in the yard of the church's missions house.

Ingram, 67, was preparing the house and yard for a missionary family to move into Aug. 20.

Church pastor Mike Odom found Ingram underneath the trailer at the house, within sight of the church.

Burke County Emergency Medical Services Lt. Jason Black said it was unclear how Ingram ended up under the trailer, which was approximately 40 feet downhill from a red pick-up truck.

It had been filled with wood and yard debris, Black said. Ingram was chairman of deacons and a Sunday School teacher at Catawba Valley.

"It's going to be a terrible loss for the church and the people," said fellow deacon Ralph Ballew.

Ingram is survived by his wife of 43 years, Ann Pearson Ingram; three children and four grandchildren.

Taking the lead:

(Continued from Page 1)

churches, and "more and more churches" are including WMU-NC in their budgets, Fulbright said.

Fulbright estimated 2,500-2,600 BSC churches have WMU in some "fashion" — in other words, the church might have Girls in Action or GAS and Women on Mission. WMU offers missions education for all ages. They do not keep figures for total number of organizations.

WMU-NC partners with other churches to promote missions education.

More than 300 churches affiliated with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina have some form of WMU-NC. They have even helped Methodist and Presbyterian churches with basic curriculum.

Fulbright credits "listening" for WMU-NC's growth. Before and during the move out of the BSC staff building in 2008, leaders listened to pastors, director of missions and women across the state to find out what they wanted in WMU-NC.

She describes the response as "amazing."

Through the turmoil

In North Carolina, Fulbright and WMU-NC have been on a "demanding, soul-searching, sometimes painful" journey since they exercised their autonomy and assumed total responsibility for their payroll and program.

"Our biggest struggle is financial but continually God provides," Fulbright said.

In 2009, WMU-NC dipped into its reserves but so far in 2010, they've met budget, despite a harsh winter and cancelled church services during WMU emphasis week. At its annual meeting in April, WMU-NC cut its budget 10 percent, freezing salaries and decreasing staff benefits.

In spite of cutbacks employees have stayed, and volunteer leaders have taken on more responsibility within the organization.

Fulbright said the "show of dedication and commitment to our cause ... is comforting ... even when they're not



HAVING FUN — One way Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina is reaching younger women is by holding special events, like Club SHINE, above, aimed at the various stages of life for women ages 18-35. Ruby Fulbright, executive director-treasurer, has been working with younger leaders across the state to find ways to bridge the gap between Acteens and older women.

sure if the paychecks coming."

Fulbright has been surprised through the whole ordeal to learn "the whole world is watching." She's received notes from outside North Carolina saying: "We're watching to see how you are handling this."

Fulbright often says, "We're building this airplane while we fly."

"Our faith is more authentic when the world sees us live it out day by day in relationships, work, on good and bad days," Fulbright said.

Unlikely leader

Moving from place to place while growing up, Fulbright said her family were members of missions-minded churches. She was at GA camp in Texas when she felt called to missions.

She and her husband, Ellis Sr., were missionaries with the International Mission Board.

"I believe so much in what we do because of all the support we received as missionaries," she said. And it is missionaries she sees as the biggest supporters of WMU-NC.

For a long time, Fulbright declined the leader position, feeling she was not executive director-treasurer material. In May, Fulbright passed her eighth year as leader of WMU-NC.

She said the challenge then and now is the same: "wanting to engage more people in missions."

WMU-NC faces the same image challenge as national WMU. Fulbright emphasizes that WMU "is not little old women sitting around reading a magazine."

The wise counsel of God and Christian brothers and sisters has always been important to Fulbright. She's seen

many women who "have stood strong for us" in spite of opposition. She sees women finding creative ways to be involved, and she appreciates

the support of certain pastors, directors of missions and fellow missionaries.

Planning celebration

WMU-NC is getting ready to celebrate a special anniversary. On Jan. 8, 2011, the organization will be 125 years old. A special celebration is planned in

WMU-NC at top of missions game

connection with its annual Missions Extravaganza at Ridgecrest Conference Center. April 8-10. WMU-NC will share a 125-day prayer guide in commemoration of the event.

Heck-Jones Offering

The harsh winter kept many churches from meeting during the WMU Focus Week and some plans to highlight the offering were postponed or cancelled. The Heck-Jones Offering that supports WMU-NC has suffered.

Through July, offering income was approximately \$289,000 toward the 2010 goal of \$1.3 million.

Offering materials are available at (866) 210-8602 or jbranch@wmunc.org.

What's happening?

WMU-NC spent five weekends from May through July on college campuses training around 350 associational leaders.

They stayed in the dorms and shared bathrooms at Chowan, Gardner-Webb, Wingate and Campbell universities and Mars Hill College.

"It was kind of fun," Fulbright said.

This summer women have been on mission trips to New York, Massachusetts, and Raleigh.

WMU-NC is developing its professional and young women's networks. The young women's network is related to SHINE efforts (see story, at right).

Jan High, leadership development consultant, has been integral in helping with the professional women.

Eastern and western events are in the works for professional women. WMU-NC has names and contact information for about 100 women across the state who have expressed interest in this network.

"Right now we are still trying to get things geared up," High said.

Contact (919) 882-2344, ext. 206, or jhigh@wmunc.org.

"Our faith is more authentic when the world sees us live it out day by day in relationships, work, on good and bad days."
— Ruby Fulbright

Books challenge Christians to avoid consumer mentality

By Cecile S. Holmes
Religion News Service

Two new books challenge Christians to restore their faith to its true mission and forsake a consumerist mentality that some churches adapt in a bid to meet members' needs.

"Churches can better shape the faithful by recovering a sense that the life of faith is supposed to be a challenging experience," said veteran journalist G. Jeffrey MacDonald. "I think that this may start with a new consumer ethic for this new religious marketplace."

MacDonald, an ordained clergyman and a correspondent for Religion News Service, takes on the consumerist gospel in his recent book, *Thieves in the Temple: The Christian Church and the Selling of the American Soul*. He criticizes the easy gospel doled out by some congregations, arguing that faith loses its flavor when watered down.

MacDonald says churches should remember the words and lives of people like Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Martin Luther King Jr., two 20th century martyrs who died when their public Christian activism challenged the status quo.

"American history would have been completely different if Martin Luther King had stayed inside his comfort zone," he said. "He put himself at ultimate risk and paid the ultimate price."

University of Texas journalism professor Stephen D. Reese approaches the challenge from a more personal perspective, but reaches similar conclusions in his new book, *Hope for the Thinking Christian*.

Reese, who's active in Austin's Oak Hill United Methodist Church and is the author of several academic books, pushes readers to explore what's required for modern believers to discover an active, grounded faith.

"I wanted to emphasize the everyday-life aspects in the book," Reese said. "I wanted to get beyond the notion that you have to have a serious personal life crash in order to have a testimony ... I think we have all faced the spiritual drama of everyday life. What it means to be a father, a husband, a teacher, a friend — multiple situations."

The rapid pace of modern life, combined with people's constant connection to technology, limits essential time to withdraw and be still, Reese says.

"The difference between work and home is no longer there," he said.

"We're so distracted in our world with demands on our time. There are difficulties in pulling away from work to have some kind of Sabbath moment. That's probably more challenging than ever before."

MacDonald worries that churches, pressed to please a fickle clientele, are failing their principle mission to edify, noting that the nation's greatest social movements — from 19th century abolitionists to 20th century women's liberationists — achieved their goals with roots in the church.

"What we're talking about here is whether churches in America will be capable of producing a prophetic voice in the present or in the future," he said. "The muscles that the church has at its disposal to shape people who know the heart of God and can bear witness in a prophetic way, those muscles are being eviscerated by consumerism."

Appreciate your pastor

By Milton A. Hollifield Jr.
BSC Executive Director-Treasurer

Before coming to serve at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina I served a number of years as a pastor. My years as a pastor were some of the greatest in my life. The Lord taught me what it means to really study the Scriptures and what it means to really love people and serve people.



However, as I learned and as many of you can surely understand, being a pastor was one of the most challenging experiences of my life. A great sense of responsibility comes when you are given the task to correctly

divide the Word of God and to shepherd God's children.

The demands on a pastor are great. A recent article that came out in *The New York Times* talks about how more and more pastors are facing the problem of burnout.

A researcher at Duke University commented in the article that one pastor he met had not taken a vacation in 18 years. Why? The researcher said it is because pastors and clergy, "tend to be driven by a sense of a duty to God to answer every call for help from anybody, and they are virtually called upon all the time, 24/7."

Having had the tremendous privilege and blessing of meeting many of our North Carolina Baptist pastors, I know they are indeed called upon 24/7 and, because of their servant hearts, try to do whatever they can to help those in the congregation or community. The task can be overwhelming, and I am not surprised to read that pastors are trying to figure out how to balance all that life demands.

Maintaining balance is very important for a pastor. Your staff at the Baptist State Convention understands this, and they want to help pastors in our state achieve balance in all areas of their lives. To do this, we have hosted a one-day event called "Church Health Institutes" all across the state. The next one coming up is on Sept. 9.

During these events pastors work through a framework called the "Well-Lived Minister's Life" when they evaluate their health in various areas, such as spiritual vitality, marriage, family and setting boundaries. I encourage you to attend one of these institutes and let God refresh and re-energize your life and ministry.

Pastor Appreciation Month is just around the corner. Please take some time during the month of October to let your pastor know you are grateful for his faithfulness to the calling God placed on his life. Healthy churches begin with healthy, godly leaders. Thank your pastor for leading your church to be a body of believers focused on Kingdom work. Thank your pastor for doing all the many different things he does in order to care and to serve.

To our North Carolina Baptist pastors, you have my sincere thanks.

"And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake."

— 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13



Tar Heel Voices

Pen Pal for students

It's time for the Fellowship of Baptist Educators, an organization sponsored by the International Mission Board, to recruit American pen pals to match with foreign student pen pals for the 2010 school year. We hope many Christian youth would like to be a "missionary" to that new friend they've made in another country from the keyboard of their computer. Please help spread the word to the young people of your churches. Pass on my contact information to the leaders of your seventh through 12th grade youth: Kellie Ziesemer, universalpenpalproject@yahoo.com or (513) 732-2111.

In addition, we need to build our database of foreign students wanting an American pen pal. If you go to and/or are going to another country and make contact with any educators there whose students might like to correspond with an American pen pal, please ask them for contact information and let me know of their interest.

Kellie Ziesemer
Universal Pen Pal Project

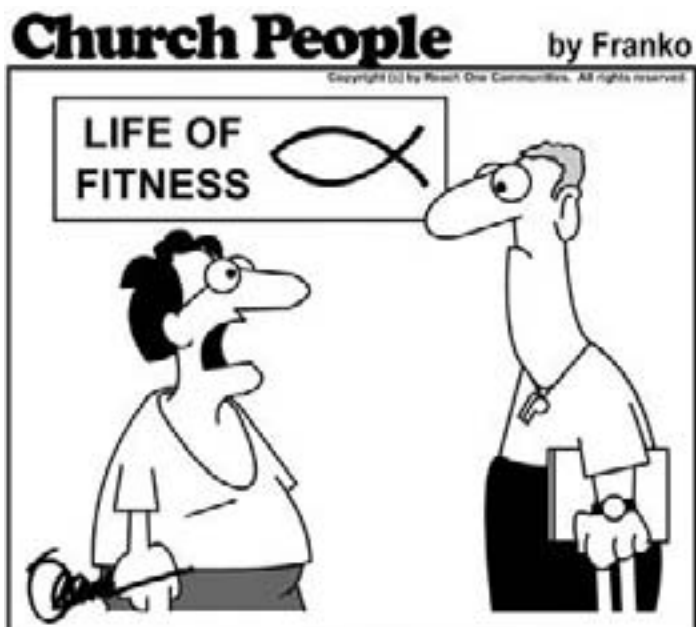
Pulpit is no altar

Vernacular language has been around a long time, yet a recent phenomenon is taking a biblical word to places it was never intended to be. The word is "altar." We often hear the term "an altar of prayer" used to describe a gathering of people to pray vocally and simultaneously at the "altar." I have a problem with both usages, and believe the scriptures will bear me out.

Every instance of usage of the word "altar" in the Bible refers to "the place of sacrifice. A perusal of Webster's finest will reveal the following definitions: "A ... raised structure ... on which sacrifices are offered or incense is burned in worship;" further words used included "Eucharistic" and "ritual." With this in mind, may we remember that the sacrifice was made "once for all?" Any allusion to a continuing sacrifice implies strongly that Christ's atonement was only partially effective.

In this ecumenical age, we seem to have capitulated to the papists in order relate to them. Recently, the *Biblical Recorder* published a picture of a group of Southern Baptists gathered "at the altar to thank God for His provision" to pay off their mortgage. They were not gathered at an altar; they were gathered at a pulpit, where proclamation takes place. A study of 2 John 1 will reveal to all that God takes exception to such appropriations of terminology; this promulgated misappropriation of biblical language needs to be stopped. We ought to know better.

David A. Williams
Waynesville and Whittier



I quit! All this bouncing up and down just makes me feel even fatter!

Why advertise secular movie?

I have been convicted by the Holy Spirit to tell you something. I have to tell you how shocked and very disappointed I was when I saw an advertisement for a movie (Nanny McPhee) that is based on black magic — which is not an illusion but magic that cannot be figured out. How could you? God's word warns us of the separation of Him and black magic (Rev. 22:14-15).

I never expected to see a promotion of that kind in this newspaper. I hope you will apologize to the readers/Christians of your newspaper for an erroneous submission. I am interested to know why you printed this. If it was to just promote a movie why not choose something that is Christian base like Fireproof?

Tina Hight
Durham

Tar Heel Voices is your forum

- Letters are limited to 300 words and may be edited for style, length and clarity: name may be withheld only for sufficient reason. Letters must be signed and include an address and phone number. Only one letter from a writer will be published in a 90-day period.
- E-mail to editor@biblicalrecorder.org, or mail to: Editor, P.O. Box 18808, Raleigh, NC 27619.

Show your appreciation

In July I attended the 20th anniversary celebration of a local church pastor and it was thrilling to see how much the congregation loved him and his wife. I told them so during their church-wide potluck lunch following the service, in which individuals stood unprompted to tell others how much the pastor meant to them.

A mission team from the church had just returned in the wee hours from Canada, and they all made their way to the service to be a part of it. One of the reasons the church loves its pastor and wife is because of their humility, and they were endearingly embarrassed by the entire hubbub.

By the end, if they ever doubted it, they knew how much their folks loved them. Of course not every church is going to build their pastor

a lake house and provide a new truck to pull the gift boat to the place every week like they did for this pastor — just kidding. But there are ways to affirm your pastor and his family that will cement the bonds between you and affirm them in ministry.

Most would appreciate the gift of guiltless freedom for a few days away from the church field, with an enabling gift of money or arrangements for a little getaway place. With that gift should come the assurance that current staff and lay leadership will handle anything that comes up, with the possible exception of a hurricane lifting the roof and filling the sanctuary with water like a bath tub.

October is pastor appreciation month and it is important that you plan and execute a way to show your pastor and family they are appreciated. Maybe he's been there a month or maybe 15 years. But he's staying by the stuff; helping you understand the Bible and live by its direction; marrying and burying; counseling; encouraging and demonstrating a life well lived by faith. If he's truly exceptional, he's finding a way to provide your church leaders with subscriptions to the *Biblical Recorder*!

And the *Biblical Recorder* is going to give you a chance to show your appreciation in two ways.

1. Nominate your pastor to be featured in the *Recorder*. Send us a few paragraphs about why you believe your pastor is a great pastor, and we will select from among the entries to present a special pastor in a feature story.

2. Send us a good, close up picture and a short paragraph of appreciation, and we will publish the information on a pastor appreciation page in the *Recorder*'s Oct. 23 issue. (There will be a \$50 charge for the space to cover the cost of extra pages. Send information and money to Alison Zogby at alison@biblicalrecorder.org or at 232 West Millbrook, Raleigh, NC 27609.)

Sometimes we think of these special observances as contrivances of the flower, chocolate and greeting card companies. Perhaps those corporate efforts are successful because most of us need a prod to do what we should do freely, spontaneously and frequently.

Be intentional about appreciating your pastor and staff. We think they know we love them, but they don't unless we tell them; unless we show them. They are the targets of enough slings and arrows that they need us to intentionally pull a few pins out of their hides now and then.

— NWJ



Build a mosque in Manhattan?

What is the issue for Christians in the American debate about whether or not Muslims should be "allowed" to build a mosque in Manhattan?

Such a mosque would not be the first in Manhattan. There already are several and in 1991 a mosque opened at 1711 Third Ave. in upper Manhattan built with money from the governments of Kuwait, Libya and Saudi Arabia

The proposed cultural center/mosque would serve Muslims in lower Manhattan. It would rise 13 stories on the site of what is now an old building that was damaged Sept. 11, 2001 when Muslim extremists flew jets into the World Trade Center towers, killing 3,000 people of many nationalities, races and religions.

That atrocity threw our country into a funk from which a stink cloud still rises. Because we could not bear the insult we justified a pending invasion of Afghanistan and later invaded Iraq.

American response has cost many times more lives than were lost on 9/11 and the long term human toll will color our psyche and our economy for many years.

It apparently also is causing Americans to consider disregarding the very principles of our nation's founding in favor of another dip in the pool of self pity.

Although Christian ethic and morals form the basis of our laws, America is not a "Christian" nation. We do not have a state church and the apparatus of government does not defend or support the church.

If we were a "Christian nation" in the way we think of "Muslim" nations birth certificates would automatically indicate "Christian" as the "faith of birth."

It would be illegal to convert to another faith. Jews, Native American religions, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Mormons and atheists would be unwelcome. They would need to practice their faith covertly, at great risk of discovery and penalties unto death.

That's the way it is when a nation defines itself by the predominant faith of its people.

That's the way it was for Baptists 400 years ago in Europe when they stood for freedom of conscience against the state church and in some cases were chained together and thrown into the river to be "baptized" by immersion.

That's why our ancestors fled Europe. That's why Roger Williams eventually had to flee Massachusetts Bay Colony and establish Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

Baptists must stand for the freedom of conscience for all for which our ancestors died.

Any question of this mosque in New York City is not about the First Amendment's precious words that the "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..."

The issue surrounding this mosque has everything to do with it being manipulated for political positioning among self-absorbed Americans nourishing our pain from 9/11 and continuing to look for someone to blame, for someone to pay, for something to make us feel alright again.

Because the radicalized terrorists who struck at our heart were Muslim, we somehow think that to deny unrelated American Muslims the opportunity

to build a worship center close to where the World Trade Center towers once stood is to strike some kind of defiant blow against terrorism.

We think it will raise freedom's torch higher because we've defended the memories of those who died by denying a place to read, swim, meet and worship to people who claim the same faith as the terrorists.

I'm glad that standard doesn't hold in North Carolina, where more prisoners indicate their faith of choice is "Baptist" than any other faith. As a Baptist, I would be held accountable for their crimes.

Americans have an irritating penchant for memorializing tragedy. We want to lay wreaths on dangerous highways where fatal accidents occurred.

We put plaques at the site of mass killings. We restore buildings once blown up and put parks around them so people can come and see and remember how awful it was.

A commission argued for months about an "appropriate" memorial for the site of the 9/11 tragedy and a major concern was, "How will the families of the victims feel?"

I'm sorry for those who lost loved ones that day nine years ago. The truth is thousands of families have lost loved ones tragically since that day — not in the same way, but the death is as permanent, the pain as searing.

I'm proud of those families who hold pictures of their loved ones and remember them fondly, bearing no grudge and recognizing that life goes on. If every nation nursed, nourished and fed their injuries like America, the world would come to a grinding halt because human tragedies strike daily: terrorist attacks in markets, suicide bombers in restaurants, murderous horsemen in Sudan and Darfur, genocides, raids on villages to conscript children for the army, train wrecks in India, capsized ferries in Indonesia and the list goes on endlessly.

To be true to our principles as Christians and for other Americans to be true to the Constitution we cannot let the painful memory of a terrorist attack and sympathetic acquiescence to those families whose identity was arrested by the events of that day dictate our responses in the future to situations that — were they unrelated to that day — would be totally unremarkable.

NCMO can build generous heart

My son knelt by his son, who zealously guarded his freshly minted ice cream cone, and asked for a taste. Caleb declined the request and pulled the cone closer to himself.

Nathan said, "Caleb, I want you to have a generous heart. May I have a taste?"

Caleb offered the cone to his dad, who then offered Caleb a taste of his own cone.

A generous heart can be cultivated and nurtured and the best way to do it is to give. It is easy to give to those you love, and for causes you believe in. Plan now to receive in your church the North Carolina Missions Offering in September. It supports causes you can believe in and giving will nurture a generous heart.

EDITORIAL



Norman Jameson



(ISSN 0279-8182)

Journal of the Baptist
State Convention
of North Carolina
Founded 1833 by
Thomas Meredith

Volume 176 No. 18

(919) 847-2127

Fax (919) 847-6939

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Subscriptions

Individual subscriptions, \$15.99; Clubs, \$13.79; Every Home Plan, \$12.49; Church News Service, \$11.50; Bulk (10+) \$11.50; single copies, 60 cents each. Payable in advance. North Carolina sales tax is included.

Publication

Published biweekly on Saturdays by *Biblical Recorder Inc.*, 232 W. Millbrook Road, Raleigh, N.C. 27609, as authorized by the Baptist State Convention in annual session at Winston-Salem, Nov. 21-23, 1939. Periodicals postage paid at Raleigh, N.C. 27676.

Postmaster: Send address changes to *Biblical Recorder Inc.*, P.O. Box 18808, Raleigh, N.C. 27619-8808.

Lesson for September 5

Formations

Lesson for September 12

Trusting God's Supply

Focal Passage: 1 Kings 17:1-24

This is the kind of text that attracts derision from modern people. Birds bringing bread and meat to starving prophets.

A widow feeding prophets with a little flour and oil that never runs out. A dead boy revived because a man lies on top of him three times and offers a prayer.

Moderns look at these incredible tales and ask, "Why can't this be replicated today? In Haiti?"

Perhaps it would do us good to look underneath the miracle and discover what this story might be leading us modern Christians TO DO in our comfortable world.

Perhaps we would witness more miracles if we followed in the footsteps of Elijah and this mystery widow from Zaraphath.

First, we might notice that Elijah has gone into enemy territory, Sidon, the heartland of Baalism. Elijah's life mission is to struggle against King Ahab, his lovely bride Jezebel, and the syncretistic tendencies of God's people.

Trusting God from the security of our Bible study group, local church, familiar geography, and a supportive family leads to a benign, impotent faith.

It's only when we step out of our comfort zones and place ourselves in the jaws of risk that our faith can mature and witness the power of God.

We don't see more miracles because we're too busy calculating the loss of

our retirement portfolio, instead of risking opposition and danger for the sake of God's call.

Second, notice the adjectives of this story describing the small beginnings to a great work of God.

Elijah wants a "little water." He wants a "piece of bread."

She doesn't have "any bread," only a "handful of flour," only a "little oil." She is gathering a "few sticks."

She anticipates having a "last meal" and dying of starvation with her son.

Elijah tells her to make him a "small cake of bread." The miracle begins when she willingly offers her last meal to this man of God.

Miracles often follow on the heels of letting go of what we have.

When I was graduating from seminary one of my fellow graduates was a Korean with a Ph.D in biology. I can only guess what kind of salary cut he was facing.

Another graduate was a lady with a law degree from UNC. The graduate seated next to me was the co-pastor of a church with 3,000 members. God was calling her to start a small prayer retreat center in the mountains of Georgia.

Here's a thought: If God is not in the process of asking you to give up something for the promise of something better, either you're not listening or God has stopped asking.



Don Gordon
senior pastor,
Yates Baptist
Church, Durham

Trusting God's Direction

Focal Passages: 1 Kings 18:1, 17-40

There comes a time in life when fundamental choices must be made before anything else can be done.

You decide who you're going to marry then begin a covenant life. You say "Yes" to a job offer then begin your work.

You tell your family what God you will worship then order your lives accordingly.

Elijah has earned the reputation as a "troubler" of Israel, because he has confronted King Ahab and Queen Jezebel about the nation's fundamental allegiance.

He has affirmed that Yahweh is the only true God and Baal is not.

He has claimed that Yahweh is the instigator of the multi-year drought because Yahweh, not Baal, is in control of all that sustains life. Confrontation has come to a head.

These fundamental opposing worldviews are going to collide. The collision is going to happen at Mount Carmel.

Elijah singularly takes on 850 prophets of Baal and Asherah. The odds seem overwhelming, but this isn't a battle between prophets. It's a battle between Gods.

It's a battle between Yahweh, the one and only true God and Baal/Asherah, false gods that don't exist. So the outcome is never in doubt.

That's why Elijah can taunt his opposing prophets when their god doesn't send fire down on their sacrifice.

It's not that he is hard of hearing, on a trip, or perhaps gone to the bathroom (a possible euphemism derived from the word translated "busy"). Baal can't answer because Baal doesn't exist.

Then Elijah calls on Yahweh who answers with fire.

The fire is so ferocious it consumes not only the meat on the altar, but the very stones, water, and dirt surrounding the altar. God makes it clear that He has no legitimate rivals.

But that doesn't mean other gods receive no worship. Ahab and Jezebel wanted to worship both Baal and Yahweh, you know, cover all the bases, "Just in case."

We may not identify with these wicked Old Testament characters, but do we allow little league baseball to compete with our worship of God? What about soccer for the kids? Leisure for ourselves?

I had a man in my church whose daughter got married on Saturday. A friend invited him to go fishing on Sunday.

He went and had the best time of his life. But he never went fishing on Sunday again. I asked him, "Why?" He said, "I figured I was confronted with the god of pleasure or the God of creation. And I chose not to serve the god of pleasure." And for the rest of his life, he kept that promise.

Who is your God?

Lesson for September 5

Bible Studies for Life

Lesson for September 12

Making Your Case

Focal Passages: Acts 21:40-22:10; 1 Peter 3:15-17

On a scale of 1-10, I would rate the importance of this lesson as a 10! The foundation of this lesson and the next 12 lessons in the unit form the basis of not only what we believe as Christians — but also why we believe what we believe. This concept is known as apologetics — defending the Christian faith.

This lesson is critical for every believer.

As Christians, we need to know who we are; we need to know what we believe; and we need to be able to share our beliefs with those in our circle of influence.

For example, do you know what to say to a team of Jehovah's Witnesses when they come knocking at your door?

Are you comfortable responding to someone who tells you they do not believe in God?

How do you answer when someone asks if Jesus is the only way to get to Heaven? Can you explain to someone why your life is different from theirs simply because you say you are saved and they are lost?

Paul gives us three keys to making our case to an unbelieving world:

- Be prepared.
- Know your audience.
- Share what Christ has done in your life.

First of all, you cannot share what you do not have.

"But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord" (v. 15a, NIV).

Be sure of your own salvation.

"Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am

convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day" (2 Tim. 1:12, NIV).

Paul instructs believers, "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have" (v. 15b, NIV).

Two essential preparations are Bible study and prayer.

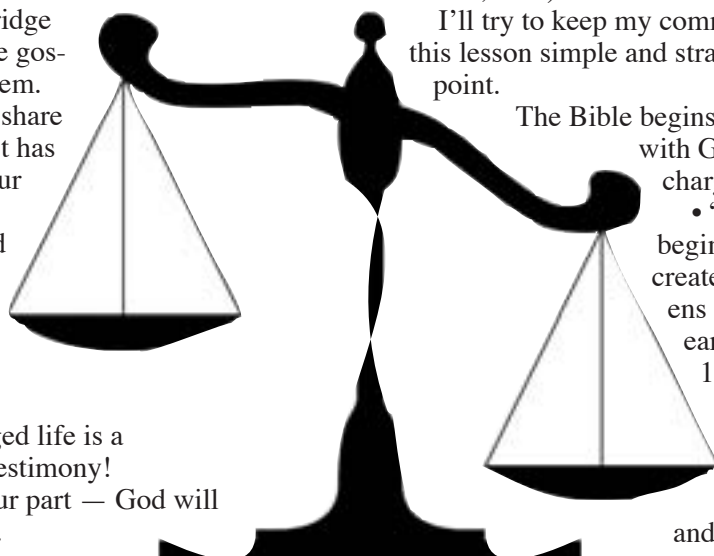
"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15, KJV).

"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful" (Col. 4:2, NIV).

Second, know your audience. Paul spoke in Greek when he was talking to the Roman authorities (v. 37-40) and then in Aramaic when he was talking to the Jews (v. 1-10). Try to connect with people on their level. Listen to what they are saying. Find a common bond and use that as a bridge to share the gospel with them.

Finally, share what Christ has done in your life. Paul simply told his story (v. 3-10). You simply tell yours.

A changed life is a powerful testimony! You do your part — God will do the rest.



The Case for God's Existence

Focal Passages: Psalm 19:1-6; Acts 17:22-29; Hebrews 1:1-2

I could summarize this lesson in one verse: "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God'" (Ps. 14:1b, RSV). Case closed.

God doesn't need our defense. He doesn't need us to plead his case. He is God.

Need some proof?

Try reading Job 38-41 out loud and see for yourself.

It begins with the Lord answering Job out of the storm. God said, "Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge?"

"Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me.

"Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me if you understand.

"Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know!" (Job 38:2-5a, NIV).

I'll try to keep my commentary on this lesson simple and straight to the point.

The Bible begins and ends with God in charge:

- "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1, NIV).
- "Then I saw a new heaven and a new

earth...He who was seated on the throne said ... I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End" (Rev. 21:1, 5-6, NIV).

I would say God has an airtight case concerning this matter on His existence.

But in the event there is someone out there who actually needs further evidence, our focal passages point us to four witnesses to the existence of God:

1) Nature points us to God. "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands" (Ps. 19:1, NIV).

Paul made it abundantly clear: "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — His eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse" (Rom. 1:20, NIV).

2) The Bible is God's Holy Word. "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways" (Heb. 1:1, NIV).

3) Jesus is the Living Word. "But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son" (Heb. 1:2a, NIV).

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us" (Jn. 1:1, 14, NIV).

4) Our spirits bear witness to God. Paul told the Athenians who were worshipping an unknown god, "Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you" (Acts 17:23b, NIV).

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty" (Rev. 1:8, NIV).

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News Briefs

BSC secures discount rate for annual meeting

Messengers to the 2010 Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) annual meeting will be able to stay at the headquarters hotel, the Sheraton Four Seasons in Greensboro, for a discounted rate of \$99 per night, \$112.61 including tax.

This pre-pay rate, which is the same for king and double rooms, is available only at the BSC annual meeting web site (<http://www.ncannualmeeting.org/index.php?id=1876>). Reservations cannot be made by calling the Sheraton or the BSC. A reservation is refundable if notice of cancellation is given at least 24 hours prior to time of check-in. This year's annual meeting will again be held at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro. The Sheraton Hotel is located on the same property as the Convention Center. High participation by messengers rooming at the hotel will keep ancillary costs of the other meeting spaces down.

Messengers staying at the Sheraton "never have to leave the convention center," said John Butler, BSC executive leader for business services.

Butler also said making room reservations online, as opposed to mail-in registration or even phone and e-mail registration, greatly reduces cost and time spent by staff processing the reservations. Reservation deadline is Oct. 31.

Two Wingate students killed

Two students attending an academic enrichment program for incoming freshmen at Wingate University were killed Aug. 14 in a Union County car accident. The students were in a caravan to a nearby team-building course.

According to the *Charlotte Observer*, Trooper R.L. Lankford said a Saturn being driven by Mishawn Miller, 18, of Fayetteville, ran a stop sign at White Store Road about 9 a.m. and was struck on the driver's side by a grain truck. Miller and Arielle Parker, 18, of Greensboro, who was sitting on the right side of the back seat, were killed on impact. Marcelle Louba, 18, a Mallard Creek graduate from Charlotte, was sitting behind the driver. Kendrick Reid, 19, of Greencastle, Pa., was in the front passenger seat. All four were wearing seat belts. Louba and Reid were treated at the hospital for injuries. The driver of the grain truck, 52-year-old Carlton Watkins, of Ellerbe, was also treated for minor injuries.

Theologian Clark Pinnock dies

HAMILTON, Ontario (ABP) — Clark Pinnock, 73, an influential theologian whose spiritual pilgrimage led him from a fiery fundamentalism as a young professor to an openness that caused some to brand him a heretic, died Aug. 15 of a heart attack.

Pinnock, longtime professor of systematic theology at McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton, Ontario, had withdrawn from public life since announcing in March he had Alzheimer's disease, but his death was unexpected.

Classified Advertisements

Pastor

Pastor. Mount Vernon Baptist Church, Forest City, NC, is seeking a fulltime pastor. We are a rural church with a moderate, diverse congregation. Applicants should have a master's degree from an accredited seminary or divinity school. Please send resume and references to Search Committee, 2676 Hudlow Rd., Forest City, NC 28043.

SENIOR PASTOR. Woodhaven Baptist Church, Apex, NC, seeks full-time senior pastor. Our ideal candidate will be an engaging teacher and outstanding preacher of creative, intellectually stimulating, spiritually challenging sermons. He/she will relate well personally with diverse groups of all ages and will be a coalition builder. He/she will be a church builder, supporting and enhancing Woodhaven's vision and creatively managing the church staff to draw out their full giftedness. At minimum, master of divinity degree is required; doctorate degree is preferred. Woodhaven is in an exciting, growing community. We are affiliated with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Raleigh Baptist Association, and Baptist State Convention of NC. We affirm both men and women in all leadership capacities, including ordained positions. Send resumes by September 15, 2010. Resumes may be emailed to: annettepridgen@earthlink.net or mailed to: Annette Pridgen, 4218 Brook Cross Drive, Apex, NC 27539.

Forbush Baptist Church, Yadkinville, NC — seeking **FULL TIME SENIOR PASTOR.** Forbush, a small rural southern Baptist church located 8 miles from Yadkinville, 15 miles from Winston Salem. An active church, average attendance: 100 per Sunday. Seeking pastor to lead growing church in community outreach, youth programs, senior adult programs and women's ministries. Pastor must meet the qualification in 1 Tim 3 and Titus 1. Must be mission minded and ministering to multi generational. Senior pastoral experience and seminary preferred. Please send resume to: Forbush Baptist Church, 3917 Old Hwy. 421 E., Yadkinville, NC 27055 Attn. Search Committee.

Pastor. Lake Lynn Baptist Church, a small rural church in Fayetteville, NC, is seeking a full-time pastor. Applicants should have a master's degree from an accredited seminary or divinity school. Send resume to Pastor Search Committee, 3363 Gillespie Street, Fayetteville, NC 28306.

Bi-vocational or Full Time Pastor. Suggs Grove Baptist Church of the Bladen Baptist Association is seeking a bi-vocational or full-time pastor. We are a small congregation of 80 resident members. We are conservative in our theology, and we deeply respect and value the office of pastor. We are seeking candidates who will share our values and beliefs, emphasizing evangelism and church growth and who will serve in the role of minister, preaching AND pastoring. Interested candidates may submit resumes to Pastor Search Committee, Attn: Carol Lewis, 17145 Hwy. 53 West, Fayetteville, NC 28312.

West Burnsville Baptist Church in Burnsville, NC (Yancey County), with an average worship attendance of 225, is seeking a **Senior Pastor.** We are a conservative church with a blended worship service. We support our local association, the Baptist State Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention. Application deadline is September 15, 2010. Send resume to: Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 38, Burnsville, NC 28714.

Full-Time Pastor. Poplar Springs Baptist Church, Shelby, NC (www.poplarspringsonline.org), is seeking a full-time pastor. We are a moderate congregation that is dually aligned with the SBC and CBF that supports the Baptist Faith and Message 1963. We seek a candidate with experience that is also a graduate of an accredited seminary or divinity school. Qualities we desire are a servant leader to unite and revive the congregation, a person with strong interpersonal skills, and a biblical preacher. Send resume to Poplar Springs Baptist Church Search Committee, 1106 Poplar Springs Church Road, Shelby, NC 28152, or church_office@poplarspringsonline.org by September 30, 2010.

Calvary Baptist Church, Mt. Airy, NC, is seeking a **full-time senior pastor.** Please visit website (transition.calvarybcmatairy.org) for information regarding submission of resumes. No phone calls, please.

The First Baptist Church of Fall Branch is seeking a **Full-Time Pastor.** Please send resumes to Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 82, Fall Branch, TN 37656. Or email address firstbaptistfb@embarqmail.com.

FULL-TIME SENIOR PASTOR. FBC, Spruce Pine, is currently accepting resumes for senior pastor. A moderate congregation of approx. 350 with 2 Sunday morning services: contemporary and traditional. Missions giving options for both BSC and CBF. Applicants should have minimum of master's degree from an accredited seminary or divinity school. Please send resume and reference to Pastor Search Committee, 125 Tappan St., Spruce Pine, NC 28777, Attn: Wanda Henline.

Senior Pastor: First Baptist Church of King, NC, near Winston-Salem, seeks an experienced senior pastor. Averaging 400 in worship services, we are a progressive, mainstream fellowship, friendly and loving, that empowers purpose-driven ministry regardless of gender or race. Excellent preaching skills, genuine pastoral desire and strong leadership abilities are expected. Direct inquiries to fbcpastorsearch@windstream.net or the church office, 336-983-5252.

Church Staff

Associate Pastor of Family Ministry. This full-time ministry position will partner with the family ministry team and ministry staff to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to integrate children, youth, college and family ministry. Jonesboro Heights Baptist Church, Sanford, NC, supports and participates in missions through various organizations including CBF and the Baptist State Convention of NC. Salary range: \$36,000-\$40,400. Package includes benefits. Send resume and cover letter by September 30, 2010, or until filled to: Personnel Committee, JHBC, 316 W. Main Street, Sanford NC, 27332.

First Baptist Church, Burlington, NC, is seeking a qualified **Organist** for part-time position in an established, comprehensive music program. Sunday and Wednesday schedule. Send resume to: Minister of Music, First Baptist Church, 400 S. Broad St., Burlington, NC 27215, or to www.FirstBaptistBurlington.com.

Student Pastor. Memorial Baptist Church, Norwood, NC, is seeking a student pastor that incorporates ministry to our students from middle school and high school. This person will work primarily in the student ministry as well as assist the pastor in all areas of pastoral and education work. Send resume to Memorial Baptist Church, PO Box 618, Norwood, NC 28128, Attn: Pastor and Search Committee.

Hephzibah Baptist Church, Wendell, NC, seeks **Church Keyboard Accompanist.** Responsible for providing keyboard accompaniment for multiple worship services, adult choir and other music ensembles as needed. Contact Hal Roach at 919-365-7847 or hroach@hephzibah.net.

Denominational

The Orangeburg-Calhoun Baptist Association, comprised of 43 churches that encompasses both Orangeburg and Calhoun Counties, is accepting resumes for the position of **Director of Missions.** web.me.com/ocba/o-cba.com/ Please submit resumes to: Orangeburg-Calhoun Baptist Association Attn: Rev. Benjamin Smoak, 3285 St. Matthews Road, Orangeburg, SC 29118, email: ocba@bellsouth.net. Deadline for resumes is September 15, 2010.

The South Carolina Baptist Convention is currently accepting résumés for the position of **Associate Executive Director for the Evangelization and Missions Team.** Qualified applicants must be an active member of a Southern Baptist church, have knowledge of evangelistic methods as well as a successful record of evangelistic and mission involvement. In addition the candidate should possess appropriate educational, ministry, and supervisory experience. Please send résumés to the search committee, c/o Office of the Executive Director — Treasurer of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, 190 Stoneridge Drive, Columbia, SC 29210.

Miscellaneous

BALDWIN GRAND PIANO. Model L, 6'3", excellent condition. Appraised at \$20,876. For more info or a photo, email strivett@nc.rr.com.

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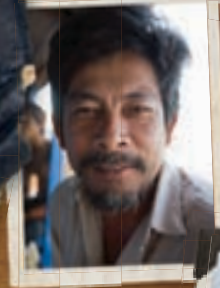
- Send e-mail to: alison@biblicalrecorder.org
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SEPTEMBER 2010



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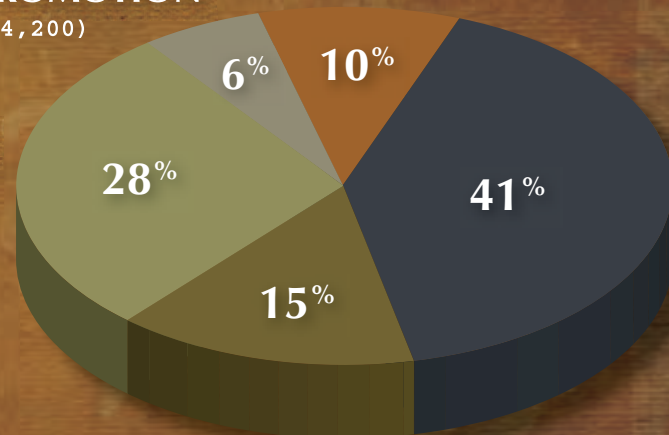
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