

LIFEWAY'S
**THOM
RAINER**
TO RETIRE
page 4



JOHNNY HUNT
TO LEAD NAMB
EVANGELISM,
LEADERSHIP
GROUP
page 4



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-NCMO-

SUPPORTS
EVANGELISTIC
CHURCH
PLANTING

By **CAROLINE BARNHILL** | BSC Communications

Columbus County is the third largest county, in terms of landmass, in the state. More than 59,000 people call it home – and 65 percent of them are unchurched.

“We knew if there was a pocket of lostness, this is one of them,” said Billy Roy, pastor of Crossroads Church. “We wanted to come and make an impact here.”

Roy, with the help of Michael Pittman, the pastor of Vertical Church in Lumberton, N.C., planted Crossroads Church in Whiteville in December 2017.

“We talked over three years ago about planting,” Pittman said.

“I had the opportunity to walk with him step by step and month by month through where he’s at and through the process of what it looks like to plant a

church and the fears that go along with that.”

Within the first three weeks of the launch of Crossroads Church, Roy saw 17 baptisms and a lot of growth reaching into the community.

“It’s very exciting to see,” Roy said. “It’s a lot of hard work, but it’s a calling and we answered that calling. You know it’s very important that we understand that we were sent, so that we need to be sending.”



With approximately 4,300 existing Baptist churches in North Carolina, some may wonder whether planting new churches is a necessary strategy to reaching the lost. However, statistics repeatedly demonstrate that new church plants are one of the most effective ways to reach unbelievers with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

According to a 2015 study by LifeWay, 42 percent of people worshipping in churches launched since 2008 never attended church previously or had not attended in many years.

As North Carolina continues to be one of the fastest growing states in the

nation, we have a unique opportunity to reach the lost – estimated at 5.8 million in our state alone.

And as our state becomes more culturally and ethnically diverse, planting disciple-making churches is essential in pushing back darkness and impacting lostness.

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) works with churches, associations and church-planting networks to facilitate the launch of new churches.

The North Carolina Missions Offering (NCMO) is vital to the convention’s church planting efforts, providing

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YOU OPEN YOUR HAND AND SATISFY THE DESIRE OF EVERY LIVING THING. – PSALM 145:16 NKJV

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N.C. Baptists launch immigrant ministry centers

Biblical Recorder

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) is launching a new initiative that will provide legal help to immigrants concerning U.S. immigration laws and facilitate outreach opportunities for churches.

Baptist Immigrant Services, led by Hispanic strategy coordinator Amaury Santos and immigrant ministries strategist Larry Phillips, will operate offices across the state, according to a convention announcement.

The first center is set to open this fall in Lincolnton, N.C., with others launching gradually at later dates. Each location will have advisers on staff that are certified by the U.S. Department of Justice to provide legal counsel to immigrants.

Santos and Phillips have been involved in similar ministry efforts for the convention in partnership with a nonprofit organization in Raleigh called the Council on Immigrant Relations (CIR).

“We will not be activists taking political positions on

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‘And who is my neighbor?’

In the parable of the good Samaritan found in Luke 10:25-37, Jesus is asked by a lawyer what he must do to inherit eternal life.

When Jesus responds by asking what is written in the law, the lawyer responds, “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.*”

After Jesus replies that the lawyer has answered rightly, the lawyer poses another question, “*And who is my neighbor?*”

Although the text informs us that the lawyer asked the latter question to “*justify himself*,” the question of “*Who is my neighbor?*” is one that we should all ask as Christ-followers.

“*Who is My Neighbor?*” is the theme for this year’s Baptist State Convention of North Carolina annual meeting, which is scheduled Nov. 5-6 at the Joseph S. Koury Convention Center in Greensboro, N.C. This year’s meeting will feature times of worship, preaching from God’s Word, ministry reports, business sessions, ministry exhibits and more.

The meeting is now less than two months away, and I hope you are making plans to join us for this special event. Also, make plans to attend the N.C. Baptist Pas-

tors’ Conference Nov. 4-5 prior to the start of annual meeting. You can learn more about the annual meeting, the pastors’ conference and a number of other related events and activities at ncannualmeeting.org.



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive
director-treasurer

This year’s annual meeting theme is an appropriate one as we seek by God’s grace as a convention of churches to impact lostness through disciple-making. The population of North Carolina is changing, and God is bringing people from all over the world to our state. Acts 17 reminds us that God is sovereign over the movements of people from among the nations so they might seek and find Him. We have a part to play in God’s plan of taking the gospel to these individuals.

There are many breakout sessions being planned that will provide biblical and practical equipping to help you and your church reach your neighbors for Christ, even those who may come from a different ethnic or religious background.

In addition, based on feedback from messengers from our churches, this year’s meeting features a revamped schedule that will provide more opportunities for attendees to take part in these times of training and



equipping. The schedule will include three separate times allotted for breakout sessions. These will take place Monday afternoon, Tuesday morning and Tuesday afternoon. I hope you will take advantage of these opportunities.

As we look ahead, I ask that you continue to pray for all of the events and activities that will be taking place and for the business that will be conducted. To assist with our personal spiritual preparation for annual meeting, Chris Schofield from our Office of Prayer has written a new devotional prayer guide for use during our 30-day prayer emphasis in October. Visit prayfor30days.org to access the prayer guide and learn about other ways you can participate in the October prayer emphasis.

I look forward to seeing you in Greensboro this November, and be sure to visit ncannualmeeting.org for the most up-to-date information about annual meeting.

“*But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’*” – Luke 10:29 (NKJV). **BR**

Fishing in the right places

A neighbor in our condo building asked me if I like to fish. “I haven’t dropped a hook in the water since I was 14,” I told him. I went on to tell him about a conversation I had with a church member at Cashie Baptist Church in Windsor, N.C., when I served as their pastor.

“I don’t have the patience to fish,” I told that avid fisherman at Cashie. “Pastor, if you’re any good, you don’t need patience,” he responded with truth and laughter.

What the man from Cashie explained was that with enough experience, a wise fisherman can assess the situation, and make a good decision about the places he’s likely to be successful.

At the beginning of this year, after seven-and-a-half-years serving in denominational roles, I returned to the work I love: local church leadership. I also returned to the work I really love: planting a new church among the people who are my neighbors.

What we discovered among our neighbors in the South Loop neighborhood of Chicago are thousands of people open to gospel conversations and interested in spiritual community. However, despite a handful of great churches in the region, they never found a church where they feel like they fit.

Back in January, when the planting of Advent Church for South Loop became my full-time work, it began with a series of conversations with neighbors about our neighborhood, as well as a careful examination of demographic data of the South Loop.

One reality became very clear to me. In a community of well-educated and affluent people, we faced a significant challenge. Most of the people who live in the South Loop work in very specialized white-collar roles. My eyes were opened to a substantial reason that the small

group Bible study we first initiated last Fall never really gained momentum.

The people in our community are consumers. They pay others for goods and services. They also expect high quality when they invest their time and money in anything. There is a certain expectation they have when they hear “church.” Four or five people sitting around a table does not fit that expectation.

The reality of our mission field meant the time had come for me to live by the counsel I gave to dozens of church planters over the last 12 years. “The question to ask is not, ‘Can this be done?’ The right question is, ‘How can this be done?’”

Lacking clear answers to my question in February, I began several weeks of earnest prayer, seeking wisdom and understanding that I did not yet have.

In early March, I posted a question

in our neighborhood Facebook group asking if there was a network of entrepreneurs in our neighborhood. The wisdom and understanding I sought was being revealed in this simple truth: entrepreneurs are those who have demonstrated a willingness to take ownership of something that doesn’t yet exist, then work to make it happen.

In something of a “Eureka!” moment, I realized, “These are the people I need to know.”

Several weeks of responses by entrepreneurs in the neighborhood made a couple of things clear. There was no network in the South Loop exclusively for entrepreneurs. Yet, there was a lot of interest in one. An obvious opportunity presented itself: create a new network of entrepreneurs in the South Loop.

In the months since, we have seen a leadership team of five entrepreneurs emerge. We are committed to giving entrepreneurs who attend our meetings

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DENNIS CONNER
Guest Column

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Pergamum: No compromises

Third in a series

I'm blessed. At least that's what I was told growing up in the South. I was raised in the country, where my dad worked hard, my mom cooked every



RONNIE PARROTT
Guest Column

night for our family, and we loved America and Jesus. I was taught to work hard and never compromise your word. You say what you mean, and you mean what you say.

As I grew older, I faced opportunities to compromise

not only my word, but also my life, and I realized not compromising was difficult. Now, as a Christian husband, father, and pastor, compromising my life could bring a world of disaster for me, my family and my church.

In Revelation 2, the Lord warns the church of Pergamum against tolerating those who compromise their faith for worldly gain. The church had been faithful through major persecution, but now they were tolerating those who “hold to the teaching of Balaam” and others who “hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.”

The teaching of Balaam led people to compromise their faith for worldly pleasure. In Numbers 22-25, we see God's people being seduced by this teaching into eating pagan food and participating in sexual immorality. These same sins were leading some in the church at Pergamum astray, seducing them into folly.



The sin of the Nicolaitans was similar, leading people to compromise their faith in Christ for worldly pleasure and worldly gain. In Ephesians 2:6, we see the church in Ephesus rejecting the teaching of the Nicolaitans, but here in Revelation 2, we are met with a church that embraced them. They sold out their faith for immorality and idolatry.

The Lord calls the church at Pergamum to repent of their idolatry and promises to meet their needs in Christ in two specific ways. First, he will give them “hidden manna,” an eternal nourishment that satisfies their deepest longings. In Christ, all our needs are met, and all our longings are fulfilled.

Second, he will give them “a white stone, and on the stone a new name is inscribed that no one knows except the one who receives it.” Debate exists over what this white stone represents, but I believe it refers to

the righteousness we have in Christ and the redeemed relationship we share with God. We need not seek satisfaction in idols or sexual immorality. True satisfaction is found in a deep, intimate relationship with God. He has a new name for us,

and He knows what we need.

1 Peter 2:9 says, “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (CSB). We are God's people, a royal people, a holy people, a people belonging to him and no one else. The same idols call out to God's people today. Let's not be seduced by Satan. Let's guard our churches. That's worth our hard work and firm conviction.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – This article is part of a series on the theme of the 2018 North Carolina Pastors' Conference, “7 Churches of Revelation.” This year's event will occur Nov. 4-5 in conjunction with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's annual meeting. Visit ncpastorsconference.org for more information. Ronnie Parrott is lead pastor of Christ Community Church in Huntersville. Each column in the series will be written by a different N.C. leader and refer to one of the seven churches in Revelation.) **BR**

CORRECTION

A story in the Aug. 25 issue of the *Biblical Recorder* included an incorrect retirement

date for Mark Gray. His actual retirement date is Nov. 5. We regret the error.

Submissions for Tar Heel Voices

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

will be published in a 90-day period. All submissions will be edited by *Recorder* style guidelines. Have questions? Call (919) 847-2127. Have a story idea? Email with all the pertinent information and photos.

4 key takeaways from Catholic church scandals

A serious scandal has ensnared the Roman Catholic Church. Recently, credible accusations surfaced that a cardinal sexually abused and harassed seminarians and young priests decades ago, one of them being a minor at the time. Reports of other clergy misconduct cases have surfaced in Pennsylvania, Australia and Ireland.

In recent weeks, a letter was published by a Vatican official claiming Pope Francis knew of the abuse and failed to act appropriately, possibly even helping to cover up clergy misconduct. One archbishop is even calling for the Pope's resignation.

While it is easy to look from our vantage point as Southern Baptists and believe we are immune from such scandal, our recent experience should teach us that we are not.

In fact, here are four lessons we can learn from the horror affecting the Catholic church:

1. No institution is safe from sexual predators.

Sexual predators can be found in Christian institutions, schools and congregations. Refusing to face this

reality only creates a compliant atmosphere for abuse. Once an individual is willing to admit that abuse can happen anywhere, then that person is obligated to prevent abuse from happening in his or her context.



LAYNE WALLACE
Guest Column

For those of us who lead local congregations, that means we are obligated to safeguard our congregations from sexual abuse. We can protect our people by doing background checks for child care workers, carefully screening volunteers and by making sure everyone knows that predatory behavior is unacceptable and will be reported immediately.

2. Clergy appeared to protect themselves, not victims.

We Baptists are quick to note the church is not primarily an institution; it is a people. We do not protect the church by covering up abuses to shield the institution. We protect the church by defending the innocent. When there are reports of abuse, our first instinct should be to root out abuse and to seek justice for the victims.

3. Internal investigations tend to be unhelpful.

When there are reports of abuse, external, independent investigations are more credible. Sadly, with each scandal of abuse that emerges in the church, the church's word becomes less credible. For investigations to mean something, they need to be independent of the organization in which the allegations of abuse were made.

4. Institutions, like the humans who build them, can become corrupt.

We are to be people of prayer for our churches and partner organizations. We need to pray that leadership in our congregations will have the wisdom to see patterns of behavior before they become abusive. We need to pray that our congregations will be understanding of the additional steps needed for protection of the innocent. We need to pray that we can create congregational cultures in which abuse is not only rare, but nonexistent.

There may yet be further reports of abuse in the Catholic Church and more scandals to unfold. But we can be proactive to prevent future misconduct in Baptist life.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Layne Wallace is pastor of Rosemary Baptist Church in Roanoke Rapids, N.C.) **BR**

LifeWay's Thom Rainer to retire

Biblical Recorder

Thom Rainer, president of LifeWay Christian Resources, told the organization's board of trustees Aug. 27 that he is retiring. Rainer, 63, plans to step down whenever a replacement is named or after one year, according to an Aug. 27 LifeWay announcement.

"It is time to pass the baton of leadership to a new generation," Rainer said.

"The next president will lead an organization poised for a great future. Though it will come with challenges, I have never been more excited about the future of LifeWay."

He thanked LifeWay employees and gave four reasons for the transition in a blog post:

- "LifeWay is poised for a great future with a new leader;"
- "I have been tempted to hang on. I must avoid that temptation;"
- "I want to maximize my time with family in this next phase of life;"
- "God willing, I strongly desire to dedicate this next phase of life to making a contribution to the revitalization of churches across the world."

LifeWay's trustee chair Jimmy Scroggins said, "We are deeply grateful for the work Dr. Rainer and his staff have accomplished the past 13 years to support churches

in their mission of making disciples and providing biblical solutions for life.

"Dr. Rainer has strategically led through times of economic uncertainty, the digital revolution, changing church practices, and tumultuous shifts in culture. His foresight and ability to lead change has well prepared LifeWay for the future as the organization continues to impact and influence the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Rainer became the ninth president of the organization in 2006. **BR**



THOM RAINER

Johnny Hunt to lead NAMB evangelism, leadership group

By MIKE EBERT | NAMB

Johnny Hunt, longtime pastor of First Baptist Church (FBC) Woodstock, Ga., and past president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), will join the North American Mission Board (NAMB) as senior vice president of evangelism and leadership. Hunt and NAMB announced the news Aug. 26.

"I want to lead Southern Baptist churches to put evangelism back on the front burner again," Hunt said. "Jesus came to seek and save the lost; we know what He is doing. We must join Him."

Hunt shared in worship services at his church Sunday morning that he will walk with the church through the transition and begin serving full time with NAMB at the beginning of 2019. NAMB trustees will vote on Hunt's role at their upcoming meeting Oct. 2.

"I am humbled and overwhelmed by God's favor and blessing to have a leader like Johnny Hunt willing to join the NAMB family," said NAMB President Kevin Ezell. "The vision, passion and leadership he will bring will help us motivate pastors to lead out in evangelism."

The group Hunt will be leading will be focused on championing the cause of evangelism among Southern Baptist churches and pastors. It will also equip pastors with tools and leadership skills that will allow them to lead their churches to become more evangelistically active.

J.D. Greear, current SBC president and senior pastor of The Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham, N.C., called Hunt's pending move to NAMB a "great day" for Southern Baptists.

"For as long as I can remember, Pastor Johnny has been carrying the torch for evangelism and demonstrating what evangelistic faithfulness looks like both in

life and in the context of a local church," Greear said. "I can't imagine anyone more qualified to lead us in this. I know it is a sad day for First Baptist Church Woodstock, but it is a great day for the larger Southern Baptist community. I believe his life and passion will lead to great joy among the lost in our communities!"

Ronnie Floyd, the senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas who currently serves as president of the National Day of Prayer Task Force, said he is "so fired up" about Hunt's new role.

"Dr. Hunt is a living legacy of evangelism, building one of the world's greatest churches that exemplifies the Great Commission regionally, nationally and globally," said Floyd, who served as president of the SBC from 2014-2016. "Equally, he is a living legacy of leadership, teaching pastors and launching leaders continually. We need these kind of pastors leading Southern Baptists."

On Aug. 12, NAMB announced formation of the Evangelism and Leadership group and that Jim Law would serve as its executive director. Law, who has served as executive pastor of FBC Woodstock for nearly 28 years, will begin serving at NAMB Oct. 1. He will handle day-to-day leadership for the group while Hunt casts vision, stirs passion for evangelism among Southern Baptists and mobilizes pastors and churches.

"My priority will be to help facilitate the present and next generation of pastors to embrace gospel conversations, soul winning if you will, witnessing as a lifestyle," Hunt said. "After being a pastor the last 42 years, with 32 of those years at First Baptist Woodstock, I have come to believe deeply that whatever is important to the pastor is what is important to the people. Evangelism must be the heartthrob of our pastors."

"I am very excited that the North American Mission Board, under the



Johnny Hunt, right, longtime pastor of First Baptist Church Woodstock, Ga., and past president of the Southern Baptist Convention, will join the North American Mission Board (NAMB) as senior vice president of evangelism and leadership. Hunt and NAMB President Kevin Ezell, left, announced the news Aug. 26. (NAMB photo by Hayley Catt)

leadership of Kevin Ezell, has invited me to serve," Hunt said. Still, he called the decision to make the transition "one of the hardest of my life," but said he will walk closely with his church through the transition, adding "I still believe with all of my heart that Woodstock's best days are ahead of them."

Hunt has led FBC Woodstock since 1986. The church averages more than 6,000 at its weekend worship services and is nationally known for the missions ministry it has in the United States and throughout the world. Hunt served as SBC president from 2008-2010. He founded the Timothy Barnabas ministry, a conference and retreat ministry, which has been attended by more than 8,000 pastors and their wives since its beginnings more than 20 years ago. Hunt is the author of several books. His annual men's conference attracts thousands. He pastored three churches in North Carolina before being called to FBC Woodstock.

"God has given brother Johnny a unique, international platform," Ezell said. "He wants to continue to use it to introduce as many people as possible to our savior and to equip believers to share their faith. I am humbled and grateful that God has orchestrated this in a way that allows him to lead at NAMB." **BR**

Trustees begin search for new LifeWay leader

LifeWay Christian Resources

LifeWay Christian Resources trustees began the initial steps to search for a successor to President and CEO Thom S. Rainer during their Aug. 27-28 meeting in Nashville.

Trustee chairman Jimmy Scroggins named a seven-person search committee to find LifeWay's next leader.

The trustees' presidential search committee will be led by Kent Dacus, vice president of student services at California Baptist University, as committee chair. Dacus is a member of Magnolia Avenue Baptist Church in Riverside, Calif.

Other members include Bill Langley, pastor of Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown, Ky.; Millie Burkett, member of Greater Gresham Baptist Church, Gresham, Ore.; Ken Bledsoe, senior pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Aberdeen, N.J.; Madeline Harris, member of Ezekiel Baptist Church, Philadelphia, Penn.; Todd Fannin, member of Life Fellowship Church, Pryor, Okla.; and Luther McDaniel, member of First Baptist Church, Hendersonville, Tenn.

Three alternate members include Mike Osborne, executive pastor of Colonial Heights Baptist Church, Colonial Heights, Va.; J.D. Perry, member of Jefferson Baptist Church, Baton Rouge, La.; and Brad McLean, pastor of First Baptist Church, New Braunfels, Texas.

The search committee will receive questions and names for consideration at presidentsearch@LifeWay.com.

Scroggins shared his appreciation for Rainer's godly leadership the last 13 years. "Thom is a man of honor and

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Mark Harris stands firm amid sermon scrutiny

By DAVID ROACH | Baptist Press

The sermons of a North Carolina pastor turned congressional candidate have become fodder for political attacks and reports in national media outlets – especially his preaching on the family and gender roles.

But Mark Harris, former pastor of First Baptist Church in Charlotte who is running as a Republican in North Carolina's 9th congressional district, told Baptist Press it should not be regarded as a "news flash" that a "Baptist preacher preaches the Bible." Past sermons, he added, don't "really have any bearing on electing a candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives."

"It's important that we understand family is the foundation of our society and the foundation of American culture," Harris said, but his political opponents are attempting "to create a distraction. They won't talk about the issues, such as GDP being up 4.1 percent in the second quarter. And they won't talk about the lowest unemployment among women, I think, in some 30 years."

The criticism he's faced for sermon content "probably speaks to the biblical illiteracy" of American culture, Harris said, and "is probably an indictment on

the church for doing a very poor job for a generation of explaining and discipling what the Bible says."

Harris resigned First Baptist's pastorate last year to run for Congress and defeated incumbent Robert Pittenger May 8 in the Republican primary. Harris was president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina from 2011-2013 and served on the 2016 Southern Baptist Convention Resolutions Committee.

The latest burst of media attention surrounding Harris began in July when a political action committee that opposes him highlighted a 2013 sermon in which he said a woman's "core calling" is to be a godly wife and mother. Women "can be anything and do anything" professionally, he added in the sermon, "as long as you understand your core calling and who you are and that guides everything you do."

"In our culture today, girls are taught from grade school ... that what is most honorable in life is a career, and their ultimate goal in life is simply to be able to grow up and be independent of anyone or anything," Harris said in the 2013 sermon according to ABC News, adding, "But nobody has seemed to ask the question that I think is critically important to ask: is that a healthy pursuit for

society? Is that the healthiest pursuit for our homes? Is that the healthiest pursuit for our children? Is that the healthiest pursuit for the sexes in our generation?"

This month, a flurry of media reports has focused on Harris' past preaching from Ephesians 5 that wives should submit to their husbands.

The political news outlet Roll Call quoted Harris as saying in a 2013 sermon, "Many marriages could save beaucoups of marriage counseling money if they would just understand; husbands love your wives even as Christ loved the church. Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord." "You cannot force your wife to submit," Harris told husbands in the sermon. Submission also does not imply "inequality" because God the Son submitted to God the Father even though they are equally divine.

Other media reports have noted Harris' beliefs that homosexual behavior is a choice and that the earth was created by God thousands rather than millions of years ago.

In July, *The Charlotte Observer* published an editorial on Harris' views of gender roles with the headline "Paging Mark Harris; it's the 21st century." An Aug. 8 editorial cartoon in *The Observer* depicted Harris dressed as cartoon caveman Fred Flintstone with "#Submit" written on his shirt, holding a club and saying to a woman in a #MeToo T-shirt, "Give me that old-time religion."

Harris' general election opponent Dan McCready tweeted in response to reports on Harris' sermons, "As a Christian, I believe that we are all created in God's image. That means men and women are equally valuable and equally capable. My opponent, Mark Harris, is out of step with this district and this century."

Colin Smothers, executive director of the Council on Biblical Manhood and



Media coverage of Mark Harris, seen in a campaign photo, has been focused on his biblical views of family and gender roles.

Womanhood (CBMW), told Baptist Press "a Christian pastor preaching 2,000-year-old Christian beliefs should not be news, but this is the world we live in." CBMW teaches men and women have equal worth before God but have been assigned distinct roles in the church and the home by scripture.

"No matter who cites them – teacher, nurse, fireman, professor or, yes, even a congressional candidate who has preached hundreds of sermons as a pastor – the words of Ephesians 5, Titus 2, and Romans 1 (to pick only a few) are offensive to the world's sensibilities," Smothers said in written comments. "Jesus told us it would be this way. But the Christian is called to joyfully embrace the whole Bible as the inspired Word of God and to have our minds made new according to every truth revealed therein. We cannot just pick and choose the truths we think will win more friends, influence more people or win more elections."

Harris advised other pastors to "stick with the Word. That's what I have been able to rely on. And really I think it has been what has caused us to be able to answer the attacks." **BR**

N.C. church dismisses lawsuit against town

Alliance Defending Freedom

Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) attorneys representing a North Carolina church voluntarily dismissed a lawsuit against the city of Monroe Aug. 23 after officials voted Aug. 21 to amend recent additions to the city's zoning code. Those additions had prohibited

churches from locating in three out of four sub-districts within the city's newly created Concord Avenue Overlay District. Now the code will permit churches to freely locate and operate throughout the overlay district.

ADF attorneys filed the suit on behalf of At the Cross Fellowship Baptist Church. **BR**

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McGill resigns Dublin church, focuses on The Lake Church

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

Cameron McGill, former president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), announced his resignation as pastor of Dublin First Baptist Church to assume responsibilities as pastor of The Lake Church in White Lake, N.C. He has led both churches since The Lake Church launched in 2014.

“After 18 years at Dublin, we made the decision to step out in faith and follow the Lord to focus full-time at The Lake Church and White Lake Christian Camp’s ministry, and also doing revival meetings as the Lord opens doors,” he told the *Biblical Recorder*. “I love Dublin and I appreciate God allowing us to be there that long.”

He announced his resignation Aug. 5, and will preach the final sermon Sept. 9 at Dublin.

“[The Lake Church] grew far beyond our expectations, averaging 400 people in the summer and 150 in the winter,” said McGill.

Each functioned as separate churches, but McGill preached in both pulpits every Sunday and served both congregations.

“The strain of trying to pastor two churches is real – it’s a challenge,” he said. “For the last year and a half, Tiffany and I felt the Lord was pulling us full time to The Lake. There’s great potential here if someone could lead each church full time. God has confirmed this and has given us real peace about it.”

The Lake Church grew rapidly in a rented facility in the resort community. A three-acre property came available last year on White Lake and they were able to acquire it.



Cameron McGill is resigning from Dublin First Baptist Church to commit his full-time attention to The Lake Church, a church he and his Dublin congregation started in 2014. (Contributed photo)

“We’re making it a small camp for church groups and families,” McGill said. “Retreats for all ages are held in the facility. It will also include a permanent home for The Lake Church. We plan to break ground for a church building soon.”

He said the ministry shift includes three ministry roles. He will serve as pastor of The Lake Church, camp

pastor at White Lake Christian Camp and Retreat Center and in an itinerant revival ministry.

“I want to credit our involvement with the Baptist State Convention for growing our mission vision that led to partnerships with churches in New York and Moldova,” he said.

“The pastor of our partner church in Moldova came to Dublin and challenged me to plant a church. So it came full circle and The Lake Church was birthed after that challenge.”

McGill said he was not aware of the many resources available through the state convention until he began serving on the board of directors in 2008.

“That was a great learning experience,” said McGill. “It connected me with so many people like Brenda Gray, Dr. [Michael] Blackwell and so many others, and it changed my perspective. That was a turning point in my ministry and my family’s focus. We would not be doing what we are doing if it were not for the influence of the convention. Tiffany and I both served on the board and learned so much. We’re excited about God’s plans for us.”

Gray and Blackwell serve at the Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina.

McGill is available for revival services and other events. Contact him at (910) 872-1726 or pastorcam74@gmail.com. Learn more about the camp ministry at whitelakechristiancamp.com. **BR**

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University Hills pastor moving to Botswana

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

On Aug. 12, the senior pastor of University Hills Baptist Church in Charlotte shared with the congregation his plans to serve in a different mission field. Fourteen years ago, Coye and Sherra Still left their work as Southern Baptist missionaries in South Asia to serve the University Hills church.

Now the couple plans to leave the strong bond of a healthy church. This time, when the appointment process is complete, they hope to serve in Botswana, Africa, through the International Mission Board (IMB).

“If the IMB approves us, Sherra and I will be serving with the Baptist Convention Seminary of Botswana,” Still said in an interview with the *Biblical Recorder*. “It’s a new seminary that was a vision some leaders in Botswana have had for some time. It’s small but growing.

“The purpose is to train pastors and leaders for churches in Botswana – also to train and mobilize Botswanan believers as missionaries to unreached peoples of Africa and Asia. Evangelism and church planting are still the core task of IMB missionaries, wherever they are serving, so that will also be our primary work in Botswana.”

Still said many missiologists are convinced the next great sending wave of missionaries to unreached and unengaged peoples will be from Africa.

“We have a tremendous opportunity to be part of this wave to help cast vision, train in biblical theology and to send people out as evangelists, church planters and pastors who will have more ready access and cross cultural effectiveness than many of us.”

Still’s first pastorate was in Kentucky when he was a student at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS), where he earned master and doctoral degrees.

After graduation he was called to pastor Sunset Avenue Baptist Church in Rocky Mount, N.C., where his father had served in previous years.

“Sunset Avenue became our sending church when God called us to serve through the IMB in Asia,” he said. “We served from 2001 to 2004 as a strategy coordinator in a major city in South Asia, working with church planters. It was a great experience, but we felt God was calling us stateside for the next chapter – however long that would be.”

At that time, University Hills was searching for a pastor and contacted Still while he was living in South Asia.



Coye and Sherra Still are preparing to leave their Charlotte church for ministry in Africa. (Contributed photo)

“We had already planned to return to the states when the church contacted us,” Still explained. “I had to be in Richmond to participate in a church planting conference, so the University Hills search committee arranged to meet with me. They extended an invitation to preach in view of a call when we moved back to North Carolina.”

The church called Still as pastor in

May 2004. Charlotte became the new mission field for the couple and their five children. The children are now adults and will not be moving to Botswana with their parents. One son is a doctoral student at SBTS, one lives in Greenville, S.C., and the others live in the Charlotte area. All but one are married.

Reflecting on the family’s ministry in Charlotte, Still said, “It’s been a great experience here. University Hills has loved us so well and encouraged our family in so many ways. We’re going to miss these folks so much, but we are so glad they are going to be our sending church. That’s an honor for us.”

“It is a real privilege to be going on a team with Sherra,” he said. “When we served in South Asia, she excelled as a missionary. I am very confident that as the Lord works through her in our new assignment she will serve faithfully again.”

If the IMB approves the Stills, he will preach his last sermon at University Hills Sept. 16, and they will participate in a “Sending” service Sept. 26 at Grove Avenue Baptist Church in Richmond, Va.

“We are profoundly grateful that God has chosen to give us this opportunity to be part of making Christ known to the nations. He’s been so good to us.” **BR**

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North Carolina women lead immigrant outreach

By LIZ TABLAZON | BR Staff Writer

Two North Carolina Baptist women have established relationships with Yemeni families in the state – the first known instance of N.C. Baptists engaging this unreached people group after four years of prayer, Zac Lyons told the *Biblical Recorder* July 5.

Lyons, senior consultant for Great Commission partnerships at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, said there are only 35 known believers in northern Yemen.

“There’s no church ... God has seen fit to bring those people right here,” Lyons said, referring to the 4,000 Yemenis living in the state.

Joy Mikhail, director of church engagement and training for cross-cultural ministries at Waypoint Church in Chapel Hill, N.C., met two Yemeni women when they brought their children to a weekly backyard Bible club in a Durham community where the majority of residents are refugees or immigrants.

Over the past year, Mikhail befriended both women and their families, “building relationships, establishing trust and sharing the gospel in love.”

“People are not projects,” Mikhail said in an interview with the *Recorder* July 28.

“It’s not, ‘I’m gonna get to know you so that I will share the gospel with you,’ but rather ‘I love you, and because of that, I’m sharing the gospel.’”

Mikhail’s interactions with them are about being part of the family, she said.

“You can go there and spend hours sitting and drinking tea. ... From filling out their paperwork to going to the labor room when they give birth – that’s basically, for me, how it looks.”

Cultural understanding is crucial to this ministry, Mikhail said. She gave the example of how Western and Eastern cultures hold different perspectives on vulnerability, which is essential to establishing trust. She explained that while Americans tend to have a guilt-driven culture, as seen in how often one might hear “I’m sorry” even in casual conversations, Eastern cultures are more influenced by shame.

“For them to be vulnerable is really hard because you would feel the shame of what they’re dealing with. ... Be an example for them that it’s OK, we all mess up; we’re all in need of grace.

“One thing the church can fall into is the holy mask. We go there and we’re like, ‘We’re gonna fix you.’ It’s hurtful in two ways. One, if we’re all right and all fixed, why do we need Christ? We’re good, which is not the truth. Two, it keeps them from being vulnerable.”

Today, Mikhail sees growth in the relationships through her friends’ transparency about their lives. She said they are now more open about conflict in their marriages and thoughts on their own culture, and they have even started attending English as a Second Language classes at Waypoint.

Finding opportunities

In Franklin County, Emily*, a former public school teacher and now part-time tutor, met two adult sisters from Yemen when she accepted an invitation to teach them English in their home.

“At the time, being a mostly stay-at-home mom of two little ones and another on the way and working part-time, I was not in the position to go to the nations to form relationships and spread the gospel, so it



(Lightstock photo by Lisa Howeler)

seemed this was a way that God was bringing the nations to me,” she said.

Like Mikhail, Emily found herself “staying an extra half hour to an hour because they would share food with me or show me pictures of their loved ones, or we would talk about their favorite soccer teams or TV shows” after tutoring sessions ended.

Emily, too, tried to understand and be sensitive to the sisters’ culture before and during their meetings.

“I worried excessively about what I should wear ... I painstakingly proofread the ESL lessons and worksheets that I was using to remove any potentially offensive material,” she said.

It didn’t take long, however, for her attention to shift from their differences to their similarities.

“I bonded with these ladies over things we had in common like being mothers to boys, being wives, doing housework and loving our families who live far away,” she said.

When the sisters asked to be excused to pray during lessons, Emily spent the time waiting for them also in prayer – “that God would open my eyes and burden my heart more for them, their families and their salvation.”

Mikhail, with years of missions experience both in the United States and internationally, and Emily, a mother and teacher leveraging her calling, are serving in intercultural ministry by meeting needs and making friends where they are.

“The Church is to embrace her calling and live inten-

tionally as ambassadors of Christ among the nations and be moved by the perfect love that is found in Christ and not by fear,” Mikhail said.

“Step out to create mutually beneficial relationships, and treat everyone with dignity and respect as image-bearers of God.”

Individuals or groups interested in ministering to immigrants or refugees should seek opportunities to get connected, Mikhail said.

She suggested getting in touch with someone else or a church that already has established connections with refugee communities, volunteering with resettlement organizations and intentionally looking around them.

“There might be some immigrants or refugees in their neighborhoods or at the grocery store or the gas station nearby where they can stop by and have a conversation with them that leads to building relationships.”

*Name changed for privacy **B**

“For them to be vulnerable is really hard because you would feel the shame of what they’re dealing with ... Be an example for them that it’s OK, we all mess up; we’re all in need of grace.”

– Joy Mikhail



Multifamily housing spurs mission strategy

By **SETH BROWN** | BR Content Editor

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) initiated a strategy last year to help churches engage a mission field that is estimated to be 95 percent unchurched. The targeted group, said to number in the millions, includes people from all over the world who span the economic spectrum.

It is one of the most significant outreach initiatives in the state, according to Zac Lyons, senior consultant for the BSC Office of Great Commission Partnerships, but many churches may be surprised to discover where these people are located. They are at the nearest apartment complex. Multifamily housing units account for one of every three occupied homes in the state, according to the latest U.S. Census data. There could be well over 3,000 apartment communities in North Carolina, said Lyons, or possibly more.

Three BSC contract workers are spearheading the plan to start or partner with existing ministries in the Metro Charlotte, Triad and Triangle regions. There are currently 86 “engaged” multifamily

housing communities in North Carolina.

“We have committed to a vision of seeing a reproducing gospel presence in every single multifamily housing community in the state,” Lyons told the *Biblical Recorder*.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development categorizes apartment complexes, mobile home parks, townhouse neighborhoods, condominiums, assisted living facilities and other structures with five or more dwelling units as multifamily housing.

Lyons outlined three basic approaches for churches interested in outreach to these environments:

- **intentional** – a church identifies and begins ministering to a community;
- **incarnational** – a person or group of people moves into a community to minister;
- **indigenous** – a ‘missional community’ is started on-site by leaders already residing there.

Lyons also noted the presence of many foreign-born people in multifamily housing communities. Although it is impossible to develop accurate estimates about

residential trends in relation to ethnicity, religion and national origin, since those classes are protected by federal discrimination laws and unmonitored by the government, he said anecdotal evidence can offer clues about the presence of internationals in multifamily housing communities.

Traditional immigrants and international students often find multifamily housing communities more accommodating due to convenient locations, access to public transit, lower costs and the likelihood of living near someone with a similar background. Refugees and asylum seekers are strategically placed in apartment complexes by resettlement agencies, Lyons explained.

“We have 1.5 million foreign-born people and children of foreign-born people in the state – about 15 percent of the population of North Carolina,” he said, pointing out the likelihood that significant numbers of those people live in multifamily housing communities.

Joe Maye, pastor of Rise Church in Winston-Salem, N.C., serves as a multifamily housing ministry catalyst for the

BSC. Statistics show minimal interaction between residents at these communities, he said in an interview with the Recorder Aug. 30.

“People are in close proximity without community,” Maye said. “With the gospel and the mission that we’ve been given ... in this particular mission field – multifamily housing – we have something that the people are hungry for whether or not they would articulate it.”

State convention staff are leading multiple breakout sessions at this year’s annual meeting on best practices for engaging multifamily housing communities, how to get started and evaluating existing outreach ministries.

Lyons encourages interested churches or N.C. Baptists living in multifamily housing communities to contact the state convention for resources and training.

“If you live in a multifamily housing community, you are the access point to that community, or you can be,” he said. “Let us train you to be a missionary where you live, and we’ll help you mobilize your church to come alongside.”

Visit ncbaptist.org. **BR**

McCain’s Baptist ‘church home’ & pastor host funeral

By **DAVID ROACH** | Baptist Press

The Southern Baptist congregation late Sen. John McCain called his “church home” hosted his Arizona memorial service Aug. 30. In addition to a eulogy by former Vice President Joe Biden, the service included references by Pastor Noe Garcia to the love North Phoenix Baptist Church felt for McCain and “the faith he has placed in Jesus Christ.”

McCain died Aug. 25 at age 81, a year after being diagnosed with an aggressive form of brain cancer.

During the funeral’s invocation, Garcia called McCain “a true American hero” and “a man loved by this church.” After reading from 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14, Garcia prayed, “We will grieve. We will mourn, Father. But we will do so with a different hope because of the faith [McCain] has placed in Jesus Christ. We can with confidence grieve with the hope to know that this very moment he is spending eternity with Jesus Christ, his Lord and Savior.”

To close the service, Garcia said McCain is “more alive than he’s ever been” because “he knew” Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23 and John 3:16. He read each of those scriptures.

McCain, a two-time presidential candidate, attended North Phoenix for more than 25 years, though he was raised



North Phoenix Baptist Church Pastor Noe Garcia said late Sen. John McCain is “more alive than he’s ever been” because of “the faith he has placed in Jesus Christ.” (Screen capture from ABC News)

Episcopalian and never joined North Phoenix. His wife Cindy is a North Phoenix member and was baptized there.

A “man of quiet faith,” according to Religion News Service (RNS), McCain “sometimes spoke in person and online of his reliance on prayer.” Author Stephen Mansfield told RNS McCain was “cautious” about mentioning his faith “very publicly because he does not want to be identified with the religious right.”

Yet when McCain worshiped at North Phoenix, Garcia told Baptist Press (BP), the congregation could see fruit of his faith.

“When [the McCains] would come here, he would come to church on time – 10 minutes before the service started,” Garcia said.

“He waited until the service was over and walked out with everybody else. I

just loved his humility and the way he loved our church members. The stories go on and on of how kind he was to everybody around him. That’s one of the main things that sticks out: how he was so personable with church members.”

North Phoenix hosted the memorial service to “honor” McCain and fulfill one of his funeral requests, Garcia said. “He called North Phoenix his church home. He’s been a part of the North Phoenix community for quite some time now.”

After McCain had become the presumptive Republican nominee for president in 2008, then-North Phoenix pastor Dan Yeary told BP, “He has a strong faith and is committed to Christ. I don’t have any doubt about it.” Still, as “a historical Episcopalian ... if you and I sat down with him and started talking Baptist talk, he just doesn’t have that kind of vocabulary.”

McCain’s body was scheduled to be at the U.S. Capitol Aug. 31 and was to be buried Sept. 2 at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., his alma mater. **BR**

OPPORTUNITY CORNER

Hillside Park Baptist Church, Thomsville, is hosting a camp meeting and pastors’ conference Sept. 24-26.

The pastors’ conference will be held Sept. 24 and 25 from 10-11:30 a.m. with lunch following.

Camp meetings will be held all three evenings from 7-9 p.m. Jeff LaBorg and Mike Whitson will be keynote speakers for both events.

Call (336) 472-6192 or visit hillsidepark.org.

Don Hadley retires after 45 years in Havelock

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

First Baptist Church of Havelock, N.C., recently celebrated the ministry of Don and Sara Hadley at the close of his 45 years as their pastor. The Aug. 25 celebration drew 200 church members, community leaders and friends to the Havelock Tourist and Event Center.

Hadley began serving the church Sept. 2, 1973, and preached his last sermon as pastor Sept. 2, 2018.

David Phelps, associational missionary of the Atlantic Baptist Association (ABA) read a letter from Milton Hollifield, executive director-treasurer of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, who was unable to attend.

“The legacy that you leave will be one of love for the Lord and your fellow man, which has served as an example for everyone who has known you,” Hollifield said.

The letter commended Hadley for his leadership at the church, the ABA, the state convention and his “positive impact on the lives of many people. ... From serving the Marines and the Navy personnel at Cherry Point Marine Air Base to discipling chaplains and numerous pastors, you have provided consistent and diligent counsel for many.”

Phelps also read a letter from Keith Hamilton, ABA’s previous associational missionary who now serves with Baptist ministries in Georgia.

“While your tenure at First Baptist Church and the association have impacted so many lives, your personal investment in developing military ministries within local churches was profound,” said Hamilton.

Hamilton said he used military ministry training learned from Hadley in his work in Georgia and at military installations in other countries, including eight years in Germany. He commended Hadley for his “passion for seeing our military personnel experience a



Don Hadley jokes with a wellwisher after his retirement celebration Aug. 25. (BR photo by K. Allan Blume)

personal relationship with Jesus Christ.”

Phelps noted that the average tenure of a Southern Baptist pastor is less than two years, making Hadley’s record “quite remarkable.”

“The church is like a ship,” Phelps said. “It has a mission to perform. ... The church is not a cruise ship. It is a battleship. Dr. Hadley, you have stood in the pulpit faithfully for 45 years.”

He noted the balance between the pastoral and prophetic roles in which a pastor “comforts the afflicted and afflicts the comfortable. ... Your personal integrity, fidelity to the word of God and integrity of your private life has made a positive influence in this community.

“Your influence in the Atlantic Baptist Association is without compare,” Phelps added. “You’ve served every position in the association except director of missions and administrative assistant.”

Steve Epperson, a retired Navy chaplain, now pastor of Cherry Point Baptist Church, shared his strong re-

spect and love for the Hadleys. He commended them for being an “amazing” husband and wife team who made their family a priority and “made an indelible mark on a town, a church and thousands of military personnel.

“Don Hadley recognized years ago that the military and the [Cherry Point] base is a people group that need to be reached,” said Epperson. “He has demonstrated great commitment to this group.”

Hadley’s ministry on the basketball court was a priority. “The Marines were surprised that this ‘elderly’ man could play so well and beat them,” Epperson continued. “His love of basketball was a great vehicle to witness to young and old marines who greatly respected Dr. Hadley.”

The church presented the retiring couple with a number of gifts, including two season tickets to UNC Chapel Hill men’s basketball games.

Other guest speakers included a former mayor of the town, military personnel, church members, staff and family. Music was featured by the pastor and wife team of Havelock Korean Baptist Church and representatives of the Havelock Community Church.

The Hadleys’ two children, their spouses and grandchildren were recognized at the event. Their son, Dane, serves as pastor of Tabernacle Baptist Church in Raleigh. He told the *Biblical Recorder*, “My Dad’s most remarkable accomplishment is the integrity he consistently modeled in both the church and our home. He lives what he preaches. I pray God’s grace would enable me to model the same consistency for my own family.”

A native of Evansville, Ind., the senior Hadley holds degrees from the University of Evansville, Oregon State University and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

He served as a campus minister and pastored several churches before coming to Havelock. In 1992 his book *Ministry with the Military* was published by Baker Book House. **BR**

Vision team to help implement SBCAL recommendations

By DIANA CHANDLER | Baptist Press

An 11-member vision team will study ways to help Southern Baptist state associations implement recommended changes including a new title and system-wide professional proficiencies for directors of missions (DOMs).

The Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders (SBCAL) vision team will research ways to help state associations implement a study team’s recommendations that were adopted during the SBCAL annual meeting in June. The new vision team will report its findings to the SBCAL executive team in advance of the 2019 SBCAL annual meeting in Birmingham, Ala., June 9-10.

Included in SBCAL-adopted recommendations are the use of the title “associational mission strategist” for all directors of missions and the adoption of certain foundational, relational and strategic proficiencies for the job description.

Vision team leader Bob Lowman, executive director of the Metrolina Baptist Association in Charlotte, N.C., told Baptist Press (BP) the proficiencies are more important than the name change.

“The title is an important factor,” Lowman told BP. “The proficiencies discovered and recommended as well as the partnerships that can develop to help promote those proficiencies – those are really the more important factors to be emphasizing.”

Among recommendations are six foundational, five relational and six strategic proficiencies deemed essential for the DOM position.

Each DOM, or associational mission strategist, should also be called by God to associational leadership and be a person of character, spiritually mature, committed to learning, emotionally intelligent, authentically vulnerable, a supportive coach, an active listener, a vision caster, a leadership multiplier (developer) and a consultant, among other proficiencies, according to the study team report

posted online at sbccassociations.org/report.html.

“Our goal will be to take the findings of the study team ... and do our best to implement those and encourage implementation of those findings in associations across the country,” Lowman said.

“We really want to take what was learned through the team’s work over the past year and then translate that into action and vision and renewed mission on behalf of associations across the convention.”

Partnerships between associations, state conventions and SBC entities, as well as changes in the name and structure of the SBCAL itself, are being considered, Lowman told BP.

“Right now we’re the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders, but that name may be adjusted. It has been adjusted in the past, but it may be adjusted to better fit the findings of the study team and what the vision team recommends to SBCAL.”

Joining Lowman on the vision team,

announced in the August SBCAL Encourager newsletter, are *ex-officio* member Ray Gentry, SBCAL executive director, McDonough, Ga.; Stan Albright, pastor, First Baptist Church, Oxford, Ala.; Mark Dance, director of LifeWay Pastors, Nashville; Dale Fisher, executive director and associational missionary, Caldwell Baptist Association, Lenoir, N.C.; Steve Holt, church services director, Tennessee Baptist Mission Board; and Jason Lowe, DOM of the Pike Association of Southern Baptists and executive pastor of First Baptist Church, Pikeville, Ky.

Completing the team are Mark Snowden, director of missional leadership, Cincinnati Area Baptist Association, Cincinnati; David Stokes, executive director and lead church consultant, Central Kentucky Network of Baptists, Lexington, Ky.; Rick Wheeler, lead missional strategist, Jacksonville Baptist Association, Jacksonville, Fla.; and Tony Wolfe, director of pastor/church relations, Southern Baptists of Texas Convention. **BR**

Will Graham hopes ‘Unbroken’ sequel changes lives

By **MICHAEL FOUST** | Baptist Press

Will Graham can do a great impersonation of his late grandfather Billy Graham. But for his role in the upcoming film “Unbroken: Path to Redemption,” he was given strict orders: don’t do an impression.

“The director said: Don’t imitate your grandfather,” Graham told Baptist Press (BP). “... My grandfather back then preached extremely fast. But the director said, ‘Don’t preach fast. Preach slow and be yourself.’”

The movie, scheduled to hit theaters Sept. 14, follows the story of Olympian and World War II prisoner Louis Zamperini, who returned home a hero but nearly saw his life and marriage ruined due to PTSD, thoughts of revenge against his captors, and dependency on alcohol. A visit to the 1949 Billy Graham Crusade in Los Angeles changed his life forever. He accepted Christ and later became an evangelist and founded Victory Boys Camp, an outreach for at-risk youth.

The PG-13 film is a follow-up to the 2014 movie “Unbroken,” which focused on Zamperini’s war heroics. The new movie stars Samuel Hunt (“Chicago Fire,” “Chicago P.D.”) as Zamperini and Merritt Patterson (“The Royals”) as his wife, Cynthia. Graham plays Billy Graham.

Matthew Baer, who produced both movies, said he was “blown away” by how similar the cadence of Billy Graham’s voice and Will Graham’s voice is. The younger Graham, though, said any similarities weren’t intentional.

“He and I, we sound alike, but he says a few words different than I would,” said Graham, a vice president and associate evangelist for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association who earned his master of divinity from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., and his bachelor’s degree from Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va. “What you’re seeing there is actually not [a] Billy Graham [impersonation]. That’s just me.”

One of the ‘greatest stories’ of forgiveness

Will Graham grew up hearing about Zamperini’s conversion at the crusade, but it wasn’t until he read the bestselling book by Laura Hillenbrand about Zamperini’s life that he fully appreciated the story’s depth.

“It’s one of the greatest stories of forgiveness outside of the Bible,” Graham said. “... Louis received forgiveness; his life was restored; his marriage was restored; his nightmares went away; his drinking went away.”



Will Graham can do a great impersonation of his late grandfather Billy Graham. But for his role in the upcoming film “Unbroken: Path to Redemption,” he was given strict orders: don’t do an impression.

But, just as significantly, Graham added, is that Zamperini then extended forgiveness to others.

“Louis said he didn’t know if what God did in his life was just a fad or if it really changed him,” Graham said. “And he said he wouldn’t know that until he went back to Tokyo to meet his former captors.”

Unbroken: Path to Redemption recreates that key moment in Zamperini’s life when he came face to face with the Japanese men who had tortured him – the men who had hit and whipped Zamperini and the other prisoners regularly.

Hillenbrand’s book says Zamperini and the other prisoners were beaten for folding their arms, for cleaning their teeth, for talking in their sleep and for not understanding orders.

One “favorite punishment” according to the book, was to force prisoners to do the “Ofuna crouch,” which involved standing for hours with knees “bent halfway and arms overhead.” Prisoners who stopped or who fell were clubbed and kicked. The beatings are recreated in the 2014 film Unbroken.

Japanese corporal Mutsuhiro Watanabe – nicknamed “the Bird” – singled out Zamperini for his Olympic fame and took a personal satisfaction in torturing him.

The Bird beat the prisoners daily, “fracturing their windpipes, rupturing their eardrums, shattering their teeth, tearing one man’s ear half off [and] leaving men unconscious,” according to Hillenbrand’s book.

Zamperini was a prisoner of war for two years.

“[Zamperini] hated these men – he hated them,” Graham said, referencing Zamperini’s time without Christ. “But when he stood before them [after the war], he said his heart melted in love for them. He said he no longer hated them. And he said, right then he knew what God had done in his life was real. And

because of that, he was able to forgive them.... He [formerly] wanted to kill these people and now he wanted to love on them and tell them about Christ and how Christ can change your life.”

The Bird, though, never agreed to meet him, so Zamperini mailed him a letter.

A turning point for Billy Graham, too

The 1949 crusade also was a life-changing event for Billy Graham. Prior to the Los Angeles event, few people in the United States had heard of the evangelist, who was only 30 and was serving as president of Northwestern Bible College in Minneapolis.

Newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst made a decision that would change history by sending a note to editors to “puff” Graham.

“In other words, go write nice things about Billy Graham,” Will Graham told BP, explaining Hearst’s note. “And so the next day, my granddaddy showed up and there was like 100 reporters. He’s like, ‘I couldn’t get one’ and now he’s got like 100 of them. He says: What happened? Why are you guys all here? And one of the guys replied to my granddaddy and said: ‘You’ve been kissed by William Randolph Hearst.’”

Hearst died two years later and never met Billy Graham.

The evangelist never knew why Hearst liked him so much. Nevertheless, it was a “watershed moment,” Billy Graham would say.

“The 1949 crusade is what made Billy Graham

famous,” Will Graham said.

Unbroken: Path to Redemption shows the famous tent that housed the crusade, which originally was scheduled for three weeks and was extended to eight weeks. More than 350,000 people attended. One of those was Zamperini, who was invited by his wife.

There’s a ‘Lot more Louis Zamperinis out there’

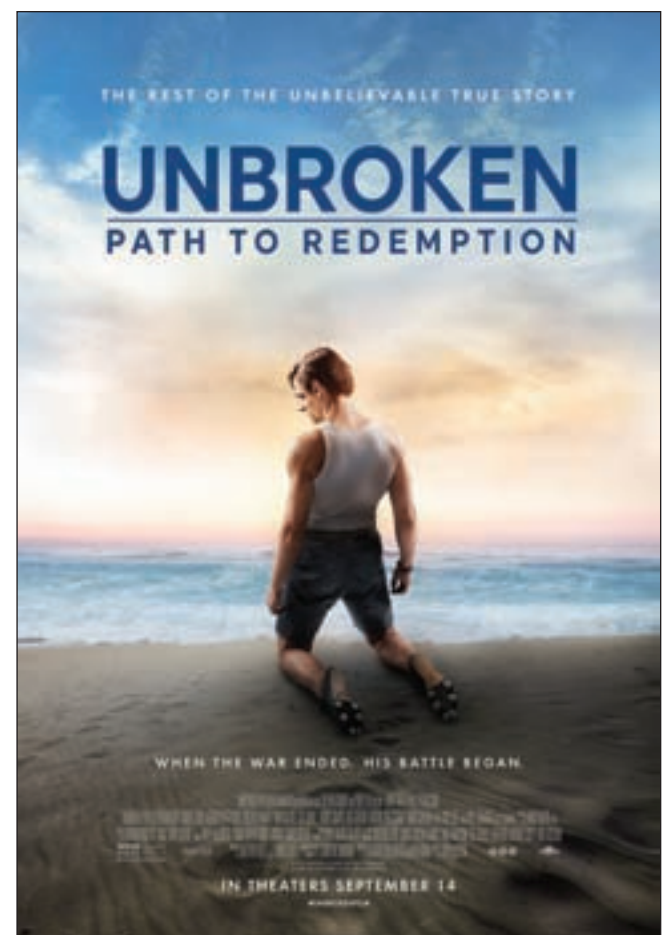
Will Graham said he hopes the movie impacts moviegoers in a similar way the crusade affected Zamperini.

“My first and primary reason for doing this is that people would give their life over to Jesus Christ,” Graham said. “There’s going to be a lot more Louis Zamperinis out there. They’re struggling in their marriage. Their marriage is broken, their life’s falling apart. They’re addicted, trying to drown their sorrows away with drugs or alcohol and they don’t know what to do. I want them to be like Louis.

“... This is a great love story,” he added. “It’s a great story of survival and turning one’s life around, but ultimately it’s about Jesus Christ changing a couple, a husband and a wife. I hope people see the real story behind it where they’re the Louis and they can give their life to Christ, too.”

Unbroken: Path to Redemption is rated PG-13 for thematic content and related disturbing images. It contains no coarse language or sexuality.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Michael Foust is a writer in Albany, Ill.) **BF**



Fishing

Continued from page 2

value-added experiences that help them take their first step or next step. After several regular monthly meetings, the feedback we have received indicates we are achieving that objective.

So how does this advance the mission of Advent Church for South Loop? Most significantly, giving life to South Loop Entrepreneurs allows us to instill the DNA for Advent Church before the church is born.

Our mission is to reveal the glory of

God by seeking and doing good in our neighborhood.

Creating South Loop Entrepreneurs is a way to invest some of my experience and passion for entrepreneurship in my neighbors. Creating South Loop Entrepreneurs also allows us to live out our core values of growth and service, as we seek to help our neighbors develop in their ability to start and grow their businesses.

South Loop Entrepreneurs has intro-

duced me to more people who are at least willing to hear the claims of the gospel. The network has also given me relationships among the people I need to know to see the church become reality. Additionally, an unanticipated but significant blessing is the leadership credibility I have gained among my neighbors by offering visionary direction for the network.

This leadership credibility is essential to successfully planting a sustainable church and gospel movement. South Loop Entrepreneurs has advanced that credibility in a broader network of relationships. As you consider the mission field where you live, what are the gifts or

abilities you have that you can invest in your community? How can you turn your interests into an opportunity to serve unchurched people around you? Who are the people in your community who share your passion? How can you bring value to the people in your neighborhood, town or community?

Joining others who share your interests or working to start something new will introduce you to people who are not likely to open their door for an outreach team, take a tract in public place, or stop by a church booth at a community event.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Dennis Conner is pastor of Advent Church for South Loop in Chicago, Ill.) **BR**

Centers

Continued from page 1

immigration,” Santos was quoted as saying in the announcement, “but we will help immigrants who are here get sound legal counsel as they file forms or meet with immigration officials.”

A resolution passed by messengers at the 2015 BSC annual meeting called the arrival of immigrants “a divine opportunity” and prompted convention leaders to establish Baptist Immigrant Services.

The resolution also urged churches to “pursue opportunities to tangibly meet

the needs of immigrants within their community as a demonstration of the love of Christ and in order to build relationships so as to more effectively be able to proclaim the hope of the gospel.”

BSC staff will lead a breakout session called “Loving Your Neighbor Through Immigration Issues” at this year’s annual meeting about the work of Baptist Immigrant Services.

Read the full announcement at ncbaptist.org. **BR**

NCMO

Continued from page 1

approximately one-third of the Church Planting Team’s annual budget.

Since 2017, the BSC has worked with more than 1,000 new churches across the state. Last year, those new churches reported a total of 6,756 professions of faith, 5,410 worshippers in attendance and more than \$139,000 in Cooperative Program giving.

The convention believes that God, in His sovereignty, is continuing to bring the nations to North Carolina. BSC church planting consultants are committed to getting the gospel to these individuals in their heart language by

planting churches to reach, evangelize and disciple individuals within these language communities.

“Every church can be a sending church and the requirement is willingness,” Pittman said.

Twenty-eight percent of this year’s offering will go toward planting new churches in North Carolina.

By giving to the NCMO, churches help plant churches that make disciples of Jesus Christ.

The NCMO is recognized each September.

Visit ncmissionsoffering.org. **BR**

MAKING BAPTISM THE STARTING LINE

During the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in June, the presidentially-appointed Disciple-making Task Force (DTF) released its report on the state of discipleship in our denomination. The report noted the gap between the reported number of baptisms and weekly church attendance over the last 20 years, citing that while SBC churches have baptized 7.1 million people, the average church worship attendance total has basically stayed the same.

Concluding that these statistics indicate a gap in local church discipleship, task force chairman Robby Gallaty asked, “Could it be that we have made baptism the finish line, not the starting line?” Gallaty and his team offered three recommendations for helping disciples grow after conversion.

- **Encourage Bible engagement**
- **Encourage group multiplication**
- **Encourage group involvement**

The task force recommended that every church should increase their efforts toward Bible engagement. According to research conducted by LifeWay, reading and studying the Bible are consistently noted as activities that have the most impact on spiritual growth. We must encourage Bible engagement and provide pathways for believers to read, study and memorize scripture.

The task force also recommended that churches begin to measure the relationship between decisions for Christ and group involvement. Re-

search shows that attending a Sunday School class or a home small group four or more times monthly dramatically increases spiritual growth in the areas of Bible engagement, prayer, serving, witnessing and giving. We must take seriously the planning, organization, and leadership training for our groups.

Finally, the task force recommended that churches measure their disciple-making effectiveness by examining the number of groups that multiply on a consistent basis. According to recent research from the Barna Group, 51 percent of churchgoers do not know the Great Commission. Another 31 percent have heard of the Great Commission but aren’t sure what it means. Reproduction is the key to fulfilling the Great Commission. We must help every disciple understand Jesus’ command to make disciples by multiplying both disciples and groups.

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina’s Sunday School and small groups ministry, under the direction of Rick Hughes, offers multiple training opportunities throughout the year to equip your church to make baptism the starting line. Learn more at ncbaptist.org/sundayschool.

The complete DTF report is available at 80by20.org.



BRIAN UPSHAW

EDITOR’S NOTE – Brian Upshaw is disciple-making team leader for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Contact (800) 395-5102, ext. 5632, or bupshaw@ncbaptist.org.

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OPPORTUNITY CORNER



Chapel at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest is open to the public.

Chapel is held every Tuesday and Thursday at 10:30 a.m. when classes

are in session (fall and spring). Special chapel services are occasionally held on Wednesday.

Check the schedule at sebts.edu/news-and-events/chapel/.

CHURCH FINANCIAL SEMINAR

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's David Blount plans to help associations and churches with financial tips at various locations. The event is design for ministers, financial administrators, treasurers, church committees and lay leaders.

Choose from the following topics: preparing for retirement, compensation planning, church retirement plans, employer provided benefits, managing designated funds, reporting charitable giving, tax updates and more.

• **Sept. 11:** Peninsula Baptist Church,

Mooresville, 6:30-9 p.m.; or Pilot Mountain Baptist Association, Winston-Salem, 9:30 a.m.-noon

• **Sept. 13:** Bald Mountain Baptist Church, West Jefferson, 6:30-9 p.m.

• **Oct. 4:** Raleigh Baptist Association, 10-11:30 a.m., 11:30-noon, lunch

• **Oct. 25:** Pilot Baptist Church, Zebulon, 9:30 a.m.-noon and 6-8:30 p.m. 20-minute personal appointments with Davis will be available between seminars. For an appointment, call Pauline Muller at (919) 496-7172.

Visit ncbaptist.org/financialseminar.



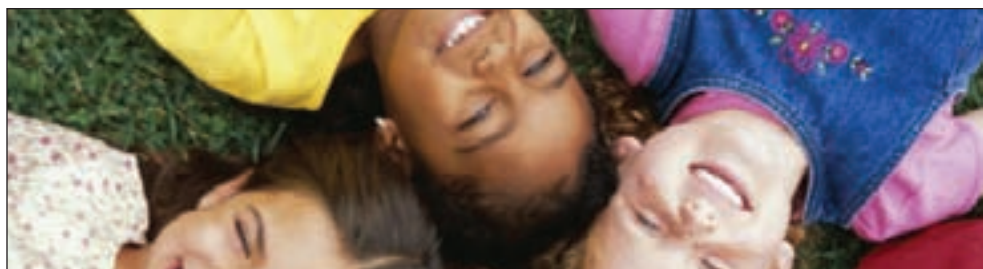
The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) is hosting Leadership Development Equipping Track 4: Competence, "Strategic Planning that Works" Oct. 4-5 at the BSC building in Cary.

This training will help leaders embrace the true "art" of planning and show how to align planning with realities of a church environment.

It will also help church leaders develop a corporate language about planning and train leaders in that language. Finally, this session seeks to help leaders

understand the different types and levels of planning and equip them in how to deploy the church's leaders to engage in planning. The speaker will be Bud Wrenn, a principal with Pinnacle Consulting and Coaching Group, the author of *Innovative Planning: Your church in 4-D*, and the founder of Innovative Church Community and Integrity Church. Cost is \$25 for Leadership training on Oct. 4 or \$95 for Facilitators Training on both days.

Visit ncbaptist.org/leadership; click on "events" in the left-hand menu and pick your event.



The Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina presents Children's Mission Day Oct. 12-13 at Mundo Vista Camp and Retreat Center in Sophia. Children from first through sixth grade will have a

program at 7 p.m. Friday (overnight cabin and campfire option is available) and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Register by Sept. 30 at mundovista@wmunc.org or call (336) 625-4828.



The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) and the Metropolitan New York Baptist Association (MNYBA) are sponsoring Coats for the City, a program that shares the love of Jesus by providing warm coats and the gospel to residents of New York City each December.

N.C. Baptists have partnered with the MNYBA in this effort for eight years.

Working with churches across New York City, coats are distributed, along with a Bible or Jesus film in the language of every recipient.

Donate coats through Oct. 20 to one of the centers scattered across the state or bring coats to the BSC annual meeting in Greensboro in November.

Coat distribution occurs Dec. 1.

Visit ncbaptist.org/coats.



The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) is sponsoring Worship Leader Boot Camp: Basic. This event is for worship leaders – band, singers, technicians, pastor – to gain a further grounding in musical issues that will provide tools for worship renewal, particularly focused on moving a church from a group of spectators to a body of active participants in worship. This training covers the material in an eight-hour conference on a Saturday.

Corporate worship times are led with

virtual worship bands and tracks rather than a full band experience. The conference will be Nov. 17 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Raleigh Road Baptist Church, Wilson. Cost varies from \$20-\$30 depending on when you register. The fee includes a 116-page enhanced worship leader handbook, Saturday lunch, a three-month subscription per church to nc.worshipplanning.com and a LifeWayWorship voucher worth about \$21.

Visit ncbaptist.org/bootcampbasic for more information.

AROUND THE STATE

Staff change

BRANTON BURLESON has been called to Grace Baptist Church, West Asheville, as lead pastor. He previously served as one of the founding pastors of Covenant Baptist Church, Arden. Burleson received an associate's degree from Fruitland Baptist Bible College (1999), a bachelor's degree from North Greenville University (2001), a master's degree from Reformed Theological Seminary (2007), and his doctoral degree (EdD) from Southeastern Seminary (2017). He continues to serve as a professor of hermeneutics (on campus) and Gospels and Pauline epistles (online) at Fruitland. Burleson and his wife, Jessica, have four children.

Retirement

TERRY BARNES retired May 2018 as minister of education from Crest View Baptist Church, Lenoir. He is a graduate of Gardner-Webb College (1975) and Southwestern Seminary ('77). Over his 36 years of ministry he served Adaville Baptist Church, Spindale; College Avenue Baptist Church; and Crest View Baptist Church, Lenoir. In addition he is the Region 7 director and feeding team leader for Baptists on Mission, team leader for Caldwell volunteers to the N.C. Baptist Assembly at Caswell Beach and has served for 25 years as volunteer chaplain for the Lenoir Police Department. He and his wife, Virginia, live in Lenoir and have two grown children and two grandchildren.

Graduate

Gardner-Webb University Divinity School had one summer North Carolinian graduate: Ronald Skinner of Newton received a master of divinity in intercultural studies.

September 16

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

September 23

Gracious Hospitality

Focal passage: 1 Peter 4:7-11

Apple Inc., now a trillion-dollar company, has hundreds of stores in the United States and has become a catalyst for many trends we see today in the realm of technology. But they are also known for something else: their retail store experience.

When you walk in, the staff acknowledges you, shows genuine interest in helping you and seeks to get you connected with the many services they offer. They have assigned staff based on their gifting and seem to always work as a team, accomplishing one objective: exposing you to Apple.

Likewise, as Christians, we must be known by our hospitality and treatment of those we meet, welcoming them into the gospel we profess.

Peter, in his letter to the dispersed exile Christians, seeks to show how biblical love and service for our neighbor must be grounded in hospitality. As we have been welcomed into the family of God by the gospel, we must now invite others to

experience the same love we've found. Therefore, Peter tells them to *"keep loving one another"* (v. 8) since it is the foundation of all hospitality and service.

As Christians, we must be the most loving and hospitable people. Our churches, then, must become environments for people to experience true love and true warmth. The good news is that, when we love and show hospitality, we must display our varied gifts. These gifts are then the conduit through which God receives glory (vv. 10-11). God is glorified when His people use their gifts to create welcoming environments that show tangible love toward each other and those outside of the church.

Rather than cold churches, God desires warm churches that overflow with love. Doctrine matters! But, Jesus said that others will know us *"by how we love"* (John 13:35) and we must show the world that hospitality matters.



TYLER FRANK
Young Adult Pastor,
Biltmore Church, Arden

"As we have been welcomed into the family of God by the gospel, we must now invite others to experience the same love we've found."

Focal passage: Luke 10:25-37

Perhaps one of Jesus' most famous stories, the "Parable of the Good Samaritan" has become the primary example of how to love our neighbor.

But, in full context of the interchange between the lawyer and Jesus, the story becomes less about random acts of kindness and more about biblical compassion and hospitality to our neighbors around us.

In this famous exchange, we see Jesus exemplify biblical love and compassion, and we learn how to imitate our Savior.

Jesus had been teaching His disciples and sending them out on mission. Then, a lawyer desired to test Jesus and justify himself (vv. 25, 29) by asking two questions: how do I inherit eternal life and who is my neighbor?

To the first question, Jesus sums up the law by saying that it must include total love for God and neighbor. Rather than doing this, the lawyer decides to inquire about the specifics of neighbor love.

"Who is that specifically?" he wonders.

In the amazing way Jesus usually answers questions, He then told a story (vv. 30-36). Three characters (a priest, Levite and a Samaritan) are introduced in succession.

Jesus chooses to highlight the true compassion that the Samaritan had on the stranger, the very person least expected! True neighbor love meets the needs of those around us. The Samaritan was the "true neighbor" because his love was defined by compassion and tangible action.

Like the Samaritan, our love for others becomes radical when it becomes unexpected and costly. Rather than self-justification, we seek the good of others and show compassion to those who have needs.

Genuine love replaces self-justification and thereby fulfills the law (Romans 13:10).

Do our churches and ministries love those that are different from us? When our love becomes costly, it becomes true compassion that glorifies God.

As D.A. Carson once preached, we must follow the "goodest" Samaritan (Jesus) and then imitate His love to those around us.

September 16

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

September 23

True Life

Focal Passage: Galatians 3:1-14

Think about your morning commute. You make a left out of the neighborhood, a right at the stoplight, then another left, then another right. Sure, you might take a side street to avoid traffic every now and then. But whether you are heading to work, school or the gym, you are going the same general direction each time. What if instead of making that first left, you made a right? What if after making that right you kept going? You likely wouldn't end up at work.

Paul was clearly concerned about the direction the Galatian churches were taking, calling them *"foolish"* (3:1). He asked the Galatian believers to recall what they experienced when they first believed. He reminds them that when they first heard the gospel, the message was very clear that Christ was crucified on their behalf. There had been no mention of adding works of the flesh to what Jesus had already done.

Paul explains Abraham was made righteous centuries before the law was even given. This was because of his faith.

How, then, could the Galatians be justified by a law that did not even justify their spiritual father? In the same way that Abraham was made righteous, they were made righteous. They would be made complete in the same way that they believed and received the Holy Spirit – by faith. By placing themselves under the law for salvation, they were placing themselves under a curse. They had already been saved by faith, nothing they could do would add to what Jesus did.

The same is true for us. We don't have to finish something we never started. Just as salvation is received by grace through faith, so is our sanctification. We continue to grow by continuing to believe. We will finish the same way we began, by believing that Jesus delivered us from the curse of sin by becoming the curse himself. Faith in Christ is what saves us, and that same faith is what allows us to live free, obedient lives for God.



ANTENESHIA SANDERS
Member,
The Summit Church,
Raleigh-Durham

Focal Passage: Galatians 3:23-29, 4:1-7

When my friends adopted their baby girl from Korea, she became theirs. As soon as she was in their arms, they began to care for her and console her. Not only did they assume immediate responsibility as her parents, but she was immediately dependent on them. She became their child in every way. She bears their name and receives all the privileges, rights and inheritance that come with being their daughter. This is the nature of adoption.

In his letter to the Galatian churches, Paul explains the purpose of the law. He tells them that the law was never meant to fix our severed relationship with God. The law, however, was meant to reveal sin and our need for grace until the coming of Jesus.

By trying to be justified by the works of the law, the Galatian believers failed

True Heirs

to realize their position in Christ. In fact, they were trying to acquire for themselves the position that had already been given to them.

When we come to Jesus in faith, we become God's children. He gives us all the rights and privileges of an heir. We have all the access to God that Jesus has. Where the law ensured that we knew our sinfulness, faith in Christ produces in us the desire to be obedient children. Paul explains that neither ethnicity nor gender or social status prevent us from being children or from receiving the benefits of an heir. God sent Jesus so all would have the opportunity to be adopted into His family.

My friends' daughter is in the fourth grade now. The way she boldly enters a room calling for "Mom" or "Dad" is a picture of what God has done for us in Christ. We are now His children, calling out "Abba, Father!"

When we approach the throne of God, we do so knowing that we have been adopted. Because we are His offspring, we have confidence before Him and the ability to obey Him.

SWBTS announces presidential search team

Biblical Recorder

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's (SWBTS) board of trustees released the list of names on its presidential search team Aug. 24. The 9-member committee will seek a replacement for former president Paige Patterson who was terminated in May.

The seminary, based in Fort Worth, Texas, is currently under the leadership of interim president Jeffrey Bingham, who previously served as dean of the SWBTS School of Theology since 2016.

SWBTS identified search team members in an announcement on the school's website:

- Danny Roberts, committee chairman, At-Large, Texas
 - Denise B. Ewing, Ill.
 - Jamie R. Green, At-Large, Texas
 - Guy G. Grimes, Calif.
 - N. Todd Houston, N.C.
 - Thomas R. (Tom) James, Ky.
 - Philip Levant, At-Large, Texas
 - Andre M. Palmer, N.Y.
 - Calvin R. Wittman, Colo.
- Trustee chair Kevin Ueckert, At-Large, Texas, and

vice-chair Cornelious C. (Connie) Hancock, Ohio, will serve on the committee *ex officio*.

Ueckert said the team will focus on developing a candidate profile and application process before the board's October meeting. He also said trustees would enter a time of "focused prayer."

Nominations and "expressions of interest" may be submitted via email at swbtspresidentialsearch@gmail.com.

Houston, senior pastor of Beach Road Baptist Church in Southport, N.C., told the *Biblical Recorder* he is grateful for the opportunity to serve both as a trustee and a search committee member.

He expressed confidence in the committee as an "excellent team to lead us through this critically important search process."

"I know our Board of Trustees and the entire Southwestern family are eternally grateful for the many prayers from our brothers and sisters in Christ, both within and beyond our convention," Houston said.

"I pray those prayers not only continue, but intensify as we begin this search process. We have one agenda: to find the man God has chosen to lead SWBTS for many years to come.

"My prayer for both our Search Committee, and for

our entire Trustee Board, is to hear from God as the Prophet Samuel heard from God when He said, 'Arise, anoint him; for this is the one' (1 Samuel 16)."

Background

Controversy engulfed Patterson in early 2018 when audio and video files were posted online that included past advice he gave to a woman about domestic violence and comments about a teenage girl's physical attractiveness in a sermon.

Trustees initially decided to move Patterson into an honorary role as president emeritus, which included compensation and a lifetime housing arrangement on campus, but days later the board's executive committee removed him from leadership at the seminary entirely, citing new information about his mishandling of two sexual assault allegations.

A committee member also said publicly at the Southern Baptist Convention's 2018 annual meeting that Patterson acted inappropriately in response to the board's investigation of the school's financial condition.

Patterson was president of SWBTS from 2003-2018. He had previously served as president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., and Criswell College in Dallas, Texas. **BR**

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Pastor

Aversboro Road Baptist Church in Garner, NC, is prayerfully seeking a **Lead Pastor** for a church with a strong missional and community focus. We worship in both contemporary and traditional Sunday morning services. While Aversboro has since its founding partnered with the Southern Baptist Convention, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and the Raleigh Baptist Association, candidates must have a demonstrated ability to work collaboratively with lay leadership, which includes women as deacons and in other leadership positions. A master of divinity degree or equivalent from an accredited seminary is required, and a minimum of 10 years of experience is preferred. Candidates must have excellent skill in preaching biblically-based messages, should be a collaborative leader skilled in equipping ministry teams, and will ideally have experience in supervising ministry and support staff. We seek a candidate whose faith is evident and who values relationship building and respects the congregation's individuality and local autonomy. Please submit résumés and cover letters to pastorsearch@arbc-garner.org. We will be receiving résumés through Friday, September 28, 2018.

Hillcrest Baptist of Kernersville, NC, is in search for a **full-time pastor**. We are a Southern Baptist church prayerfully seeking the man of God which He has prepared for us. For inquiries and requirements please email us at hbcpastorsearchcom@gmail.com.

North Henderson Baptist Church, Henderson, NC, is seeking a **full-time pastor** to a congregation with an average attendance of 75-100 for Sunday morning worship. We are a Southern Baptist church and firmly believe and support the Baptist faith and have a passion for missions. Applicants should be strong leaders with good pastoral skills and possess strong preaching abilities. Administration skills a plus. A minimum of 5 years' experience as a pastor with a degree from seminary. Interested candidates may send résumés to northhendersonbaptist@gmail.com; attention Al Taylor.

Church Staff

Oak Grove Baptist Church, Boone, NC, is seeking a **part-time secretary/treasurer** (20 hours per week). Please send all inquiries to revronhayes@gmail.com.

Oakdale Baptist Church is prayerfully seeking a **Part-Time Worship Leader**. The worship leader will work closely with our pastor to cultivate worship services, strengthen our choir and develop worship teams that help lead our congregation. Our congregation's regular Sunday attendance is approximately 100. We currently appreciate a blended worship style. We firmly believe and support the Baptist Faith & Message 2000. The deadline to submit a résumé is October 31. Send résumés to Oakdale Baptist Church, 585 Mocksville Hwy, Statesville, NC 28625. Or email us at: oakdalebaptist@bellsouth.net.

Mintz Baptist Church in Roseboro, NC, is seeking a **full-time Youth** and **part-time Music Minister**. Youth position to oversee all aspects of student ministries to include Bible studies, summer retreats, youth events and other youth programs. Music position to provide leadership in choral music and maintain a comprehensive music program. Contact church office 910-564-6500 or Mintzbc@intrstar.net.

BRnow.org

Mount Zion Baptist Church, Hudson, NC, is seeking a **full-time Associate Pastor of Families, Youth and Children**. We are a conservative Southern Baptist, mission-minded church who supports the Cooperative Program. An average of 300 attend our blended style worship service on Sunday morning. Our preference would be a graduate with a degree from a Southern Baptist seminary or divinity school, with at least 5 years of experience. More information at mountzionhudson.org. Résumés may be sent to Associate Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 292, Granite Falls, NC 28630, or mzbcpastorsearch@gmail.com. Deadline to receive résumés is October 1, 2018.

Miscellaneous

Cash Paid for Libraries. Baker Book House buys religious used books. Contact: quotes@bakerbookhouse.com or call 866-241-6733.

CHURCH BUS FOR SALE: 2015 Ford F550 powerstroke diesel. 28 passenger, 4,500 actual miles. FBC, Spruce Pine is now accepting offers. Further details by calling 828-765-3157 or emailing firstbaptist125@gmail.com. The Bus Committee will consider all offers and retains the right to accept or reject any offer made.

Share the Biblical Recorder – FREE. Order three months free. Contact liz@BRnow.org.

Do you have staff changes at your church or association? Or special news you would like to share (significant church or church staff anniversaries or a mission effort to reach your community)? Let the *Biblical Recorder* know by calling (919) 847-2127 or email editor@BRnow.org.

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

Cost for Baptist churches/organizations is \$1.25 per word, number and stand-alone initial (\$1.45 for commercial and non-Baptist entities) with a minimum charge of \$35. Classifieds also are carried online.

Trustees

Continued from page 4

integrity who has brought honor, integrity and success to this organization.”

He also asked the trustees to be in prayer for the search committee and for the future leader of LifeWay.

“We believe in a God who is sovereign over all things,” Scroggins said. “We believe God has had His hand and anointing on this organization for well over 100 years. And we are confident God will continue to sustain LifeWay and allow this organization to move forward and thrive.”

Rainer announced his retirement to trustees Aug. 27.

Other business

LifeWay trustees elected Connie Nelson as senior vice president and chief human resources officer during the August 28 plenary session. Nelson joined LifeWay in 2016 as senior director of Human Resources. She succeeds Selma Wilson who announced her retirement earlier this month.

“We are blessed to have someone of Connie’s caliber leading our people strategy at LifeWay,” Rainer told trustees.

In other action, trustees approved Chris Knight as secretary of the corporation. Knight, who joined the organization in April, is vice president and general counsel, overseeing LifeWay’s legal department.

LifeWay trustees also approved a 2019 budget of \$471 million.

New trustees

Rainer welcomed and introduced eight new trustees who began their terms with the August meeting. New trustees include Derrick Burt, director of music ministries at First Baptist Church, Natchez, Miss.; Curtis Clark, senior pastor of Thomasville Road Baptist Church in Tallahassee, Fla.; Cynthia Cook, a member of South Main Street Baptist in Greenwood, S.C.; Jacob Fitzgerald, senior pastor of Denman Avenue Baptist Church in Lufkin, Texas; Chad Keck, senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Kettering, Ohio; Benjamin Posey, pastor of First Baptist Church, Leroy, Ala.; Randy Smith, a member of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga.; and Curtis Woods, associate executive director for convention relations at the Kentucky Baptist Convention and a member of Watson Memorial Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky.

Trustees also heard updates from LifeWay leaders regarding progress and plans for ministry.

Resources

In his report to trustees, LifeWay vice president Earl Roberson announced

exciting changes in LifeWay Stores, including partnerships with Proverbs 31 Ministries and Passion that offer a store-within-a-store concept. These mini-stores will feature books, CDs, Bible studies, gifts and apparel tied to the ministries.

Trustees also heard reports on events and camps for children and students, which continue as mainstays of LifeWay’s ministry to churches. In 2018, 633 children made salvation decisions at CentriKid camps, and campers gave more than \$97,000 to missions through the International Mission Board (IMB) and the North American Mission Board (NAMB). LifeWay’s student camps saw more than 100,000 student participants and reported around 2,000 decisions for Christ. Students at LifeWay camps donated \$538,000 to IMB and NAMB.

Technology

Tim Hill, senior vice president and chief information officer, explained to trustees the emphasis LifeWay IT has placed on combating cybersecurity threats facing employees and customers. He detailed specific security measures the company is taking to keep corporate and personal information safe from potential data breaches.

Hill also outlined significant initiatives IT is finalizing for LifeWay Christian Stores, which includes a new modernized point of sale system and upgraded network and infrastructure that will roll out next month. The system will allow LifeWay to better serve customers with increased efficiency.

Organizational development

In Selma Wilson’s last report to the trustees before her fall retirement, she expressed her confidence in her successor, Connie Nelson.

“Connie is answer to prayer,” Wilson said. “What she’s already done in her short tenure at LifeWay is just the beginning of what she will do.”

Wilson highlighted several employee satisfaction achievements, including: positive feedback pertaining to the headquarters relocation, enhanced vacation policy, improved paternity leave benefits, a second-time Forbes award for being one of the best mid-size employers in America, and a first-time Forbes award recognizing LifeWay as one of the top employers for women.

At the end of his plenary report, Rainer thanked trustees and employees for the last 13 years. “You have honored and blessed me,” he said. “God has a plan for LifeWay, and I believe its best days are yet ahead.” **BR**



Who is my Neighbor? LUKE 10:29

NOVEMBER 5-6, 2018

ANNUAL MEETING | KOURY CONVENTION CENTER | GREENSBORO, NC

NCANNUALMEETING.ORG

... he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus,
“And who is my neighbor?”



BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOMES OF NORTH CAROLINA

MONDAY | NOVEMBER 5

Join us to see and hear the beating heart of **Baptist Children's Homes (BCH)** through song, testimony and the inspirational words of BCH president Michael C. Blackwell. **6:00 p.m.**

TUESDAY | NOVEMBER 6

Convention Sermon 6:30 p.m.
John Mark Harrison
Pastor, Apex Baptist Church





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Unite in 30 days of devotional study and prayer during the month of October. Prayer guides can be ordered for \$2 each, downloaded for free or emailed to you daily. Visit **Prayfor30Days.org** to access each.

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North Carolina Baptists

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