

## CONFERENCE TO REIGNITE PASTORS



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STRAWBERRY  
SAYS 'NO'  
TO THE WORLD  
SAYS 'YES'  
TO GOD



Page 4

# BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

SEPTEMBER 27, 2014 • News Journal of North Carolina Baptists • VOLUME 180 NO. 20 • [BRnow.org](http://BRnow.org)

## Philippines: Baptist Global Relief feeds, heals



Wells are an essential source for inhabitants of many of the Philippines' rural villages. Typhoon Haiyan disrupted this water supply by damaging pumping equipment of many wells and contaminating others. Restoration of these fresh-water supplies is a top priority in the ongoing relief effort. (IMB photo by Hugh Johnson)

By CAROLINE ANDERSON | IMB

**A** crushing wall of water from Typhoon Haiyan hit the city of Tacloban on Nov. 8, 2013. Thousands of people perished. Homes and businesses were destroyed.

The water beached cargo ships weighing several hundred tons. Water devastated Tacloban. But water also is what people need most after the storm. And water is the precious resource being provided by Christians like the ones from Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists (KNCSB).

Baptist Global Response (BGR) is partnering with Carl and Suzie Miller, International Mission Board missionaries in Tacloban, not only to provide water, but also rebuild the city of Tacloban.

Global Hunger Relief funds are making it possible.

"It's going to take a long, long time for Tacloban," Suzie said and starts to cry.

The city has long-term needs, "everything from getting water

## Global Hunger Relief

World Hunger Sunday: Oct. 12

into their homes, to getting a home, to having their schools ready, maybe livelihood, just the whole gamut of getting people back on their feet and helping them to move forward," Suzie said.

"For that long-haul building, it's exciting to know that Southern Baptists are going to be here," she adds.

The Kansas-Nebraska convention enlisted the help of Oklahoma Baptists because of their experience in drilling wells after

[See Philippines page 9](#)

## Ronnie Floyd visits N.C. to pray for revival

By MICHAEL MCEWEN | BR Content Editor

**A**fter Ronnie Floyd was elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) at the June annual meeting this year in Baltimore, he expressed his desire for Southern Baptists to come together in extraordinary prayer for the next great awakening.

"It's time for us to come together, for us to have visible union and time ... in extraordinary prayer," Floyd said in a press conference after his election. "Over the last many months, I have given my life to pastors and local churches together to practice hours and hours of extraordinary prayer for this very purpose, to see ... the manifested presence of God in our lives, to see revival come to the church of Jesus Christ so that America would be awakened with a powerful God-consciousness so that great numbers come to faith and trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior."

For three months, Floyd has been intentional in these efforts. Recently, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) hosted an event, "United in Prayer," meant for students and pastors to pray for awakening and persistence in the Great Commission.

"Revival is the manifested presence of God in our lives," Floyd said to those gathered Sept. 18 in Binkley Chapel. "Today, this Great Commission seminary is going to call out for God to ... raise us up" to fulfill His mission.



RONNIE FLOYD  
Guest Column

[See Revival page 15](#)



# Old Cape Fear church is new again

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

**E**ight years ago David Barco did not know Christ and did not go to church. Today he is the youngest pastor of the oldest Baptist church in Cumberland County. He calls this an “anomaly” that gives glory to the “awesome God we serve.”

Cape Fear Baptist Church (CFBC) was constituted in 1756 and has held a reputation of effective ministry to the Grays Creek community southeast of Fayetteville. But two years ago church attendance had decreased to fewer than 20 people.

“They realized this was a make it or break it situation,” Barco said. “They knew that if they didn’t do something, these doors would close and this would just be a historic site. They took a risk with me at 24 years old.”

As a teenager, Barco had no interest in church. But he was very interested in dating the woman who is now his wife.

“One of the rules of dating Danielle is that I had to go to church,” he said. “I hated [going to church], but I went every Sunday.” They attended Mount Vernon Baptist Church in Fayetteville where Ron Hester is pastor.

“I could tell God was convicting me, so one Wednesday night I went to talk with Pastor Hester, and I gave my life to Christ,” Barco said. “I was 19 years old.”

He began reading his Bible. “I started feeling like God was calling me to preach. I didn’t understand all of it, so I talked to Mr. Hester about it. He guided me, and I submitted to God’s call.”

Barco enrolled at Carolina College of Biblical Studies in Fayetteville. At the age of 21 he accepted his first ministry position as the youth pastor of Massey Hill Baptist Church. “I enjoyed youth



David Barco stands at the pulpit in Cape Fear Baptist Church in Fayetteville. He is the youngest pastor of the oldest Baptist church in Cumberland County. The church was constituted in 1756 and has a long history of ministering to its community. (Contributed photos)

ministry, and it was going real well,” he said. “The youth group grew from eight to 40. It was awesome. But I felt that God called me to pastor, and I always wanted opportunities to preach.”

When Barco heard the pulpit was vacant in another church in the area, he decided on a long shot to submit his resume.

He said, “A man from the church called me about a week later and he told me, ‘Listen, you’re too young for the job; God’s called you to be a youth pastor, not a pastor.’ I said, ‘Ouch.’ I was really bummed out about that. I thought I’m never going to get a shot at pastoring. I’m young, and no one’s going to give me an opportunity in an established church.”

In the spring of 2012 Danielle’s uncle was in a local McDonald’s when someone from CFBC asked, “Isn’t Danielle married

to a minister? Can you ask him to send us his resume?”

The uncle told Barco about the conversation. “I don’t want to be any part of that,” Barco said. Knowing the church only had 15 to 20 people left, he did not believe it would be a good match. “We won’t be able to do anything. It’s a traditional church – I won’t go well with the church.”

His wife encouraged him to preach for the church. “What’s the worst thing that can happen?” she said.

Although he preached at CFBC, he was still reluctant to consider a call to serve as the pastor. “I made up my mind that I didn’t want to even try to take a chance.

I would probably fail at it. I was comfortable in youth ministry.”

Barco prayed, “Lord, let Your Will be done. If you want me to take this church, please show me.”

A few days later, Massey Hill’s pastor, Tim Evans, called Barco into his office. “David, we’re going to have to let you go. We don’t have the funds to keep you here,” Evans said.

“This was a complete shock to me,” Barco said. “But that was God answering my prayer.”

He weighed the options of looking for a secular job or trying to get into another youth ministry position. “I thought, maybe the Lord wants me to take this church,” he said. “A lot of people encouraged me not to do it. Many pastors I looked up to said, ‘You’re too young for this church; it’s not going to work; the church is about to close; the church is going to die.’”

One friend explained that Barco’s philosophy of ministry would not work in an established church. He was advised to start a new church. “It is easier to give birth than to raise the dead,” his friend said.

“I thought about all of that,” Barco said. “As I read the scriptures, it occurred to me that giving birth and raising the dead are both miracles. But raising the dead is an even greater miracle, and God will get even more glory in that.”

He accepted the church’s call in June 2012. There wasn’t a youth ministry, children’s ministry or Wednesday night service.

He served bivocationally for the first

**See New page 15**



Signs to the left of each door on the front of the sanctuary at Cape Fear Baptist Church indicate visitors should enter through side entrances. The design of the sanctuary is reversed so the pulpit is just inside the front doors facing the congregation.

## BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

(ISSN 0279-8182)

News Journal of the Baptist State Convention  
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Founded 1833 by Thomas Meredith

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### Subscriptions

- Individual subscriptions, \$15.99 (one year); \$27.99 (two years); \$39.99 (three years)
- Bulk Plan, \$11.50 • Club Plan, \$13.50
- Family Plan, \$12.50 • Single copies, .60 cents each

Payable in advance. N.C. sales tax is included.  
Digital rates: \$5.99 (one year); \$10.99 (two years); \$15.99 (three years).

### Publication

Published biweekly on Saturdays by *Biblical Recorder Inc.*, 205 Convention Drive, Cary, NC 27511, as authorized by the Baptist State Convention in annual session at Winston-Salem, November 21-23, 1939. Periodicals postage paid at Raleigh, NC 27676.

### Postmaster

Send address changes to *Biblical Recorder Inc.*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512-1185.



# Conference to reignite pastors in their calling

By MICHAEL MCEWEN | BR Content Editor

**B**efore the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's annual meeting Nov. 10-11, pastors will gather at this year's Pastors' Conference in Greensboro to learn how to flee the passions of worldly living and live content in the care of the Lord.

Based on 1 Timothy 6:11 – “*But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness*” – the theme for the conference is “The Pursuit.” Each of the lessons will invite pastors to pursue personal holiness anchored in unwavering faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Josh Phillips, pastor of Cherry Grove Baptist Church in Cerro Gordo and Pastors' Conference president, said, “I am very excited about this year's Pastors' Conference. I feel this year we have a great lineup of preachers to encourage and aid our pastors and staff members.

“As we take ‘The Pursuit’ as our theme this year, we hope our pastors and staff members will see just how important it is to pursue the calling that has been given by God.”

Lawndale Baptist Church has hosted this event in the past, but this year the two-day conference will be in the Koury

Convention Center on Sunday, Nov. 9, 6-8 p.m. and Monday, Nov. 10, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Greg Heisler, senior pastor of Mount Vernon Baptist Church in Boone, said this conference is all about “pastors encouraging pastors. ... All of us as pastors need the Spirit's refreshment and refinement, and I have found that to come powerfully through the preaching of God's Word. My prayer is that all who attend will leave with a greater sense of the eternal weight of their high calling to be pastors, and a profound sense that with the Spirit's power and Word's witness, they can see God move in this generation.”

Speakers include Rick Coram, founder and president of Rick Coram Ministries, Inc.; Heisler; Phil Hoskins, senior pastor at Higher Ground Baptist Church in Kingsport, Tenn.; Tony Merida, founding pastor of Imago Dei Church in Raleigh and associate professor of preaching at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary; Bob Pitman, Southern Baptist evangelist; Robert Smith, Jr., professor of Christian preaching at Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Ala.; and Don Wilton, pastor of First Baptist Church in Spartanburg, S.C.

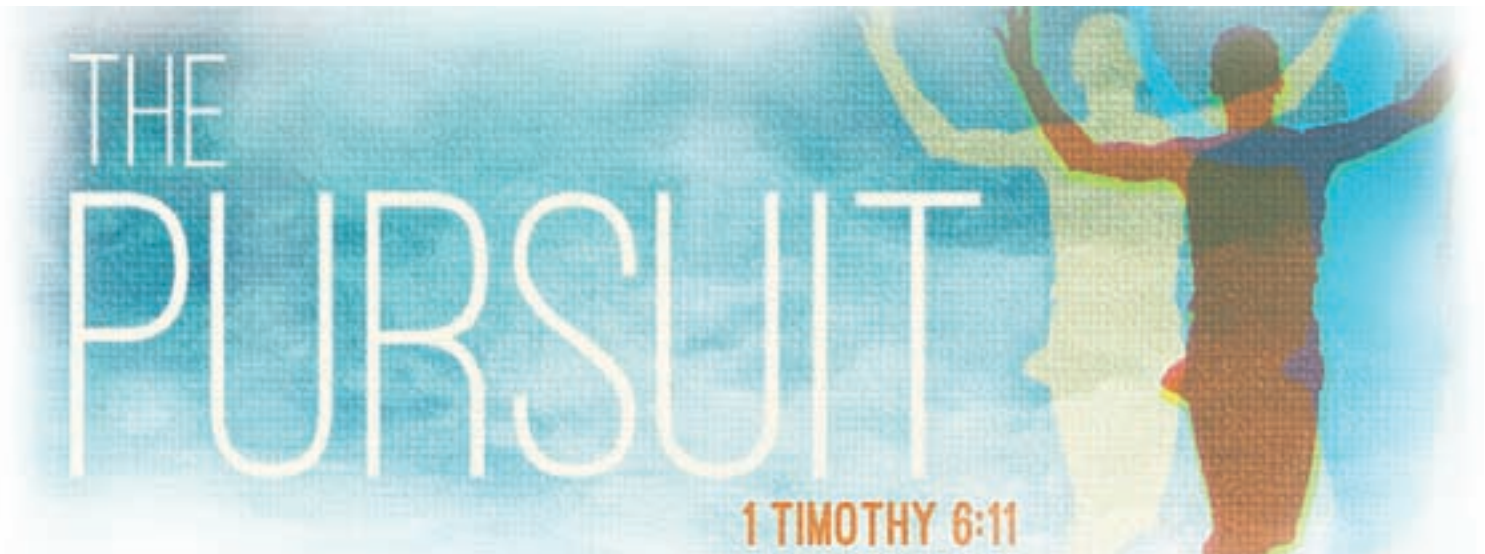
Phillips said, “Oftentimes in the min-

istry there are so many things competing for our time, our calling and our focus and if we are not careful, it's easy to fall prey to some of these traps. ... I pray that God will remind all of us as pastors just how vital our calling is. In addition, we pray that God will use the preaching, the times of prayer and the music to reignite some of our pastors that are on the verge of quitting.”

The conference is free to attend and registration is not required.

To find out more, visit [ncannualmeeting.org/legacy](http://ncannualmeeting.org/legacy).

See advertisement on page 6. **BR**



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## Baseball star says ‘no’ to world, ‘yes’ to God

**T**hroughout the 1980s and early 1990s, Darryl Strawberry was one of the most feared sluggers in Major League Baseball. At 6’6” he was known for his intimidating presence in the batter’s box and his extraordinary home runs.

During his 17-year career, he helped lead the New York Mets to a World Series championship in 1986 and the New York Yankees to three World Series championships in 1996, 1998 and 1999.

A popular player during his career, Strawberry was voted to the All-Star Game eight straight times from 1984-1991.

As great as he was on the baseball field, he struggled for many years with a devastating drug and alcohol addiction.

In this very candid interview Strawberry tells me all about how God came to rescue him and alter his darkness forever. Now an ordained minister, Strawberry and his wife Tracy have hit a “home run” with Darryl Strawberry Ministries, and have committed to help restore the lives of others struggling to survive the game of life.

**Q:** Based on your experiences with drugs, alcohol and overcoming them, what do you tell kids who are thinking about doing drugs and alcohol?

**A:** A success plan in life shouldn’t include alcohol or drugs. Let’s be realistic about this.

Turn on the TV and look at many of the Hollywood people, entertainers and

athletes and where they are right now. Drug and alcohol abuse leads you down the wrong road. It changes you as a person.

The devil is a deceiver and is trying to use those destructive forces on young people in this world.

God says the truth will set you free, and there’s nothing like studying His Word. Young people: seek after God yourself, and you’ll find the truth. God loves you.

He has a great passion for you and a plan for your life. For me and sports, it used to be about championships, about winning. Now it’s about eternal things, knowing God.

**Q:** Your wife Tracy sounds like she helped you get to the real issue – your heart problem – a spiritual problem.

**A:** She helped change my life. Thirteen years ago we met in a convention in South Florida. We started dating, and she went through some very hard times with me.

I was saved in 1991 and knew the Bible, but I was running from God. We decided to start over, leave South Florida and go back to St. Louis.

We got married and starting walking with God together. She is remarkable, and led me back to my faith. I always tell people it’s awesome to have a great woman who loves Jesus.

**Q:** At Sold Out Ministry, we work with students today and warn them

about the dangers of alcohol and drug use and about the importance of knowing that the only way to stay safe is to never do it the first time. But after all those years of struggling, was

it the spiritual change that completely freed you?

**A:** You’re right. You know recovery works but it was really difficult for me to focus because of my celebrity status.

I would go to meetings and have real trouble focusing on what was wrong with me. It wasn’t until I went back to God, started attending church again that I started to understand.

I began to study the Word hard, and I did that for five years. I was visiting my pastor, reading my Bible and continuing to surrender my life.

I began to do things different. I really came out of the world, and started to do it God’s way.

**Q:** It’s exciting to see how God radically changed your life. How can people find you and get involved with your ministry?

**A:** You can go online to [strawberryministries.org](http://strawberryministries.org). You can check out all the

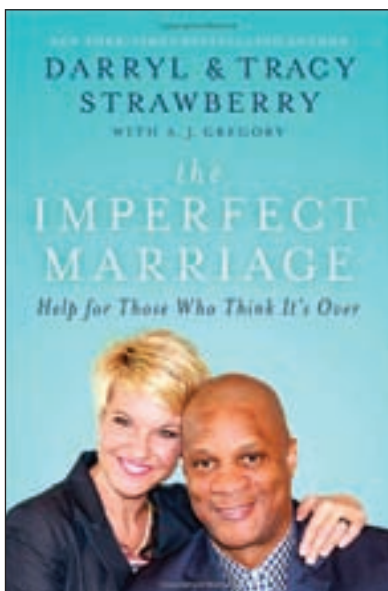
Darryl Strawberry helped his teams win several championships when he was playing baseball, but he had struggles which he shares in a new book, *The Imperfect Marriage*. (Contributed photos)

things that we do. For Tracy and I, it’s all about changing lives. It is not about us. So check this out!

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Roman’s Sold Out Sports Talk Radio program on American Family Radio can be heard in 200 cities nationally or streaming live at [afr.net](http://afr.net). He is an evangelist and motivational speaker. Visit his website: [soldouttv.com](http://soldouttv.com); Facebook: Roman Gabriel III Fan Page; connect on Twitter: [romangabriel3rd](https://twitter.com/romangabriel3rd). Contact at (910) 431-6483 or email: [soldoutrg3@gmail.com](mailto:soldoutrg3@gmail.com).) **BR**



ROMAN GABRIEL III  
Sports Q & A



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## Prayer webcast slates Ezell, Platt, Floyd

NAMB, Baptist Press

**O**n Oct. 2, Southern Baptists are encouraged to take time to pray for pastors and missionaries engaged in spreading the gospel worldwide. The special day, including a webcast, is part of the North American Mission Board's (NAMB) TenTwo prayer emphasis based on Jesus' call in Luke 10:2 to pray for more workers in the harvest field.

Jesus told His followers: "*The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest*" (Luke 10:2, HCSB).

NAMB President Kevin Ezell, International Mission Board President David Platt and Southern Baptist Convention President Ronnie Floyd will lead the TenTwo webcast. The half-hour prayer webcast – to begin at 10:02 a.m. Eastern time on Thursday, Oct. 2 – can be viewed at [namb.net/tentwo](http://namb.net/tentwo). "There is absolutely no substitute for prayer in any facet of life," Ezell said. "Prayer is the primary, fundamental need in any mission endeavor. I would not think of taking any action without God's counsel. And TenTwo is a daily reminder that living life on mission includes praying for others as God sends them to the mission field."

Floyd, pastor of Cross Church in



northwest Arkansas, said prayer is "the greatest action we can take to mobilize our churches and raise up next-generation missionaries to reach the world for Christ."

"God can do more in a moment than we can do in a lifetime," Floyd said. "This is why each of us should participate with the TenTwo webcast where we gather to pray online from across the world."

"No great movement of God ever occurs without first being preceded by the extraordinary prayer of God's people," Floyd noted. "This webcast is an expression of God's people praying in an extraordinary way. I hope many will join us as we call out to God together for the world to be reached for Christ."

Visit [namb.net/tentwo](http://namb.net/tentwo) or [imb.org/main/pray](http://imb.org/main/pray). **B3**

## Southeastern Seminary launches center on spiritual formation

SEBTS Communication

**S**outheastern Baptist Theological Seminary announced the new Center for Spiritual Formation and Evangelical Spirituality directed by Nathan Finn.

Finn is an associate professor of historical theology and Baptist studies. His work has been published on topics related to Baptist studies, Christian spirituality, ecclesiology and the history of missions.

The mission of the center is to promote spiritual maturity and the cultivation of a robust evangelical spirituality for the glory of God, the health of the church and the advancement of Christian mission.

The center plans to provide a resource guide for Southern Baptist churches and other similar evangelicals who are interested in these topics.

"I believe one of the great needs among this generation of seminary students and local churches is a healthy view of spiritual formation," Finn said.

The Southeastern fellows for the Center are Drew Ham, director of the

Office of discipleship and spiritual formation; Greg Mathias, associate director of international missions for the Center for Great Commission studies; Chuck Quarles, professor of New Testament and biblical theology; Steven Wade, associate professor of pastoral theology and coordinator of field ministry; and Keith Whitfield, associate vice president for institutional effectiveness and faculty communications and assistant professor of theology at Southeastern.

The center's pastor advisory board includes, Jason Dees, senior pastor of Valleydale Church in Birmingham, Ala.; Robby Gallaty, senior pastor of Brainerd Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tenn.; Dharti Lewis, lead pastor of Blueprint Church in Atlanta, Ga.; Ronjour Locke, pastor of First Baptist Church of Brooklyn, Md.; Josh Reed, pastor of Oaks Church in Raleigh; Juan Sanchez, preaching pastor of High Pointe Baptist Church in Austin, Texas; and Justin Wainscott, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jackson, Tenn.

Visit [sebts.edu/centers-initiatives/spiritual\\_formation/default.aspx](http://sebts.edu/centers-initiatives/spiritual_formation/default.aspx). **B3**



NATHAN FINN

# THE PURSUIT

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# 2013 MISSIONS SUPPORT by NC Baptist Churches



Just prior to the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, convention leadership published a list of missions support of the more than 4,300 churches of the convention in a special section of the Biblical Recorder. The positive response from readers was overwhelming, so we are excited to provide that information again for the 2013 calendar year. We do so with a deep sense of gratitude for the sacrifices made by churches and individuals to cooperatively support the ministries of our mission organizations. God has been faithful in many ways during these transition times at the convention and in our national missions organizations, and we recognize that our churches have been the instruments of His provision.

We also received some great suggestions regarding how we categorize the churches in relation to their missions giving. We have come to realize that resident members is often a very poor indicator of the actual number of North Carolina Baptists supporting a local church. So this year we are highlighting the top churches in Cooperative Program support by average

worship attendance, as reported by the churches in the Annual Church Profile or through direct confirmation. Those listings are found below, and we will provide the complete list of the more than 4,300 churches of the convention, arranged by association, in an upcoming issue of the Biblical Recorder. The list will include Cooperative Program support as well as contributions to the three primary missions offerings in North Carolina: the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions and the North Carolina Missions Offering.

Please understand that there is always the possibility of error when reporting so many statistics. But the convention has taken great care to ensure that the numbers reported accurately represent the contributions received by our accounting team from Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2013. These contributions do not include other designated gifts for our affiliated institutions and agencies, auxiliary (N.C. Baptist Men) or other ministries such as world hunger and disaster relief.

## Top 25 Cooperative Program Gifts: Churches with worship attendance over 700

CHURCH	ASSOCIATION	CP GIVING	CHURCH	ASSOCIATION	CP GIVING
Hendersonville First	Carolina	\$361,061.29	Garner First	Raleigh	\$133,693.32
Apex	Raleigh	\$264,466.00	Pleasant Garden	Piedmont	\$131,078.04
Hickory Grove – Charlotte	Metrolina	\$263,506.88	Lake Norman – Huntersville	Metrolina	\$126,139.34
Village – Fayetteville	New South River	\$244,898.95	Salem – Apex	Raleigh	\$123,475.30
Calvary – Winston-Salem	Pilot Mountain	\$221,000.00	Bay Leaf	Raleigh	\$109,614.00
Green Street	Piedmont	\$215,144.00	Parkwood – Gastonia	Greater Gaston	\$95,594.40
Rocky Mount First	North Roanoke	\$212,171.86	Snyder Memorial	New South River	\$91,882.14
Biltmore	Buncombe	\$205,000.00	Mud Creek	Carolina	\$77,160.96
Lawndale – Greensboro	Piedmont	\$182,639.25	Grey Stone – Durham	Yates	\$70,634.08
Carmel – Matthews	Metrolina	\$174,697.45	Rich Fork	Liberty	\$67,277.00
Life Community Church	Piedmont	\$171,234.29	Indian Trail First	Union	\$65,000.04
Kings Mountain First	Greater Cleveland Co	\$157,111.92	Center Grove – Clemmons	Pilot Mountain	\$57,285.00
			Providence – Raleigh	Raleigh	\$50,945.00

## Top 25 Cooperative Program Gifts: Churches with worship attendance 400-699

CHURCH	ASSOCIATION	CP GIVING	CHURCH	ASSOCIATION	CP GIVING
Charlotte First	Metrolina	\$306,930.18	Pitts	Cabarrus	\$102,836.50
Cary First	Raleigh	\$227,746.14	Dudley Shoals	Caldwell	\$100,215.99
Old Town	Pilot Mountain	\$209,522.78	Summerfield First	Piedmont	\$94,307.46
Elizabeth – Shelby	Greater Cleveland Co	\$190,329.94	Hephzibah – Wendell	Raleigh	\$86,711.72
Mount Vernon – Boone	Three Forks	\$182,414.44	Shelby First	Greater Cleveland Co	\$81,291.10
Matthews First	Metrolina	\$175,531.90	Bethlehem – Jacksonville	New River	\$74,612.13
Cornerstone – Greensboro	Piedmont	\$136,480.23	Mount Home	Catawba River	\$73,654.91
West Asheville	Buncombe	\$127,175.00	Millers Creek	Brushy Mountain	\$72,960.07
Friendly Avenue	Piedmont	\$125,656.36	Parkwood – Concord	Cabarrus	\$68,588.35
Woodlawn – Conover	Catawba Valley	\$120,296.16	Pleasant Grove – Creedmoor	Flat River	\$62,438.16
Durham First	NC Miscellaneous	\$117,065.41	Burkemont	Catawba River	\$61,394.00
South Point	Greater Gaston	\$113,654.81	Flint Groves	Greater Gaston	\$59,033.41
			Mount Vernon – Raleigh	Raleigh	\$57,099.98

## Top 25 Cooperative Program Gifts: Churches with worship attendance 200-399

CHURCH	ASSOCIATION	CP GIVING	CHURCH	ASSOCIATION	CP GIVING
Trinity – Mooresville	South Yadkin	\$177,104.57	Leland First	NC Miscellaneous	\$64,702.23
Sunset Avenue	North Roanoke	\$109,270.98	Bethesda – Durham	Yates	\$63,573.60
Peninsula	South Yadkin	\$96,903.00	Highland – Raleigh	Raleigh	\$62,170.42
Crossnore First	Avery	\$91,518.97	Central – Oak Ridge	Piedmont	\$60,657.00
Mount Zion – Hudson	Caldwell	\$89,168.73	Welcome First	Liberty	\$60,455.02
Theresa	Beulah	\$88,505.95	Calvary – Roanoke Rapids	North Roanoke	\$60,320.00
Glenwood – Glenwood	Blue Ridge	\$81,346.50	West Albemarle	Stanly	\$60,066.61
Alexis	Greater Gaston	\$78,881.44	Boger City	South Fork	\$60,000.00
Troutman	South Yadkin	\$78,179.73	Union Grove – Yadkinville	Yadkin	\$57,761.54
Front Street – Statesville	South Yadkin	\$77,410.79	Rutherfordton Second	Green River	\$56,698.00
Westchester	Piedmont	\$72,183.90	Rocky Hill – Statesville	Brier Creek	\$54,770.52
Coats	Little River	\$69,044.79	Clemmons First	Pilot Mountain	\$54,464.30
			Holly Springs – Franklin	Macon	\$53,283.98

## Top 25 Cooperative Program Gifts: Churches with worship attendance under 200

CHURCH	ASSOCIATION	CP GIVING	CHURCH	ASSOCIATION	CP GIVING
Philadelphia – Marshville	Union	\$66,364.42	Cresset	Yates	\$34,830.19
Becks	Pilot Mountain	\$63,635.16	Calvary – Gastonia	Greater Gaston	\$34,714.23
Flat Rock – Louisburg	Tar River	\$57,870.65	Magnolia – Stedman	New South River	\$34,406.49
Cornerstone – Charlotte	Metrolina	\$50,911.70	West Burnsville	Yancey	\$34,247.41
Beulaville	Eastern	\$50,841.75	Reeds	Liberty	\$34,173.62
Corinth – Rose Hill	Eastern	\$47,861.63	Genesis	Cabarrus	\$34,088.78
Center Road	Bladen	\$42,725.50	Manteo	Chowan	\$33,104.63
Mount Zion – Canton	Haywood	\$37,619.99	Weddington First	Union	\$32,990.02
Lebanon – Eastover	New South River	\$37,024.82	Belmont First	Greater Gaston	\$32,711.84
Crestview – Canton	Haywood	\$35,307.84	Love Memorial – Goldsboro	Neuse	\$32,692.50
Andrews First	Truett	\$35,228.44	Calvary – Reidsville	Dan Valley	\$32,661.24
Mount Zion – Cherryville	Greater Gaston	\$34,926.42	Warlicks	Catawba Valley	\$32,414.00
			West Hickory	Catawba Valley	\$32,014.32



# Two Morganton churches become one

By **TRACY FARNHAM** | Special to the *Recorder*

A traditional Baptist church seeking a pastor was approached about uniting with Journey Church, a congregation with a pastor in search of a facility in Morganton.

"We are a portable church looking for a place – land or facility," Mike Chandler, pastor of Journey said.

Journey Church, a church plant of Biltmore Baptist Church in Asheville, began meeting in August 2008. The congregation has been meeting on Sunday mornings at Morganton's Table Rock Middle School since March 2009.

Calvary Baptist Church was established in 1925. The church constructed a new facility, including a sanctuary, in 1993.

When first approached about the merge, Robert Bolick, chairman of the deacons at Calvary, thought they just wanted to use their facility.

"We thought at first [Journey] wanted to share the building," he said. "Talk about uniting – it caught us off guard, and then it made perfect sense. They needed a permanent facility to do worship, and we needed a congregation and a pastor."

"We have very few young people at Calvary, and [Journey] has a lot of young people. We're an aging congregation," former Calvary pastor Larry Thompson said.

Thompson retired as pastor of Calvary Baptist in June 2013 after serving the church for 12 years. He currently serves as interim pastor for Silver Creek Baptist Church.

"[Journey] had no building and we have a great facility, and it needs to be used," he said.

"I think it's wonderful ... the best thing that could have happened for Calvary



At left, Jean Stevens, a founding member of Journey Church, prays over the facility where Journey is going to join with Calvary Baptist Church as one congregation. A prayer service was held Aug. 9 where members of both congregations came together to pray for the church which will start meeting Oct. 5. (Contributed photos)

Church. It is a win-win for both churches."

While the pastor search committee was seeking to fill a position, Bolick said, "God already had a plan."

John Setterlind, worship pastor at Journey, recalled how Calvary was introduced to the idea by Jerry Stephens, "He said, 'pray about, think about,' and he left."

Stephens and his wife are two of the four original members of Journey Church.

"The Lord answered two prayers and it kind of dropped it in our laps," Bolick said.

"It is kind of like a marriage. Biltmore birthed [Journey], metaphorically, and raised them and now it is a marriage to [Calvary]."

Biltmore Baptist will continue in the role as a consulting partner.

"The facility is just beautiful and we want to add some complimentary elements to the traditional and vintage church look without taking away from that element," Chandler said. "It is a challenge, but we are getting a lot of people involved to do this."



## Services

Another part of the merger will include offering services that appeal to both the older and younger generations.

A traditional worship service will be offered at 8:45 a.m. with connect groups meeting from 10-10:45 a.m. A contemporary worship service will take place at 11 a.m.

At the same time children's worship for children from kindergarten through fifth grade, called Kids AMP (All My Praise), will be held.

"It's something for everybody. I truly believe that both services will grow,"

Bolick said about offering two types of worship services.

The connect groups will continue to meet on Sunday morning as well as throughout the week in homes, Chandler said. These groups are like Sunday school and they are both teacher-led and discussion-based, he said.

"The home setting is so much more informal and it creates an environment that people feel relaxed and a chance to be salt and light in the community," Chandler said.

Wednesday evenings will offer

See Churches page 13

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# Philippines

Continued from page 1

the 2010 earthquake in Haiti. In July, a team installed two well pumps in Tacloban and in a small community on the outskirts of the city. Water4, an organization based out of Oklahoma, provided the well pumps.

Instead of bringing multiple teams from the U.S. to build and maintain the wells, Larry Thomas, former KNCSB director of disaster relief, said they enlisted help from local believers to drill the wells. In the future, they hope to see believers trained to maintain the wells.

Joey Rojero, a Filipino-American from Kansas, worked with believers from each of the communities where wells were drilled or repaired. He has been Kansas-Nebraska's man on the ground in the Philippines since April.

One of the wells that received a water

pump is on the grounds of Kalipayan Baptist Church in Tacloban.

The church's pastor said the wells will minimize expenses for his church and the church will be able to serve the community by providing water. Wells meet a physical need in communities, but they also provide a source of income for the believers who were trained in well maintenance.

"It's an economic blessing for life," Thomas said.

"Speaking as a survivor, as soon as you can begin to make decisions and do things for yourself, the healing takes place a whole lot faster and that's one of BGR's objectives in this long-haul, is to help people from Tacloban begin to help themselves," Suzie adds.

Though much has been accomplished

through national and international relief organizations, Carl said full recovery is still a long way away. "Long-haul healing is needed," he said.

Though Global Hunger Relief and BGR's involvement in disaster relief in the Philippines began in November, their work in Tacloban began in April. After the typhoon, as the world's attention focused on Tacloban, Southern Baptist relief efforts focused on other areas not in the media spotlight.

Although the work in Tacloban is just beginning, the Millers say the assistance provided by Global Hunger Relief comes at a perfect time.

Some of the relief organizations pulled out of Tacloban in July – the same month the two well pumps were installed.

"I believe disaster relief is one of the

best opportunities for people to move from I am a follower to I am a disciple-maker," Thomas said. "It's going to be a catalyst to open a lot of doors."

Global Hunger Relief funds also will be used to meet chronic needs like medical care, education and food security.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Caroline Anderson writes for the International Mission Board from Asia. On World Hunger Sunday, Oct. 12, Southern Baptist congregations will address the hunger crisis across North America and around the world, many by focusing on the theme "Hunger Happens Everywhere." Visit BGR at gobgr.org. Donations received are channeled through Global Hunger Relief, which uses 100 percent of each gift to meet hunger needs. For more information, visit [globalhungerrelief.com](http://globalhungerrelief.com). Donations to Global Hunger Relief can be made at [globalhungerrelief.com/giving](http://globalhungerrelief.com/giving).) **BR**

## Embrace conference stresses boldness in evangelism

By ERIN GANDY | Biblical Recorder

**M**ore than 100 women from across North Carolina gathered at LifeWay's Ridgecrest Conference Center at Black Mountain from Sept. 5-6, 2014, for the Embrace Women's Prayer and Evangelism Retreat.

This year's theme was "Be Bold: Standing Up for Christ in the Midst of Change."

"We live in a changing culture, and while most of our lives have not been threatened because of the gospel message, at times it feels as though we are in the minority," said Ashley Allen, senior consultant for Embrace Women's Missions and Ministries for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC). "Paul is the example of one who took that mandate [Great Commission] seriously and shared the gospel in the midst of opposition. May we be found faithful to do likewise."

The special guest speaker for the two-day retreat was Mary Jo Sharp of Houston, Texas.

Sharp, a former atheist who holds a masters in Christian apologetics, is currently an apologetics instructor for the North American Mission Board. She is also an assistant professor at Houston Baptist University. Worship for the weekend was led by Ashley Seagle, leader of the BeDoTell Girls' Band, part of the BSC's youth ministry.

Conference attendees were made aware of the BSC's eight strategic focus teams across the state which are "committed to impacting lostness through disciple-making," according to *ncbaptist.org*.

Women were asked to sit at tables that



Phyllis Foy, a church renewal missionary with the North American Mission Board, leads women in prayer during the Embrace Women's Prayer and Evangelism Retreat Sept. 5-6 at Ridgecrest Conference Center. (BR photo by Pam Blume)

properly identified the strategic focus area in which their church was located. Tables contained facts and tailored prayer requests for their strategy area.

As a kickoff for Friday evening, women enjoyed games centered on North Carolina facts and snacked on Krispy Kreme donuts.

This was meant to foster pride in the state yet shed light on the extreme preva-

lence of lostness in neighborhoods and communities.

Sharp led three plenary sessions focusing on the reason for apologetics and conversational apologetics. According to Sharp, we must study our faith to "answer our own doubt which builds up our own confidence in what we believe and that changes lives." We must be confident in what we believe in order to

go out and share with others.

Sharp's discussion on the elements of conversational apologetics provided attendees with practical tips of how to converse with nonbelievers. Sharp emphasized women must know their faith, listen to others, question and respond. In her closing remarks Sharp said 1 Peter 3:15 encouraged that "we are not out there giving good arguments to be argumentative ... this is out of love and respect for the other person."

A question and answer time with Sharp was held during the final session. This allowed women to pose questions regarding concerns about sharing the gospel in their personal contexts.

Brian Upshaw, disciple-making team leader for the BSC, led an additional plenary session teaching the women in attendance "The Story" method. This is a simple method of sharing the story of the gospel divided into creation, fall, rescue and restoration. Upshaw said, "We are to be living the Christian life in such a way that people are asking, 'Why do you live the way you live? Why do you believe the way you believe?' and then we are given an invitation to share this wonderful story." Upshaw's time of instruction served to provide a framework for conversations Sharp had previously encouraged women to have with others during her speaking times.

Allen hoped women would return from the retreat to their home church "feeling not only encouraged and challenged to do the ministry of disciple-making, but [that] they also felt equipped to do so" in their contexts.

Next year's conference will be held at Caraway Conference Center Oct. 23-24, 2015. **BR**



**Our Vision** “By God’s grace, we will become the strongest force in the history of this Convention for reaching people with the message of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

# 2014 Annual Meeting to focus on 'Greater Things'

by C. Walter Overman



Messengers to the 2014 Annual Meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) will be challenged to achieve “Greater Things” for the Kingdom during this year’s meeting.

The theme of “Greater Things” is based on John 14:12, where Jesus promised his disciples they would accomplish greater things after His impending death and resurrection.

"Jesus' promise remains in effect for those who follow Jesus today," said Brian Davis, BSC associate executive director-treasurer. "Our prayer is that North Carolina Baptists will embrace Jesus' words in John 14:12 as we strive together to impact lostness in our state, nation and around the world."

The Annual Meeting will be a time to celebrate how God is accomplishing greater things through North Carolina Baptists and that greater things lie ahead for God's people. From the opening to closing session, messengers will be encouraged to attempt great things for God through exhortations from God's Word, worship through music, personal testimonies and during times of theme interpretation.

Jonathan Falwell, pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church (TRBC) in Lynchburg, Va., will bring the convention sermon during the special "Greater Things" worship service on Tuesday night, which will also include celebration through music and personal testimonies.

Through it all, North Carolina Baptists will be challenged to use everyday things and experiences such as careers, hobbies, meals, sporting events and much more, to connect with the lost in meaningful relationships that result in disciple-making.

patterned after the life and ministry of Jesus.

“Jesus invested in people’s lives, building relationships with them through their everyday lives and activities,” Davis said. “He also used everyday experiences and objects to convey spiritual truth and connect with those far from God.”

Likewise, the Annual Meeting will inspire North Carolina Baptists to connect with those far from God by challenging believers to be willing to be used by God and willing to use everyday items and experiences to impact lostness through disciple-making to accomplish greater things for the Kingdom.

## Strategy update

Throughout the Annual Meeting, messengers will hear how North Carolina Baptists are achieving greater things through the Convention's five-year strategy: "Impacting Lostness Through Disciple-Making."

“Disciple-making is evangelism plus discipleship that results in disciples who make disciples, who in turn make disciples,” Davis said.

The strategy was introduced to messengers during last year's Annual Meeting and Convention staff began implementing the strategy in January.

Messengers will hear a strategy update from Milton A. Hollifield Jr., BSC executive director-treasurer, during the Tuesday morning session. Convention staff will also be on hand throughout the Annual Meeting in the exhibit hall and in various breakout sessions Tuesday afternoon to answer questions related to the strategy.

Updates will include how North Carolina Baptists are engaging in collegiate partnerships statewide and how churches and associations are working together to

discover pockets of lostness and points of engagement primed for gospel engagement in the state's population centers as well as in rural communities. Messengers will also hear about the Convention's efforts to equip church leaders to implement disciple-making strategies in their churches.

## Pray Greensboro

On Monday, Nov. 10, prior to the opening session of the Annual Meeting, messengers can witness firsthand part of the strategy implementation by participating in Pray Greensboro, a time of prayerwalking around the highest concentrations of lostness in the Greensboro area.

Teams will register and receive a map of the prayerwalking area, a prayerwalking training video with a guide and a demographic overview to prepare the team for praying. Teams will visit strategic points of interest that are ready for North Carolina Baptists to engage with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Register at [ncbaptist.org/praygreensboro](http://ncbaptist.org/praygreensboro).

## N.C. Baptist app

Messengers will be able to view important information about the Annual Meeting on their mobile devices via the N.C. Baptist app. The free app is available for download at the Apple App Store, on Google Play (Android Market) and at the Windows Phone Marketplace and can be found by searching for “NC Baptist.”

The app features alerts, information about breakout sessions, exhibits, speakers, schedules and more. Users will be able to download the *Book of Reports* and the *Tuesday Morning Update* through the app.

For more information, visit  
[nccannualmeeting.org/app](http://nccannualmeeting.org/app).

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# ‘Left Behind’ shapes up to be best movie on rapture

**T**he new movie, “Left Behind,” is based on *The New York Times* bestselling book series that bears the same title, co-authored by Jerry Jenkins and Tim LaHaye, which has sold more than 65 million worldwide.

Stoney Lake Entertainment CEO Paul Lalonde, the screenwriter and producer, chose director Vic Armstrong and actor Nicholas Cage to remake this apocalyptic action-adventure film about the rapture. Lalonde and his brother Peter Lalonde were a part of the production crew that produced the original *Left Behind* in 2001.



**GINNY DENT BRANT**  
Guest Column

The movie follows Academy Award winner Nicholas Cage (“National Treasure”) as pilot Rayford Steele, who is 30,000 feet over the ocean when the rapture occurs.

Faced with a damaged plane and missing and terrified passengers, he must guide the plane to safety with little help from the world below which is engulfed in chaos. Buck Williams (Chad Michael Murray, “A Cinderella Story”) is the international news correspondent who unexpectedly serves as his co-pilot.

Hattie Durham (Nicky Whelan, “Hall Pass”) is a senior flight attendant on board who must set aside her fears and relationship with Steele to save passengers on the flight.

Jordin Sparks (2002 American Idol winner) plays a football star’s wife with her own secret, whose daughter vanishes on the plane during the rapture.

Meanwhile on the ground, Steele’s daughter, Chloe Steele (Cassi Thompson, “Cop Dog”), is left on her own to navigate the madness while trying to find her lost mother and brother, both of whom have disappeared in the event.

She struggles to understand the nature of God in a world spinning out of control.

Her mother, Irene Steele (Lea Thompson, “Dennis the Menace”), is caught in a rift between her faith and sharing it with her beloved family whom she warns about the coming rapture.

This film powerfully shows the chaos and results of people vanishing with no explanation through the eyes of Steele in the air and Chloe on the ground. Chloe searches desperately to find her mother and brother and puts her life at risk to save her father.

After frantically canvassing a hospital to find her brother, Chloe stumbles into the children’s unit only to find that all the children and babies have disappeared. A panic-stricken nurse informs her, “It didn’t just happen here. It’s all over the world.”

Paul Lalonde calls *Left Behind*, “A contemporary story that could happen at any moment. It’s based on a true story that hasn’t happened yet.”

Lalonde turned down offers from three major Hollywood studios to distribute *Left Behind* because those studios would not allow the final control to be in Stoney Lake Entertainment’s hands. Lalonde insisted Stoney Lake must have total control.

Lalonde desired to make this film bigger and better. With a \$16-million dollar production budget, he admits



Chloe Steele, portrayed by Cassi Thompson, has to fend for herself after people disappear and total chaos reigns in the new “Left Behind” movie, starring Nicholas Cage, Chad Michael Murray, Nicky Whelan, Lea Thompson and Jordin Sparks. ([leftbehindmovie.com](http://leftbehindmovie.com))

he hired Nicholas Cage because Cage was his favorite actor.

He also emphasized, “Being a Christian was not a requirement of working on this film. No one was interviewed as to their spiritual beliefs.”

He wanted to hire the best actors, director, camera men, etc. He also wanted to extend the audience beyond Christians. And with Cage, he will bring his movie followers with him.

The first *Left Behind* movie is based on the entire *Left Behind* book, while this movie is based on the first 30 pages which cover six to eight hours that day. The 111-minute film is intense and focused.

Author Jerry Jenkins said, “I believe this film does justice to the novel and will renew interest in the entire series.”

Jenkins provided useful notes for the script during pre-production and visited the set during principal photography. Co-author Tim LaHaye added, “It’s the best movie I have seen on the rapture.” Both men acted as consultants for the film.

Nicholas Cage recently said, “My hope for this movie is that people will be entertained and thrilled by it, but also that they’ll go home and have conversations with their family, and ask, ‘Do you

think this could happen, or couldn’t happen?’ and it’ll inspire discussion and closeness.”

This apocalyptic thriller is guaranteed to leave you on the edge of your seat while piercing your heart. With an amazing, well-written screenplay, this film is embedded in current events and has more storyline twists, turns and additional characters than the original movie.

You will be amazed to see the excellent work of director Vic Armstrong, who is also one of the greatest stunt men of all time.

He doubled as Harrison Ford in the Indiana Jones film series and served as the stuntman/action director for “The Amazing Spider Man.”

After seeing the movie, I agree with Tim LaHaye, “This is the best movie I’ve seen on the rapture.”

Theologians and pastors may disagree on the tim-



ing of the rapture regarding the seven year tribulation period, or whether the “snatching of God’s church” is separate or simultaneous with the second coming of Christ.

But on this we can all agree, Jesus is coming back to gather his church, and according to a poll conducted by the Barna Group in August 2013, “[41] percent of Americans over age 18 believe we are currently living in the end times as described by the prophecies in the Bible.” So my question to you is simple, “Are you ready?”

*Left Behind* is rated PG-13 and has been given the family seal of approval for ages 12 and up by The Dove Foundation. It premieres Oct. 3. Visit [leftbehindmovie.com](http://leftbehindmovie.com).

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Ginny Dent Brant is an author, speaker, counselor and soloist. She is editor-at-large for Sonoma Christian Home Magazine. Visit [ginnybrant.com](http://ginnybrant.com).) **BR**

**This film powerfully shows the chaos and results of people vanishing with no explanation ...**



## NEWS IN BRIEF

### FEMA council adds Baptist disaster relief leader

(Baptist Press) Fritz Wilson, executive director of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBD), is one of 12 new appointees to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Advisory Council.

Wilson was selected for a three-year term from among 200 leaders recommended from across the U.S., including elected officials, first responders, scientists, emergency management specialists and cyber security professionals.

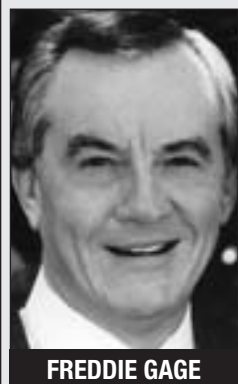
The 35-member advisory council, established following Hurricane Katrina, studies service gaps and recommends possible solutions to the FEMA administrator in the areas of disaster preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation.

"It's a high honor to represent Southern Baptists and Southern Baptist Disaster Relief," Wilson said.

Wilson, a staff member of the North American Mission Board (NAMB), said he believes SBD's reputation caught the attention of senior FEMA officials who chose him to bring experience and expertise in the areas of "standards setting and accrediting" for response groups. He follows Mickey Caison, NAMB's previous disaster relief team leader, who served on the advisory council in a dual role with another organization. Full story available at [BRnow.org](http://BRnow.org).



FRITZ WILSON



FREDDIE GAGE

### Freddie Gage, evangelist, dies

(Baptist Press) Freddie Gage, a Southern Baptist evangelist for more than 60 years whose fervency for souls extended to the Southern Baptist Convention's Conservative Resurgence, died Sept. 12 in a Houston hospital after an extended illness. He was 81.

Gage was among the initial inductees to the Evangelists Hall of Faith, created in 2008 by the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists. A former teen gang leader, he preached in more than 1,300 churches and crusades and more than 3,000 school assemblies and youth rallies. Full story online at [BRnow.org](http://BRnow.org).

### Chapman Center slated on Moody's campus

(Moody) A generous gift from Gary and Carolyn Chapman will help bring about unprecedented expansion of Moody's education and media ministries.

Moody Global Ministries' president, Paul Nyquist, announced that just north of the Sweeting Center on Moody's Chicago campus, the new four-story, 50,000-square-foot Chapman Center will house the Gary D. Chapman Library and Exhibit, Moody Theological Seminary Counseling Clinic and Study Center, The Gary D. Chapman Chair of Marriage and Family and the Global Media Center.

Chapman is senior associate pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem and a well-known author and speaker.

### Donald Whitney updates spiritual disciplines book

(SBTS/Baptist Press) Donald Whitney said the newly released edition of *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* contains new material with more emphasis on the gospel as a help to first-time readers as well as others intent on grounding their disciplines soundly in scripture.

The 1991 bestseller is widely used in seminary classes across the country. Whitney said NavPress approached him to revise the book for a 20th anniversary edition in keeping with a tradition established with the spirituality books of Dallas Willard and Richard Foster.

Full story online at [BRnow.org](http://BRnow.org).



DONALD WHITNEY

### Campbell attracts N.C. students

(Campbell) Over the past five years, Campbell University has enrolled more undergraduate students from North Carolina than any of the 36 private colleges and universities in the state, according to the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities' 2013-2014 Statistical Report released in late August.

In the most recent comparative data available, Campbell enrolled 4,440 undergraduate students from North Carolina during fall 2013. Only one other private college or university in North Carolina enrolled more than 2,000 in-state undergraduate students during fall 2013.



Members of Journey Church and Calvary Baptist Church are in the process of joining their congregations. They gathered in August to pray for the endeavor. (Contributed photo)

## Churches

Continued from page 8

university-type settings where people can sign up for classes on topics including financial management or parenting strategies and prayer groups will meet throughout the week.

"For the first joint service [on June 29], we tried to be very strategic really, and polled the young families about what they feel about having Journey Church brought into a traditional setting," Chandler said. Their response, he said, was "We could care less what the building looks like, it's what is going on inside the building."

Bolick agreed. "Words can't describe it ... for the sanctuary to be full of people and life and to see the older congregation accept it," he said. "It is great for them and great for Calvary. We are really excited about the possibilities of what a united congregation can do."

### The transition process

A transition team, including five people from each church, was formed and the team started conversations to work through the process of joining congregations under one roof.

"We chose some from each body so that they would be equally represented," Chandler said.

"We are working on a leadership model right now."

Suggestions for the church name have been received, and it is yet to be determined.

Calvary is unique to be able to reach in to the community, and Journey had been praying for three things for the church's future.

Those were: higher visibility, easy accessibility and a multipurpose facility. The facility at Calvary was an answer to prayer Chandler said.

He believes that while change is never easy, it is sometimes a necessity.

"We want to embrace change. Change is going to be what keeps us relevant to the next generation," Chandler said. "Many of our churches look as they looked in a '50s mindset. In a 21st century world ... you have got to always be evolving."

"We often get locked into our comfort zone, and it is not about our comfort zone. It is about what works. Churches are in a decline – we need to do something to regroup and reach the next generation."

While the facility may go through updates, Chandler said, there are certain things they will not compromise.

"We won't compromise who we are or what we do," he said. "The message is constant – it is what changes lives, but how you package the message brings people in and to strike a balance the message never changes."

### Outreach ministry

Calvary Day School currently has 70 students and this ministry will continue, Bolick said. In addition, the Shepherd's Kitchen and Come as You are Sunday school class will continue.

"It is great to see what these ministries have done and will do," Bolick said of the Monday night Shepherd's Kitchen which serves 125-150 people with only 6-10 workers. Also a clothes closet is open during this time.

"We try to be very visible in the community and we will continue to help with the city Easter egg hunt and Spooktacular ... we will be part of that," Chandler said.

Thompson said the combined efforts can provide more to the community.

"I'm looking forward to it, and I think this is a great thing for the city as well as for the community," he said.

Although the combined church had a successful joint service with nearly 425 in attendance and a smooth transition, there is much to be done, Chandler said.

"That's not to say that we've arrived," he said.

"That's just the beginning."

Joint activities will be ongoing until the Oct. 5 target date for the churches to be united as one. A lake baptism was held at Lake James State Park.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Tracy Farnham writes for *The News Herald*, Burke County's newspaper. For more information about the church, visit [calvarybaptistchurch-morganton.com](http://calvarybaptistchurch-morganton.com) or [myjourneychurch.me/](http://myjourneychurch.me/).)



# Buncombe Assn. celebrates 25 years of fair ministry

By RICK HOUSTON | Special to the Recorder

**A**n unassuming man walked into the tent alone. He asked worker Howard Bridges for a sandwich, maybe two, because he didn't know if he would be able to make it back later in the day.

He asked Becky Costner, another volunteer, if she could line him up with a Bible.

His Bible had somehow gone missing, and when Costner found him one, he left, disappearing back into the maze of rides, games and exhibits that covered the grounds of the Western North Carolina Agricultural Center in Fletcher.

Some of the faces have changed and others have not, but for 25 years now, that's the way it has worked at the North Carolina Mountain State Fair. The man with the two sandwiches and new Bible was one of thousands of carnival workers – known as “carnies” – who have been touched by massive ministry efforts coordinated by the Buncombe Baptist Association.

Churches from no less than 11 different Baptist associations in and around Asheville – Buncombe, Green River, Carolina, Polk, Macon, Transylvania, Yancey, Haywood, Mitchell, Truett and French Broad – took part this year.

Name almost any type of ministry, and it likely took place Sept. 5-14 at the Mountain State Fair.

A break tent served sandwiches, snacks, water and soft drinks, and Bibles were distributed at regular intervals throughout the day. Next to that tent was a smaller one, where a barber set up shop. Eyeglasses were passed out. There were tents for evangelism, tents where workers could pick out new clothing, a missions booth, courtesy carts and a bus where a total of 37 medical and 52 dental patients were seen.

In all, 10 carnival workers and eight fair visitors made professions of faith.

“I’m grateful for all the churches that take ownership in this,” said Perry Brindley, director of missions for the Buncombe Baptist Association. “The participation of individuals represents at least 11 Baptist associations that cooperate together. “But we hand this ministry to local churches, and local churches take ownership. That’s why we exist, to assist local churches in doing ministry in their communities and the region, to reach people for Christ.”

Many, if not most, carnies go from one fair location to the next. They come together in run-down cars, trucks and vans, and there are some who have recreation vehicles. Some came from area shelters. All carnivals have what are known as “bunkhouses,” which are essentially semi-truck trailers, divided into tiny living quarters.

When the bunkhouse has to pull up stakes early on the last day and head to the next fair location, those left behind to help tear down are essentially homeless.

“(Carnies) have been referred to as a forgotten group of people,” said Norma Melton, Buncombe’s director of church and community ministries. “They’re people who need to be loved. You’re out there, and you’re doing all these things, and you’re loving on them. They’re dirty, and you’re hugging them.

“One of them will get you aside and say, ‘Nobody’s



Volunteers discuss plans for the Mountain State Fair ministry. Because of the terrain, volunteers use golf carts to help fairgoers get around the fair. (Contributed photos)

here, now tell me, why do you really do this?’ You have an opportunity to share, ‘We’re doing it because God loves us, and He has allowed us to share that love with you in this way.

“He loves you, too, and we want to tell you about that love He has for you.’ It’s perfect.”

Relationships form over the course of time, and the carnival workers became something very much like family for those involved in the fair ministry. One by one, they come into the break tent, and they’re greeted warmly.

That’s when fellowship begins – by far, one of the most important ministries.

“They sit down at the table, and we say, ‘Hey, what’s going on? Anything you want us to pray about?’” Melton said. “They love to talk. The carnival workers love to share with you. They don’t have anybody to talk to. The interesting thing is that they see us as ‘the church.’

“They don’t see us as many churches and many associations. Isn’t that what it’s supposed to be? They’ll call us, ‘the church tent, the church people.’ They call us all year long, because they don’t have a church to call. They’re here this week. They’re there next week.”

Other churches and associations partake in varying degrees of ministry at other state fairs in North Carolina. Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem plans to cancel its Wednesday night services Oct. 8 in order to

allow its members to visit the nearby Dixie Classic Fair and invite fellow attendees to its Festival 31 event on Halloween.

The next week, the Raleigh Baptist Association is coordinating efforts at the North Carolina State Fair. Chaplains will be on site from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. ministering to the needs of the carnival workers and those attending the event. As at the Mountain State Fair, personal hygiene gift bags, clothing and a dental bus will be made available. North Carolina Campers on Mission also plan to feed carnival workers throughout the Oct. 16-26 state fair.

“Our objective, primarily, is to serve the people at the fair in the name of Christ, showing them the love and mercy of Jesus,” said Travis Williams, pastor at Treasuring Christ Church in Raleigh who is helping coordinate ministries at the N.C. State Fair. “Particularly, we focus on the carnival workers. They are usually in a pretty downtrodden state by the time they get to North Carolina.

“They travel 300 days out of the year. They’re away from their families. They’re barely making a decent wage. They don’t get a lot of breaks. They’re on their feet all day.

“This is a group of folks who really need to see the light of Jesus, so we try to serve them.”

Information on how to volunteer as a chaplain or dental bus worker, as well as donating personal hygiene gift bags, food items and baked goods, is available at [raleighbaptists.org/ministries](http://raleighbaptists.org/ministries).

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Rick Houston is a freelance writer living in Yadkinville.) ■



PERRY BRINDLEY



NORMA MELTON





At right, Ronnie Floyd leads prayer in Binkley Chapel at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Above, two brothers in Christ pray together for revival. Floyd, pastor of Cross Church in Arkansas and president of the Southern Baptist Convention, was on campus with Steve Gaines, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn., to call people – students, faculty, pastors and other church leaders – to prayer. “Revival is the manifested presence of God in our lives,” Floyd said to those gathered Sept. 18. “Today, this Great Commission seminary is going to call out for God to ... raise us up” to fulfill His mission. (SEBTS photos by Maria Estes)



## Revival Continued from page 1

Pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn., Steve Gaines said the early church was birthed in a white-hot, fervent prayer meeting.

“They prayed until God showed up, and when they prayed nobody had to tell them when He showed up,” Gaines said.

“When God shows up, you don’t have to ask anybody. ... A lot of people tell me that we need God in our government and we need God in our schools, but I want to tell you that we need God in our churches.”

Gaines also noted that missions happened when the early church started praying in a small, upper room in the book of Acts.

The two-hour morning session was set

aside for students and professors, and an afternoon assembly hosted area pastors.

Time was allotted in each gathering for worship, teaching and prayer, which concentrated on personal and national repentance, local ministries and international missions.

Nathan Finn, associate professor of historical theology and Baptist studies at SEBTS, prayed for spiritual renewal in churches and global awakening.

He prayed, “Lord, we pray that you would help us to be faithful in our going, to help us be united in our vision for

**“I want to tell you that we need God in our churches.”  
– Steve Gaines**

the greater mission, and Father, we pray and long for that day prophesied by the prophet Habakkuk when the knowledge of the glory of the Lord would cover the entire world as the waters cover the sea.

“That’s our prayer today.”

The president of SEBTS, Daniel Akin, referenced the International Mission Board’s statistics that report approximately 3.5 million people don’t have adequate access to the gospel, whereas 1 billion have no access at all.

“The Bible says that God will respond to the prayers of His people to get the

gospel to every tribe, tongue, people and nation,” Akin said.

“Might it be that the first and hardest work in fulfilling the Great Commission takes place on our knees?

“Brother Ronnie said in the beginning that [Southeastern] aspires to be a Great Commission seminary, but I’m wondering more and more if that means we must also be a praying seminary?”

Floyd plans to meet with senior pastors Sept. 30-Oct. 1 in Southlake, Texas, to continue praying for revival and awakening.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – To find out more about Ronnie Floyd’s prayer gatherings, visit [ronniefloyd.com](http://ronniefloyd.com). Get updates via [ronniefloyd.com/join-the-movement](http://ronniefloyd.com/join-the-movement).) **BR**

## New Continued from page 2

year since the church could not support him full time.

“We went to the drawing board that summer, and we worked. We set as our mission ‘To lead people to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ,’” he said.

“Every ministry is driven off this. We’re not going to design this church for church people, but for the unchurched. Jesus came to seek and save that which is lost. So that’s what we are about.”

On Labor Day weekend of 2012 CFBC relaunched. It was a way of making a statement to the community that the church is new and different. The congregation saw it as a new beginning point. They baptized 14 people that day.

“It’s been awesome to see what the

Lord has done. We have baptized 60 people in two years – 40 of those are adults. The majority of our people did not grow up in church, and most did not go to church before they came here,” Barco said.

The sanctuary was built in 1859. It was spared destruction during the Civil War because it was used as a hospital. “When people look at the building, they think it is a traditional church – because of the old building. But the church has had a complete change.”

Barco preaches in jeans and a casual shirt.

“We have an awesome praise team and sing contemporary music,” he said.

“People say a church must look a certain way to attract people, and the

building needs to be relevant. I don’t believe that. When I was lost I did not want to go to any church, no matter what it looked like.”

Tina Drake leads the praise team and has been a church member for four years. “Two years ago, CFBC was a mere skeleton of the church it once was, with only a handful of dedicated members fighting to keep it alive. Now, the church is thriving,” she said. “My own teenagers refuse to miss a church service because they are so excited to participate.”

The church has averaged around 100 in attendance this year. Barco said 25-30 youth participate in a thriving youth ministry. There are Sunday School classes for all ages now, and Barco leads a class called “Starting Point” for new believers.

A small group ministry is scheduled to launch in October. He believes this will be a great entry point into the church. “I’m stoked for that,” Barco said. “I think it’s going to take us to another level. These will be in homes, restaurants, wherever they choose. They will invite their unchurched friends to join the group.”

Jamie Cottrell, the director for the small groups ministry, grew up in CFBC. “Before our relaunch, I thought it was time to be looking for a new church because the doors were starting to shut. When David and Danielle came to the church it was our last hope.” She said the relaunch brought the church together. “We want to tell the world what is going on at Cape Fear Baptist.” **BR**



# Impacting lostness through disciple-making

In the past nine months, our convention staff has begun the work of implementing our five-year strategy to impact lostness through disciple-making. The work that has been accomplished is the result of North Carolina Baptists embracing the strategy and partnering together to make a difference.

For example, many churches have a vision for collegiate ministry and are working with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in developing campus ministries, like the churches of the South Roanoke and Stanley associations that are planning ministries at community colleges in their respective areas.

In the mountains, churches are beginning new works at Lees-McRae College, Mayland Community College and at

Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, among others. The new Campus Church at Western Carolina University reaches more than 600 students and adults each Sunday.

Students comprise approximately 80 percent of this congregation – they are disciplined, and in turn, reach other students with the gospel.

Convention collegiate partnership staff continues to work with networks of churches that are launching ministries at universities where the Convention has traditionally operated Baptist Campus Ministry. At

only nine months into the new strategy, North Carolina Baptists have more than doubled their gospel presence on college campuses across the state – and this is only the beginning!



**MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.**  
BSC executive  
director-treasurer

## TAR HEEL VOICES

### Bible camp opens door to minister

Praise the Lord and thanks to those who took advantage of the “open door” to minister to the children in the schools in Hungary. How exciting to read of the English Bible camps that gave children the opportunity to hear the news of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Not only the children, but also the parents, teachers and even

the school principal received the good news. What a great opportunity for volunteers to go and minister to the Roma communities. I pray several VBS teams will go from North Carolina.

**Clara Huff, emeritus missionary to Chile, Wilmington**

### Hunger is everyone's problem

For many in North America, hunger is someone else's problem. It's the emaciated children halfway around the world. It's people who live on the other side of the tracks. And, occasionally, it's the person holding a cardboard sign at a freeway exit.

But as a follower of Jesus, hunger is your problem and it's my problem. Jesus showed us, over and over again in the gospels, that the physical needs of those around us matter to God – and should matter to us as well. Because Jesus didn't ignore hunger (read the stories of Jesus multiplying the fish and the loaves in the Gospels), we can't ignore it either.

Hunger impacts one in six Americans. No matter where you live, you know someone who is hungry. And no matter how it appears on the outside, that hunger impacts every area of life – including physical health, mental processing ability and social relationships. In the wealthiest country in the history of

the world, more than a third of poor families in the United States have to choose whether to eat or pay for a roof over their heads. That's why Southern Baptists have worked together for decades to push back hunger in North America. Through

your gifts to Southern Baptist Global Hunger Relief ([global-hungerrelief.com](http://global-hungerrelief.com)) – more than \$1.1 million in 2013 – local church-based ministries in big cities and small towns provide food for hungry people throughout the U.S. and Canada.

More important, these ministries provide hope, by connecting the hungry to gospel-preaching churches where they can hear about Jesus and learn to follow Him. Your gifts

to Global Hunger Relief last year led to more than 22,000 professions of faith reported through Southern Baptist hunger ministries in North America.

Lynn Gardens Baptist Church in Pueblo, Colo., is a great example of this.



**KEVIN EZELL**  
Guest column

North Carolina Baptists have also embraced the newly formed Strategic Focus Team (SFT), which assists churches and associations to impact lostness where the greatest numbers of lost people reside in this state. SFT strategists have immersed themselves in their areas, forming relationships with church and associational leaders while raising awareness of the depths of lostness in their locations. In the Triad population center, several churches have begun reaching an unreached and unengaged people group in that area. Other Convention employees are working with associational leadership in rural areas to develop strategies to impact lostness and strengthen existing churches.

Part of our strategy emphasizes planting new churches to reach our state's growing diversity. To that end, our Church Planting and Missions Partnership Group launched an initiative in January to identify unreached people groups living in North Carolina. With the help of churches and associations, they have discovered more than 50 points of

engagement in the Charlotte, Triad and Triangle areas that are primed for new ethnic church plants.

North Carolina Baptists have also embraced the strategy's emphasis on discipleship. In 2014, one of the approaches our Evangelism & Discipleship Group is using to strengthen existing churches is by training more than 500 people in The Story. This is a conversational evangelism technique that equips believers to live and share the gospel through the framework of discipleship.

It is great to see this growing number of North Carolina Baptists embrace the strategy. Your eagerness to partner together, whether in starting collegiate ministries, reaching out to people groups, planting churches, helping identify people groups or learning strategies for evangelism and discipleship, makes a difference.

As more North Carolina Baptists engage in Kingdom advancement, God will use the churches of this Convention in even greater ways to impact lostness through a disciple-making culture. **BR**

## DISCIPLE-MAKING GUITAR LESSONS?

As I have wrestled with my understanding of disciple-making I have learned a very simple truth: making disciples is an intentional process. Making disciples is not a one-time effort, or series of one-time efforts, but a process. The disciple-making process is most effective where relationships are established, nourished and sustained. I have been asking God to help me evaluate my intentionality as a disciple-maker and He has helped me to see that I have been missing a wonderful opportunity to do so in my very home.

When I say, “in my very home” I'm not talking about disciple-making with my family, but with guests who come on a regular basis. I play the guitar and for years I have given guitar lessons. More often than not, my students are younger children who visit on Saturdays for an hour. Sadly, I must confess that while being kind, patient and gracious – all Christ-like qualities, I was not intentional in sharing the gospel and helping these young believers grow in their faith so they might make disciples as well.

So, I have changed my entire approach to guitar lessons. In the past

parents wanted me to give their child lessons because I did not charge a fee. But now, there is a different motivation. Parents who often sit with their child while I'm teaching are hearing me share the gospel. Some of these parents are learning how to have gospel-centered conversations with their children. Some of my students are coming to Christ, and those who are already followers are growing in that relationship.

The process is simple: I have one hour with the student. I intentionally pick songs to teach the student that have a clear gospel message. As we play the song, I sing the lyrics over and over again. We do this for 45 minutes. Then the final 15 minutes are spent talking with the student about the lyrics of the songs we've been singing. It's simple, but I've found it effective as souls are coming to Christ and/or growing in their relationship with Christ.

What opportunities have you been given that can be used to make disciples?

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Brian K. Davis is associate executive director-treasurer for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Contact him at [bdavis@ncbaptist.org](mailto:bdavis@ncbaptist.org).)



**BRIAN K. DAVIS**



## OPPORTUNITY CORNER

### Baptists on Mission plan RA tent weekend

Baptists on Mission are providing a tent camping opportunity for Royal Ambassadors Oct. 3-5 at Camp Raven Knob in Mount Airy. The weekend includes free time with your group, fun activities and camp craft classes planned around cook times. Recreation options may include fishing, rock wall climbing, archery and air rifles.

There will be entertainment and a speaker. Onsite registration will be 5-6 p.m. Friday. Activities will continue until 11 a.m. Sunday morning after camp-wide worship. A missions offering will be received. Cost is \$12.

Visit [baptistsonmission.org/Events/Children/Royal-Ambassadors/2014-RA-Camporee](http://baptistsonmission.org/Events/Children/Royal-Ambassadors/2014-RA-Camporee). T-shirts, snacks and drinks will be available for purchase.

### Men's worship, missions weekend set

North Carolina Baptists on Mission is hosting a men's worship weekend from Oct. 10-11 at Red Springs Missions Camp. Men will participate in a weekend of fellowship, worship and missions. The camp provides a place where volunteers can use their God-given skills to rebuild homes during a hands-on mission project. Most projects involve the building of new homes and renovation of existing ones in and around the Robeson County area. There will also be a men's worship rally and devotional times throughout the weekend.

Check-in is from 4-6 p.m. on Friday. Supper at 6 p.m. The worship rally is at 7. Weekend will conclude at 5 p.m. Saturday. Cost is \$24. Thursday night arrival is an option but increases the cost to \$45. Visit [baptistsonmission.org/Events/Adult/Men-s-Ministry/Men-s-Work-Worship-Weekend-at-Red-Springs-Mission](http://baptistsonmission.org/Events/Adult/Men-s-Ministry/Men-s-Work-Worship-Weekend-at-Red-Springs-Mission).

### Conference helps train for literacy, ESL

North Carolina Baptists are providing a Literacy Missions Conference Oct. 17-18 in the Caraway Conference Center near Asheboro.

The literacy mission volunteers to do quality instruction while connecting people to Christ. Sessions include teaching children and youth, story writing, ESL, vocabulary, VBS with internationals and ESL picture communication.

Leaders include Glenda Reece, Doris Edwards, Tom and Carla Pless, Ann Knowles, Dick Pacetti, Kathy Boyd and others.

Prices vary according to lodging. Registration begins at 2 p.m. Oct. 17 with orientation at 3:15. There are several seminars offered throughout the conference.

The event ends Saturday at 3 p.m. To register or get more information, visit [ncbaptist.org/literacymissionsconf](http://ncbaptist.org/literacymissionsconf).

### BCH hosts Unite event for youth

Residents of Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina (BCH) and youth from surrounding churches came together again this year for Unite, an event focused on evangelism, music and fellowship. It will take place on Sat., Oct. 18 at BCH's Mills Home in Thomasville. This year's featured speaker is Jonathan Evans, chaplain of the Dallas Cowboys and former NFL player.

Unite's mission is to bring youth, churches and the community together for the cause of Christ. Joining Evans is Flame of God, a North Carolina-based Christian rap artist, singer; author Roberta Brunck, a former BCH resident; and Liberty University's S.O.A.R. Dunk, an acrobatic basketball team. Awestruck, the contemporary worship band from Awestruck Church in Gibsonville, is returning to this year's Unite. Unite begins at 12:30 p.m. with free food, inflatable games and other activities. A dodgeball tournament for groups that have pre-registered also begins at 12:30. S.O.A.R. Dunk performs at 2:45. The food area and all other activities end at 3 p.m. for the start of the main program.

Unite is a free event. To register, the dodgeball tournament (space is limited to 16 teams), or to volunteer, visit [standupunite.com](http://standupunite.com). For more information, contact Tabitha Ward at [tward@bchfamily.org](mailto:tward@bchfamily.org) or (336) 313-9512.

## AROUND THE STATE

### Staff changes

**CHAD TUCKER** has been called as senior pastor of Grove Park Baptist Church, Burlington. He previously pastored Hepzibah Baptist Church, Princeton.

Grove Park Baptist Church, Burlington, has called **JOHN ADAMS** as minister to youth, college and career.

### Anniversary

**CENTER GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH**, Clemmons, celebrates its 100th anniversary Sept. 28. Led by Pastor Steve Corts, the 9:30 a.m. service will mark the first century of the church, which held its first service on June 14, 1914, in a chapel built on a three-acre tract. Prior to that, the congregation had met monthly under a brush arbor, while the chapel was built. The chapel and an addition are now a student center. The church itself moved to a new building a couple of miles away. More than 1,100 people attend a Sunday service. Lunch is provided after the service.

## Carver: Churches should minister to veterans

By **JACQUI CLAYPOOL** | Special to the Recorder

**T**he tragedy of 9/11 casts a long shadow over the mental health problems faced by military veterans returning from the Afghanistan and Iraq battlefields.

Retired U.S. Army chaplain Major General Douglas Carver spoke at a meeting of Agape, a Christian counseling service in Charlotte, on the anniversary of that infamous day. He told workers and supporters that "175,000 veterans have or will come to North Carolina communities after leaving the Armed Services." Many of them will be seeking mental health care. That is why faith-based organizations in North Carolina are needed to work with or refer those seeking help to the proper counseling services.

He pointed out that emotional events take place when men and women serving this country face the jaws of death on the battlefield.

Carver, a member of First Baptist Church in Matthews, said, "According to a 2014 poll, conducted by *The Washington Post* and Kaiser Family Foundation, more than 260 million veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan struggle with physical or mental health problems as a result

of the deployment into a combat environment. One of those emotional costs is depression."

Carver, who is the former Army chief of chaplains at the Pentagon, said "Current Department of Veterans Affairs statistics reveal that a veteran commits suicide every 65 minutes. Veterans, having survived the challenges of war, often come home to fight another type of war with family stress, reintegration and post-traumatic stress."

He emphasized that it is important for communities to assist a vet by simply "getting to know them and help them reconnect with their families and local support groups."

The former chaplain, who now serves as the executive director of chaplaincy services

for the North American Mission Board, said, "Churches and faith-based organizations play a critical role in helping our veterans achieve a sense of normalcy in their lives."

"According to a 2011 Pew Research Center study, veterans who attend a religious service once a week have a 67 percent chance of recovering from their war wounds," Carver said.

"In another study, only four percent of churches advertise or provide some kind

**See Veterans page 19**



**DOUG CARVER**

## CHURCH NEWS



### French Broad Baptist Church, Hendersonville

On Sunday, Sept. 14, French Broad Baptist Church, Hendersonville, celebrated its 225th anniversary. French Broad is, by most accounts, both the oldest Baptist church west of the Blue Ridge and the oldest Baptist church in Henderson County. The church celebrated with special activities such as a bell ringing, a historical reenactment of an early service, a photograph and memorabilia display and dinner on the grounds. The current pastor of 14 years, Kemuel Pruitt, above left, delivered a message at the celebration and then a former pastor, Mervyn Garrison, shared memories and reflections of his time at French Broad. Seven other Baptist churches in the area formed as daughter churches of French Broad Baptist. Those churches include Mud Creek, Cane Creek, Beulah, Ebenezer, Mills River, Shaw's Creek and Cathey's Creek in Transylvania County. Today, the church has about 240 active members and supports local and overseas missions. Visit [frenchbroadbaptistchurch.com](http://frenchbroadbaptistchurch.com).



October 5 BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE October 12

Connected in Service Connected Through Prayer

Focal Passage: Ephesians 5:15-21

In our culture today, staying connected is pretty easy. We can instantly check our emails, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram with just one touch on our phone. We can FaceTime or Skype with family and friends around the world. So if it's that simple, then why does it seem like work to remain connected in the church? Take a moment and gauge your level of connectivity in serving the body of Christ. Are you serving regularly? Are you serving at all? Very often, our connections on social media are one-sided. We are broadcasting our thoughts to the world or our photographs with the most flattering angle of who? You guessed it: ourselves. When we feel like "disconnecting," we just close the app or turn off our computer. Service in the body of Christ is not something that we can choose to be "disconnected" from. Scripture calls us to serve one another. In Ephesians 5, Paul calls us to serve each other with wisdom. He counsels the believers to live wisely, not foolishly, and to make the most of every opportunity. In other words, redeem the time

for the days are evil. How much time are you spending – unwisely – in superficial, surface-level (possibly me-centered) connections on social media? How can you better make use of your time by sacrificially serving others? In light of this week's theme of service, Paul also instructs the church in Ephesus to "be filled with the Holy Spirit" (v. 18). When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we are emptied of ourselves. Paul uses a conditional statement in Philippians 2:1-4 to describe this: "... If [you have] any fellowship with the Spirit ... then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves ...." We are to humbly serve in submission to the Spirit. Lastly, Paul makes the point that our union with the Spirit should affect how we live as believers. Read the remaining verses and jot down the ways Paul describes how we should live as children of light.



HILARY RATCHFORD  
Writer, Southeastern  
Seminary student

Focal Passage: Ephesians 6:18-22

Do you value prayer? Do you make time for prayer? Jesus, the Son of God, did. He valued communion with the Father – so much so that He carved out time to go to solitary places to pray. This week marks the end of the "connected" series as well as the end of the book of Ephesians. Paul, in his closing, emphasizes the importance of prayer. Not only is prayer interwoven in his final remarks to the believers in Ephesus; it is also listed as the last piece of the armor of God in Ephesians 6. For all of these reasons and more, we can deduce that prayer is not only valued but necessary and vital to the life of every Christ follower. Prayer, as a crucial part of the armor of God, helps us to stand firm against the attacks of the enemy. John Piper defines it in this way: "Prayer is primarily a war-time walkie-talkie for the mission of the church as it advances against the powers of darkness and unbelief." The church on mission is a threat to Satan. As believers,

we must support the church with prayer. Prayer keeps us grounded in the strength of the Lord and in His mighty power. Paul teaches us three principles in this week's verses: we are to pray for each other, for the leaders of the church, and to stay abreast of how we can pray for others. Paul commands the believers to pray at all times in the Spirit with all kinds of prayers and requests (v. 18). He then charges them to remain alert so they can continue to pray for the saints. The Greek renders this "as watching with all perseverance." Just like Piper reiterates, we are at war (Ephesians 6:12). With the same kind of watchfulness as a soldier on the battlefield, we too must be attentive to the prayer needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Not only should we pray for each other, we must also pray for the leaders of the church. The apostle Paul coveted prayer. He recognized his need for others to intercede on his behalf so that he could proclaim the mystery of the gospel with boldness (v. 19-20). Make a commitment to pray regularly for other believers, including your church leadership, beginning this week. Be intentional. Ask for specific ways you can intercede on their behalf.

October 5 EXPLORE THE BIBLE October 12

Secured With Confidence Don't Walk Away

Focal Passage: Hebrews 4:14-5:6

"You just don't understand me!" As the parent of a teenager, I heard this phrase on more than one occasion. I uttered it to my own parents a time or two. Even today, I want to be understood. We all do. We all want, dare I say need, someone in our lives who understands us. Yet, there is something frightening about that, too. Do we really want someone who understands everything about us? Someone who knows us deeply and intimately? Someone from whom there are no secrets? The writer of Hebrews tells us that nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight, but that everything is laid bare before the One to whom we must give an account (Hebrews 4:13). If that is the case – and it is – how can any of us every bear up under the divine scrutiny of a holy God? The writer anticipates our anxiety and so reminds us in Hebrews 4:14-16 that we have a High Priest who sympathizes with our weaknesses, one who has been tempted in every way, yet without sin. He reminds us that Jesus

knows us deeply and intimately. He knows our weakness and our struggle. But, thank God, He is not powerless to help us! Jesus provides grace and mercy to us in our time of need. Just as other high priests deal gently with those under their care (Hebrews 6:2), Jesus does as well. While other high priests offer sacrifices on their own behalf and those under their care, Jesus offers something better – a one time sacrifice that – by faith – makes us right with God. Sadly, too many Christians want to receive such an awesome gift of forgiveness and then, inexplicably, not extend the same grace to others. Yet, the best way to demonstrate Jesus to others is to demonstrate his grace and mercy. If Jesus knows all about us and sympathizes with us, let us make it our ambition to sympathize rather than criticize. And, the next time you hear someone say "you just don't understand me," point them graciously to the One who does.



ROB POCHEK  
Senior Pastor, Raleigh  
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Wilson

Focal Passage: Hebrews 6:1-8

"Hey, I'm a Christian. In fact, I am a baptized member of your church!" I was shocked, to say the least. The man I was speaking to had finished his third beer and let out a string of profanities that would have made a sailor blush. When I asked him if it bothered him to use such language around a pastor, he made the statement above. As Southern Baptists we have rightly held to a view of salvation that is eternal in nature. Sometimes coined "once saved, always saved," we rightly emphasize the divine side of salvation. We emphasize that we are saved by God's grace, through faith and not of works. We emphasize that if you can do nothing to earn your salvation, you can do nothing to lose it. But, in so doing, I wonder if we have raised a generation of lazy Christians? The writer of Hebrews seems to be addressing just such an issue (Hebrews

6). Southern Baptists tend to shy away from the first six verses because we are not sure how to handle them. Or worse, we offer the notion that the writer is only speaking hypothetically and, you have nothing to be concerned about. After all, you've prayed "the prayer." The first three verses emphasize the fact that God expects Christ-followers to be growing and maturing in their faith. This section actually begins back in Hebrews 5:11 where the writer makes the point that "by now you ought to be teachers." The idea is that there should be a trajectory toward Christlikeness present in every believer. The writer is urging the believers to move forward, not backward. He issues them a warning in verses 4-6: Do not leave Christ. These Jewish Christians were being tempted to return to Judaism. The writer's point is simple: if you abandon Christ, there is no hope for your salvation. There is no salvation apart from a life-changing encounter with Christ. Frankly, for the writer of Hebrews – and, indeed, the rest of the Bible – there is less concern over whether you have "prayed the prayer" than whether you are faithfully following Christ today.



# Hunger

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The small church averages around 35 in attendance each week, but its food ministry – called God’s Food Pantry – has grown to become one of the largest in the community. Every week the church helps 180 to 190 families put food on their tables.

As the church has provided food for the community – which had been ravaged by unemployment in recent years – it has reversed the perception of Southern Baptists in Pueblo. Pastor Lonnie Hartke says when he first arrived at the church and would go door to door, no one wanted to listen to a Baptist preacher. But as his small church has loved its community unselfishly by providing much-needed food, perceptions have shifted. Residents are more open to hearing him share the gospel. One lady had attended the church years earlier but had been hurt by someone there and left. Through God’s Food Pantry, she re-connected to the church, became a follower of Jesus and was baptized. She now helps others as a volunteer in the food pantry.

Your support of Global Hunger Relief helps us push back hunger and lostness in Pueblo, Colo., and throughout North America. Hunger is our problem as Southern Baptists. Thank you for working together to do something tangible to help our neglected neighbors.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Kevin Ezell is president of the North American Mission Board.) **BR**

# Veterans

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of intentional ministry for the returning warriors.”

He believes Christians have a moral obligation to make sure these men and women come home to a grateful nation, and that we link up with them. He said believers have a God-given responsibility to take care of those who are struggling. Carver said mental health problems seem to be escalating since 2007-2008 when tours of duty were increased from 12 to 15 months. Personnel began missing not just one but possibly two birthdays, anniversaries and other important personal events. Now some 600,000 veterans have been totally or partially disabled. It is a figure that impacts family caregivers, many of whom are on duty 24/7, and the children who have to deal with detachment stress.

Carver reminded attendees at the Agape event that “wars take a toll whether in the air, on the sea or land.” He quoted retired Air Force colonel and former prisoner of war Robert Hudson, a B-52 pilot shot down over Vietnam in 1972, “Freedom has a costly taste to those who fight and almost die for it that the protected shall never know.” Carver was named earlier this year to a mental health advisory group by Frank S. Page, president of the Southern Baptist Convention’s Executive Committee. The purpose is to gather suggestions for the ways Southern Baptists can more effectively minister to people with mental health challenges.

According to Baptist Press, members of the Mental Health Advisory Group (MHAG) include pastors, licensed counselors, healthcare providers, educators, social workers and a military chaplain. They represent churches, private practices, para-church ministries, state conventions and national SBC entities. Many members of the group have dealt with mental health challenges within their own families in addition to their professional experience.

At a recent gathering of MHAG Carver addressed the unique issues that military chaplains face.

Chaplains are trained in trauma, suicide prevention and other issues of particular importance to soldiers, Carver said, and they work with mental health professionals on the field.

There are not enough professionals to go around, he said, so they train at the “first line of defense” – the soldiers. Carver described the Army’s “ACE of Hearts” training model: ask the right questions of fellow soldiers, care enough to listen and escort them to a professional if needed. This model could be applicable to churches as well, he said.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Jacqui Claypool is a freelance writer who has been a television anchor, a CBS station news director, vice president of a television group and president of a communications firm working with major corporations. She lives in Charlotte.) **BR**

## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

### Pastor

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

United Baptist Church located in historic Valdese, NC, is seeking the man that God would have as our next **pastor**. The candidate must be a man of prayer, mature in his faith, who is an experienced leader with a seminary degree, preferred. Please send resume to: Pastor Church Committee, United Baptist Church, 2638 Messer Road, Valdese, NC 28690.

First Baptist Church Kershaw, SC, part of South Carolina Baptist Convention is receiving resumes through October 10, 2014, for the position of **full-time senior pastor**. Seminary degree and pastoral experience required. Send resume by mail to Search Committee, First Baptist Church, P O Box 67, Kershaw, SC 29067, or email to [fbckershaw@windstream.net](mailto:fbckershaw@windstream.net).

**Full-Time Senior Pastor** needed. Sandy Plains Baptist Church in Gastonia, N.C., is prayerfully seeking the man whom God has chosen to lead and shepherd our congregation. We are a Bible-believing, Bible-teaching Southern Baptist church. We are looking for a Pastor who is biblically grounded and mission minded. Experience pastors and seminary graduates need only apply. Send resumes to: Pastor Search Committee, Chairman David Lynn, 4211 Beaty Rd., Gastonia, N.C. 28056; 704-962-4403; [davidlynn2014@outlook.com](mailto:davidlynn2014@outlook.com).

### Church Staff

**Associate Pastor of Youth Ministries.** Troutman BC in Troutman, NC, is seeking a full-time Youth Minister. TBC associates with the South Yadkin Baptist Association, NCBSC, and SBC. Send resumes to Troutman Baptist Church; Attn: Youth Minister Search Team; PO Box 275, Troutman, NC 28166, or forward to [troutmanbaptist@bellsouth.net](mailto:troutmanbaptist@bellsouth.net).

Seeking Christian individual with sufficient music skills and experience to effectively plan, coordinate, operate, and evaluate a comprehensive **Music Ministry**. **Part-time**. Salary \$8076 year, Send resume to [whbaptist@bellsouth.net](mailto:whbaptist@bellsouth.net).

White’s Memorial Baptist Church is a conservative missions-minded fellowship located in Franklinville, NC. We are prayerfully seeking a **full-time Minister of Children and Youth**. This ministry opportunity will include challenging children and youth, babies through college, to both have and grow in their walk with Christ. It also involves working with parents and volunteers to see the ministry be effective. Please send inquiries to: [wmbc-franklinville@hotmail.com](mailto:wmbc-franklinville@hotmail.com) or White’s Memorial Baptist Church, 2930 Whites Memorial Rd., Franklinville, NC 27248 (attn: Sr. Pastor).

The Memorial Baptist Church of Greenville, NC, a Baptist congregation ministering to the community for 187 years, invites applications for a **full-time Associate Pastor/ Minister of Families**. TMBC is CBF affiliated and is located approximately 2 miles from East Carolina University. Primary responsibilities include ministering to youth, children, and their families as well as other ministry opportunities that may arise. Minimum education requirements: Bachelor’s Degree/Master’s preferred or working toward. Please send resumes to Holly Sloan, 1510 Greenville Blvd. SE, Greenville, NC 27858, or to [hollybsloan@gmail.com](mailto:hollybsloan@gmail.com). Review of resumes will begin immediately.

Spray Baptist Church Eden, NC, seeks **part-time music director** to lead music Sundays and Wednesdays, work with choir. Must possess knowledge of music and individual parts, be willing to lead/prepare choir for weekly services, and be present for required church events. Send resume to Martha Bridges, PO Box 3602, Eden, NC 27289-3602, or [Tbridges001@triad.rr.com](mailto:Tbridges001@triad.rr.com).

Samaria Baptist Church, Raleigh, seeks **part-time minister of music piano/organist** to provide choir direction and music for Sunday morning service, Wednesday night rehearsal and special events. Type of music traditional with an occasional blend of praise/worship. Prefer 4 year degree in music education or will accept 5 years music experience. Send resume: Attention Human Resources, Samaria Baptist Church, 3621 Poole Rd., Raleigh NC 27610. Accepting resumes thru Oct. 15, 2014.

Woodland Baptist, Waynesville, NC, is seeking a **bi-vocational Worship Leader**. WBC is SBC, affirming the 2000 BFM using blended music. Seeking a man who has a desire to lead worship with gospel centered music. Some experience needed, education a plus. Possibility of combining Student Ministry in Spring 2015 for full-time position; [woodlandbaptist545@gmail.com](mailto:woodlandbaptist545@gmail.com).

### Miscellaneous

**NCBAM will conduct Leadership Training** at Camp Caraway’s Fall Festival of Fellowship in October. Senior adult leaders will be encouraged and trained to provide effective ministry for the coming “age wave.” Call 1.877.506.2226 for more information.

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**Do you have staff changes at your church or association?** Let the *BR* know by calling (919) 847-2127 or email [editor@BRnow.org](mailto:editor@BRnow.org).

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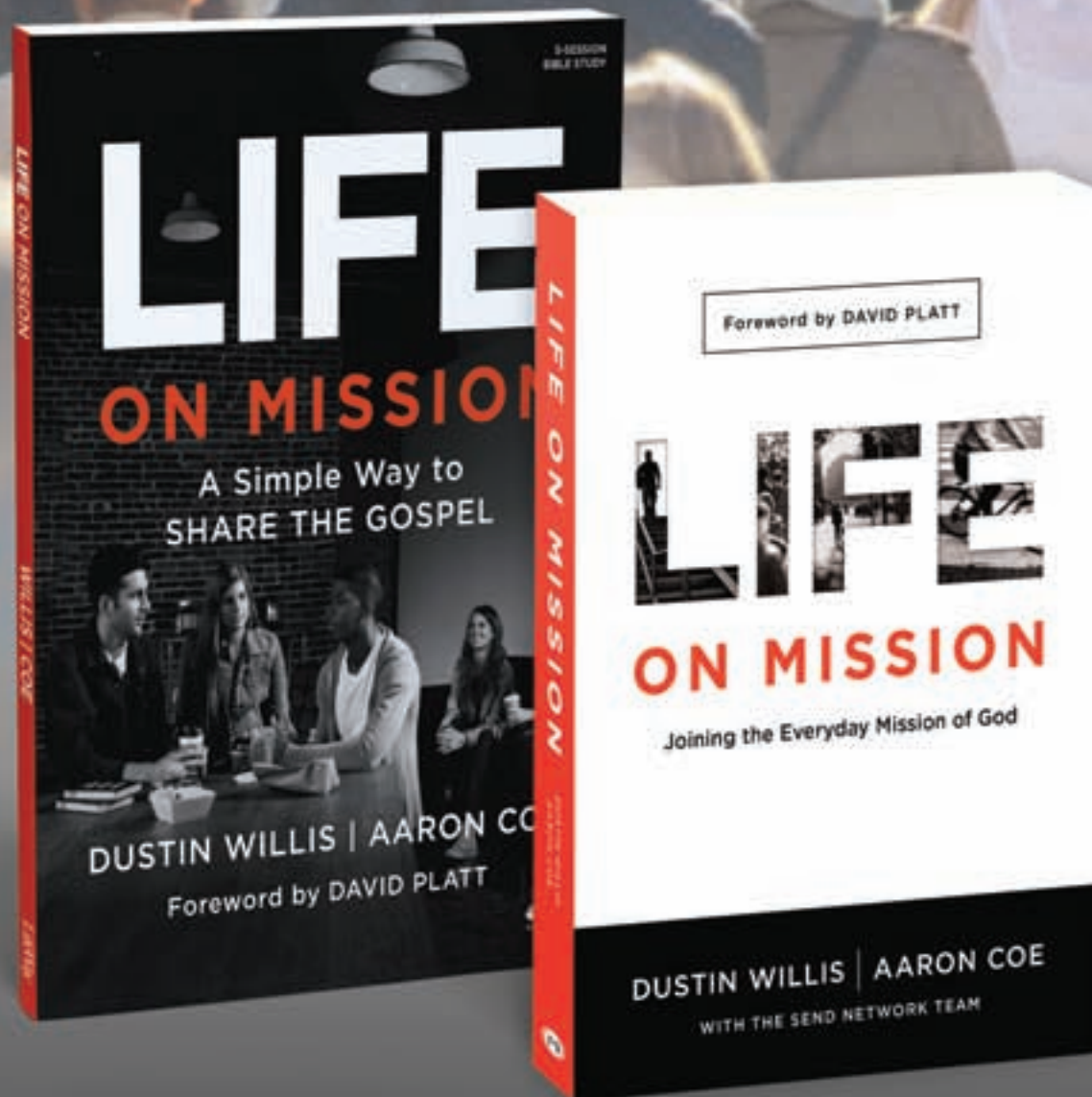
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