

ANNUAL MEETING TO
FOCUS ON NEXT STEPS,
IMPACTING LOSTNESS

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BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

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WOMEN CHALLENGED to leave strong spiritual legacy

By **MELISSA LILLEY** | BSC Communications

At age 76, Esther Burroughs still remembers the time when as a child she stood outside her father's study and heard him weeping. She peered in and saw him lying on the floor, weeping the Psalms back to God. She wanted what her father had – the Holy Spirit of God.

"The Spirit of God is a gift," she said. "I didn't know God would put that Spirit in me."

As a child her father taught her to treasure God's Word, something she wants to pass on to her own family.

"This is our instruction book," she said. "The Bible is God-breathed. Leave the legacy of God's Word in your children's lives and grandchildren's lives."

Burroughs, who directs Esther Burroughs Ministries ...Treasures of the Heart, was a featured speaker during the Sept. 6-7 women's prayer and evangelism event at Ridgecrest Conference Center that was hosted by Embrace Women's Missions and Ministries of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC). Burroughs previously served the Home

[See Women page 12](#)

Laughter was just one of the common occurrences during Leaving a Legacy, a two-day conference held by Embrace Women's Missions and Ministries of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. (BSC photo by Alexandra King)

Office of GCP celebrates anniversary, relationships

By **MELISSA LILLEY** | BSC Communications

Three years ago New York City, Boston and Toronto were no places for a Southerner. Moldova was a country of little significance, and unreached people groups were merely statistics.

Now, these three North American cities are viewed more as gateways to reach the nations with the gospel. Moldova is home to faithful leaders who continue ministry in a country that once persecuted them. Unreached people groups now have names, faces and individuals who need Jesus.

Now, more North Carolina Baptists are engaging in long-term partnerships in some of the most strategic and unreached areas of the nation and world.

This year marks the three-year anniversary of the Office of Great Commission Partnerships (GCP) which coordinates partnerships of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in New York City, Boston, Toronto and the Eastern European country of Moldova. Since GCP began, more North Carolina Baptist churches have started the process of developing a missions strategy that connects them locally and globally for effective, long-term impact ministry.

"We often send our people everywhere instead of asking the Father to guide us to that place or people group where the gospel has never been," said Chuck Register, executive leader for church planting and missions development. "We want to help North Carolina Baptists develop a strategy

[See Celebrates page 8](#)



GreatCommissionPartnerships
connecting NC Baptists with the world

Harris announces candidacy for U.S. Senate

By **K. ALLAN BLUME** | BR Editor

At a private gathering Sept. 12 in Clemmons, Mark Harris announced his candidacy for the U.S. Senate. He is in a race that has at least three Republicans vying for the seat held by Democratic Sen. Kay Hagan.

Harris is the pastor of First Baptist Church, Charlotte and is completing his second term as president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

"These are the people that ... caught the vision and carried it across the state," said Harris to draft committee participants that have worked for 90 days to explore his potential candidacy. "We began

with 70 people in Charlotte ... and we now have 26,000 on the database list."

Harris and his wife Beth spoke to the participants Sept. 12 with an official public announcement scheduled for Oct. 2. They will begin in Asheville and tour several stops to make the announcement.

Beth Harris told the group how God brought her to a point of "... complete excitement, looking forward to this journey, really, really believing that this is God's will."

"The Lord gave me complete peace that Mark is not stepping down, he is not stepping away from anything God has called him to," she said.

[See Harris page 17](#)

Mark Harris shared Sept. 12 with supporters his intent to run for U.S. Senate.



Blanton, Bordeaux discuss BSC presidential run

By SHAWN HENDRICKS | BR Managing Editor

For the first time since 2005, two candidates will seek the office of president for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC).

The two candidates – Bobby Blanton, pastor of Lake Norman Baptist Church in Huntersville, and C.J. Bordeaux, pastor of Gorman Baptist Church in Durham, – sat down with *Biblical Recorder* Editor K. Allan Blume earlier this month to discuss a variety of topics that included why each decided to run for president, their qualifications for office and what they hope to accomplish if elected.

Earlier this year it appeared that only one candidate was going to run for the position. Bordeaux, who has served the last four years as second and first vice president, contacted Blanton and let him know that he had decided not to run.

In the May 25 issue of the *Biblical Recorder*, Blanton announced his intentions to accept a nomination for president. In late July, Bordeaux contacted Blanton and the *Recorder* to announce he had reconsidered his decision and would run after all.

“The more I prayed about it, the more the Lord began to change my heart and my mind,” said Bordeaux, during the hour-long interview recorded at Lawndale Baptist Church in Greensboro on Sept. 10.

“I didn’t feel like I sought the office. In many ways I felt like the office sought me.”

“Yes, I did make the decision not to run, but then with encouragement from my family, from my church and many people across the state, I did change that position. I take full responsibility for that.”

In the last election between two candidates nearly 8 years ago, Stan Welch, who was pastor of Blackwelder Park Baptist Church in Kannapolis at the time, defeated Blythe Taylor, the former associate minister of St. Johns Baptist Church in Charlotte.

Welch is now pastor of West Asheville Baptist Church in Asheville.

Both Bordeaux and Blanton voiced respect for the other and full support if either candidate wins. They also explained that their decisions to run did not have anything to do with any theological disagreement.

“I think I can say this, and he would agree ... there’s not a half-a-teaspoon ounce of difference in our [theological] beliefs and convictions,” Bordeaux said. “I’m only seeking the office to continue serving my state, serving all of North Carolina Baptists and just being a part of what God is going to do and continue to do here in our great Tar Heel state.”

Blume asked both candidates to share why they felt uniquely qualified for the position.

“For whatever reason the Lord has put me in places of leadership all throughout my life,” said Blanton, who gave a brief summary of leadership opportunities that included everything from being the captain of his high school football and basketball teams to his years of service as a pastor, president of the BSC’s Board of Directors and serving on various committees of leadership for the convention.

“One of the greatest challenges that I’ve had in leadership is being the president of our Board of Directors,” Blanton said. “It was through that experience that [I] really gained a lot of valuable insights for me, relating to leadership.”

Blanton later added that though he has not served



Allan Blume, center, editor of the *Biblical Recorder*, asks questions of Bobby Blanton, left, and C.J. Bordeaux, candidates for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) president. Blanton, pastor of Lake Norman Baptist Church in Huntersville, and Bordeaux, pastor of Gorman Baptist Church in Durham, will be nominated at the BSC annual meeting Nov. 11-12. The *Recorder* hosted a forum Sept. 10 at Lawndale Baptist Church in Greensboro to ask the candidates questions. Watch the forum online at BRnow.org. Look for links.

in a vice president officer role for the BSC, he believes anyone with North Carolina Baptist leadership experience should have the same opportunity to win the presidential position as someone who has served as first and second vice president.

“One of the trends I think we have slowly begin to creep toward in our convention is this idea of automatic succession,” Blanton said. “I’m certainly not an opponent of succession.

“Succession has proven to be very helpful for us, and we’ve had some great leaders that have been generated ... from that,” added Blanton, who nominated Bordeaux the last two years for the office of first vice president.

Blanton explained that succession becomes a problem, however, when it is “automatic succession.” He contended there are many leaders who would make great presidents but don’t have years to invest to “get in line in the back of the train and ride that train for six years.”

“I just think it puts us in a place of disadvantage,” Blanton said. “I would say the office of president is much too important for it ever to be assumed.

“I have no disappointment with C.J. I just think ... it’s a healthier trend for our convention that these kinds of positions, particularly that of the president, would be such that we would have a choice.”

Earlier during the interview Bordeaux brought up the topic by saying, “I do not in any way see moving into the office of the presidency as an automatic right or an automatic succession. ... I had initially decided not to seek this office but I love our convention.”

Bordeaux later added, “I think what Bobby and I are doing is great for the convention. I don’t have any issues with it whatsoever, and again, he and I are going to be friends win or lose. But I just haven’t heard a lot of interest in the last several years about convention leadership.”

Blume asked Bordeaux why he feels qualified to serve as president. Bordeaux responded, “I don’t.”

“To be truthful, I don’t feel qualified,” he said. “I don’t know of any man or any woman that could actually say they are because it is such an incredible responsibility.”

“I have such great respect for the men that have gone before us over these many past years, but I really believe this is one of those positions that it cannot be done by a person,” he said. “It has to be done with the help of the Lord.”

During the discussion, Blanton and Bordeaux shared their thoughts on the BSC’s new strategy and restructuring that focuses on making disciples, church planting and reaching more lost areas of the state. The new strategy and staff structure was approved by the BSC’s

Executive Committee in the spring and will officially launch in January.

“I’m very excited about the new strategy,” said Blanton, who presided as president of the Board of Directors during the initial study to help formulate a new vision and plan for the BSC. “It’s a structure that I think is bold. I think it is exciting. ... If North Carolina Baptists will embrace it and will rally around it, I think it will go a long way to help to impact the lostness that is already a part of North Carolina.”

Bordeaux also expressed support for the convention’s new strategy and called it a “powerful tool and great opportunity for North Carolina Baptists.”

“We’ve already seen some agreement and we’ve seen disagreement,” he said. “But I really do believe that the strategy that Dr. Hollifield has placed before us for the North Carolina Baptist State Convention and for North Carolina Baptists is really a stroke of genius.”

“We’ve done things one way, a certain way, for a long time. ... This is breaking the mold, and I really see this model is going to help ... and keep us on the cutting edge of the forefront of Kingdom ministry work for many years to come.”

Each candidate shared what he would like to accomplish if elected president of the BSC.

Blanton reinforced his support for the convention’s strategy to focus in on the lostness in the state.

“I feel very excited about the opportunities that we face in this state,” he said. “It’s staggering to think that of a population of 9.5 million people, it is estimated that 5.8 million people are unchurched.”

While international and North American missions are vital, Blanton said, North Carolina Baptists must not forget that “God has brought the world to our doorstep, and we must be able and willing to meet the challenges of that opportunity.”

Bordeaux said he’d like to focus more on church health and relationships between churches of different styles and sizes.

“I hear a lot of small church pastors say you don’t care about us,” he said. “Nobody calls upon us. Nobody knows who we are. They just want our money. And I think that sets a dangerous tone if they believe that.”

He also expressed an interest in initiating a conversation or summit between both sides.

“I would hope that I’d have the opportunity to influence a conversation. ... One of the privileges that the convention president does have is the opportunity to be heard.”

Both men challenged North Carolina Baptists to attend this year’s annual meeting Nov. 11-12 in Greensboro. A video of the entire discussion will be posted soon. Visit BRnow.org and follow the links. **BR**



NAMB encourages churches to honor pastors

Baptist Press

With Pastor Appreciation Month on the horizon, the North American Mission Board (NAMB) is providing laypeople with resources to encourage and support their churches' shepherds.

"NAMB's mission is to penetrate lostness in North America," NAMB President Kevin Ezell said. "Local pastors are the ones who lead churches to focus on that mission. We strongly encourage every

local congregation to celebrate and affirm their pastors because we believe their role is critical in the expansion of the Kingdom."

Looking toward Pastor Appreciation Month, NAMB is encouraging churches to pick one Sunday in October to lift up their pastors during a worship service.

At namb.net/honoring_pastors, NAMB is providing a variety of resources to help churches do this. Lay leaders additionally can find information about planning a retreat for their pastor and his wife. **BR**

Got video?

I believe every church leader would say that their church wants to reach people for Jesus Christ. Yet we see a practice in many of our churches using antiquated methods of communicating the gospel. One example is the use of video in the church.

Perhaps more than half of our churches do not utilize video as a form of communication in their worship services. Yet video is an integral part of our communication in the 21st century.

Church media expert, Barry Whitlow comments, "The language that our culture uses is changing, and because of that there is an ever-widening communication gap between those in the church and those outside of the church. Digital media is literally taking over the world, and the way people learn and communicate is changing. The church can either embrace this revolution and

make history, or stick to the status quo and become history."

"Become history." How many of our churches will have to close their doors one day because they dug their heels in, stuck their heads in the sand, and refused to recognize changing communication? It might be time that we take a serious look at how we are communicating the gospel and make some adjustments. Why would a church not embrace one of the most powerful forms of communication today? Why

would we not speak the truth in a mode of communication that is best understood by our communities?

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Kenny Lamm is senior consultant for worship and music with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Contact him at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5638, or klamm@ncbaptist.org. Visit his blog at www.renewingworshipnc.org.)



KENNY LAMM

GuideStone plans to fight contraceptive mandate

By ROY HAYHURST | Baptist Press

GuideStone Financial Resources has renewed its vow to fight the Affordable Care Act's contraceptive/abortifacient mandate and is now looking to court action alongside efforts in Congress and before federal agencies.

The need to fight arises from the Obama administration's requirement that all employers who provide health benefits also must cover contraceptives. The mandate covers all FDA-approved contraceptives, including those that cause early abortions.

"Our plans have strict prohibitions against the coverage of any of these abortifacients that are out there," GuideStone President O.S. Hawkins told members of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee Sept. 16. "And yet, [the Obama administration] wants to tell us that we not only have to provide [abortifacients], but without cost to anybody that wants them.

"But the truth is, we're not going to do it. We're in a fight."

Hawkins told Executive Committee members that litigation is the latest front

in GuideStone's three-pronged fight to protect church health plans. More than 1 million pastors and church workers depend on church plans for their health benefits. GuideStone also has been working with a broad coalition of religious denominations on both the regulatory and legislative fronts.

Advocacy on the regulatory front yielded the exemption to the contraceptive mandate for churches and church auxiliaries but it did not go far enough, Hawkins said.

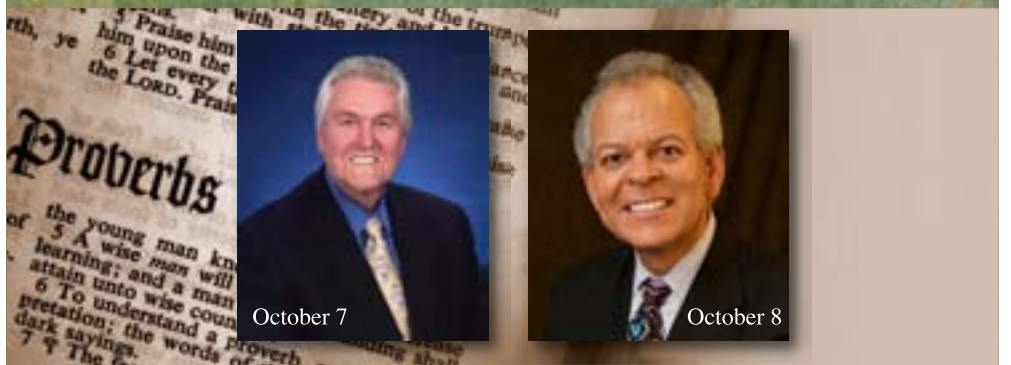
The contraceptive mandate offers a narrow exemption to churches and church auxiliaries – including most Southern Baptist boards and seminaries – but not other ministries such as colleges and charities.

On the legislative front, Sen. Mark Pryor, D.-Ark., introduced the Church Health Plan Act of 2013, which would help church health plans regain some protections lost under the health care reform law.

Republicans, however, have expressed reluctance to pass legislation that would offer technical fixes to the health care reform law as they say they are working to repeal it, Hawkins said. **BR**

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Trail Life USA offers Christian alternative to Boy Scouts

By WARREN COLE SMITH | World News Service

More than 1,200 people from 44 states gathered in Nashville the first weekend in September for the inaugural meeting of Trail Life USA, a new group that hopes to be a Christian alternative for the Boy Scouts of America. Organizers say Trail Life USA will be an outdoor scouting-like program designed for boys ages 5-17 which will focus on adventure, character and leadership.

"We're here to honor the legacy of the Boy Scouts of America," said radio personality Bill Buckner, master of ceremonies for the event. "But now, quite frankly, we are called in a new direction."

This meeting is the culmination of intensive planning that began more than two months ago when a steering committee gathered in Louisville, Ky., to discuss the feasibility of starting a group. Since then the group has created a constitution and bylaws, logo, and other organizing documents and procedures.

Mark Hancock, vice chairman of the board and the convention host, said, "For this to happen in 68 days, that doesn't happen by the power of men."

John Stemberger is chairman of the board of directors for the new group. He said in his opening address that he would deal with what he called "the proverbial elephant in the room," the relationship Trail Life USA has with the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). In May the BSA changed its membership policy to allow openly homosexual youth to participate in the program.

"First of all, we're not an anti-BSA organization," Stemberger said. "We're not an anti-anything organization. We honor the legacy of the Boy Scouts of America and the contributions it has made to us and our families. The men and boys we have left behind are not our opponents. They are our brothers and our friends. I encourage you to interact with them with charity and good faith."

Stemberger added, though, that "many of us feel anger and betrayal." He said that charity requires him to "continue to expose the real dangers and risks that the



TRAIL LIFE USA

Adventure > Character > Leadership

new membership policy [of the BSA] poses to boys. Real men value integrity above institutions."

Stemberger said Trail Life USA would be open to boys of all religious faiths, but it would be an explicitly Christian organization.

"Adults must sign a statement of faith and submit to a background check," he said. "We will have a strong outdoor component, and ranks from the Boy Scouts will be transferable." The top award in Trail Life USA, the equivalent to the BSA's Eagle Award, would be the Freedom Award.

"Our vision will be to become the premier national character development organization for young men which produces godly and responsible husbands, fathers and citizens," Stemberger said. **BR**



BR DIGITAL EDITION launches

The digital edition of the *Biblical Recorder* launched Aug. 1. For two months access to this new feature has been free.

Beginning Oct. 1, you will need a password to see the latest edition. A sample of the digital edition is available on the website to let you see how it looks. The cost of a subscription is very reasonable. With access, you will not only be able to read the *Recorder*, but to follow links on the pages. We hope you will subscribe to the digital edition today. Here's a bonus offer: if you have a paid subscription to the *Recorder*, we will give you free access to the digital edition!

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10:2: ‘Pray to the Lord of the harvest’

By **JOE CONWAY** | Baptist Press

The Luke 10:2 biblical call to pray laborers into the Lord’s harvest undergirds the North American Mission Board’s (NAMB) TenTwo initiative for churches to pray for laborers on Oct. 2 and beyond.

Daniel Ausbun, pastor of First Baptist Church in Moreland, Ga., is among those who have shared the online TenTwo prayer initiative video with their churches. “We showed the two-minute video and read Luke 10:2,” Ausbun said. “[Everyone] was nodding their heads in agreement that we have an abundant harvest and we need to ask God to send workers into the harvest field.

“Everyone knows we need to pray, and TenTwo provides an organized opportunity for that.”

On Oct. 2, First Baptist in Moreland will join Southern Baptist churches in the U.S. and Canada praying for the Lord to send workers to the harvest. Many are intentionally focusing their regularly scheduled Wednesday evening activities on prayer. “We are going to replace our Wednesday night Bible study with an hour-long prayer service,” Ausbun said. “No sermon, no songs, no testimonies – only prayer – a true prayer meeting. Everyone is welcome to come and pray. On Wednesday, Oct. 2 at 10:02 a.m. and 10:02 p.m. we want our entire church to pause and pray, wherever they are.”

Gary Frost, NAMB’s Midwest Region vice president who also leads the mission board’s national prayer strategies, voiced excitement for TenTwo’s potential to help bring the gospel to communities throughout North America and beyond.

“Penetrating lostness in North America is a huge task,” Frost said, noting that

he often gets a “TenTwo buzz” in his travels, sometimes literally.

Baptists are “setting their phone alarms to 10:02 a.m. or p.m. to remind them to pray for God, by His Holy Spirit, to stir the hearts of harvesters to leave their comfort zones and work the fields,” Frost said. “Personally it has become a vital and welcomed ‘alert’ for me every single day ... of the lostness of our world and the urgency of sharing the love of Christ in every opportunity.”

Churches like Rose Bud Baptist Church in Rose Bud, Ark., are not letting their lack of a weekly Wednesday night prayer meeting keep them from participating. The central Arkansas church will use the entire month of October to pray and promote TenTwo.

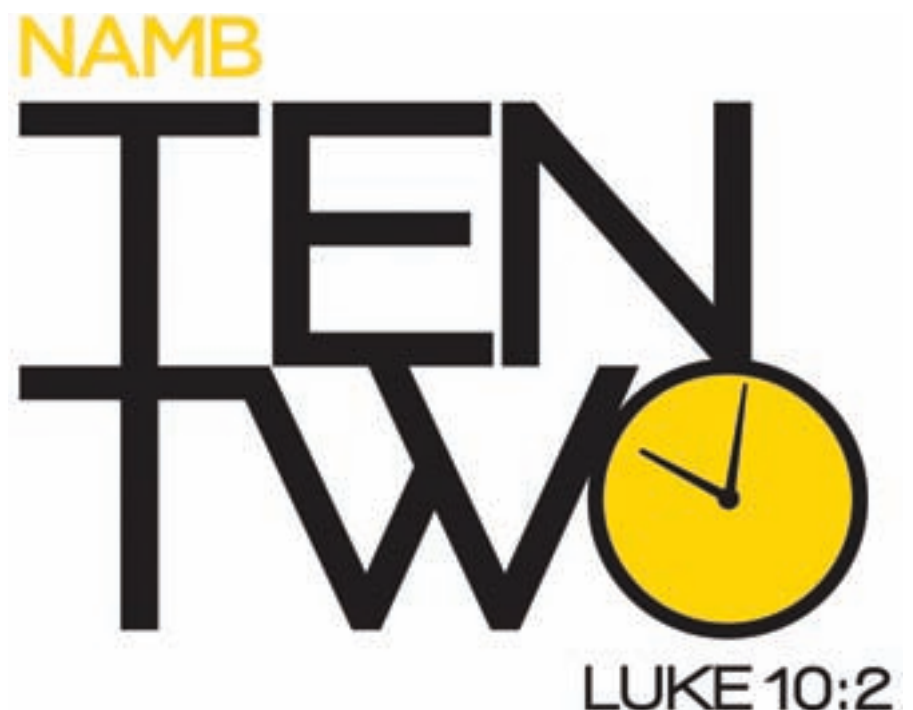
“We plan to kick off our efforts on the last Sunday in September,” Rose Bud ministry assistant Kathy Moss said. “We will have home prayer meetings the first Sunday night in October and have other activities planned for the month using the TenTwo DVD and prayer guides.”

At First Baptist in Moreland, Ausbun plans to preach from Luke 10:2 on Sunday, Sept. 29, in advance of TenTwo.

“I’d like to encourage other pastors to remind their people who the Lord of the harvest is. I believe prayer evangelism is something we’ve gotten away from in the SBC. God sometimes has to remind me that only He can save a soul,” Ausbun said. “Without prayer, our evangelism is fruitless. Pray for God to send workers to share Christ with the lost and pray for God to save lost people.”

A TenTwo video is available at www.youtube.com/brnowvideo. Explore additional TenTwo resources at namb.net/TenTwo.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Joe Conway writes for the North American Mission Board.) **BR**



Deaf youth retreat impacts lostness

By **BUDDY OVERMAN** | BSC Communications

During the final worship time at this year's Deaf Youth Retreat at Camp Caraway, a young man named Duanta announced to everyone his profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

"He signed, 'I am Duanta. I have been a thief and a rebel. Today I give my life to Christ,'" said Donnie Wiltshire, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) consultant for special ministries.

"He was crying. He was overwhelmed and felt like it was something he needed to say to everyone. Several other youth, touched by the sincerity of Duanta's confession, likewise professed faith in Christ."

Every May, deaf middle and high school students from across the state attend the retreat near Asheboro. The primary purpose of the event is to provide youth an opportunity to respond to the gospel and to help Christians grow in their walk with Christ.

The retreat includes all of the typical things kids do at a camp such as swimming, playing games and sports activities, but it also has a strong evangelism and disciple-making emphasis, and it includes numerous times of worship, devotions and prayer, Wiltshire said.

An important feature of the camp is that adults who also are deaf mentor the youth. Most campers are from hearing families and rarely interact with deaf, Christian adults. This, combined with the other aspects of the retreat, provide a complete Christian camp experience, he said.

"When we have this event, these young people are able to see Christ in their counselors, have worship experiences, see testimonies from deaf adults



Youth and leaders gathered for a group photo during the annual Deaf Youth Retreat held at Camp Caraway. About 36,000 North Carolinians are culturally deaf. About 100 N.C. Baptist churches are engaging the deaf community. (Contributed photo)

– so they encounter Jesus all over the place," Wiltshire said.

Meeting a need

For youth such as Duanta, the annual retreat might be the only time during the year when they have an opportunity to respond to the gospel. Thus, the retreat is essential for reaching the deaf community for Christ.

"Many of these kids have no church they are a part of during the week," Wiltshire said. "Our annual camp is one of our strategies for impacting lostness in the deaf community."

About 36,000 North Carolinians are culturally deaf, which includes people who were born deaf or became deaf early in life, attend or were educated at a school for the deaf, and who communicate primarily through American Sign Language (ASL).

The culturally deaf are one of nine affinity groups listed by the International Mission Board. Affinity groups are large concentrations of people who share similar origins, languages and cultures. Often, the most important aspect of ministering to a people group is to communicate the gospel in their heart language.

About 100 North Carolina Baptist churches are engaging the deaf community, the majority of which aim to mainstream deaf people into the life of the church through interpreters. Only 10 deaf congregations are active statewide.

"If deaf people have a choice, typically they will choose to be a part of a deaf congregation. Those are largely found in the metropolitan areas," Wiltshire said. "The vast majority of deaf people in the state have no place close by where they can really be part of a Christian fellowship."

Wiltshire said North Carolina Baptists

can engage the deaf community in a number of ways, but they must begin with a commitment to understand the culture.

"It takes a long-term commitment and a cultural understanding of how they think and live, and then reaching them in relationship," he said.

The BSC offers training throughout the year to help churches minister to the deaf community, including ASL training for interpreters. Wiltshire encourages all North Carolina Baptists to prayerfully consider how they can engage the deaf community with the gospel. One way churches can help is by increasing their gifts to the Cooperative Program, which helps fund the annual deaf retreat and other ministries aimed at impacting lostness among North Carolina's deaf population.

"The lifeline for our work to reach deaf people in North Carolina is the Cooperative Program," Wiltshire said. "Support for the Cooperative Program allows us to offer these kinds of ministries to reach people who are often overlooked."

The 2014 Deaf Youth Retreat will be held May 2-4 at Camp Caraway. For more information, contact Donnie Wiltshire at dwiltshire@ncbaptist.org. **BR**

"Support for the [CP] allows us to offer these kinds of ministries ..."
– Donnie Wiltshire

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Committee on Nominations Report

The Committee on Nominations is charged with the task of receiving and reviewing the numerous recommendations provided by North Carolina Baptists for service on the Board of Directors and committees of the Convention as well as the boards of the institutions and agencies of the Convention. The committee begins its work with the recommendations sent by North Carolina Baptists and only when exhausted, or in the event too few recommendations have been received for a specific place of service, the committee seeks to find candidates who meet the qualifications for service as outlined in the Convention bylaws.

The full report from the Committee on Nominations can be found on the BSCNC's Annual Meeting website, in the edition of the *Biblical Recorder* dated September 28, 2013, on the *Biblical Recorder* website, and in the Book of Reports provided to each messenger who completes their registration at the Annual Meeting.

On behalf of the committee members listed below, I want to thank each North Carolina Baptist who completed and submitted a recommendation. It is not too early to begin thinking about those individuals whom you wish to recom-

mend for consideration by the 2014 Committee on Nominations. Please continue to submit your recommendations, as your input is essential to the committee's work and the ongoing effectiveness of the missions and ministries of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

Charles Martin, Chair

2013 Committee on Nominations Members

David Blackburn, Jefferson; Joe Cappar, Jacksonville; Shelton Daniel, Rocky Mount; Ellen Day, Greensboro; Shawn Dobbs, Winston-Salem; Faye Edwards, Beulaville; Elizabeth Faw, Staley; Duane Kuykendall, Hickory; Brian Langley, Kure Beach; Charles Martin, Winston-Salem; Ricky Mason, Maggie Valley; Cameron McGill, Dublin; Boyce Porter, Camden; Marc Sanders, Bear Creek; Bill Saylor, Charlotte; Shannon Scott, Raleigh; Sharon Smith, Fayetteville; Aaron Wallace, Wendell.

The Committee on Nominations report follows the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's (BSCNC) bylaws directive to "nominate persons for election by the Convention to the committees listed in Article I.C.1 (b) - (d) of these Bylaws,

such other committees as may be assigned to it, the chair of such Convention committees, the boards of trustees and directors of all institutions and agencies of the Convention, the Board, and such other nominations as may be delegated to the committee by the Convention."

Among other considerations for nominees, the bylaws state "It is desirable that at least twenty-five percent (25%) of members nominated to all committees of the Convention, the Board, the boards of trustees and directors of the Convention's institutions and agencies shall come from churches with a membership under four hundred (400)." This is indicated in the Committee's report by (O) for 400 and over and by (U) for under 400 in church membership.

The bylaws further direct that, "The Committee on Nominations shall include in its report at a minimum the name, church, home town, association, occupation, and sex of each nominee, the name of the committee or board on which the nominee is to serve together with such summary information as will make clear to this Convention the diversity and breadth of representation provided by the slates of nominees."

Board of Directors, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina

Region 1 - No vacancies.

Region 2 - No vacancies.

Region 3 - LeRoy Burke, Zion Hill (U), Lumberton, Robeson, minister, male; Chris Carroll, Elizabethtown (O), Elizabethtown, Bladen, minister, male; Tiffany McGill, Dublin First (O), White Lake, Bladen, lay person, female; Michael K. Moore, Kure Beach First (U), Kure Beach, Wilmington, minister, male; Ruth D. Murray, Southside (U), Wilmington, Wilmington, lay person, female.

Region 4 - Donald Cashwell, Creedmoor Road (U), Raleigh, Raleigh, minister, male; Edward Rose, Central, Wendell (O), Wendell, Raleigh, minister, male.

Region 5 - David Duarte, Iglesia Internacional (U), Greensboro, Piedmont, minister, male.

Region 6 - Herman W. (Buddy) Pigg Jr., (2016 unexpired term of Terry Casino), Mount Harmony (O), Monroe, Union, minister, male.

Region 7 - Vernon Eller, (2014 unexpired term of Matthew Grindstaff), Union (U), Ferguson, Three Forks, minister, male; Toby Oliver, Brushy Fork (U), Boone, Three Forks, minister, male; Debra Smith, (2014 unexpired term of Delores Greer), Dudley Shoals (O), Hickory, Caldwell, lay person, female.

Region 8 - Donald Cline, Mount Anderson (O), Lincolnton, South Fork, minister, male; John Compton, (2014

unexpired term of Kevin Purcell), Mountain View (O), Newton, Catawba Valley, minister, male; Danny Emory, (2015 unexpired term of Billy Shaw), Hopewell (O), Morganton, Catawba River, minister, male; Garry Morrison, Iglesia Bautista Betel (U), Hildebran, Catawba Valley, minister, male; Phillip Oakley, Calvary, Morganton (U), Morganton, Catawba River, minister, male; Donald Warren, (2015 unexpired term of Scott Hardin), Parkwood (O), Gastonia, Greater Gaston, lay person, male.

Region 9 - David Spray, Pisgah Forest (O), Etowah, Transylvania, minister, male; Howard (Cloyes) Starnes, (2014 unexpired term of Danny Hedgepeth), Encouraging Word (U), Waynesville, Haywood, minister, male.

Region 10 - Mitchell Shields, Little Brasstown (O), Murphy, Truett, minister, male.

Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina

William Lewis Boddie, Rocky Mount First (O), Rocky Mount, North Roanoke, lay person, male; Michael D. Bowers, (2014 unexpired term of Tannis Nelson), Rich Fork (O), Lexington, Liberty, minister, male; Bobby Boyd, Woodlawn (O), Conover, Catawba Valley, lay person, male; Betty Greene, Mt. Vernon (O), Boone, Three Forks, lay person, female; John F. Lee, Wilson First (O), Nashville, South Roanoke, lay person, male; Lyndell Pate, Rockwell First (O), Rockwell, Rowan, lay person, male; Marian Phillips, Oakley (U), Siler City, Sandy Creek, lay person, female; Eric Vernon, Sanford First (O), Sanford, Sandy Creek, lay person, male; Sterling Wall, Lexington First (O), Lexington, Liberty, lay person, male; Jay Westmoreland, Charlotte First (O), Fort Mill, Metrolina, lay person, male.

Biblical Recorder

Kelli Benfield, Calvary, Winston-Salem (O), Winston-Salem, Pilot Mountain, lay person, female; Chester Jones, (2016 unexpired term of Ed Trull), Peachtree Memorial (O), Murphy, Truett, minister, male; Charles Love III, (2014 unexpired term of James "J.C." Bradley), Pine Valley (O), Wilmington, Wilmington, minister, male; Lee Pigg, Hopewell (O), Monroe, Union, minister, male; Michael Smith, Fruitland (O), Hendersonville, Carolina, minister, male; Ed Yount, Woodlawn (O), Conover, Catawba Valley, minister, male.

North Carolina Baptist Foundation

Jack Cooper, Corinth (O), Elizabeth City, Chowan, lay person, male; Dale Fisher, Mt. Zion (O), Hudson, Caldwell,

See Nominations page 14



Baptists Help Sisters Find HOPE!

Fourteen-year-old Brittany and her seven-year-old sister Ruthie used to live without the necessities of food, running water and electricity.

Now, Brittany and Ruthie have found love and happiness at Baptist Children's Homes' Kennedy Home in Kinston. At Kennedy Home, the sisters share a room in one of the children's cottages. It looks much like any girl's room. Stuffed animals rest on the made beds. Pictures of family and friends are on the nightstands. The scene contrasts greatly with their life and their room at home before coming to the Kinston campus.

"I was afraid living at home," Brittany says. "My life would be a lot different if I weren't here."

Houseparents Fred and Andrea Johnson are there to care for the girls and other children in the cottage. Most of all, they show them God's love.

"Every night I get one of the houseparents to pray with me," Ruthie says.

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Celebrates

Continued from page 1

that will reach people in their community, North America and the world.”

Register applauded the leadership of Michael Sowers, senior consultant in the Office of Great Commission Partnerships.

“I am amazed that in three short years we have fully developed partnerships in New York City, Toronto, Boston and Moldova, and we have taken the initial steps to launch a partnership through the International Mission Board in Southeast Asia,” Register said. “That’s a testimony to the desire of North Carolina Baptists to bring gospel light to a spiritually dark world.”

Strategic cities

All along the 7-train route from Times Square to Flushing, Queens, is evidence of North Carolina Baptist partnership. Queens is home to some of the most diverse neighborhoods in all of New York, and North Carolina Baptists are partnering with local church planters in those strategic areas.

In addition to partnering with a Hispanic church plant on Long Island, First Baptist Church in Summerfield is partnering with planter Boto Joseph in Jackson Heights, an area home to more than 130 languages.

The Metropolitan New York Baptist Association (MNYBA) anticipates starting a ministry center in Jackson Heights, a “key community that continues to be the arrival point for almost all the South Asians in the metropolitan region,” said George Russ, MNYBA executive director.

Russ expressed gratitude to North Carolina Baptists for their commitment to long-term partnerships, especially in an association where 70 percent of churches are non-English speaking and 70 percent do not own a building.

“It’s really about relationships; it’s not just a project,” Russ said. “You get to meet people. There’s a blending of heart and soul.”

Summerfield senior pastor Richard Odom values the relational aspect of partnership missions.

“A lack of connections and relationship hinders excitement,” he said. “As the church develops relationships with

Related story

The church: Destination or launching pad ? Page 13

the planters, and as people go year after year, there’s a desire to go back.”

Ted Hawkins and Salem Baptist Church in Sneads Ferry are gearing up for a five-year partnership with a church in Fall River, about one hour south of Boston.

“I think the congregation was really shocked when I told them how lost New England is, especially since this is where our Christian foundations started,” said Hawkins, the church missions coordinator.

About 98 percent of Boston’s 2.7 million population is unchurched, and only one Southern Baptist Convention church exists for every 13,352 people. God is at work in this spiritually dark city, said Hope Fellowship Church planter and pastor Curtis Cook. More and more churches are on the verge of multiplying and planting other churches. He asked North Carolina Baptists to specifically pray for God to send more planters to Boston’s suburbs.

Like Russ, Cook is thankful for the BSC partnership.

“They have brought more churches and interested partners than any state convention; North Carolina has been a tremendous partner,” said Cook, who also serves as city coordinator for the North American Mission Board’s (NAMB) Send Boston initiative.

The Office of Great Commission Partnerships has also helped connect North Carolina Baptists with church planters in the Greater Toronto Area, which is less than five percent evangelical and home to more than 6.5 million people.

“North Carolina Baptists have been faithful prayer warriors for our city,” said Andrew Lamme, Toronto lead church planting catalyst for NAMB.

“The mission teams are coming with servant hearts and attitudes of doing whatever needs to be done. They have really gone outside their comfort zone.”



“We want to help North Carolina Baptists develop a strategy that will reach people in their community, North America and the world,” said Chuck Register, executive leader for church planting and missions development for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Register was part of a 2010 vision trip to New York. (BSC file photo)

Just this year, 22 North Carolina Baptist churches partnered with church planters throughout the Greater Toronto Area.

Ends of the earth

Through its partnership with the Baptist Union of Moldova, the Office of Great Commission Partnerships is helping North Carolina Baptists engage lostness in a country that is 96 percent non-evangelical and 73 percent Eastern Orthodox.

Moldova is strategic in that it is uniquely positioned to impact the rest of the world with the gospel. For example, a Bible college in Moldova is training students from countries that are resistant to the gospel. These students will take the gospel back home once their studies are complete. Aaron Wallace, pastor of Hephzibah Baptist Church in Wendell, participated in the GCP vision tour last year to Moldova. He now is leading his congregation to partner with a church planter in northern Moldova.

“The Moldovans can teach us a lot about cooperation,” Wallace said. “It’s about truly investing in the Kingdom together. They truly see the Kingdom as bigger than any one church. A future work is being built up in Moldova; a lasting work.”

As GCP also seeks to help North Carolina Baptists engage in Southeast Asia, the office has sponsored several equip-

ping events in partnership with the International Mission Board, including the Impact Your World conference and Embrace Southeast Asian Peoples USA Training. GCP also sponsored a safety and security training.

The world is here

North Carolina’s growing diversity has challenged GCP to consider not only strategies for partnering throughout North America and the world, but also across the state. Through a pilot project known as NCMapID, GCP is working with Metrolina and Piedmont associations to identify each of the unique people groups living in the Charlotte and Greensboro metropolitan areas.

The goal is to mobilize North Carolina Baptists to partner with the Metrolina and Piedmont associations to help identify, pray for and engage the people groups, and to then expand the project by creating an effective model that can be used in the six other North Carolina metropolitan areas.

GCP is also committed to involving young leaders in North Carolina in missions. Through a three-year initiative known as Next Generation Missional Journey, high school and college students are learning from pastors, missionaries and missions strategists, and participating in hands-on missions experiences.

From equipping the next generation of mission leaders to sharing the gospel with people who have never heard, Register said he is encouraged by the support and enthusiasm of churches across the state. “The response of North Carolina Baptists to the Office of Great Commission Partnerships has been overwhelming,” he said. “Through such engagement, North Carolina Baptists are expanding God’s Kingdom.”

For more information about Great Commission Partnerships contact Chuck Register at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5532, or cregister@ncbaptist.org. Contact Michael Sowers at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5654, or msowers@ncbaptist.org. ■

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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.”

ANNUAL MEETING TO FOCUS ON NEXT STEPS, IMPACTING LOSTNESS

by Melissa Lilley



With a theme of “Arise,” messengers to the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) Annual Meeting will be challenged to step up and take action to help penetrate spiritual darkness. About 5.8 million people in North Carolina do not know Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. Spiritual darkness is everywhere - in our neighborhoods, across the state and throughout the world. We must “Arise” and obey the Lord’s command to share the gospel and make disciples.

North Carolina Baptists will be challenged through testimonies from individuals and families about next steps, or practical ways to engage neighbors, co-workers, family members and friends with the gospel.

The following are highlights of this year’s meeting. **More information is available at ncannualmeeting.org.**

Pastors’ Conference

The Pastors’ Conference theme is “A Lasting Legacy.” We are all called to leave a legacy that outlasts our lives; we are called to make a difference for eternity.

Featured speakers include Lee Pigg, pastor, Hopewell Baptist Church, Monroe; Junior Hill, Southern Baptist evangelist; Ken Trivette, president and director, Native American Baptist Missions; David Gallamore, pastor, Rock Springs Baptist Church, Easley, S.C.; Herb Reavis, pastor, North Jacksonville Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla.; Mike Whitson, pastor, First Baptist Church Indian Trail; and Jeff LaBorg, east campus pastor, First Baptist Church Indian Trail.

The conference will be held at Lawndale Baptist Church in Greensboro and begins

Sunday, Nov. 10 at 6 p.m. and ends Monday, Nov. 11 at 3 p.m. The conference is free and registration is not required. Visit ncannualmeeting.org/legacy for more information.

Prayer

Your church should have received a copy of the 30-day Arise prayer guide in the mail. Please use this guide throughout October and pray that the Lord would help us to Arise and be obedient to the task of fulfilling the Great Commission. You can also sign up on the annual meeting website to receive email or text message prayer prompts during October.

Don’t miss the prayer room in the exhibit hall. Throughout the annual meeting, people will be praying in the prayer room. Please come by and spend some time praying that God will help us impact lostness.

Convention sermon

Fred Luter Jr. will deliver the Convention sermon during the Tuesday evening session. Luter is president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans, La. When he was elected pastor in 1986, Franklin Avenue had 65 members. Under his leadership, by 2005 the church had grown to more than 7,000 members.

Luter was the first African-American to preach the Convention sermon at the SBC, and in 2012, was the first African-American elected SBC president.

Arise worship service

Mark Harris, BSC president and pastor of First Baptist Church in Charlotte, will preach Monday night during a special worship service. Harris has pastored First Baptist for about six years. He has also

served as BSCNC first and second vice president.

Breakout sessions

Breakout sessions are scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 12 at 3:15 and 4:15 p.m.

Session topics include: mentoring, church renewal journey, transformational discipleship and teenagers, prayer, mission projects, stewardship, children’s discipleship, North American partnerships, reaching people in their cultural/ethnic context, rural strategy development and church strengthening.

For a detailed listing visit ncannualmeeting.org.

Exhibit hall

The exhibit hall includes about 100 exhibits. Convention staff will have booths set up and will be able to answer questions about Convention ministries serving local churches.

Convention institutions and agencies will be represented, as will exhibitors offering various resources to churches such as directory services, insurance, website development and construction/architecture.

This year the exhibit hall will be organized according to the new BSC staff structure. Several new groups and teams are now part of the new structure, and will be available in the exhibit hall for you to meet and ask questions. For example, the new Strategic Focus Team that is leading the work in eight population centers across the state will have a booth area. The new Collegiate Partnerships Team, as well as the new Evangelism and Discipleship Group, which includes the Church Strengthening Team and Disciple-making Team, will be in the exhibit hall.

Visit ncannualmeeting.org.

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A behind-the-scenes look at what really happens during annual meeting



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Strategy presentation scheduled for Tuesday session



Impacting Lostness through Disciple-making

ncbaptist.org/strategy

North Carolina Baptists will have opportunity throughout the annual meeting to learn more about the Convention's new strategy and staff structure. Earlier this year, the Convention's Executive Committee and Board of Directors approved a five-year strategy that focuses on helping churches evangelize all people groups – in every ethnic or cultural context – by applying disciple-making models with an Acts 1:8 focus.

The strategy calls for a commitment to both strengthening churches and planting churches through facilitation of a disciple-making culture that utilizes a relationship-driven model of consultation, beginning in the most concentrated

areas of lostness across the state. Strategy implementation will begin January 2014.

Executive director-treasurer Milton A. Hollifield Jr. will share with messengers information about the strategy during a special presentation Tuesday morning. The presentation will feature testimonies from North Carolina Baptists about how they are taking the next step to impact lostness where they live.

For more information about the strategy, visit ncbaptist.org/strategy.



Pray for 30 days

October 1 - 30

ncannualmeeting.org/pray

Pastors' Conference

November 10-11

ncannualmeeting.org/legacy

Heavenly Banquet

November 12, 12 p.m.

ncannualmeeting.org/heavenlybanquet

Listening Session: Budget

November 12, 7:30 a.m.

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Listening Session: Proposed Articles & Bylaws Amendments

November 12, 7:30 a.m.

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Breakout sessions

November 12, 3:15 and 4:15 p.m.

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Exhibit hall

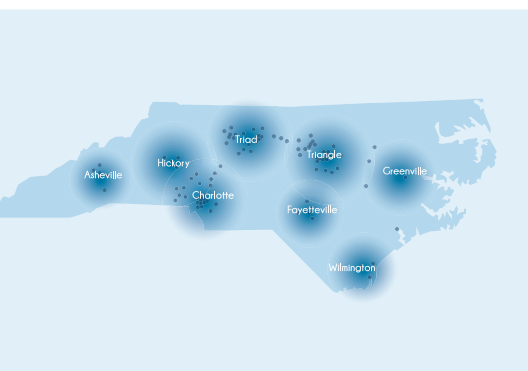
November 11-12

ncannualmeeting.org/exhibit

ANNUAL MEETING EVENTS

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

ncannualmeeting.org/breakouts



Creating a Disciple-making Culture

Church leaders want to know what is working and what is not working when it comes to disciple-making. In this session, we will look beyond the "why" of discipleship into the "how." Special emphasis will be given to relational disciple-making models that highlight life-on-life discipleship and developing an environment where disciple-making is the norm and not the exception.

A disciple-making culture is evident when followers of Christ order their everyday lives around their call to love God, which is expressed by loving others, which then results in producing more followers of Christ. We want to live as disciples who are making more disciples.

Led by BSC consultant Brian Uspshaw

Collegiate Partnerships

During this session participants will learn about the new model being used by North Carolina Baptists to reach college students, faculty, staff and their families with the gospel. We will explore new strategies God is using across the country to impact college/university campuses with the gospel for life transformation.

A new collegiate partnership model will help best fulfill the Convention's new strategy, as well as the Convention's mission and vision. A new model will allow us to expand and increase the mobilization of college students across the state in missionary efforts.

Led by BSC consultants Chuck Register and Rick Trexler

Why Eight Population Centers?

Research conducted by the Intercultural Institute for Contextual Ministry identifies the top 100 areas of lostness in North Carolina. The study revealed that 97 percent of the areas of lostness are located around eight population centers across the state: Charlotte, the Triangle, the Triad, Fayetteville, Wilmington, Hickory, Asheville and Greenville.

The population in North Carolina increased 18 percent from 2000 to 2010. During this same period, the population in these eight areas increased 22 percent, comprising nearly 75 percent of the state population. As North Carolina is becoming more urban and suburban, North Carolina Baptists must commit to penetrating lostness in these eight population centers.

Led by BSC consultants Michael Sowers, Frank White and Larry Phillips

Reaching People in their Cultural/Ethnic Context

How can you reach people from all different backgrounds in your community with the gospel? Come learn how while still honoring their language, culture and ethnic context. We will help you better understand the diversity of North Carolina and the various resources available to help you.

Led by BSC consultants Mark Gray and Antonio Santos

There are 20 breakout sessions scheduled Nov. 12 over two sessions. Visit ncannualmeeting.org/breakouts.

Family reorients life to invest in neighbors

By **MELISSA LILLEY** | BSC Communications

Other than a few names, Brandie Upshaw didn't really know her Gulfport, Miss., neighbors.

So when her husband, Brian, accepted a job with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), they committed to doing things differently in their new home. As they prepared to move from Mississippi to North Carolina they prayed for God to move them into a neighborhood where He would use them to share the gospel.

Five years ago Upshaw had no idea the journey God had in store for her family, and she shared that journey during the Sept. 6-7 women's prayer and evangelism conference hosted by Embrace Women's Missions and Ministries of the BSC. Her breakout session on learning to do evangelism from the home was one of several sessions offered during the conference at Ridgecrest. The conference also included plenary sessions and special prayer times.

Initially, trying to meet and build relationships with neighbors was not easy and at times proved frustrating. Yet, the Upshaws continued praying and seeking opportunities to get to know the people in their neighborhood.

"They saw that we were real people," Upshaw said.

"We were very intentional about reorienting our life to interact with our neighbors.

"Sometimes we don't take the Great Commission literally," she said. "Literally, God has placed us somewhere and He has a bunch of people around us who need to know Him."

About two years after moving, one neighbor expressed interest in participating in a Bible study that the Upshaws wanted to start in the neighborhood. They began the study with Bible storytelling and that study led to a more in-depth Bible study with two adult couples. That study has led to other Bible studies and, ultimately, salvations.

"Give them the gospel, but also give them your life," Upshaw said.

"People have been hurt by other people and they blame it on God. Pray for love and relationships that point to your Savior; don't make people your projects."

During her breakout session Upshaw encouraged the women to be mindful that many people have not been taught basic Bible truths and stories, and so they must be patient and take time to offer explanations as needed.

For example, during a study on the book of Acts, one of the men in the Upshaw's neighborhood Bible study had never read Acts and he had no idea that Saul would become the apostle Paul. His excitement upon learning how God changed this man's life brought much joy to Upshaw.

"They are so hungry and they have such fresh eyes," she said. "I have learned so much from my neighbors."

Upshaw's mother-in-law, Judy, also began a Bible study with her neighbors. She moved to North Carolina to be closer to family and within about six months knew many of her neighbors, most being senior adults.

Just by going on walks in her neighborhood she met many people, and as she did, she asked if they were interested in a Bible study.

What started as one group of five or six ladies has turned into three groups, including a group in a nearby neighborhood. Upshaw shared during the breakout session that neither she nor her mother-in-law did anything out of the ordinary in their neighborhoods.

"We are just normal ladies," she said. "It's all God; it's totally Him. It's nothing I do that's special.



Brandie Upshaw shares how her family started a Bible study in their home after building relationships with their neighbors. Upshaw was part of "Leaving A Legacy," a two-day conference sponsored by Embrace Women's Missions and Ministries. (BSC photo by Alexandra King)

"In my former neighborhood I wasn't really there," she added. "It's fun to see what God can do just by loving the people around you." **BR**

Women Continued from page 1

Mission Board (now North American Mission Board) in missions and evangelism.

The annual conference focused on Psalm 78:4, which encourages believers to tell of God's love and power from one generation to the next. Burroughs challenged women to not only teach their children the promises of God, but to claim His promises every day. She also reminded women to tell their testimony, or their story, and to tell it often.

"Part of leaving a spiritual legacy is telling your story. Your testimony is as fresh as what God said to you this morning when you opened His Word," she said. "Tell your story to your sphere of influence."

Merrie Johnson, BSC student evangelism consultant, shares her story often, as it is a story of God's faithfulness in the midst of a tremendous trial. She spoke on leaving a legacy of hope and modeling a life based on hope and trust in God.

Johnson said she chose to leave a legacy of hope instead of bitterness and discouragement. Although she could have given up when her husband left her and their two children, Johnson decided to trust God and to allow Him to use her situation for good. "Joshua 1:9 became our life verse," she said. "Over and over again God is telling us He will not leave us. The hope we have in Christ is not a vague feeling. The hope we have is complete assurance of certain victory through God."

Leaving a spiritual legacy is all about God working in and through His children, she said. Believers can let the hard times in life define them, or they can allow challenges to be part of their legacy. "I knew the only way to



Seeing her father cry when she was a little girl, Esther Burroughs said she wanted what he had – the Holy Spirit. She had seen him lying on the floor weeping the Psalms back to God. That legacy from her father has inspired Burroughs in pursuing a similar relationship with God. She was the main speaker Sept. 6-7 at a women's event at Ridgecrest Conference Center. (BSC photo by Alexandra King)

do that was to be better than the day before," she said. "Was I going to be bitter or better? I knew that my purpose was to know God and to make Him known. Our family's purpose was to live out our faith so that people would ask, 'What is the difference?'"

When Johnson struggled with finances as a single mom, she trusted God to provide. When she was lonely and didn't know where to turn for help, she trusted God to provide.

"Every choice we make will lead us closer or farther away from God. It's an everyday choice," she said.

Embrace director Ashley Allen was also a featured conference speaker and highlighted the life of Abraham as an example of a godly legacy; one who heard from God and then acted in obedience to God's instructions.

Although God commanded Abraham to move his family to an unfamiliar land, Abraham did not ask a lot of questions – he simply obeyed.

"A life of faith sometimes means living outside our comfort zones," Allen said. "Abraham was willing to go outside his comfort zone to be obedient to God."

Allen also pointed out that sometimes comfort zones go beyond a physical location, but no matter the situation, God's Word promises believers can trust their Savior.

"I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that He is faithful," Allen said. "We get to respond to His faithfulness when we are knocked out of our comfort zones."

Abraham willingly obeyed God even to the point of offering his son, Isaac, as a sacrifice to God. "Abraham trusted God with the outcome. He knew God had the details," Allen said.

Abraham cared more about living a life of eternal purpose than he did earthly pleasures or rewards. His spiritual legacy continues to this day as believers are reminded to pursue righteousness in Christ and the eternal Kingdom.

"Our lives are not about us; they are about Him," Allen said. "How are you living your life? What kind of legacy are you leaving?" **BR**

The church: Destination or missions launch pad?

By MELISSA LILLEY | BSC Communications

John Ewart did not grow up in church and had no intention of ever attending church. He heard the gospel through a football teammate.

"I was saved in a locker room because a guy who loved Jesus more than football shared the gospel," Ewart said.

Ewart shared with those gathered at Providence Baptist Church in Raleigh for the Sept. 13-14 Great Commission Church Conference that the "ya'll come" approach to church would not have worked for him – someone had to bring the gospel to him.

"We can't just stay inside the church walls and expect people to find us," he said. "You have to go, even to people who are different from you."

Ewart, associate vice president of project development and missions professor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, challenged conference participants to embrace the mission of God.

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's Office of Great Commission Partnerships sponsored the conference in an effort to help provide church leaders with a basic, yet workable framework for a local church mission strategy.

In order to establish a mission strategy the local church must understand that the mission of God is to bring Himself glory and to redeem a lost world unto Himself. Without a relationship with Jesus Christ, people are lost, dying and going to hell.

"Do we really embrace this concept?" Ewart said. "When was the last time loss had a gut-wrenching impact on you and your church? If we truly appreciated and loved our redeeming God on mission, we would tell others about Him and make disciples."

Churches fail to focus on God's mission when individual priorities and preferences become the goal.

"We have to be focused on what God wants for my church, not what I want for my church," Ewart said. "We often confuse ownership and stewardship. God never gave us ownership; we're just stewards."

Ewart reminded leaders that the Great Commission commands believers to take the gospel to all people, and that requires going to cultures unlike our own. "Our ministry is not to change culture, but to present the Word of God in ways that is understood in the culture," he said.

"The engineer and the passengers don't get to decide where the train tracks are going. Our job is to build the train. Every train will look different. Contextually, the train will be determined by who you are. But the mission, the train tracks, never changes."

To effectively present the gospel, and to do so in different cultures, a church must pursue an intentional relationship with God and His people, and with the world and its people.

"Being missional is simply an overflow of our relationship with God," Ewart said. "Sometimes our relationship with the world just becomes a work of righteousness, and the motivation will dry out unless you embrace the mission."

Ewart reminded leaders that Great Commission fulfillment is not only about making converts; it's about making disciples. Disciples are those who experience life transformation and then make more disciples.

Missions shape the mission

David Horner, who founded Providence Baptist Church in 1978 and has served as senior pastor ever since, was



JOHN EWART

also a featured conference speaker. He spoke about how missions must help shape a church's mission.

With less than 13 percent of Southern Baptist Convention churches sending out even one missionary, churches

must be willing to equip and to then let go.

"Your church will be viewed as a destination or a launch pad," he said. "We've got to be willing to let go – to release people to go. That hurts your bottom line, unless your bottom line is Kingdom focus. God will let a lot of people pass through your church if you don't own them as your members."

Churches become willing to release people to the mission field when members embrace the biblical teaching of loving Jesus above all else.

"We want to cultivate a deep, growing love for Christ so that our desires align with His. We've got to be so in love with Jesus that this matters more than anything else," Horner said. "The motive for missions comes out of our passion for Christ. A sense of guilt will only motivate short term."

Prayer always precedes and accompanies a great movement of God, and that includes a missions movement. "What is it you really long for? That's what you pray about," Horner said.

Each year Providence sends out hundreds of people on short-term mission trips, and throughout the years has sent out about 125 individuals to serve long-term in an international missions context. While short-term missions help provide a

"boots on the ground" experience, long-term partnerships are crucial.

"We want to go in deep for long periods of time," Horner said.

For a number of years Providence has committed to sending teams, both short and long term, to work among unreached people in Central Asia.

An effective missions strategy must be part of a biblical, holistic strategy for church ministry.

"Missions fits into a principle-based approach to ministry so that we pursue the whole counsel of God," Horner said. "Missions is part of a fully developed, mature response to the claims of Christ. If missions becomes isolated or insulated, we're in trouble."

Horner shared the following "best practices" to help build a missions culture:

- Designate leadership responsible for missions
- Maintain a high value on partnering with indigenous works
- Maintain consistent contact with supported missionaries
- Utilize an assessment process to send out those best suited and called
- Highlight missions at an annual conference to raise visibility and priority of missions
- Adopt a people group or focus on a particular nation or region
- Emphasize missions from the pulpit and platform

To learn more about principle-based ministry and missions, read Horner's *When Missions Shape the Mission and Firmly Rooted, Faithfully Growing: Principle-based Ministry in the Church*. More information about creating a church mission strategy is available through the Office of Great Commission Partnerships: www.ncbaptist.org/gcp. ■■

World Hunger Fund now 'Global Hunger Relief'

By MARK KELLY | Baptist Press

When it comes to people in need, big numbers can hide the human faces they represent. Statistics tell us that more than 1 billion people around the world are hungry more often than not, and about 24,000 people – over half of them young children – die every day from various conditions that could have been alleviated by basic nutrition.

The personal realities of those numbers are more compelling. Think about the humility of the African man who scours the ground where bags of maize are being distributed in his village, picking up every dusty kernel so that he can provide one more mouthful for his family.

Try to imagine the anxiety of the Tennessee child who is afraid to leave her classroom on Fridays for fear that she will miss the backpack of food that will keep



her from going hungry over the weekend. Consider the worries of the Syrian lawyer who is a refugee in a neighboring country, living in a shelter made from plastic bags and cardboard and scrambling for any work to provide for his extended family of 20.

In each of these situations, Southern Baptists are there, providing help for today and hope for the future. Certainly, other relief organizations are doing similar work, but Southern Baptists are different: While some

groups keep as much as 70 percent of their donations to cover overhead, Southern Baptists are assured that their donations go directly to the actual need.

To help raise awareness about Southern Baptists' unique approach to funding hunger ministries, a new name – Global Hunger Relief – is taking the place of the World Hunger Fund (WHF).

Beginning with this year's World Hunger Sunday, Oct. 13, the new name will show up in more places. Global Hunger Relief will follow precisely the same guidelines used with the World Hunger Fund. As with the WHF, funds will continue to be distributed 80-20 between international and North American causes.

A new website is being developed at www.GlobalHungerRelief.com, and social media presences are being created on Facebook and Twitter. Other information and resources are at www.WorldHungerFund.com. ■■

Recorder managing editor accepts Baptist Press job

BR staff

Shawn Hendricks, managing editor of the *Biblical Recorder*, has accepted the position of managing editor for Baptist Press (BP) in Nashville, Tenn.

A Missouri native, Shawn came to the *Recorder* in October 2011 after nearly 10 years as a writer for the International Mission Board.

"I'm excited about this new opportunity to serve as managing editor of Baptist Press," Hendricks said. "It will be a privilege to continue reporting on missions, ministry and other important events throughout this country and around the globe."

"I will definitely miss North Carolina

and the *Biblical Recorder*," he added. "During my time here, I have enjoyed helping to report on God's work in this great state and beyond. I also have had the privilege of working alongside a talented, hardworking and dedicated team. They have been a blessing."



SHAWN HENDRICKS

BR Editor Allan Blume said, "Shawn has been a valuable part of the *Biblical Recorder*'s team. He is a gifted journalist and a hardworking manager. While I am very sad that he is leaving us, I recognize the valuable contribution his skills will bring to the larger Southern Baptist family in his new role. We will miss Shawn and his family very much."

Hendricks will begin at Baptist Press on Oct. 28. ■

Nominations

Continued from page 7

minister, male; Mary Lucille (Molly) Foy, Carmel (O), Charlotte, Metrolina, lay person, female; Harvey Montague, Macedonia (O), Raleigh, Raleigh, lay person, male; Jerome W. (Jerry) Rodgers Jr., Hickory First (O), Denver, Catawba Valley, minister, male.

North Carolina Baptist Hospital

Carol Polk, Ardmore (O), Winston-Salem, Pilot Mountain, lay person, female*; William C. Warden Jr., Wilkesboro (O), Wilkesboro, Brushy Mountain, lay person, male; Sheree Watson, First Hickory (O), Hickory, Catawba Valley, lay person, female.

*Elected to three-year term as part of the realignment of the Board of Trustees for North Carolina Baptist Hospital

Committee on Convention Meetings

Paul Arnold, Olive Chapel (O), Apex, Raleigh, minister, male; David Ethridge, Fairview (O), Raleigh, Raleigh, lay person, male; Scott Faw, Moon's Chapel (U), Staley, Sandy Creek, minister, male; Josh Greene, Green Meadows (U), Mocksville, Pilot Mountain, minister, male; Gloria Ann South, New Friendship (O), Lex-

ington, Liberty, lay person, female; Luis Tejera, Hickory Grove Baptist Church Latin Campus (O), Charlotte, Metrolina, minister, male; Joel Stephens, Chair, Westfield (O), Westfield, Surry, minister, male.

Committee on Resolutions and Memorials

Robert O. Lyerly Jr., Charlotte First (O), Indian Trail, Metrolina, lay person, male; Phillips L. McRae, Troy First (U), Troy, Montgomery, minister, male; Allen Williams, Salem, Whitakers (U), Whitakers, North Roanoke, minister, male; Jeffery Broadwell, Chair,

Long Branch (O), Lumberton, Robeson, minister, male.

Historical Committee

Robbie Gibson, East Sanford (U), Sanford, Sandy Creek, minister, male; Weeks Parker, Snyder Memorial (O), Fayetteville, New South River, lay person, male; Richard Price, Elm Grove (U), Rocky Mount, North Roanoke, minister, male; Rick Rogers, Roanoke (U), Roanoke Rapids, North Roanoke, minister, male; Todd Parker, Chair, Edgewood (U), Winston-Salem, Pilot Mountain, lay person, male.

CHURCH NEWS



Nobles Chapel Baptist Church, Sims

A team of 11 people from Nobles Chapel Baptist Church, Sims, went on the church's first group mission trip in its 113-year history. The team served Sept. 12-15 with Chris and Becca Autry, church planters with the North American Mission Board in Pittsburgh, Pa. Paul Batson is pastor.



Rocky Hock Baptist Church, Edenton

The golf ministry team, seen above, at Rocky Hock Baptist Church, Edenton, recently raised more than \$7,000 for Baptist Children Homes of North Carolina (BCH) by hosting its annual golf tournament. The church raised \$7,212.73 and presented a check to Peggy Taylor of the Baptist Children Home in Ahoskie. In its five years, the church has raised more than \$31,000 for BCH. Included on the team are: Trey and Alanna Bass; Neal and Michelle Tynch; Ellis Tynch; Felisa Bass; Gray Bass; Gertrude Harrell; Oscar Jr. and Belva White; Danny Lewis; Col. Bill Smith; Allen Peele; Wayne Howell; Herb Consalvo; Logan Brabble; Billy Elliott; and James Horton, senior pastor.

First Baptist Church, Gaston

Connie Shotwell, right, holds a plaque given to her Sept. 1 at First Baptist Church, Gaston, to celebrate Connie Shotwell Day. There was also a dinner for Shotwell, wife of the late Earl Shotwell, who pastored the church during the 1970s and '80s. She supported his ministry at FBC Gaston as well as Campbell University, and other churches in Roanoke Rapids, Fuquay-Varina and Nashville. It was because of her dedication to serving God and the local church that the church decided to honor Shotwell. "I have known Connie and Earl for a long time, and they were always faithful to the Lord and His church," said Julian R. Mills, FBC Gaston's interim pastor. "Connie has been an inspiration to me while I have served at Gaston. This truly is a very fitting and well deserved honor which the church has bestowed upon her." (Photo by Sharon Robinson)



Ross Baptist Church, Windsor

About \$500 in school supplies were collected in July and August and presented to the students at the Aulander Elementary School at the Aug. 11 event called "Christmas in August" at Ross Baptist Church, Windsor. Pictured from left: Wendee Todd, media library director at Aulander Elementary; Jeffery Russell, Ross' pastor; Tracy Gregory, principal at Aulander Elementary; Karen Rodman, director of Student Services at Bertie County Public School District. This is the second year Ross hosted the event held during its Sunday morning worship service. Todd is a member of the church and helped coordinate the effort.

Submissions

The *Biblical Recorder* is pleased to publish staff changes, church news and events with a statewide interest. Please send information immediately following an event, or for opportunity corner, send at least two months in advance. Send to dianna@BRnow.org or *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512. Call (919) 847-2127.

God before government: The key to unlock revival

During the last few years, there have been a number of court cases that have demonstrated a surge of judicial tyranny taking place across the United States.

A few examples include:

- the Christian photographers in New Mexico who refused to take pictures of a same-sex wedding;
- the Christian bakers in Oregon who similarly refused to bake a cake for a homosexual ceremony;
- the Christian couple in Hawaii who have a privately owned bed and breakfast and are being forced to entertain homosexual patrons despite their desire to run their B&B as a Christian environment;
- the Supreme Court's decision on DOMA and its willingness to let Prop. 8 in California remain overturned;
- the cases in North Carolina involving Forsythe and Rowan County commissioners opening their meetings with sectarian prayer, that is, prayer in Jesus' name.

Today, we have come to the place where it's criminal for Christian business

owners to refuse service to homosexuals, but it's perfectly acceptable for homosexuals to harass conservative Christians and bully them, via the courts, into violating their religious convictions.

Many pseudo-intellectuals have recently argued that the right to discriminate on the basis of religion is one right that a tolerant society does not protect. Ok, let's try to make sense of that statement. A tolerant society does not allow religious people to discriminate based on their religious convictions, but it does allow people of same-sex persuasion to subjugate based on their sexual convictions? Sure, that makes a lot of sense – wink, wink.

In the name of tolerance, our judicial system has embraced totalitarianism.

Consider the ruling of the New Mexico Supreme Court as articulated by Justice Richard Bosson, who stated that the “price of citizenship” for the Christian photographers is “to channel their conduct, not their beliefs, so as to leave space for other Americans who believe something different.”



RIT VARRIALE
Guest Column

Elsewhere, Justice Bosson stated that the photographers would now be, “compelled by law to compromise the very religious beliefs that inspire their lives,” and that they, “can no more turn away customers on the basis of their sexual orientation ... than they could refuse to photograph African-Americans or Muslims.” Don't overlook the subtle but powerful tie to the civil rights movement. Curtailing racism is admirable. Coercing Christians to participate in homosexual and Muslim ceremonies is an anathema.

So, how do we, the church, make a difference?

Here are three areas of prayer and action:

- Christians must unite across denominational lines and work together in order to defeat the radical liberalism and secularism that prevails in our courts. Current North Carolina politics and last year's marriage amendment are great examples of what can be done when the church unites.

- Christians must be willing to recall judges and politicians that disregard the will and voice of the people. This was recently accomplished in Colorado with the recall of two Senators over the issue of gun control. Arguably, the issue of religious freedom and the right to live out one's religious convictions in the public square is more important than the issue of gun rights. Thus, if the people of Colorado were motivated to dismiss politicians for guns, Christians all across the nation should be motivated to dismiss politicians for God.

- Christians must commit to a new era of revivalism where the goal of the revival is not individualism packaged in religious language, but the goal of the revival is to obey God before government.

Many people lament the fact that revival has not broken out in our land. Yet, Acts 4 and 5 teaches us why revival has not taken place in America. In Acts 4, after being harassed by the authorities and commanded, “not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus,” the church prayed for boldness (Acts 4:29). In answer to their prayer, the leaders of the church proclaimed the name of Jesus regardless of the authorities' demands. In Acts 5, the leaders of the church were again bullied by those in power. After being rebuked for preaching in the name of Jesus, Peter responded tersely, “We ought to obey God rather than men.”

This is God's word for the 21st century church, and it is the key to revival.

However, Peter did not stop there. In

Acts 5:32, he said, “we are His witnesses to these things [the ministry of Jesus], and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him.”

Understood within the context of Acts 4 and 5, the Holy Spirit is “given to those who obey Him” [God] over and against human authorities.

It doesn't matter how many Graham family crusades we have. It doesn't matter how large our churches become. It doesn't matter how burdened we are for the lost. If we are not willing to obey God before government, we will not experience an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We have not experienced revival because the American church is more committed to the government than it is to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

When the government tells us to stop praying with our children at institutions that our tax dollars built, we stop praying.

When the government commands us, “not to speak at all in the name of Jesus,” we do exactly what we're told.

When Supreme Court justices tell us that we are, “compelled by law to compromise the very religious beliefs that inspire [our] lives,” we do everything but what Spirit filled Christians should do, namely, obey God rather than government.

When will we experience a true revival in our nation? We will experience a true move of the Holy Spirit when Christians unite across denominational lines and when Christians are willing to recall judges and politicians who reject the voice and vote of the people. Indeed, we will experience true revival when Christians are willing to tell the courts, with all due respect, “you can take any ruling that compels us to violate our religious beliefs straight back to hell where it originated.”

When it comes to our religious beliefs we have one rule – the rule of faith that proclaims, “Jesus Christ is Lord!”

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Rit Varriale is pastor of Elizabeth Baptist Church, Shelby, and chair of the Christian Higher Education Committee of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Varriale is the author of *Reformation in Responsibility*, which is currently out of stock on Amazon.com but can be purchased in bulk for \$6 per copy by contacting info@theappian.com.) **BR**

“We will experience a true move of the Holy Spirit when Christians unite across denominational lines ...”



Show appreciation for your pastor

I grew up in western North Carolina as the son of a pastor, and although I pursued some other vocations, I later sensed God's call to change my plans and soon found myself following in my father's footsteps. I was blessed to serve as pastor of churches in Texas and North Carolina.

The life of a pastor is rewarding and I consider it the highest calling. To open God's Word each week and teach the truths of scripture is a privilege and a blessing. Pastors have many opportunities to invest their lives in helping people with spiritual needs. They counsel those seeking direction, they help strengthen Christians through discipleship, they lead their people to serve in missions, and they par-

ticipate in some of their church member's most celebrative occasions, such as weddings and the birth of children. They also spend sleepless nights with individuals who are gravely ill and families who grieve over the death of a loved one. Pastors are expected to offer words of encouragement and hope during funerals and stand with families at the graveside. Their presence is often desired because people recognize them as messengers from God. Seeing the pastor in times of grief and loss can be a welcomed reminder to the bereaved that God never forsakes us.

However, serving as a pastor also comes with great responsibility and, at times, tremendous challenges. With so many different tasks that need attention

the pastor's time is stretched thin and he can become physically and emotionally exhausted. His family often sacrifices things they want to do together because of the needs of his parishioners.

An article on the 9Marks blog titled "Don't make your pastor a statistic" notes that 50 percent of pastors feel unable to meet the demands of their job. Of pastors participating in the research study, 70 percent fight depression and 50 percent would consider leaving full-time ministry.

Do members of your congregation ever inadvertently place impossible demands and unreasonable expectations upon the pastor? Does your church family fail to encourage him, affirm him or show their appreciation for his labors on their behalf?

October is Pastor Appreciation Month, and I encourage you to take time and ex-

press your appreciation not only to your pastor, but also to all your church staff. LifeWay offers great ideas for simple, yet effective ways you can do this. For example, you could do something as easy as writing your pastor a letter or sending a card that expresses your gratitude and assures him of your prayer support.

However you decide to show your appreciation next month, I would ask that you also make a special commitment to pray for your pastor.

Pray that God will provide him with physical, mental, emotional and spiritual strength. Pray that God will speak through him each week as he preaches and ministers. Most importantly, pray that his life and leadership bring much honor and glory to God.

"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." 1 Timothy 5:17 BR



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive
director-treasurer

The pastor search process

Baptist Press

Churches face many daunting tasks in the pilgrimage of doing ministry. Arguably, one of the most crucial times in the life of a church is when a pastor leaves and the search begins for a new pastoral leader.

Among Baptists and similar faith groups, the process involves a pastor search committee. Each church determines how this committee or team is selected. Most often, that selection is driven by bylaws or some other codified means of choosing representatives to do the search for the church family.

During my pastoral ministry, I have had occasions to talk to pastor search committees – I was the one being researched and interviewed in the process of calling a new pastor.

In most instances, the experience was pleasant and informative, even when I did not make the transition to the church that a committee was representing. I did learn a few things along the way that might be helpful to those engaged in this calling process.

A couple of disclaimers need to be noted before I offer comments about the process of calling a pastor. I must admit I have never been on a search committee for a pastor or a CEO of an entity. I have had my share of experiences in ministry, but this one I have not yet encountered. Therefore, my views on the subject may come across one-sided or a bit biased. If that is the case, I apologize in advance.

Additionally, I have to admit that with all the potential downsides of the way we do the pastor search and calling process, I believe it is an excellent model. It is based on the congregational principle of church governance, even though a representative group makes the initial recommendation. By that, I mean the church makes the final decision as a local body of believers. In my view, this is an expression of solid ecclesiology or church polity and practice.

Prayer power

With all that said, let's launch into a descriptive approach to calling a pastor, with the intent of hoping to make a good process even better.

Where does the process need to begin? After the church has selected the search committee/team, the group needs to get to know each other better.

They may be acquaintances or even friends, but most likely they have not worked together in a ministry assignment like this one. So getting to know each other more intimately is a must.

Praying together is one of the best ways to deepen relationships among people with such an important task before them.

Praying for each other, for their families, for their church family and for the new pastor makes for healthy direction-setting as a group.

Obviously, prayer needs to permeate the process. It is not just a beginning place but a foundation on which to stand. Any committee/team wanting to do a good job needs to be empowered by the Spirit of God for sure. Prayer is the key to that sense of empowerment.

Practical matters

Practical and confidential matters have to be considered in the initial stages of the search process. If the

church did not select or name a chair, which oftentimes is the case, then the group will need to take care of that matter.

The chair is certainly not a dictator, but this person is a direction-setter along the way. Other leaders may need to be selected as well, such as a vice chair and someone to keep good notes and information for the entire committee/team.

Another practical matter to be seriously considered is training for the assignment. Some committees do not think they need to be trained for this assignment. This is not arrogance; it is just the feeling that they are good leaders in the business world and in the church, and they feel they are already prepared to do the work. This is a misperception for sure.

Every committee/team needs some personalized training. Who does the training? There are more options than one might think. Local directors of missions often are experienced and prepared to do this specialized training. State conventions also can help.

A trainer can help the group avoid some problem areas in the search process. I cannot overstate the importance of having a coach or trainer to do at least some initial training for the work ahead.

Profiling the church

Doing a church profile can be helpful to the search team as well.

Many who are called on to do a pastor search feel they know their church well. However, with multiple generations worshiping together and with all kinds of backgrounds represented in the church family, a survey of the church at this interim juncture is of vital significance.

No one really has comprehensive knowledge of a particular church until the person does some reflective study of the church family.

This kind of survey can be a part of the trainer's role in getting the committee off to a good start. The survey

See Lance page 19

Submissions for Tar Heel Voices

Please send no more than 300 words, along with contact information, to editor@BRnow.org or *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512-1185. Only one letter from the same writer will be published in a 90-day period. Have questions? Call (919) 847-2127.



RICK LANCE
Guest Column

Stronger together – state Baptist conventions and SBC

Fall brings the opening of the new school year, the energy of the season of autumn and, for Southern Baptists, the meeting of the state Baptist conventions. In coming weeks, most of our state conventions will be holding their annual meetings. Pastors and laypeople will gather from local churches and assemble as a convention of Baptist churches. There is a glory in these meetings, and they affirm our need for these state conventions and their ministries.

A younger generation of Southern Baptists may well be unaware of the importance of the state conventions and their work. They would be well-advised to attend their local state convention and catch a vision of what the Baptist churches in their states are doing together.

Americans are regularly reminded that states matter. Our political system respects the role of the individual states, and most Americans identify not only as citizens of the United States, but as residents of their respective states. This does not make our nation weaker. We are stronger because the states retain an important role in building communities and building the nations. As our national experience has shown, there is great gain in recognizing the priority of the local, even in the building of the nation.

In Southern Baptist life, the same is profoundly true of our state conventions. If the state conventions did not exist, we would have to invent them. There

is a need for Baptist churches within every state to coordinate and combine their energies for the cause of the Great Commission and the task of reaching the communities in their own state and region. This does not weaken the Southern

Baptist Convention—it makes us stronger.

Respect for the state conventions comes naturally to me. As a boy, I participated in camps and programs for children and young people. Soon after my conversion, I boarded a church bus and headed for Lake Yale, the assembly of the Florida Baptist Convention. The first real exposure I had to the scope and scale of Southern Baptist mission work came when I was a nine-

year-old boy sitting in the auditorium at Lake Yale. I came back year after year, attending Royal Ambassador Camp and an assortment of camps and retreats and conferences. The imprint of those experiences remains on my life even now.

As a young man called to the ministry, I headed to Samford University where I received the gift of education for ministry from a school founded by Alabama Baptists—at least part of the tuition for my education came directly through the Alabama Baptist Convention. As a young ministerial student, I was exposed to preaching and evangelism through the Alabama state evangelism conferences and I saw the cooperative ministries work by attending the Alabama Baptist Convention annual meeting. When I was elected president of the student Ministe-

rial Association, Samford's president, Dr. Leslie S. Wright, invited me to attend the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions with him. I learned how Baptists work together.

Later, as a pastor and seminary student, I saw the cooperative ministries of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and was able to participate in its work. Later, I was elected editor of *The Christian Index* and shifted my ministry to the context of the Georgia Baptist Convention. I was immersed in the life of that state convention, and I saw first-hand that it was doing important work that would otherwise be left undone.

When disaster strikes, state disaster relief teams are first on the scene. When a pastor needs help, the state convention is close at hand. When strategies for reaching America's urban areas are developed, state conventions are on the front lines. State conventions remember the rural churches and are there to combine strengths and walk alongside those congregations serving the heartland.

At the same time, the state conventions have the world on their hearts. Increasingly, our leading state conventions are increasing their commitment to the support of national ministries and the reaching of the nations. Many of these conventions have taken courageous steps to send a greater percentage of Cooperative Program funds to the cause of reaching the nations with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. These state conventions have made sacrifices for the Great Commission cause and are mobilizing church-

es to reach not only their communities, but the world.

Now is the time for Southern Baptists committed to the Great Commission to show up and support our state conventions, to attend our annual convention meetings and to support every effort to reach our individual states, our nation, and the nations with the gospel.

As a committed Southern Baptist, I would not know who I am without the state conventions that have contributed so much to my life and ministry. As president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, I am proud and thankful to be in partnership with every one of our state conventions, and I want my students and faculty to share this pride and gratitude.

So, as the Southern Baptists in your state head for their annual meetings, determine to join them, to pray for them, to support them in Cooperative Program giving, and to strengthen the Great Commission vision and energy you will find there.

Southern Baptists will never be bolder in

mission and ministry than when we strengthen these bonds and stand together. Bring the full wealth of your conviction and the full passion of your desire for reaching your state, our nation and all nations with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Stronger together. Serving together. Sending together.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – R. Albert Mohler Jr. recently celebrated 20 years as president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. This column first appeared at his website, AlbertMohler.com.) **BR**



R. ALBERT MOHLER JR.
Guest Column

“Now is the time for ... Baptists committed to the Great Commission to show up and support our state conventions ...”

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Harris

Continued from page 1

Asking God, “Why Mark?” she read scripture, prayed and saw “... the kind of preparation God has given Mark in ministry is the kind of leadership that is needed in a legislative body.”

In traveling across the state Harris said he has learned “people really do want a candidate they can believe in. They really do want a candidate who is marked by character – someone who does not have to get up in the morning and read the newspaper to figure out what they believe. Someone who does not have to turn on the news and hear what the latest poll is saying to determine how they are going to vote or how they’re going to stand that day.

“They are looking for somebody that has a core that has been built in their life,

not from [several] terms of public office, but a core that has been built up over a lifetime, that’s marked by character.”

Harris was heavily involved in North Carolina’s marriage amendment referendum in 2012.

Harris’ church is giving him “a sabbatical leave mixed with a personal leave of absence,” developed by the church’s personnel committee, unanimously approved by the finance committee and the deacons and affirmed by the church in a public vote. The plan calls for Harris to devote his full attention to the campaign from Dec. 1 through the primary in May.

Jim Henry, the retired pastor of First Baptist Church in Orlando Fla., will be filling the Charlotte pulpit during Harris’ absence. **BR**

October 6

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

October 13

The Pressure of Retaliation

Focal Passage: James 5:1-11

No obedient Christian would steal his neighbor's car and claim it for himself. However, he may be tempted by a more subtle form of theft: "Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it" (Proverbs 3:27).

Simply stated, theft is sometimes a matter of withholding instead of taking. James spoke against rich land owners who failed to pay their field laborers, but continued to live in the lap of luxury. He warned these men that their theft cries out to God against them.

Frugality may be a virtue, but God has nothing good to say about cheapskates and thieves. A former farm equipment dealer once told my father, "A deal is only a good deal if it's good for both parties." I used to think a good deal meant that I negotiated a sale far below the sticker price. On the contrary, the Bible calls us to do to others what we would have them do to us (Matthew 7:12). We should want a good deal for both parties.

James exhorted offended believers to be patient and strengthen their hearts as

they await the Lord's return. While we should be wise in our business and interpersonal transactions, we should expect the evil dealings of a fallen world.

When we keep our eyes on Jesus we are reminded that He's in control of our finances, relationships and future.

Furthermore, we must avoid groaning against each other and bringing judgment upon ourselves. James exhorts us to follow the examples of the prophets who endured suffering with patience. He further highlighted the endurance of Job and God's compassion and mercy toward him.

When we seek to get even with the people who have wronged us, we ignore Scripture's exhortation, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," says the Lord" (Romans 12:20).

While we merely attempt justice with our limited knowledge and power, God knows the heart and addresses the real problems. Let's trust in Him, even when we have been wronged.

Focal Passage: Luke 10:38-42

Several years ago a Christian author tackled the subject of *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World*. Our culture seems to raise the bar continually on busyness. The masses want to do more and be more as they spend their lives on activities and aspirations which mean nothing in light of eternity. When we narrow our focus to observe Christians we find a disheartening amount of carryover from the world. Are we spending our time on Christian activities without spending time with Christ?

Mary and Martha set very different priorities when Jesus came. Martha was busy with various preparations to serve. While her work seems praiseworthy, Luke described her as "distracted." She was so focused on the urgency of cultural norms that she missed what mattered most. Mary, although considered a slacker by her sister, set aside her usual duties to spend time

with the Master. Jesus told Martha that she was "worried and bothered about so many things." Furthermore, he told her that Mary had chosen that which was necessary, good, and would not be taken away. How many people in the average church love serving more than worship? If they serve in a seasonal ministry do they attend worship in the offseason? Every church needs workers to do jobs that aren't very spiritual (cleaning, landscaping, counting money, etc.), but are those the only things they do? Work without worship could be performed by any lost person. As Christians we are called to do our work "as for the Lord rather than for men" (Colossians 3:23). We must not merely produce results; we must worship God in all we do.

What are your spiritual priorities? On Sunday do you seek a Christian concert or true corporate worship? Do you long for motivational speaking or biblical preaching? Is your small group built on mere social interaction or making disciples of Christ? Ultimately, are our Christian activities based on our expectations or God's priorities? Let's make intimacy with Jesus priority one!



TROY RUST
Writer, Hurdle Mills

October 6

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

October 13

The Power to Save

Focal Passage: John 4:39-54

How do you decide who to believe? Whether it is trying to decide who to believe when it comes to a sibling conflict or political rivals, there has to be some basis for making a decision of who to believe. It is definitely true when making decisions about religious beliefs, too. Why do you believe that Jesus has the power to save? In our scripture passage this week, we see reasons that people chose to believe that Jesus has the power to save.

The Samaritans believed at first "because of what the woman said when she testified" (John 4:39-42). Then, they believed "because of what He [Jesus] said."

In Galilee, the Galileans believed "because they had seen everything He [Jesus] did in Jerusalem during the festival" (John 4:43-48). Then, a royal official believed because Jesus did what He said He would do (John 4:49-54).

One reason I choose to believe someone is when they have experienced what I need to know about. For example, if I want to know more about what to expect in my Mom's diagnosis of Alzheimer's,

I go to my dear friend whose Mom has Alzheimer's.

I can believe what she tells me, because she has experienced it. And, when we come to the time of life to plan our first wedding, I know exactly who I will go to for advice. The friends I am thinking of are the very ones who I can believe because of their personal experience and what I have seen them do.

So, why do you believe Jesus has the power to save? It is essential that you know, and know how to articulate it, because then you can influence others to believe in Jesus. As you go through this week, take the time to write down the reasons you believe Jesus has the power to save. Reflect on your personal experience and all the wonderful ways you have seen Jesus work miracles and do what He said He would do!

And then, pray that God will open doors of opportunity to share this knowledge and personal experience with others.

Focal Passages: John 5:2-3a, 5-17

Jesus demonstrated his concern for those who are physically suffering when he healed the lame man at the pool of Bethesda. Jesus addressed the man's physical need first (John 5:5-9a) and then addressed his spiritual need (John 5:14). We can follow the example of Jesus.

Reflect for a moment on whether or not you have ever experienced chronic pain or prolonged suffering. For some, it might be a history of migraines and for others it is the constant presence of arthritis.

We may try to identify with the suffering of the man in our Bible story, but like this writer, the majority of us would not have any idea of what it feels like to be an invalid for 38 years.

But, we do understand that when you are hurting, it is difficult to focus on anything other than the pain.

The man must have felt helpless as

he could not get to the pool first to be healed. The point is not whether or not he would have been healed by the pool, but that he had no hope of it happening. And yet, he was there for a reason – for the Healer to meet him and provide physical and spiritual healing.

Jesus chose to help the lame man, even though it was the Sabbath. For you, the obstacle to helping the physically hurting might be something else. I am fortunate in that as a social worker at an outpatient clinic for children, I am daily around those who are suffering physically.

If I thought their physical suffering was all they could look forward to each day, it would be a depressing place to work.

But, instead, they often receive treatments that result in physical healing. As physical needs are met, I can explore issues such as how they are coping with their chronic illness.

We talk about the role of faith in their ability to cope. As physical needs are met, then spiritual needs can be met too. What opportunity do you have today to meet a physical need and then point someone to Jesus?



SHERRA STILL
Writer, University
Hills Baptist Church,
Charlotte

Lance

Continued from page 16

or profile of the church can be a way of understanding how the church has changed since the calling of the last pastor. That is valuable information.

Pastoral resumes

The experience of receiving resumes can be a confusing part of the search process. However, it is now the pattern and practice of most committees or teams. Let me say that I believe a search group needs to have this information.

Many times it will come from a person recommending a prospect to be considered. That is a healthy way to receive information.

Personally, I would prefer to not receive the resume from the candidate himself. By contrast, I know that is the accepted practice in the business world, but it is not my preference.

Resumes may be available from the offices of local Baptist associations and state conventions as well as seminaries. Also, there is no reason the committee could not request the information from someone in whom they are interested.

Patience with the process

Patience in the process is a necessity. There are times when the search group has an unnecessary feeling of being in a hurry.

The church may have some problems, or there may be some outside pressure placed on the team.

This is a point of caution. A hurried approach to calling a pastor is fraught with danger signs. Space and time

will not permit a discussion of this issue but, again, a trainer can help the committee understand the need for a patient attitude in this search process.

Regarding interviewing a prospect, let me say a few things that reflect my experience. First, do not oversell the church.

Yes, you need to emphasize the positives and highlight the high points of the past and present, but most pastors with experience know that search teams have a high opinion of the church or they would not have been chosen for the task. If there have been problems recently, be forthright with the prospect.

Additionally, if you have questions about his past or present ministry, feel free to tactfully but truthfully pose them to him. This needs to be an open process. It is better to know the candidate and the candidate to know the church up front than to find out later that the situation from either perspective was not what those involved had thought it was.

Again, I just cannot overstate the importance of the transparency needed for the team and the prospect as they consider walking together in presenting a recommendation to the church.

Preparation for the call

When the search committee/team has made its decision, there needs to be some time for the group to prepare the church for the recommendation and the call of the potential new pastor. With mass communication in terms of social media and the like, confidentiality is really challenging for the process.

The pastor will be sensitive to the fact that he wants to be the one to tell his people about his departure. Therefore, the schedule for introducing the pastoral choice to the people and calling him needs to factor in all these variables. Every church is different, and so is every pastor. Careful consideration of how and when to go public with the announcement is something that demands the best of all involved.

Personal support

After the pastor is called, the search committee/team may think their work is complete. That is technically true, but not in the relational sense. Let me make a suggestion to any search group: On the anniversary of the pastor's calling, take him, his wife and family out to eat and have a time of fellowship with them. Let them know how much they are appreciated.

This was the practice of my last pastorate, and it was a good one. I wish I could say it was my idea, but it wasn't. Try it, you will like it.

Well, this was a lengthy discourse, but my passion for seeing good marriages in the ministry has led me to share these thoughts with you. I regularly pray for our churches. I want the best for all of them.

This is my simple way of trying to help churches at a crucial time in their journey. A lot is at stake. This is a Kingdom concern, one which cannot be taken lightly. Thanks for your service.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Rick Lance is executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions. This column first appeared on his blog at RickLance.com.) **BR**

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Church Staff

First Baptist Church of Rockingham, NC, is seeking a **full-time associate pastor/minister to families**. The candidate should have a calling to minister to and disciple young people and a strong desire to strengthen families. It is preferred that the candidate have a theological degree from an accredited university or divinity school. Compensation is commensurate with education and experience. See www.fbcrockingham.org. Send resumes to: Mrs. Janice Coen, C/O FBC, 201 N. Randolph St., Rockingham, NC 28379, or to janicecoen@gmail.com.

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Little River Baptist Church, a conservative church in western NC, is seeking a **full-time Associate Pastor of Youth/Family Ministry**. Additional information is available at littleriverbaptist.com.

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, BSCNC, and SBC. Send resumes to Troutman Baptist Church; Attn: Youth Minister Search Team; PO Box 275; Troutman, NC 28166, or forward to troutman-baptist@bellsouth.net.

Welcome Home Baptist Church in North Wilkesboro, NC, is seeking a **part-time worship leader** to lead congregational worship and work with our adult choir. Interested candidates can mail their resume to 132 Welcome Home Baptist Church or email at whbcinfo@gmail.com.

Mountain View Baptist Church of Hamptonville, NC, is seeking a **part-time Director of Children's Ministries**. Our church is theologically conservative and actively involved in missions. E-mail resume to mvbc@yadtel.net.

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