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BR

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J.D. Greear, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, gives the opening prayer for an afternoon legislative session for the House of Representatives. (Image captured from U.S. House video)

Greear delivers prayer before U.S. House

By SETH BROWN & LIZ TABLAZON | Biblical Recorder

The words of Psalm 16:1 are located inside a prayer room of the United States Capitol: “Pre-serve me, O God, for in thee do I put my trust.” A similar prayer was spoken on Capitol Hill Sept. 25 as Southern Baptist Convention President J.D. Greear opened the afternoon legislative session for the House of Representatives.

“May You grant that this body rule in a way that directs the men, women and children of this country toward Your goodness, and enables them to respond in thankfulness to You,” said Greear, pastor of The Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham, N.C. “May we perceive the love that You have for us, and may that translate into love for one another, especially the most vulnerable.”

Greear was invited to open the session in prayer at the request of Rep. Mark Walker (R-N.C.). Walker is a member of Mercy Hill Church in Greensboro, N.C., and a former Southern Baptist pastor.

“[Greear] believes the deeper we dive into the ex-travagant love of Christ, the more our lives will be filled

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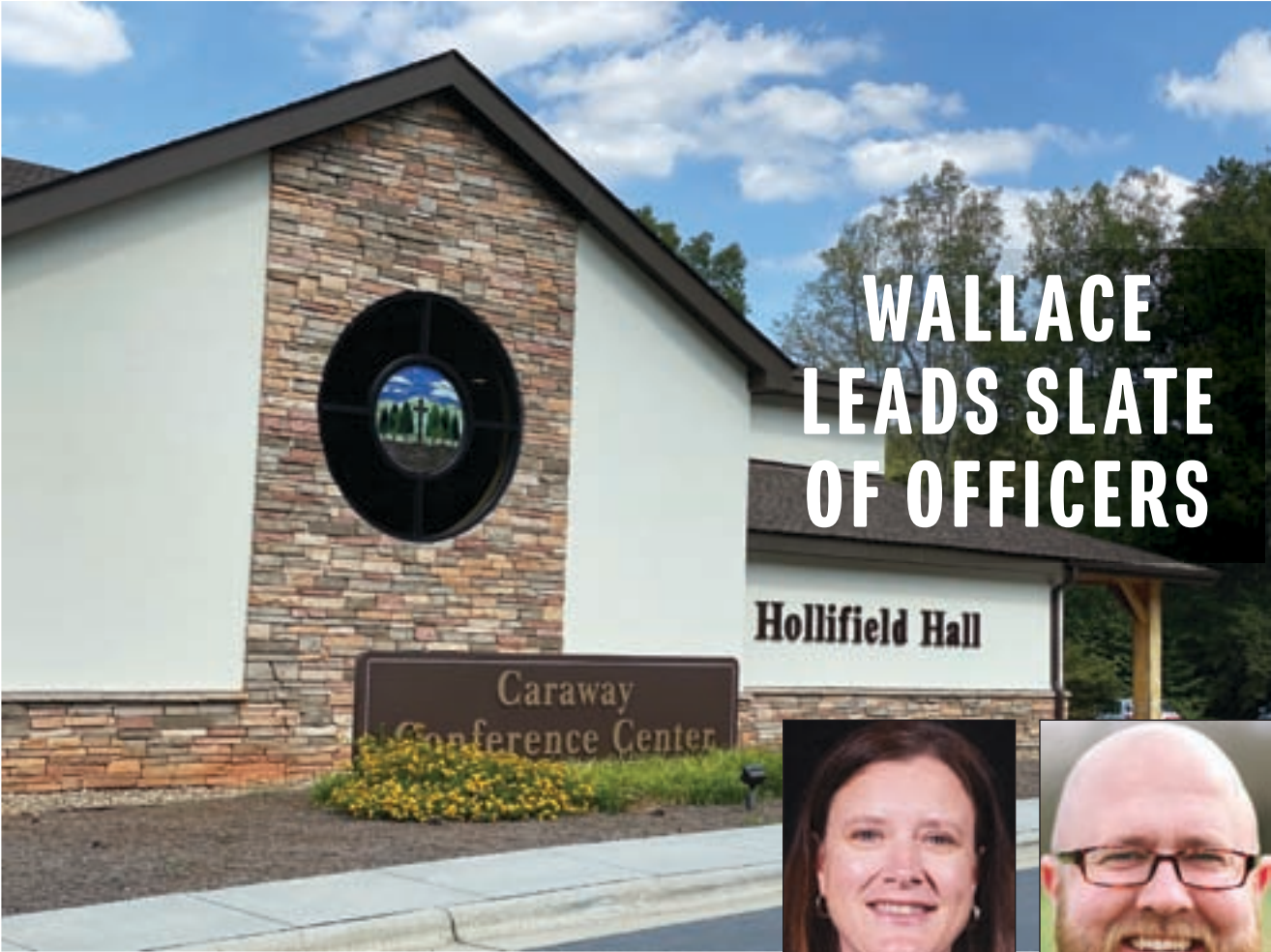
Amy Whitfield named EC's associate communications VP

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Melanie Wallace, from left, and Matt Capps will lead the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina Board of Directors. The board met recently at Caraway Conference Center near Asheboro for a regularly scheduled meeting.

WALLACE LEADS SLATE OF OFFICERS



By CHAD AUSTIN | BSC Communications

Melanie Wallace, a pastor’s wife with a deep love and commitment to God’s Word and missions, was elected president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina’s (BSC) board of directors, becoming the first woman elected as board president since 1993.

Wallace was elected during the board’s regularly scheduled fall meeting, held Monday and Tuesday, Sept. 23-24, at Caraway Conference Center near Asheboro.

No other candidates were nominated.

“It is an honor and a privilege to be able to serve the convention as president of the board over the next year,” Wallace said. “I appreciate the confidence and encouragement I have received from board members and executive leaders (of the convention). Anyone who serves alongside our Executive Director-Treasurer Milton Hollifield Jr. comes to appreciate his vision statement that ‘By God’s grace, we will become the strongest force in the history of this convention for reaching

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Board endorses bylaw measures to address misconduct

By CHAD AUSTIN | BSC Communications

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina’s (BSC) board of directors gave unanimous approval to a pair of proposed changes to the convention’s bylaws that outlines criteria by which certain officials could be removed from leadership positions for instances of “serious misconduct.”

The approvals came during the board’s regularly scheduled fall meeting, held Monday and Tuesday, Sept.

23-24, at Caraway Conference Center near Asheboro. Both proposals will now go before messengers from N.C. Baptist churches attending the 2019 BSC annual meeting this November in Greensboro.

The proposed changes define “serious misconduct” as that which is “damaging to the people, mission or ministry of the Convention.” The changes also state that cases of misconduct may be “related or unrelated to the individual’s duties” with the convention.

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Floyd's 5 keys for transforming the culture in the SBC

I recently had the privilege of attending the inauguration service for Ronnie Floyd, the new president and CEO of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee, on Mon., Sept. 16 at First Baptist Church in Nashville, Tenn.

It was a wonderful worship service with music, personal testimonies and a stirring message from Floyd. On several occasions throughout the service, we paused to spend time in prayer for his new work and the work of the SBC. I hope you will join me in praying for the things that we prayed for at that service. Pray for him, his ministry and the work of our convention.

Ronnie Floyd is a man who is passionate about prayer, personal evangelism and proclaiming the gospel to the ends of the earth. While I was in Nashville, Floyd outlined what he termed as five keys for transforming the culture in the SBC. They are:

1. Living and breathing gospel urgency.
2. Empowering all churches, all gen-

erations, all ethnicities and all languages.

3. Telling and celebrating what God is doing.

4. Loving others like Jesus loves.

5. Reaching the world for Christ.

All of these keys undergird his vision of reaching the world for Christ. He says whatever the cost and whatever the risk, this worldwide mission thrust must be our priority.

In the days ahead, I'm sure you'll be hearing more about his refreshing vision for Southern Baptists. And if you haven't already made plans to

attend this year's Baptist State Convention of North Carolina annual meeting in Greensboro this November, I want to personally invite you to come hear Floyd in person. Before coming to serve in his new role of leadership, he was senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas. God blessed this congregation to see around 1,000 people baptized each year.

On Tues., Nov. 12, at 6:15 p.m. during the closing session of the meeting, Floyd

will be preaching during a special worship service related to the SBC's current "Who's Your One?" evangelism initiative.

During our time together, he will challenge North Carolina Baptists to be more diligent in the area of personal evangelism. I challenge you to begin praying now that God will do a great work in transforming lives during this worship service.

As we prepare for this special night, I want to also issue a personal challenge to North Carolina Baptists.

As we focus on “Who’s Your One?” during the service that Tuesday night, bring someone with you who doesn’t yet know Christ.

In addition to being stirred toward evangelism ourselves, I've asked Floyd to give an evangelistic invitation at the conclusion of his message.



Wouldn't it be wonderful to see a move of God and see people trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior right there at the annual meeting? Will you join me in praying for our annual meeting and the service with Floyd?

I hope to see you there. Be praying for your “one” and bring them with you or ask them to meet you at the Koury Center on Tuesday evening, Nov. 12. The session starts at 6:15 p.m. and the worship service will begin at 7:15 p.m.

For more information on this year's annual meeting, visit ncannualmeeting.org.

“Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents” — Luke 15:10 (NKJV). **BR**

Bath towels & yellow shirts

One week after Hurricane Dorian blew through the Outer Banks, I loaded up my car and headed to Cape Hatteras. This was in response to a call I received from Paul Langston, missions mobilization consultant with the North Carolina Baptists on Mission (also known as N.C. Baptist Men).



JAMES HARRINGTON
Guest Column

Our shower units were set up on Ocracoke Island, and the day before receiving his message

over 400 showers were taken in those units. The problem was they had no towels. No towels, wow! When was the last time you took a shower but didn't have a towel?

I don't mean you didn't have a handy towel, or a clean towel but you had no towel.

Even if that happened you were likely still in the comfort and privacy of your own home, not standing in a unit in a parking lot somewhere and possibly unable to even stay in your own home due to storm damage. Then all of a sudden, it occurs to you, “I have no towel.”

That simple little reality touched me deeply. I had just had my eyes dilated

See Towels page 4

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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 of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), the committees of the convention and the boards of the related entities (North Carolina Baptist Foundation, the *Biblical Recorder*, Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina and North Carolina Baptist Hospital).

The committee begins its work with the recommendations sent by North Carolina Baptists and 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 BSC's Annual Meeting website (ncannualmeeting.org), in the Oct. 5 edition of the *Biblical Recorder*, on the *Biblical Recorder* website (BRnow.org) and in the BSC Book of Reports. 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 recommend for consideration by the 2020 Committee on Nominations.

The committee would also ask you to consider the issue of gender and ethnic diversity in the recommendations you submit. We would like to see more and more of the wonderful diversity of our Baptist state convention family reflected in those we will be nominating to serve in these key leadership positions in the future. So please think and pray about the recommendations you

will make from large churches, small churches, rural churches, urban churches, new churches, historic churches, men and women, young and old, and potential leaders from across all cultural and ethnic groups.

Please submit your recommendations through the N.C. Baptist app or online at ncbaptist.org/recommend. 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.

Robin Fisher, Chair

2019 Committee on Nominations Members

Robin Fisher, Rocky Mount, chair; Mark Brady, Moyock; Michael Davis, Charlotte; David Duarte, Greensboro; Carolyn Fowler, Murfreesboro; Mark Golden, Waynesville; Amy Harrison, Troutman; David Helms, Pendleton; James Keku, Browns Summit; Heath Lloyd, Reidsville; Dustin Mace, Vale; Connie Millsaps, Franklin; Josh Pruitt, Rutherfordton; Gene Roberts, Asheville; Jennifer Thoppil, Mount Airy; and Jason Wilkinson, Wake Forest.

The Committee on Nominations report follows the BSC's 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 Board, the members of the boards of trustees and directors to be elected by the Convention of the Related Entities, 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, and the boards of trustees and directors of the Related Entities 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** – Terry Stockman, 2020-2023, Meherrin (O), Murfreesboro, West Chowan Association, minister, male

• **Region 2** – Dimas Castillo, 2020-2023, Living Hope Community (U), Jacksonville, New River Association, minister, male; Brandon Dees, 2020-2023, Calvary (O), Rocky Mount, North Roanoke Association, minister, male; Jon Mills, 2022 unexpired term of Willie Porter, Gaston First (U), Roanoke Rapids, North Roanoke Association, lay person, male; and Jody Yopp, 2020 unexpired term of Phil Brannan, Kellum (O), Jacksonville, New River Association, minister, male

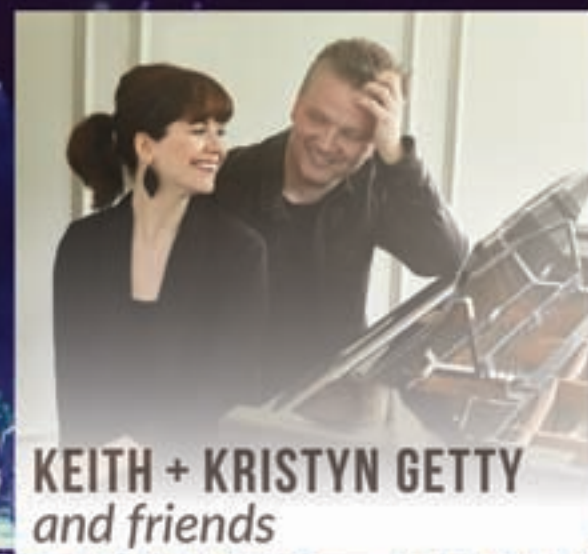
See Nominations page 4

Sing!

OCT 15, 2019

7:30 PM | SOUTHEASTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
BINKLEY CHAPEL | 120 S. WINGATE ST | WAKE FOREST, NC

FEATURING
THE SOUTHEASTERN SING! CHOIR



KEITH + KRISTYN GETTY
and friends



Southeastern
Baptist Theological Seminary

SEBTSGettyConcert.eventbrite.com

Towels

Continued from page 2

when I received that message. I left the eye doctor’s office and with blurry vision headed out to buy all the towels I could fit in my car.

I called Russ Howard, pastor of Hatteras Baptist Church and told him I was on my way. He suggested a few other things for me to bring if I could and after utilizing every inch of space in my SUV, I headed to the Island. It was there that I witnessed what I had long known but never seen. I witnessed what I have talked about in many conversations.

I witnessed what I had given many offerings to over the years. I witnessed what millions of people have witnessed in the worst of times.

I witnessed the presence of dozens of yellow shirts and the operation of the N.C. Baptist men and women. It was a machine operating at high capacity.

I witnessed the gigantic feeding operation, and I wit-

nessed a barrage of kind smiles and warm handshakes.

I witnessed your mission dollars invested at their best in a time of desperation for many and an opportunity to serve, love and encourage for many others.

I will not take my towel for granted, and I will not take for granted the amazing ministries of Baptists all around the world and the possibility that the very best of the bunch are right here in North Carolina!

Maybe you would like to help make sure this amazing ministry never stops being a helping hand in the most difficult of times. You can send your contributions, designated to Disaster Relief, to NCBM, P.O. Box 1107, Cary, NC 27512.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – James A. Harrington is the associational mission strategist for Chowan Baptist Association and pastor of Fellowship Baptist Church in Moyock. He originally wrote this to share in the association’s newsletter.) **BR**



Southern Baptists celebrate Global Hunger Sunday Oct. 13. Funds collected at your church go toward helping your local food pantries as well as resources across the state, nation and world.

Food is a basic need that affects all aspects of life. Going hungry prohibits clear thinking for children who are trying to learn in school.

Mothers who are desperately trying to keep food on the table and a roof over the family’s heads stress over a better job or even a job that will provide for basic necessities.

Hunger affects children and adults alike, and it is not just a third-world problem. Families go hungry every day in a house down the street from you.

What can you do about it? Support your local food banks and also pray about giving.

Visit globalhungerrelief.org. **BR**

Nominations

Continued from page 3

- **Region 3** – Tim Chavis, 2020-2023, Bear Swamp (U), Maxton, Burnt Swamp Association, minister, male
- **Region 4** – Carlyle Hall, 2020-2023, Castalia (U), Castalia, Tar River Association, minister, male; and Steven Wade, 2020-2023, Faith (O), Louisburg, Tar River Association, minister, male
- **Region 5** – Paul Cao, 2020-2023, Vietnamese (U), Whitsett, Piedmont Association, minister, male; Jim Cohn, 2021 unexpired term of Steve Wilson, Walnut Cove (U), Advance, Pilot Mountain Association, minister, male; Keith Jefferson, 2020-2023, Immanuel (U), Mebane, Piedmont Association, minister, male; and Walter Overman, 2020-2023, Main Street (U), Kernersville, Pilot Mountain Association, minister, male
- **Region 6** – Jimmy Barrett, 2020-2023, Poplar Grove (U), Kannapolis, Cabarrus Association, minister, male; Chris Baucom, 2020-2023, Benton’s Cross Roads (U), Monroe, Union Association, minister, male; Casey Norkett, 2020-2023, Hickory Grove (O), Harrisburg, Metro-olina Association, minister, male; Mark Perko, 2022 unexpired term of Jonathan Homesley, Deep Creek (U), Wadesboro, Anson Association, minister, male; Sam Roach, 2020-2023, Weddington First (U), Waxhaw, Union Association, minister, male; and James Weddington, 2020-2023, Eastern Hills (U), Charlotte, Metrolina Association, minister, male
- **Region 7** – Chris Johnson, 2020-2023, Fairplains (U), Wilkesboro, Stone Mountain Association, minister, male; Wes McGarry, 2020-2023, Westfield (O), Pilot Mountain, Surry Association, minister, male; and Stephen Robbins, 2020-2023, Elkin Valley (O), Elkin, Elkin Association, minister, male
- **Region 8** – Ryan Bennett, 2020-2023, Cross Memorial (O), Marion, Blue

- Ridge Association, minister, male; Shawn Berryhill, 2020-2023, Montford Cove (U), Union Mills, Green River Association, minister, male; Matthew Mills, 2020-2023, Mount Pleasant (U), Forest City, Sandy Run Association, minister, male; Cory Smith, 2020-2023, Mountain View (O), Hickory, Catawba Valley Association, minister, male; and Keith Stephenson, 2020-2023, 2nd Baptist (O), Rutherfordton, Green River Association, minister, male
- **Region 9** – Ricky Mason, 2020-2023, Antioch (O), Maggie Valley, Haywood Association, minister, male; and Chris Reese, 2020-2023, Enka (U), Candler, Buncombe Association, minister, male
 - **Region 10** – No vacancies

Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina

Bill Boddie, 2020-2023, Christ Covenant (U), Nashville, North Carolina Miscellaneous Association, lay person, male; John Cashwell, 2020-2023, Providence (O), Concord, Cabarrus Association, minister, male; Gayla Freeman, 2020-2023, Marshall First (U), Conover, French Broad Association, lay person, female; James D. (Jim) Goldston III, 2020-2023, Bay Leaf (O), Raleigh, Raleigh Association, lay person, male; Kenneth Lance, 2020-2023, Salisbury First (O), Winston-Salem, Rowan Southern Baptist Association, minister, male; Karl Milliren, 2020-2023, Rich Fork (O), Thomasville, Liberty Association, lay person, male; Steve Strickland, 2020-2023, Mount Airy (U), Pembroke, Burnt Swamp Association, minister, male; Robert (Bobby) Tucker, 2020-2023, North Kannapolis (O), Kannapolis, Cabarrus Association, lay person, male; and Christopher (CW) Watkins, 2020-2023, The Summit Church (O), Durham, Yates Association, minister, male

Biblical Recorder

Joan Calhoun, 2020-2023, West Edgecombe (O), Rocky Mount, North Roanoke Association, lay person, female; Marty Childers, 2020-2023, Durham Memorial (O), Hillsborough, Yates Association, minister, male; Ron Davis, 2020-2023, Old Town (O), Pfafftown, Pilot Mountain Association, lay person, male; Amy Lunceford, 2020-2023, Rocky Mount First (O), Rocky Mount, North Roanoke Association, lay person, female; and Sonny Sweatman, 2020-2023, Beach Road (O), Oak Island, Brunswick Association, minister, male

N.C. Baptist Foundation

Mike Cummings, 2020-2023, Deep Branch (U), Pembroke, Burnt Swamp Association, minister, male; Byron Greene, 2020-2023, Highland (O), Garner, Raleigh Association, minister, male; Jim Shelley, 2020-2023, Creedmoor First (O), Creedmoor, Flat River Association, minister, male; Sylvia Stafford, 2020-2023, Friendly Avenue (O), Greensboro, Piedmont Association, lay person, female; and Harold Vaden, 2020-2023, Calvary (O), Reidsville, Dan Valley Association, lay person, male

N.C. Baptist Hospital

No vacancies

Committee on Convention Meetings

Debbie Faulk, 2020-2022, Edgewood (U), Mebane, Mount Zion Association, lay person, female; M.C. Ko, 2020-2022, The Connect Church (U), Cary, Raleigh Association (mission church), minister, male; Eric Peacock, 2020-2022, Westchester (O), High Point, Piedmont Association, minister, male; David Rich-

- ardson, 2020-2022, Creedmoor First (O), Stem, Flat River Association, minister, male; Jonathan Waggett, 2020-2022, Coats (O), Garner, Little River Association, minister, male; Robbie Wood, 2020-2022, Pleasant View (U), State Road, Elkin Association, minister, male; and Jeff Maynard, Chair 2020, Brevard First (O), Hendersonville, Transylvania Association, minister, male
- Committee on Resolutions and Memorials**
- Ken Jones, 2020-2022, Friendship (O), Lincolnton, Ashe Association, minister, male; Bill Sturm, 2020-2022, Sandy Ridge (U), Conover, Catawba Valley Association, minister, male; Dai Vo, 2020 unexpired term of Jared Parks, Vietnamese (U), Jamestown, Piedmont Association, lay person, male; Chris Webb, 2020-2022, New Bethel (U), Pembroke, Burnt Swamp Association, minister, male; and Joel Stephens, Chair 2020, Hopewell (O), Concord, Union Association, minister, male

Historical Committee

Jonathan Blaylock, 2020-2022, West Canton (O), Canton, Haywood Association, minister, male; Ryan Bliss, 2020-2022, 4D Church (U), Morrisville, North Carolina Miscellaneous, minister, male; Chivous Bradley, 2020 unexpired term of Peter McDonald, Pleasant Hill (U), Rutherfordton, Green River Association, lay person, male; Jayson Rowe, 2020-2022, Conway (U), Conway, West Chowan Association, minister, male; Nick Smith, 2020-2022, Lake Junaluska First (U), Waynesville, Haywood Association, minister, male; and Allen Murray, Chair 2020, Centerville (U), Kelly, Cape Fear Network of Baptist Churches (formerly Wilmington Baptist Association), minister, male **BR**

9Marks Conference urges perseverance in prayer

By LIZ TABLAZON | BR Assistant Editor

Pastors, church leaders and other participants came from numerous states and as far as India for equipping and encouragement on prayer. The 9Marks Conference at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) in Wake Forest, N.C., Sept. 27-28 featured seven sessions, several panel discussions and singing.

Brian Davis, pastor of Risen Christ Fellowship in Philadelphia, opened with the story of Martha and Mary in Luke 10. He highlighted the necessity and quality of Christ by comparing both women's same love for, but different devotion to, Jesus.

"We're choosing the good thing," he said. "We have a good God who commands us to do good things."

"It is good for us to remember, just because we're saved does not mean we love Jesus like we should or as much as we could."

John Onwuchekwa, pastor of Cornerstone Church in Atlanta, Ga., spoke about the power of prayer.

"God doesn't just tell us how to pray, but He tells us what to pray for," Onwuchekwa said. He pointed out the difference between The Lord's Prayer spoken by individuals for themselves and spoken by church members in community.

If "somebody from your church loses their job and you get a promotion, do you know what we do? We all come together and say, 'God answered the prayer to give us the bread that we need,'" he said. "'God, forgive us of our sins.' Do you know what that does? It eliminates grudges."

Prayer is to be a "close companion of your life," SEBTS President Danny Akin said, emphasizing the importance of exercising prayer as a regular habit.

"We give thanks in all circumstances, we do not give thanks for all circumstances ... in all things, our God is working His will in our lives," Akin said.



A 9Marks panel talks about the importance of prayer during the annual event at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary Sept. 27-28. (SEBTS photo)

Prayer is also practiced through singing, said hip-hop artist Shai Linne, who aimed to expand understanding of what prayer is.

"One common, encouraged, exhorted form of prayer is singing praises to the Lord," he said, directing attention to Isaiah 12.

"If you think about the drama of redemption, you have the writer who is God Himself, you have the main actor who is the Lord Jesus Christ, you have the supporting actors who are the church," he said.

"But the drama of redemption is a musical."

H.B. Charles Jr., pastor of Shiloh Metropolitan Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Fla., wrapped up the first day considering three spiritual priorities that are to drive prayers with and for one another: the Word of the Lord, the faithfulness of the Lord and the direction of the Lord – "*to the love of God and the steadfastness of Christ*," as Paul wrote in 2 Thessalonians 3.

Mark Dever, 9Marks president and senior pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., and Thabiti Anyab-

wile, pastor of Anacostia River Church in Washington, D.C., delivered the last two messages on Saturday morning.

Dever offered nine practical statements about prayer: the public prayer life of a church should be the outgrowth of personal, private prayer; some prayer practices will vary; encouraging a collective verbal response like "amen" can help build congregational prayer; different kinds of public prayer, whether long, short, planned or spontaneous, help build the local church; it is good to focus one prayer on praising God; one prayer should be of confession; dedicate one prayer to asking for God's help; prayer should not only mark public services but elders' meetings and staff meetings; and expect each other to regularly attend prayer gatherings.

"[The] Lord Jesus knows how incon-

sistent and dispirited our prayer lives can become for us. He knows that the long wait for desired answer can weaken us. So the parable is not law, it is gracious help," Anyabwile said about the parable of the persistent widow in Luke 18.

Anyabwile urged participants to keep on praying, reminding them that "the effectiveness of prayer cannot be measured by immediate results."

"If you want to cut down a tree, you don't stop chopping until the tree falls. If you want to be effective in prayer, you don't stop praying until the Lord acts."

Sessions included panels in which conference speakers reflected on each other's exhortations and further explored topics such as spiritual disciplines and practical ways to implement prayer in local churches and individual lives. **BR**

New missionaries include N.C. Baptists

By ANN LOVELL | IMB

The International Mission Board (IMB) celebrated the sending of 24 newly appointed international missionaries in a service at Swift Creek Baptist Church on Sept. 25. IMB trustees voted to approve the candidates during a meeting near Richmond earlier in the day.

Ronnie Floyd, president and CEO of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee (SBC EC), preached the message at the celebration, encouraging the new missionaries to "step into the missionary calling."

The 24 missionaries represent churches across the United States – from Louisiana to Michigan and North Carolina to Hawaii. Families, friends, and pastors from across the country also attended the event.

IMB President Paul Chitwood told the

gathered crowd, "We have come from all around the country, but we are here tonight because we anticipate what God will do all around the world."

From North Carolina, Levi and Eva Whitfield* are assigned to East Asian Peoples, along with Pearl Hopkins*.

Floyd encouraged the new missionaries to "step into their missionary calling." Referencing Acts 20:22, he reminded them that they were crossing over to the point of no return, just as Paul did when he was compelled to go to Jerusalem, not knowing the challenges he would face there. "Nothing in your life will ever be the same again," Floyd said. "Everything will be different. Anytime you step into the call of God, you step into change."

"This is God's purpose for your life. You are chosen for this moment. You were created for this moment."

* Names changed. **BR**

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Amy Whitfield named EC's associate communications VP

By ART TOALSTON | Baptist Press

Amy Whitfield has been named as associate vice president for convention communications of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee (EC).

"I am so pleased to have Amy Whitfield joining our team at the SBC Executive Committee," said Ronnie Floyd, EC president and CEO.

"She brings with her a wealth of knowledge, experience and integrity as well as a new perspective that will serve all Southern Baptists well. She is highly respected among those who know her," Floyd said Sept. 30.

Floyd said he also is grateful "to have her representing and advising me and the SBC Executive Committee staff as we develop, engage and partner with ministries for women."

Whitfield, who will begin her work with the Executive Committee on Oct. 16, has served as director of marketing and communications at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., since 2014. She also is the co-host of the "SBC This Week" podcast, which she and Jonathan Howe, now the EC's vice president for communications, began in 2015, having recorded 235 episodes. Her "This Week in SBC History" is a regular podcast feature.

Whitfield is the coauthor of the 2018 book *SBC FAQs: A Ready Reference* with Keith Harper, senior professor of Baptist studies at Southeastern, and has been an assistant parliamentarian at the SBC's annual meetings since 2016.

In a broad range of duties as associate vice president for convention communications, Whitfield will edit *SBC LIFE* (sbclife.net), the journal of the Southern Baptist Convention; lead in utilizing media technologies to advance the messaging, mission, vision and ministries of the SBC and the EC; and promote participation in the SBC annual meeting and other events.

Howe noted, "There is no one better to help us tell the Southern Baptist story than Amy Whitfield. Amy will play an essential role in improving how we communicate with Southern Baptists as well as those outside our fellowship of churches.

"And while I'm thrilled to have her as part of the communications team, I am also excited for her to represent the SBC Executive Committee to other women and women's ministries in the SBC," Howe told Baptist Press (BP).

Whitfield, as the EC's women's liaison, will have a lead role in developing strategies for recruiting, utilizing and developing women at multiple levels of Southern Baptist life and advising the EC leadership on issues related to the encouragement and involvement of women in the SBC.

Kathy Litton, director of spouse development for the North American Mission Board and SBC registration secretary, said in comments to BP, "The addition of Amy Whitfield to the Executive Committee staff marks an important moment for Southern Baptists. Amy brings a broad range of denominational experience and a strong leadership skill set. Her leadership regarding the SBC communication footprint will be invaluable.

"Her hire sends a strong signal that women's contributions are not just welcomed but are indispensable in our mission of the gospel," Litton noted.

"This step encourages women that they are respected, valued and can increasingly be included in roles,



Amy Whitfield, the Executive Committee's new associate vice president for convention communications, and her husband Keith flank their two children, Mary and Drew. (Submitted photo)

responsibilities and leadership in our denomination. Amy's presence and role will be huge platform to help connect and develop female leaders across our denomination."

Ed Stetzer, executive director of Wheaton College's Billy Graham Center for Evangelism and former executive director of LifeWay Research, told BP, "I'm thrilled that Amy is going to represent Southern Baptists in this new role.

"She's served three SBC entities, all with great distinction. She was exceedingly valuable in our communications efforts at LifeWay, then at Southeastern. She will serve all of us across the SBC well."

Whitfield will be based in Wake Forest, where her husband Keith is Southeastern Seminary's acting provost, vice president for academic administration, dean of graduate studies and associate professor of theology.

A native of Nashville, Tenn., she holds a master of arts degree in Christian studies from Southeastern and an undergraduate degree from Converse College in Spartanburg, S.C.

Whitfield, in comments to BP, said, "Wherever I have served I have always considered how each entity fits into our greater cooperative relationship. The role of the Executive Committee staff in our Southern Baptist family is a vital trust, particularly as we tell the big picture story of the convention while supporting the work of its entities and ministries.

"I take seriously the importance of integrity and clear messaging as we encourage cooperation and engagement at every level," Whitfield said, "and my prayer is to serve that purpose well."

Danny Akin, Southeastern's president, said Whitfield has been "one of God's great gifts to Southeastern Seminary and now she will be a great gift to the Southern Baptist family. I have known Amy for more than

**"She is one of the most talented people I know."
— Danny Akin**

20 years. She has worked by my side at two different institutions. She excelled in both places.

"She is one of the most talented people I know," Akin said.

"She is omniscient, and her skills are a perfect match for this new assignment. ... Amy has my prayers and full support. She also will have the prayers and full support of the Southeastern family."

In addition to her communications role at Southeastern, Whitfield has taught a course as an adjunct instructor on the Southern Baptist Convention since 2016 and, in the seminary's Biblical Women's Institute, a course on church life. She served as research assistant to the president and assistant to the president's wife from 2012-2014.

Prior to Southeastern, Whitfield was executive assistant to the vice president of LifeWay Insights at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville and administrative assistant to the senior vice president for academic administration at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

She lived in Waverly, Va., from 2005-2010 when her husband was pastor of Waverly Baptist Church.

In SBC life, Whitfield is a steering committee member of the SBC Women's Leadership Network, which launched earlier this year, and program chair-elect for the Baptist Communicators Association.

She and Howe have moderated a number of panel discussions on the Cooperative Program stage during SBC annual meetings on such topics as the future of the SBC and on the issue of sexual abuse, and she was a member of a panel discussion on women in leadership and discipleship during the SBC Women's Session preceding the 2019 SBC annual meeting in Birmingham, Ala.

She also is a member of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's Historical Committee; the Evangelical Theological Society; National Association of Parliamentarians; and American Institute of Parliamentarians.

The Whitfields have two children, Mary and Drew, and are members of Faith Baptist Church in Youngsville, N.C. **BR**



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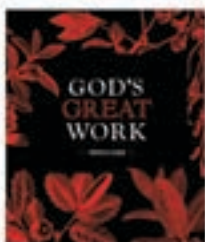
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The missions and ministries of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina are made possible by your gifts through the Cooperative Program and the North Carolina Missions Offering.

President to form group for workplace religious freedom

By DIANA CHANDLER | Baptist Press

A new coalition of U.S. businesses to protect religious freedom in the workplace is among U.S. President Donald Trump's latest initiatives, Trump said Sept. 23 at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

"This initiative will encourage the private sector to protect people of all faiths in the workplace," Trump said in hosting the 11:30 a.m. Global Call to Protect Religious Freedom. "Too often, people in positions of power preach diversity while silencing, shunning or censoring the faithful."

"True tolerance means respecting the right of all people to express their deeply held religious beliefs," Trump said, citing statistics that 83 percent of the world's population lives in countries with religious persecution.

Ronnie Floyd, president of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, applauded the event attended by more than 100 governmental leaders and members of persecuted faith communities globally, including Christians, Jewish leaders and Muslims.

"I applaud today's call to broaden international support for the protection of religious freedom," Floyd told Baptist Press (BP). "This is especially important in the wake of increasing persecution of people on the basis of their beliefs, and the growing number of attacks on and destruction of houses of worship."

"It is time to bring an end to religious persecution and do all we can to see crimes cease against people of faith," Floyd said. "I am grateful for President Trump speaking and leading in this global effort."

Floyd described religious freedom as a "first freedom" in America.

"We should work to take the gospel to the nations to see hearts and minds around the world changed so that all tribes, tongues and nations can freely and safely worship our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," Floyd told BP.

Trump pledged an additional \$25 million in U.S. funding to protect religious

sites and relics from criminal attacks.

"These evil attacks are a wound on all humanity. We must all work together to protect communities of every faith," Trump said. "We're also urging every nation to increase the prosecution and punishment of crimes against religious communities. There can be no greater crime than that."

Trump proclaimed religious liberty one of his highest priorities as president.

"Today with one clear voice, the United States of America calls upon the nations of the world to end religious persecution," Trump said.

"To stop the crimes against people of faith, release prisoners of conscience, repeal laws restricting freedom of religion and belief, protect the vulnerable, the defenseless, and the oppressed, America stands

with believers in every country who ask only for the freedom to live according to the faith that is within their own hearts."

Joining Trump were U.N. Secretary General António Guterres, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross, U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, U.S. Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom Sam Brownback, formerly imprisoned pastor Andrew Brunson, and various administration representatives. Kelly Craft, newly appointed U.S. ambassador to the U.N., praised Trump's progress. "His administration has vigorously defended religious freedom and the freedom of conscience in the United States," she said, "and under his guidance the state Department has become a watchful defender of religious liberty, especially through the 2019 Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom, the largest freedom event of its kind in the world."

The new business group for workplace religious freedom would be the first of its kind, Trump said. He didn't name members of the group, but said it would include some of the "most successful men and women on earth" whom he described as "great business leaders, great people of strength." **BP**



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Board approves \$30.5M budget proposal

By CHAD AUSTIN | BSC Communications

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's (BSC) board of directors unanimously approved a budget proposal totaling \$30.5 million for 2020 during its regularly scheduled meeting held Sept. 23-24, at Caraway Conference Center near Asheboro.

The proposal will now go before church messengers for final consideration during this year's BSC annual meeting to be held in Greensboro on Nov. 11-12.

The proposal calls for a 0.5 percent increase in the percentage allocation to missions and ministries of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) through the Cooperative Program (CP), bringing the state convention's SBC allocation to 42 percent of the budget. If approved, this would mark the 14th consecutive year that N.C. Baptists have increased the allocation to the SBC.

The proposal also reflects an overall

reduction of \$500,000 from the current 2019 budget of \$31 million.

While noting that every ministry area would share in the absorption of the overall budget reduction, budget committee Chairman Rick Speas noted that the committee sought to propose a budget that reflected "prudent stewardship."

"We want to be realistic in our budgeting, and so we believe that a reduction to the overall budget is prudent stewardship for us," Speas said.

In a financial report to the board, John Butler, executive leader for the BSC's Business Services Group, noted that CP giving was about 8.6 percent behind budget through the end of August.

While giving is up about 3 percent through the same time period as last year, total CP receipts for 2019 are projected to be in the \$30 million range, which is about \$1 million below this year's budget.

Based on those and other giving trends, Butler called the 2020 budget proposal "challenging but realistic."

The board also approved a 2020 "challenge budget" and giving goal for the 2020 North Carolina Missions Offering (NCMO).

The challenge budget stipulates how funds received in excess of the 2020 budget would be allocated. According to the measure, 50 percent would be allocated to the SBC, 25 percent to institutions and agencies of the Baptist state convention, and 25 percent to state convention ministry groups. The NCMO goal for 2020 was set at \$2.1 million. NCMO is the annual offering that supports the numerous ministries of North Carolina Baptists on Mission (NCBM), church planting and the mission camps operated by NCBM.

The challenge budget and the NCMO goal will also go before messengers at the annual meeting this November for final consideration. **BR**

AROUND THE STATE

Obituary

DONALD "DON" BRIAN TEEARS, 61, of Kill Devil Hills, died Sept. 23 in Kitty Hawk.

A New Jersey native, Teears attended Baptist Bible College (1976-'80) in Clarks Summit, Pa., and graduated with a bachelor's degree in pastoral studies from Philadelphia College of the Bible in Langhorne, Pa. (1987). He has served three churches: First Baptist Church, Asbury Park, N.J., as a youth & interim pastor for six years; First Baptist Church, Rushford, N.Y., for 11 years and most recently as pastor of Kitty Hawk Baptist Church (N.C.) since 2005.

He is survived by his wife, Jill; three sons; a nephew he and his wife are raising; his mother; and two brothers.

Memorials to: F.A.I.T.H Riders at faithriders.com/donate/.

Bylaw

Continued from page 1

The overarching goal of the proposed changes is "to provide an environment that protects and promotes the Christian witness of the cooperating churches and their members."

The changes would apply to convention officers, members of the convention's board of directors, appointees to special committees of the board, members of convention committees, and members of Fruitland Baptist Bible College's board of directors. The proposed changes do not apply to state convention staff members because their conduct is governed by the policies outlined in the BSC's employee handbook.

Board members also reviewed a draft of a written policy that outlines specific steps for addressing and acting upon allegations of misconduct. The policy defines procedures and guidelines for how complaints, investigations, hearings, appeals and dismissals would be handled.

Because the policy is dependent upon approval of the proposed bylaw amendments, convention legal counsel John Small advised the board to wait until after messengers consider the bylaw changes during the annual meeting in November before taking any action on the draft policy.

Based on Small's recommendation, the board took no formal action on the policy proposal, but plans to take up the matter at its next regularly scheduled meeting in January 2020.

When messengers consider the proposed bylaw changes this November, it will mark the culmination of nearly a year's worth of work by convention officials to address potential cases of misconduct.

In January, the board approved a motion that directed the BSC's executive committee to develop a formal process by which a board member could be removed from office due to a "moral failure." The executive committee later referred the matter to the convention's Articles and Bylaws Committee.

The Articles and Bylaws Committee presented its recommendation to the executive committee in the form

of the bylaw amendments, which expanded the scope of the initial motion to include "serious misconduct" and additional positions beyond board members. The executive committee unanimously approved the proposals during its July meeting and sent the measure to the full board.

Disciple-making strategy update

Following a report on the feedback received as part of the convention's formal evaluation of the "impacting lostness through disciple-making" strategy, the board affirmed several next steps related to clarifying and expanding the strategy.

Those affirmations included acknowledgement that the strategy is far from being fully implemented and support to continue the strategy for five more years.

The strategy evaluation took place earlier this year and included an online survey, public forums and personal interviews. While 70% of survey respondents expressed positive sentiments about the strategy, the overall data revealed a disconnect between understanding the strategy and engaging in the strategy.

Brian Davis, BSC associate executive director-treasurer, described the strategy implementation and evaluation as a "refocusing" of the convention's mission to assist the churches in their divinely appointment mission.

"The board is encouraged to use its voice to call North Carolina Baptists to utilize the numerous resources of the convention to assist the churches in the fulfillment of the Great Commission, which is the focus on the strategy," Davis said.

New Fruitland board members

The board also approved the recommendation of three individuals to serve on the board of directors of Fruitland Baptist Bible College. They were:

- Perry Brindley, member of Pole Creek Baptist Church in Candler.
- Ken Jones, interim pastor of Friendship Baptist Church in Jefferson.

- Anton Roos, senior pastor of Lake Lure Baptist Church.

Board members honored

BSC Executive Director-Treasurer Milton A. Hollifield Jr. also recognized 20 outgoing board members who had completed their terms of service.

They were: Durrant Barr; Charlie Brackett; Kevin Buzzard; Ken Coley; Billy Cooper; Dac Croasmun; Steve Frazier; Dan Harrell; Lana Hathaway; Polly Heafner; David Herman; George Hunnicutt; Sandy Huntley; Mike Madaris; Sally Matheny; Chris Morgan; David Richardson; Marion Sykes Jr.; Curtis Williams; and Kevin York.

Board members Shawn Berryhill, Timmy Chavis, Jim Cohn, Matt Mills, Walter Overman and Keith Stephenson also completed their partial (unexpired) terms but are being nominated for additional full terms of service.

To nominate individuals to serve on the BSC board of directors or other places of service, visit ncbaptist.org/recommend.

Committee chairs elected

Board committees also elected new chairs for 2020. They were:

- Timmy Blair (Business Services Special Committee).
- Bob Jordan (Christian Life and Public Affairs Special Committee).
- Al James (Church Planting and Missions Partnerships Committee).
- Jon Morris (Communications Committee).
- Keith Stephenson (Convention Relations Special Committee).
- Tracy Smith (Evangelism and Discipleship Committee).

Committee chairs will begin their terms of service in 2020 and will also serve on the BSC's executive committee.

Next meeting

The next meeting is Jan. 27-28, 2020, at Caraway. **BR**

Greear Continued from page 1

with unquenchable joy, reckless generosity and audacious faith,” Walker said in a brief speech on the House floor.

“I deeply respect what Pastor J.D. has done for the faith and his boldness to always stand up for what is right. It is an honor to host him here in Washington, D.C. today and I look forward to his continued leadership as head of the Southern Baptist Convention.”

Mercy Hill, an outgrowth of The Summit’s church planting efforts, was recently identified as the fastest growing Southern Baptist church and named among the top fastest growing evangelical churches in the nation, according to a study by *Outreach Magazine* and LifeWay Christian Resources.

Mercy Hill’s pastor, Andrew Hopper, told the *Biblical Recorder* he is grateful for Walker’s work in Washington.

“It’s incredible to see Rep. Walker use the gifts he has been given by God, both inside and outside the church,” Hopper said. “That is something we push all our people toward. Whether you are a teacher, nurse or politician, our gifts were given to us to be given to others.”

Greear’s trip to the U.S. Capitol included meetings with multiple legislators, including Walker, Rep. David Price (D-N.C.), Sen. Thom Tillis (R-N.C.), Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.) and others. **BR**

**Visit
BRnow.org**

Wallace Continued from page 1

people with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.’

“The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina does an amazing work across the state and around the world. My prayer is that I would make much of Jesus through this position on the board.”

Wallace was nominated by BSC President Steve Scoggins, pastor of First Baptist Church of Hendersonville, who said, “She’s the embodiment of the best of Baptist life in North Carolina.”

Wallace will begin her new term in January, but she has been serving as board president since July when former board president Clay Smith resigned after accepting a call to serve as senior pastor of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in metro Atlanta.

Wallace will serve alongside Matt Capps, senior pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Apex, who was elected board vice president; and Kathy Bennett, who was re-elected as board secretary.

Capps was nominated by Andrew Hopper, lead pastor of Mercy Hill Church in Greensboro. Hopper described Capps as someone who “has the heart of a local (church) pastor.”

Wallace nominated Bennett for board secretary.

Capps was elected without opposition, and Bennett was elected by acclamation.

Wallace’s husband, Aaron, is the lead pastor at Hephzibah Baptist Church in Wendell, where he has served on staff for a total of 21 years. Prior to being named pastor, Aaron Wallace served as Hephzibah’s youth pastor. The Wallaces have been married for 24 years.

Melanie Wallace is actively and regularly involved in missions on the local, state, national and interna-

tional levels. She and a friend also started a baking and catering business with the purpose of raising money for missions.

Hollifield praised Wallace’s leadership ability and her support and engagement in missions.

“Melanie has demonstrated great ability as a leader,” Hollifield said.

“I value her heart for missions and her heart for reaching lost people. She is a delightful, knowledgeable and capable individual, and I am delighted to have her serve as president of the board of directors.”

Wallace is the first woman elected to serve as the BSC’s board president since Kathryn Hamrick in 1993. Hamrick is a member of Boiling Springs Baptist Church in Boiling Springs, N.C.

Hollifield said he would like to see more women serve in leadership positions in N.C. Baptist life.

“We have numerous women in the churches of our convention who are well equipped to serve in roles of leadership,” Hollifield said. “All of them are gifted of God, and the convention provides places and opportunities for them to be involved in leadership, allowing them to exercise their gifts according to the words of scripture.”

“We have women who currently serve and who have previously served on the board of directors. I would be delighted to see that number increase because our board would be strengthened if we had more women nominated to serve.”

To make a nomination for individuals to serve on BSC board of directors or in other places of leadership, visit ncbaptist.org/recommend. **BR**

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October 13

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

October 20

God's Will and My Will

Focal passage: Romans 11:33-12:2; Ephesians 1:4-6

Life is full of questions. Some questions are inconsequential, but others have a huge impact on our daily lives. Is a hotdog a sandwich? If a tree falls in the forest, does it make a sound? Why do some people seem to experience more suffering than others? When will the cure for cancer be discovered?

One of the biggest questions we will ever confront as Christ's followers is, 'How do we reconcile God's sovereignty and our own free will?'

The Bible explicitly teaches that God chooses people to follow Him. In Ephesians 1:4, Paul writes, "For he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world."

We trust these words to be absolutely true, and yet, we must admit that as finite humans, our understanding of God's sovereignty is limited. We know God is in control.

We also know God has given us a free will. For example, God calls us to exercise that will by repenting and believing the gospel.

I'm so glad God never requires us to

fully understand how His sovereignty and man's free will can exist at the same time. According to Pastor Matt Chandler, "Trying to figure out God is like trying to catch a fish in the Pacific Ocean with an inch of dental floss." Even the author of Romans writes, "who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" (Romans 11:34).

Our response to this mystery must never be fear or defensiveness.

Instead, when we dwell richly in these truths, we will be overwhelmed with worship and praise. What's more, the result will be that we are able to "discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2b).

You and I may never agree on the status of a hot dog, but almost all of us can admit they are pretty tasty!

In the same way, although the tension between our will and God's can sometimes seem overwhelming and uncertain, we must be careful to never allow this mystery to keep us from thanking God for His overwhelming gift of salvation.

Focal passage: Psalm 19:7-14

My husband and I are expecting our first child in January, and just recently, at our little one's 20-week anatomy scan, we were amazed by the detail with which the technician examined every part of his tiny body.

She was able to accurately measure his arms, spine, brain and so much more.

Unfortunately, although the expert needed our baby to flip over for his final measurements, he refused. We were forced to reschedule our appointment.

Every adult in the office that day understood what was best for the baby, but we were unable to communicate with our bundle of joy. The little guy had no idea how important it was for him to do a somersault.

Is it possible that, as believers, we are tempted to view God's will in a similar way? We know God has a plan and that His way is best, but sometimes we live in oblivion.



EMILY KISTLER
Member, Parkwood Baptist Church, Gastonia

This sort of behavior is far from what our Creator intended.

God has not left us like a baby in utero, with no way to listen to His instruction.

We have direct access to God's will through His Word.

Instead of spending months or even years wondering what God's will may be for our lives, we can know His good and loving plan for us with complete certainty and trust. As the psalmist writes in Psalm 17:7, "the instruction of the Lord is perfect, renewing one's life."

When we obey God's word and align our will with His, the result will always be blessing.

As we follow God's directions, we are "warned by them, and in keeping them there is an abundant reward" (Psalm 17:11).

For right now, I have to hope that when we return for our next ultrasound appointment our baby will cooperate, turning in the right way for the technician to complete her job.

You and I, on the other hand, have nothing to wait for.

We can open the pages of God's word today and learn His good, pleasing and perfect will for our lives.

October 13

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

October 20

Walking Together

Focal Passage: Ephesians 4:1-10

Christians can divide over silly things sometimes. Other times we split over serious issues. Yet, the Scripture calls us to unite on the most important issue: the gospel.

Paul writes, "There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call – one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."

One of the markers of the gospel at work among God's people is that we have supernatural unity that transcends culture, politics, ethnicity, socio-economic status and more. Most of our divisions along these lines arise because of arrogance and pride. That is why the Apostle Paul tells us that to walk worthy of the gospel is to live a life of humility (Ephesians 4:1-3).

To walk worthy of the gospel is to have a life marked by the fruit of the gospel, which is unity in and because of the gospel.

Does Christian unity, because of the gospel, mark your life? Do you live, regardless of your differences, with other

Christians as if you truly share the "one Lord?" Do you act as if those with whom you disagree with on non-essential issues actually share in the "one faith" or do you treat them as if they are spiritually inferior? Because of the gospel, all believers share the same Father, according to Paul. That means we are one family. Families don't always get along, but they always love each other.

Even in families with strained relationships, usually there is a time of the year when the family gets together to celebrate a holiday around a meal. In those moments, you are reminded that even though you don't always get along with your family, you love them.

Every time the church gathers, it is a holiday (holy day), and we ought to celebrate around a meal (the Lord's Supper).

This should remind us of our love for one another because of Christ's love for us. And our love for our brothers and sisters must be demonstrated in Christian unity.



DAYTON HARTMAN
Lead Pastor, Redeemer Church, Rocky Mount

Focal Passage: Ephesians 4:11-16

"I will pray for you!" Often, you say that to another believer and if you're honest, you never pray. We've turned "I'll pray for you" into a meaningless nicety. I'm as guilty of this as anyone.

What the Apostle Paul envisioned for the church was believers actually praying for one another and building one another up into Christian maturity.

Moreover, he envisioned Christians praying specifically for the presence of the Spirit to be evident in the life of a believer.

That Spirit manifests as Christian brothers and sisters using their God-given gifts to love and serve one another.

According to the Apostle, God gives His church apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers "to build up the body of Christ."

It is the Holy Spirit's presence, as He works through Christian brothers and

sisters, that strengthens and equips the congregation.

We certainly should ask for the needs of other Christians to be met, but more than that, we ought to ask for the presence of the Holy Spirit to be evident in their lives through the outworking of their gifts. That is how God chooses to equip His church to be more like Jesus.

In recognizing my own temptation to tritely say "I'll pray for you," only to forget, I now attempt pray for someone on the spot.

I ask the Lord to intervene in whatever situation is going on, but I always make a specific request that the presence of the Spirit would be known and felt in the life of the believer for whom I'm praying.

As we encounter requests for prayer, our fellowship in Christ should drive us to faithful and fervent prayer so that the body of Christ might be built up.

And let us take every opportunity to speak the "truth in love" so that "the whole body, fitted and knit together" might grow into maturity for the sake of God's glory.

Interested in writing lessons?
Email editor@BRnow.org.

Walking Forward

CHURCH NEWS



Pilot Mountain Baptist Association, Winston-Salem

Made up of a network of 90 churches scattered across five counties, Pilot Mountain Baptist Association in Winston-Salem hosts a meeting once a month for retired pastors. The group met Sept. 9 at College Park Baptist Church for lunch and fellowship. From left to right (standing): Charles Edwards, Jim Hamblen, Gene Sherrill, Ray Needham, Cecil Cave, Yates Wilkerson, Ray Davis, Les Davis, Ben Fleming, Paul Mullen, Jack Gentry, Jim Pollard, Phil Oakley, and Paul Wonders; and seated: Jack Thomas. (Photo courtesy of Bill Greenwood)



Cornerstone Baptist Church, West End

On Aug. 18, the girls from Camp Duncan in Aberdeen visited Cornerstone Baptist Church, West End. Cornerstone Kids is made up of less than 20 children, ranging in age from 5 to 16, but the children decided to divide into teams and collect money for Camp Duncan, a girl's camp operated by Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina. Cornerstone's students raided their own piggy banks as well as sought out donations from family and friends to raise almost \$300 for the camp. Camp Duncan's students shared stories and songs during the service and a meal afterward. Cornerstone students who participated include Team 1: Garner Thomas, Maddy Davis, Gracelyn Sheffield, Haileigh Deese, Brooke Deese; and Team 2: Olivia Thomas, Ryan Brigman, Abby Davis, Wyatt Davis. (Contributed photo)



East Corinth Baptist Church, Gold Hill

On Sept. 8, East Corinth Baptist Church, Gold Hill, honored its church organist of more than 36 years. Sue Eller began playing the organ for the church in the early '80s after her son and daughter became involved in the youth choir. Both her children and families attended the special service traveling from Texas and Florida to help honor their mother. Eller received a monetary gift totaling \$1 per week for her years of service, an award, a blessing tree for tokens of appreciation from the congregation, and flowers in her honor were placed on the altar. A covered dish meal was served. The pastor is Johnny Daniel. (Contributed photo)

AROUND THE STATE

Staff changes

JOSHUA BARRETT was called by First Baptist Church, Hickory, as senior pastor. Barrett previously served at three churches in Huntsville, Purmella and Houston, Texas, from 2008 until present. He earned his master's degree in ministerial leadership from George W. Truett Theology Seminary. He and his wife Lisa have a four-month-old son.

First Baptist Church, Welcome, has called **JONATHAN GOODMAN** as lead pastor. Goodman began his ministry at FBC Welcome as youth pastor in 2005 and was named associate pastor in October 2009. He earned his master's degree in pastoral studies at Southern Seminary.

He and his wife Laura have four children.

KEITH BROWN, minister of music and education at First Baptist Church, Welcome, celebrated 30 years of ministry with the church June 11. A graduate of Southwestern Seminary, Brown has been with FBC Welcome since 1989. He and his wife Cathy have two children.

Ordination

JAKE MORGAN, of First Baptist Church, Welcome, was ordained into the ministry Aug. 18, after receiving his license to preach in March. Morgan has served as the minister of students since November 2018. He earned his degree from Liberty Theological School of Divinity. He and his wife Susan have one son.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Pastor

Good Shepherd Church of Greensboro is searching for a **full-time** or **bi-vocational Senior Pastor**. We are a conservative Southern Baptist church located in south Greensboro, NC, and are affiliated with the SBC, BSCNC and the Piedmont Baptist Association. Send inquiries, cover letter and résumé to: Pastor Search, Good Shepherd Church of Greensboro, 4453 Sumner Church Rd., Greensboro, NC 27406.

Summerville Baptist Church is prayerfully seeking the **full-time Pastor** God has already selected for us. We are a conservative, mission-minded, rural church with an average worship attendance of 100. Located near the beautiful Uwharrie Mountains and High Rock Lake in central NC, we are affiliated with the Liberty Baptist Association. Email résumé and sermon link (optional) to secretary@sbcdenton.org or mail to Summerville Baptist Church, Attn: PSC, 3134 Summerville Church Road, Denton NC 27239.

Clement Missionary Baptist Church, Autryville, NC, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. We are a conservative, mission-minded, rural church with an average attendance of 105. Applicant should be licensed and ordained by a Southern Baptist church. Mail résumés to Jennifer Matthews, PSC 60 Waterwheel Ln., Godwin, NC 28344, or email to Clementpastorsearch@gmail.com.

Franklin Heights Baptist Church, Kannapolis, NC, is seeking a **full-time Senior Pastor**. We are affiliated with the SBC and searching for the man God desires to lead our church into the future. All interested applicants should send a cover letter, résumé and references. Inquiries can be submitted to rbradley@fhhbkannapolis.com or 2000 Lane Street, Kannapolis, 28083, Attn. Robin Bradley.

Church Staff

Mt. Ruhama Baptist Church, Maiden, N.C., seeks **full-time Children's Director**. Primary responsibilities would include overseeing the ministries for children from kindergarten through sixth grade. Experience in children's ministry is preferred but not required. Email résumé to juliehelderman@hotmail.com or mail to 3273 Mount Ruhama Church Rd., Maiden NC 28650.

Prospect Baptist Church, Albemarle, NC, is seeking a **full-time Children's Pastor/Director**. Primary duties include overseeing the ministries for children from birth to 5th grade. Experience in children's ministry is preferred. Please email your résumé to stoney@prospectbaptist.com or mail 502 Prospect Church Rd., Albemarle, NC 28001.

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