



GOD IS 'CHANGING
HEARTS,' SAYS
MEGAN LIVELY
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BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

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Responding to abuse: New guide available for women's ministry leaders

BSC & SCBC Communications

A new resource developed for women's ministry leaders to help them minister to victims of sexual abuse is now available, thanks to a partnership between the North Carolina and South Carolina Baptist state conventions.

"Responding Well: A Guide for Women's Ministry Leaders to Help Survivors of Sexual Abuse" is a free resource manual created by and designed for women's ministry leaders that includes biblical and practical advice on how to support and care for abuse victims.

Ashley Allen, women's ministry leader with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), and Melanie Ratcliffe, women's ministry leader with the South Carolina Baptist Convention, co-authored the guide as a way to serve and equip other women's ministry leaders.

"Many women's ministry leaders serve in volunteer capacities in their local church, and our desire was to create a resource with them in mind," Allen said. "Women often turn to other women for help, so we wanted to equip women's ministry leaders to respond well to hurting women who may turn to them."

The resource addresses topics related to developing policies and procedures, reporting guidelines, definitions of terms, training volunteers and more.

"Women's ministry leaders are trusted mentors, guides and confidants to the ladies they lead and serve," Ratcliffe said.

"The 'Responding Well' resource was designed to help women's ministry leaders to not only know how to counsel women who are victims of abuse, but also what steps to take if information that is shared with them is required to be reported by law."

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Brothers' dreams of finding a family finally come true

By BLAKE RAGSDALE | BCH Communications

(EDITOR'S NOTE – The story is written in the voice of 13-year-old Jacob, the oldest of the two brothers. The story is real, but the names of the children are changed for their privacy and wellbeing. This piece draws attention to the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina Offering and its Week of Prayer, Nov. 10-17.)

A boy's dream

I always wanted to go camping. You know, a big adventure for our whole family! Mom and Dad take me and my little brother Jonah shopping.

We pick out our tent, sleeping bags and cooking stuff. I find the best tent, big enough for all four of us.

Dad and I look at the fishing gear while Mom and Jonah shop for food.

They buy hot dogs and get chocolate bars, marshmallows and graham crackers to make s'mores for dessert. I almost smell it cooking over the campfire!

But it's only a dream – all of it.

My brother is right where I left him – trying to stay warm by the campfire. My mind has been wandering as I picked up sticks for the fire.

We don't have a dad to help us with the campfire or take us fishing. We don't really know him because he's never been a part of our lives. If it wasn't for me and Jonah, the fire would go out, and it gets really cold at night.

We have a mom, but she stays sleeping in the tent most of the time. She's been taking too much of her medicine again – she doesn't know when to stop.

See Dreams page 7



7 reasons why you should read Southern Baptist news

Southern Baptist journalism plays a key role in the life of our local, state and national partnerships. Yet, like most traditional press outlets in our society today, our news agencies appear to be caught in a struggle for relevance.

Many people in our pulpits and pews are not aware of the value – sometimes even the existence – of Southern Baptist news outlets at the state or national levels. Others may be familiar, but do not believe Southern Baptist journalism has any effect on their lives or churches.

Here are seven reasons why I think it is important for pastors and lay people to stay informed:

1) It cultivates a spirit of partnership.

The primary role of Southern Baptist journalism is to promote the cooperative work of our local churches.

We help congregations work together to make disciples of all nations by publishing reliable information and inspiring stories about their partner churches and

the entities they support through the Cooperative Program.

2) Missions stories inspire missions efforts.

Most Southern Baptist journalists say their favorite stories to report are those that inspire others to make the gospel known. It is a joy to research, interview and write about congregations that deploy creative strategies for sharing the gospel with their neighbors.

Our hope is that others will read those stories, and begin thinking about how they, too, might develop creative and unique ways to reach their communities for Christ.

3) Accountability is important.

News agencies provide a level of transparency in Southern Baptist life as they report accurate information about our missions and ministries. Journalism is not the only light that shines on our efforts, however.

Trustee boards, committees, entity reports and other organizational tools provide accountability as well. Yet, news

reporting plays a key role in ensuring that vital information remains accessible to as many Southern Baptists as possible.

4) An abundance of news – at your fingertips.

News outlets serve as a supermarket for information about Southern Baptist entities.

The communications departments in our state and national entities do a wonderful job of providing information about their ministries.

But it is unreasonable to think the average reader will pore over numerous websites and publications to stay informed about each organization.

The reporting process enables our news teams to cover press releases, announcements and updates – in addition to enterprising and investigative stories – making them available through convenient print and digital formats.

5) Hear from leading voices.

Our news platforms – both print and digital – make it possible for readers to encounter a wide variety of voices on any given topic related to the Christian life. From editorials to book reviews, news outlets can provide edifying content

from trusted leaders that supplements the work of pastors and ministry leaders.

6) Gain insight.

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is the largest Protestant denomination in America.

We have a significant presence in our society that affects the culture and politics of our nation. News reports about what is happening in the SBC can help us understand the world more broadly. Ministry leaders often try to gain such insights to help develop ministry strategies.

7) Informed Baptists are better Baptists.

Sometimes we have the privilege of reporting uplifting and heartwarming news, other times, not so much. Despite our emotions about any given article or post, our job is to produce news reports that are accurate, thorough and timely. That enables Southern Baptists to feel informed and confident that – whether the news is positive or negative – they have true picture of the state of things. Telling the truth generates trust, and that makes for healthier partnerships in the long run. **BR**



SETH BROWN
Executive Editor

Emphasize baptisms, ACP in your congregation

For many years, we have lamented the decline in baptisms that we have witnessed across the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). While it's heartbreaking to see these declines, I don't believe that the numbers alone paint a complete picture of how many people are placing their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.

Yes, we have much work to do as Southern Baptists to reverse these trends, and these statistics should motivate every one of us to be more intentional about sharing the gospel with those we know who do not know Christ. However, something we can do a better job at is emphasizing the importance of baptism and having your church complete the Annual Church Profile (ACP).

The ACP is the instrument that churches use to report statistical data from their congregation that is used by associations, state conventions, the SBC and LifeWay Research for a variety of purposes. One of the many metrics used in the ACP is a church's

number of baptisms in a given year, which is used by LifeWay to compile statistics from across the SBC.

Your church's participation in the ACP is vital to make sure that the data that is reported is as accurate as possible. Last year, only 60.5 percent of our North Carolina Baptist churches submitted their data. I would love to see the number of our churches that complete the profile increase significantly.

As a former pastor, I realize that gathering the data for your church and completing the ACP form takes time. But we can't report on data that we don't have, so let me encourage you to complete the ACP so we can truly understand what's taking place in our convention of churches and better understand the trends on a local, state and national level.

Baptism numbers garner a lot of the attention related to the ACP, and rightfully so. After all, we have the term "Baptist" in our name. Baptisms are important, and they are one of the measurements that



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive
director-treasurer



we use as Southern Baptists. But baptism numbers alone don't reflect how God is at work.

Many people who come to faith in Christ delay or put off being baptized for a variety of reasons. As we call people to repentance and faith in Christ, I would also like to see us call people to baptism and help them understand why it is so important. While baptism is not essential to salvation, it is essential to obeying Christ.

I hope that you will take time to complete your church's Annual Church Profile.

The state convention's deadline for completion is Nov. 15, but each association has its own deadline. Check with your local Baptist association to know when to submit your information.

Remember that insights and information gleaned

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2019 summary for proposed BSC bylaw amendments

The Board of Directors of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (Convention) will present two motions to amend the Convention's bylaws during the November 2019 annual meeting of the Convention. During the January 2019 meeting of the Board of Directors ("Board"), it approved a motion directing the Executive Committee to develop a policy to permit the removal of a member of the Board due to a "moral failure."

The Executive Committee recognized the need to draft bylaw amendments to authorize such actions and to apply the same standard to individuals holding positions with the Convention other than Board members. A brief overview of the two motions to amend the bylaws for this purpose follows:

Motion One

The first amendment changes the designation of current Section H. in Article IV. entitled "Amendments to Bylaws" to Section I. in Article IV. and adds a new section Article IV.H. entitled "Removal from Conven-

tion Position". Within the new Section H., the covered positions are identified as "Convention Positions".

The designation of Convention Positions goes beyond members of the Board, and also includes the Convention President and Vice-Presidents, members of Convention Committees, the non-Board members appointed to serve on the special committees of the Board and members of the Fruitland Baptist Bible College Board of Directors.

This new section describes the reasons that an individual may be removed from a Convention Position. This amendment also authorizes the Board to establish policies outlining the process for removing individuals serving in Convention Positions.

Motion Two

The second motion proposes amendments to six (6) sections in the bylaws that affect the Convention Positions referenced in Motion One. These amendments bring each of these sections into alignment and agreement with the new proposed Section H. in Article IV. "Removal from Convention Position."

To bring these sections into alignment, and for reasons of consistency, the addition of new language for certain Convention Positions regarding the reasons for removing an individual from their place of service is necessary.

As an example, currently the bylaws do not require Convention Officers to be members of churches cooperating with this Convention, but this requirement is in place for members of the Board, Convention Committees, et al. Therefore, the addition of this requirement for Convention President and Vice-Presidents brings consistency to these Convention Positions as one of the reasons an individual may be removed from a Convention Position is due to failure to maintain membership in a cooperating church.

Should you have questions regarding these proposed amendments to the bylaws, please feel free to contact Don Goforth, the chair of the Articles and Bylaws Committee at goforthfamily@embarqmail.com, or Brian Davis, Associate Executive Director-Treasurer, at bdavis@ncbaptist.org, for more explanation. **BR**

Proposed amendments to articles of incorporation and bylaws of Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Inc.

Motion One:

The Board of Directors moves that the messengers at the 2019 annual meeting amend the Bylaws by changing the designation of current Section H. in Article IV. entitled "Amendments to Bylaws" to Section I. in Article IV. and by adding the following new section as Article IV. H. entitled "Removal from Convention Position":

H. Removal from Convention Position

This section shall apply to the President and Vice Presidents of the Convention as set forth in Article I.B.1.d., members of Convention committees as provided in Article I.C.2.e., at-large members of the Board as provided in Article II.A.1.b., any member of a special committee of the Board who is not a member of the Board as provided in Article II.F.1.b., and the Fruitland Directors as provided in subparagraphs (vii) and (viii) of Article II.G.2.a. (collectively, "Convention Positions").

1. Any individual holding a Convention Position shall be removed from such Convention Position in the event that (1) such individual moves their residence from the State of North Carolina; or (2) such individual ceases to be a member of a cooperating church as defined in Article VI.A.3. of the Articles. In addition, any individual serving in a Convention Position may be removed for serious misconduct damaging to the people, mission, or ministry of the Convention, whether such conduct is related or unrelated to the individual's duties in the Convention Position, in order to provide an environment that protects and promotes the Christian witness of the cooperating churches and their members. Such conduct shall occur or become known during the term of an individual serving in the Convention Position and shall exclude any controversy concerning a local church.

2. The Board shall apply this section related to an individual's removal from a Convention Position and shall adopt appropriate policies which may include the delegation to its designees of the application of this section.

Motion Two:

The Board of Directors moves that the messengers at the 2019 annual meeting amend six sections of the Bylaws, Article I.B.1., Article I.C.2.e., Article II.A.1.b., Article II.B.1., Article II.F.1., and Article II.G.2.a., as follows:

Article I.B.1.

1. The current Article I.B.1. be amended by adding the following new paragraph at the end of existing subparagraph c. to Article I.B.1.:

d. The President and the Vice-Presidents shall be members of cooperating churches as defined in Article VI.A.3. of the Articles. The President and Vice-Presidents may be removed from office for any of the reasons set forth in Article IV.H. of these Bylaws under the process described in that section.

Article I.C.2.e.

2. The current Article I.C.2.e. be deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following paragraph indicated as the "New Reading":

Current Reading:

e. The membership of members of Convention committees moving from this state shall be terminated upon the date of the move from this state. In addition, the membership of a member of a Convention committee shall immediately terminate in the event that either (1) the member fails to attend at least one (1) meeting of the Convention committee in each full calendar year of the member's term; or (2) after the first full calendar year of the member's term, the member fails to attend at least fifty percent (50%) of the meetings of the Convention committee measured from the beginning of the member's term.

New Reading:

e. The membership of a member of a Convention committee shall immediately terminate in the event that (1) the member fails to attend at least one (1) meeting of the Convention committee in each full calendar year of the member's term; (2) after the first full calendar year of the member's term, the member fails to attend at least fifty percent (50%) of the meetings of the Convention committee measured from the beginning of the member's term; or (3) the member is removed for any of the reasons set forth in Article IV.H. of these Bylaws under the process described in that section.

Article II.A.1.b.

3. The current Article II.A.1.b. be deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following paragraph indicated as the "New Reading":

Current Reading:

b. In the event at-large members of the Board move from the region from which they were elected, their membership shall continue through the remainder of the calendar year. The membership of those moving from the state shall be terminated upon the date of the move from the state. In addition, the membership of an at-large member shall immediately terminate in the event that either (1) the member fails to attend at least one (1) meeting of the Board in each full calendar year of

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the member’s term; or (2) after the first full calendar year of the member’s term, the member fails to attend at least fifty percent (50%) of the regular meetings of the Board measured from the beginning of the member’s term.

New Reading:

- b. In the event at-large members of the Board move from the region from which they were elected, their membership shall continue through the remainder of the calendar year. In addition, the membership of an at-large member shall immediately terminate in the event that (1) the member fails to attend at least one (1) meeting of the Board in each full calendar year of the member’s term; (2) after the first full calendar year of the member’s term, the member fails to attend at least fifty percent (50%) of the regular meetings of the Board measured from the beginning of the member’s term; or (3) the member is removed for any of the reasons set forth in Article IV.H. of these Bylaws under the process described in that section.

Article II.B.1.

- 4. The last sentence of Article II.B.1. be deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following sentence indicated as the “New Reading:”

Current Reading:

. . . No one who is employed by the Convention, or any institution or agency of the Convention as described in Article III.A.(1) below, whether the salary be total or supplemented, shall be eligible for at-large membership on the Board or as an at-large member (other than an ex-officio member) of any special Committee of the Board.

New Reading:

. . . No one who is employed by the Convention, or any institution or agency of the Convention as described in Article III.A.(1) below, whether the salary be total or supplemented, shall be eligible for at-large membership on the Board.

Article II.F.1.

- 5. The current Article II.F.1. be deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following paragraph and subparagraphs with the entire section indicated as the “New Reading”:

Current Reading:

- 1. Selection of Committee Members. After their election at the September meeting of the Board, the President-elect and Vice-President-elect of the Board shall be responsible for assigning all newly elected Board members to one of the Board committees or the special committees. The assignment process and notification of assignments will be finished at least two (2) weeks prior to the January meeting of the Board. Also, the President-elect and Vice-President-elect will review and take into consideration any recommendations furnished by the Executive Leader associated with the work of a specific committee. Any member of a special committee of the Board who is not a member of the Board shall not be serving at the same time on any Convention committee, any other special committee of the Board of the Convention, or any board of the Convention’s Related Entities.

New Reading:

- 1. Selection of Committee Members. After their election at the September meeting of the Board, the President-elect and Vice-President-elect of the Board shall be responsible for assigning all newly elected Board members to one of the Board committees or the special committees. The assignment process and notification of assignments will be finished at least two (2) weeks prior to the January meeting of the Board. Also, the President-elect and Vice-president-elect will review and take into consideration any recommendation furnished by the Executive Leader associated with the work of a specific committee.
- a. Any member of a special committee of the Board who is not a member of the Board shall not be serving at the same time on any Convention committee, any other special committee of the Board of the Convention, or any board of the Convention’s Related Entities. Any member of a special committee of the Board who is not a member of the Board (other than an ex-officio member) shall not be employed by the Convention, or any institution or agency of the Convention as described in Article III.A.(1) below, whether the salary be total or supplemented.

- b. Any member of a special committee of the Board who is not a member of the Board may be removed for any of the reasons set forth in Article IV.H. of these Bylaws under the process described in that section.

Article II.G.2.a.

- 6. The current Article II.G.2.a. be deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following language indicated as the “New Reading”:

Current Reading:

- a. The Fruitland Directors shall consist of twelve (12) members, each serving a four-year (4) term. One-fourth (1/4) of the members shall be elected each year at the September meeting of the Board. The term of service shall begin January 1. During the May meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board, the Chairperson shall appoint three (3) members of the Executive Committee to serve as a nominating committee for the purpose of recommending nominees for the Fruitland Directors to the Board. The Fruitland Directors shall comply with the following:
 - (i) One-third (1/3) of the membership shall be chosen from the alumni of the Fruitland who may or may not be presently serving as members of the Board;
 - (ii) One-third (1/3) of the members shall be chosen from those presently serving on the Board when the member is elected;
 - (iii) One-third (1/3) of the members shall be chosen at large from among members of cooperating North Carolina Baptist churches not presently serving on the Board when the member is elected. The at large members should have expertise in budget, finance, and Baptist life;
 - (iv) At least four (4) of the members shall be laypersons;
 - (v) If for any reason a member of the Fruitland Directors shall cease to be a member of a church cooperating with this Convention, or shall remove residence from the state, membership on the Fruitland Directors will be thereby terminated. Vacancies on the Fruitland Directors shall be filled by the Executive Committee between sessions of the Board;
 - (vi) No person shall be eligible to succeed himself/herself as a member of the Fruitland Directors whether such service has ended through expiration of the term, resignation or otherwise until one (1) full term has elapsed; provided, however, that any member of the Fruitland Directors who shall have been elected to fill a vacancy of less than two (2) years shall be eligible to be re-elected to a full term; and
 - (vii) No person shall serve as a Fruitland Director, who at the same time is employed, either partially or fully, by the Convention, or any institution or agency of the Convention.

New Reading:

- a. The Fruitland Directors shall consist of twelve (12) members, each serving a four-year (4) term. One-fourth (1/4) of the members shall be elected each year at the September meeting of the Board. The term of service shall begin January 1. During the May meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board, the Chairperson shall appoint three (3) members of the Executive Committee to serve as a nominating committee for the purpose of recommending nominees for the Fruitland Directors to the Board. The Fruitland Directors shall comply with the following:
 - (i) One-third (1/3) of the membership shall be chosen from the alumni of the Fruitland who are active members of cooperating churches as defined in Article VI.A.3. of the Articles and who may or may not be presently serving as members of the Board;
 - (ii) One-third (1/3) of the members shall be chosen from those presently serving on the Board when the member is elected;



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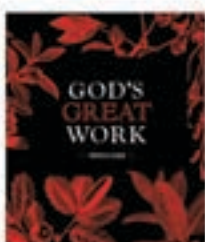
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- (iii) One-third (1/3) of the members shall be chosen at large from among members who are active members of cooperating churches as defined in Article VI.A.3. of the Articles not presently serving on the Board when the member is elected. The at large members should have expertise in budget, finance, and Baptist life;
- (iv) At least four (4) of the members shall be laypersons;
- (v) No person shall serve as a Fruitland Director, who at the same time is employed, either partially or fully, by the Convention, or any institution or agency of the Convention.
- (vi) No person shall be eligible to succeed himself/herself as a member of the Fruitland Directors whether such service has ended through expiration of the term, resignation or otherwise until one (1) full term has elapsed; provided, however, that any member of the Fruitland Directors who shall have been elected to fill a vacancy of less than two (2) years shall be eligible to be re-elected to a full term;
- (vii) In the event that the Executive Committee becomes aware that a Fruitland Director should be removed for any of the reasons set forth in Article IV.H. of these Bylaws, then the Executive Committee shall immediately refer the issue of the potential removal of a Fruitland Director to the Fruitland Directors. The Fruitland Directors have primary responsibility for the resolution of the issues concerning the potential removal of a Fruitland Director and shall report the resolution of the issues to the Executive Committee;
- (viii) In the event that the Fruitland Directors do not report the resolution of the issue of the potential removal of a Fruitland Director within ninety (90) days of its referral, then the Executive Committee may initiate the process set forth in Article IV.H. concerning the removal of an individual from a position in the Convention; and
- (ix) Vacancies on the Fruitland Directors shall be filled by the Executive Committee between sessions of the Board.

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Lewis: Advocates crucial in increasingly polarized culture

By MAINA MWAURA | Special to the Recorder

Maina Mwaura sat down with Dhati Lewis, lead pastor of Blueprint Church in Atlanta, Ga., to talk about Lewis' book, *Advocates: The Narrow Path to Racial Reconciliation*. They discussed racial issues and the church.

Q: What made you decide to write about race in a day and age when people don't want to talk about it?

A: I have a sense of pride about being black and African American, but also with the reality of being African American in America.

When I started falling in love with a white woman, it struck me at the core of my identity. Here I am as a Christian, I was Mr. Racial Reconciliation Guy, but now, all of a sudden ... I just had a preference to marry a black woman. But now I'm falling in love with a white woman.

And so now I'm wrestling with this identity, and I have to really determine through this time – and God took me through a series of things – that what's more important? That adjective in front of Christian or Christian? The fact that I'm a "black" Christian or just that I'm Christian?

This is really what I see going on in America. We're struggling with an identity crisis.

Q: You are a pastor in a church that is incredibly diverse, you're here at the North American Mission Board as one of their vice presidents – your life is diversity. So when you talk about the narrow path to racial reconciliation, what do you mean by that?

A: That's simple. It's based off of the verse in Matthew 7:12-14; it's the Golden Rule: treat others in the way you want to be treated ... verses 13 and 14, they go on, "*the path is wide, the road is narrow.*" And so God gives us a narrow road.

A lot of times, when people talk about racial reconciliation, I think they take on a posture of "by any means necessary." But that's not the posture we can take as Christians because the problem is that we have this thing called the Bible, and the Bible gives us bumper rails So, I like to say it's not "*by any means necessary*," it's really by all possible means.

Q: You talk about Paul. Why him?

A: I think Paul gives us a unique perspective. As one who is dealing, specifically in Philemon, with racial tension and racial injustice – we've got to re-



Dhati Lewis, author of the book "Advocates: The Narrow Path to Racial Reconciliation," is the North American Mission Board's vice president over the Send Network, NAMB's church planting ministry arm. Lewis also pastors Blueprint Church in Atlanta. (Photo courtesy of Blueprint Church)

member, the apostle Paul was a missionary to the Gentiles. He was an ethnic Jew as a missionary to Gentile believers. And it wasn't to one Gentile, it was to multiple [Gentiles]. So he was very fluent in navigating through racial issues, cultural issues, racial things. I think Philemon is a manifestation of having to navigate through this type of tension. Now it may not be specifically racial in that context, but it's about reconciliation, and Paul is on the outside.

A lot of times when you're dealing with injustices or tensions, you either deal with the oppressed and the oppressor or the perceived oppressed and perceived oppressor. But a lot of times what we lose is that third position: the one of an advocate. And I think Paul comes in, and he's that one on the outside looking in and he recognizes that "I can either be in advocate or I can be an aggravator."

Q: Do you see yourself as an advocate?

A: Yeah, we had to. I've had to, and part of it is because of my own journey and my own story and I've had to wrestle through that in my own tension ... When President Trump was elected, and I'll never forget this idea ... there's people at our church who voted for President Trump, but then there's people at our church that think that if you voted for President Trump, you're the devil. Right? So there's this tension that we have, and I was like, man, we need to talk. We need to come to the table.

Q: What do you say, Dhati, to people who go, "I am tired of talking about this issue of race"? They are fatigued over it. You talked about awareness in the book; they're aware, but they are aware of their own personal limitations on this. What do you say to folks who are just tired of it?

A: I'd say I understand. I get it. ... Think about it, you know. If you have brought up something continually over and over and over again and you feel like there was no change that took place after doing that ... Or if you're someone who's constantly been accused of something over and over and over again and you change, but then no one's feeling like you've done enough – that's draining.

But the question is not whether or not we're tired or fatigued or any of that – that's not the question. Paul said he was poured out like a drink offering. So fatigue should not be our North Star. It should not be the thing that drives or not drives, whether we're tired or not tired. Are we tired of talking about sin? We've been sinning since the beginning, since Adam we've not figured it out, so are we done? Should we stop talking about it? No.

Q: How do you deal with being in a diverse area, leading a diverse church?

A: I wasn't raised as a believer, but God's providence and His sovereignty in my life, I think He's prepared me for this. I'm the son of a professional

football player, and I remember being middle class, upper middle class. The story that most people don't know is that as soon as my dad's career was over, literally the next year I'm on welfare. So I go from affluent to welfare. I go from going into a multi-ethnic, upper middle-class kind of context to a lower middle-class, which is mainly made up of people of color ... And then I go back into the high school context where, again, there's a small percentage of African Americans. And even as a believer, I felt comfortable in an all-minority context. I felt comfortable in a majority context. And I think God was writing a story in my life to prepare me for a time and a season like this where I can be real because I don't have to be fake, I can just be who I am.

Q: Where do you see the church going, this issue of race, in the next five to 10 years?

A: We're going to have to address it. Primarily, if we're going to be effective, specifically in urban contexts. ... The polarization that is going on in our country is getting more and more polarized. And if we don't come with a solution, then we miss it. And going back, that's what I'm saying. Paul was seeing this in Rome. He was seeing these churches, Jews and Gentiles separating, can't worship together, different sanctuaries, different living ...

We've got to recognize that these are real issues that are so tied into our culture that we can't separate the two. It's called syncretism. And I think what the beauty of the gospel – the beauty of what Paul is navigating through – is allowing us to see this tension, see how we're so wrapped up. And he says, "But the gospel is so much greater. So much bigger. And it's worthy to fight for."

Q: How can we be practical at being advocates? What are some practical points?

A: I really wanted to give handlebars to people who really want to be a part of it. Because I'm an optimist ... I try to wish and hope and think that people generally want solutions. But the problem is that we're real good at what I call anti-vision, we're just not good at vision. We're real good at saying what's wrong, we're just not good at describing where we're going, what's right, what could it be.

Watch the full interview: youtube.com/brnowvideo.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Maina Mwaura is a freelance journalist who lives in Atlanta, Ga., with his wife and daughter. They attend Johnson Ferry Baptist Church.) **BR**

Dreams

Continued from page 1

And our campsite in the woods isn't some big family adventure. This is where we live. This is our home.

Maybe today is the day

Jonah and I barely make it to school most days. We're so far behind, it isn't funny.

Today is one of those days where we just happened to wake up in time to catch the bus. The best thing about school is we get to eat – we always save some food for later. We never know when we'll get to eat again.

We've got a lot of extra homework because we're out so much. Jonah and I try to get as much done on the bus ride after school, but it's hard when the kids keep making fun of us.

They laugh about our clothes – we wear the same smelly clothes every day. Who knows what they'd say if they knew we take baths in a creek.

Nobody wants anything to do with us.

As soon as the bus stops, we grab our backpacks and hurry off. Jonah starts heading for the woods, but I stop him until the bus is out of sight. The driver thinks she's letting us off near our house. She doesn't know what's really going on.

Mom's probably been sleeping – I bet she let the fire go out. Jonah and I start picking up sticks for tonight's fire.

Mom promises she's going to do better and stop taking all that medicine so she can get a job.

Maybe, today is the day!

Jonah and I will get to the campsite and, this time, she'll be wide awake. The fire will be warm, and she'll smile and

hug us like she used to.

When we arrive at the tent – none of that happened because mom's gone. She's not in the tent, by the fire or anywhere. Waiting for us instead is a police officer and a lady.

Jonah's scared. So am I. Could he have taken mom to jail?

He kneels down to talk to us. His voice is calm.

"My name is Terry," he tells us. "Everything is OK. Your mom is safe, and we want to make sure you're safe, too. Is that OK?"

He seems kind, but I'm frightened. I'm worried about Mom and what's going to happen to us. But I know I've got to be brave for Jonah.

"Will you trust me?" the policeman asks.

"Yes, sir," I say.

"Good, let's go," he reaches out his hand.

We start walking out of the woods. The lady with him is right beside us. I still don't know who she is.

I take one last look at our campsite. Whatever happens, I'm not looking back.

What home feels like

Jonah and I peer out the car window as the lady drives. She's called a social worker. She helps kids like us who have had a rough time.

We arrive at a place called Baptist Children's Homes. She says we'll be living in a cottage with other boys and cottage parents. Jonah's fidgeting – he's nervous. I am, too.

The three of us walk up to the door. There are bicycles in the carport, and there's a basketball goal.

We ring the doorbell. A man and a woman open the door, and we step inside.

"I'd like to introduce you to Jacob and Jonah," the social worker says as the man and woman reach out to shake our hands.

The man says we can call him Mr.



Jacob makes sure the fire doesn't go out so his family can stay warm for the night. He and his brother Jonah lived in the woods with their mom before a social worker and police officer took them to Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina. (BCH photo)



Dathan and he introduces his wife Mrs. Diana.

"How about we look at a little bit of the house?" the cottage mom says as we walk into the next room.

It's so warm here – the way a home should feel. There are photos of kids all over the walls and on the shelves. Everything is colorful and bright.

"This is where the boys gather, and we have our meals," she tells us.

We go from room to room. It is a really big home with a huge table for eating, a big living room, and bedrooms for all the boys.

The next few hours go by fast as Jonah and I settle into the bedroom we'll share. It is all so new. I wonder what eating at a table feels like? What will taking a shower feel like? What will sleeping in a warm bed feel like?

Mr. Dathan gets us settled in our beds for the night. The clean sheets feel so good.

"Good night," he says as he turns off the light. "We'll see you in the morning."

My eyelids become heavy, and I think how the cottage parents are really nice. They made us feel safe. My eyes close, and I think about that family adventure that fills my dreams.

My family adventure

All the kids from all the cottages are outside around a fire pit. We laugh and cut up while Mr. Dathan and Mrs. Diana help the other cottage parents pass out chocolate bars, marshmallows and graham crackers.

Jonah and I pick out our sticks and stuff the biggest marshmallows we can find on the end. As my marshmallow becomes gooey over the fire, I remember how Jonah and I used to pick up sticks for our fire in the woods.

I don't miss sleeping in the woods or being afraid we wouldn't have food to eat. But I do miss Mom. Jonah and I talk with her on the phone from time to time. She says she is trying to do better. I sure hope that's true.

I wish she could see how well we are cared for and how we pray for her every day.

She'd hear Mr. Dathan talk about Jesus and hear Mrs. Diana tell us how Jesus loves us.

She says that He can heal hurts. I see how the kids here are helped, and I wonder if Jesus can help my mom, too.

I hope mom can one day know how good a home feels and remember what it's like to be a family. Because that's what Jonah and I have here at Baptist Children's Homes – a family. **B3**

CORRECTION

In a Sept. 21 obituary for Sara Ann Hobbs, the *Biblical Recorder* said Hobbs lived in Siler City, N.M. The correct name is Silver City. We regret the error.

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God is ‘changing hearts,’ says Megan Lively

By LIZ TABLAZON | BR Assistant Editor

Attendees saw tears of relief, not just sadness, Megan Lively said at an event focused on addressing sex abuse in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). In April, the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) changed the direction of its 2019 national conference in the wake of news reports about abuse in Southern Baptist churches.

Lively, a member of Peace Church in Wilson, N.C., shared her experience as a sexual abuse survivor for the first time on a public stage at “Caring Well: Equipping Churches to Confront the Abuse Crisis.” The conference was held Oct. 3-5 in Grapevine, Texas.

“I’m glad that we’re having conversations about this subject,” Lively told the *Biblical Recorder* in an interview Oct. 4. “I know one girl that wept through an entire talk, and I knew she was relieved that we’re having this conversation.”

Lively first came forward as a survivor of sexual assault in May 2018, when she identified herself as the woman in a *Washington Post* article who had been allegedly assaulted by a male student while enrolled at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) in 2003. Lively also claimed she was encouraged by then-president Paige Patterson not to report the incident to police.

Telling her story to help other victims came with unforeseen costs, she said. Lively encountered scrutiny and skepticism. Lawyers asked if she had financial or marital problems. Even some family members did not believe her. Lively advised survivors to “guard your story” in her talk.



Megan Lively (Karen Race Photography)

“There’s a part of me, looking back, had I known, I don’t know if I could’ve done it,” she told the *Recorder*. “God carried us through it.”

“The most heartbreaking thing is when I hear women talk about their faith. They struggle with their faith, or they question their faith. That’s one thing I had never struggled [with]. I just had this visual of God literally holding me in His hands for the last 15 years.”

Recounting her experiences, Lively talked about her husband’s care, help from Southern Baptist leaders and rediscovering a calling to ministry.

“The darkness has not overcome the light,” she said.

Lively recently returned to SEBTS to complete her master’s degree after withdrawing in the early 2000s.

While undergoing Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy, which is designed to treat post-traumatic stress, she “kept seeing an open door, a chapter that needed to be finished ... and I know it was God leading me to finish what I started at SEBTS.”

Lively said she also wanted to show both male and female survivors “that God redeems people and institutions.”

When asked whether the SBC was acting quickly enough to address sexual abuse in its churches, Lively said it will take time, but she sees change happening.

“There’s not an overnight fix, especially when the SBC is so large, and we still have strongholds,” she said. “We still have people that remain among us that want that power that was held on to for so long.”

“We are seeing God crumble power and take down strongholds, painful at times, but necessary.”

“God is really changing hearts,” said Lively.

“It takes a while, but I think you look at these leaders now, and it’s contagious ... we’re drawn to people that genuinely love all people, especially the vulnerable, and have a desire to help the broken and hurting.”

The full text of what Lively shared at the ERLC conference, along with other speakers and panels, is available at meganlively.com/single-post/2019/10/08/My-Survivor-Story. **BR**

Carolina Women challenged to make God’s Word a priority

By DIANNA L. CAGLE | BR Assistant Editor

Nearly 300 women gathered at North Carolina’s Baptist Assembly at Fort Caswell on Oak Island Oct. 4-5.

They collected \$4,045.50 as an offering to Woman’s Missionary Union of North Carolina (WMU-NC) for hosting Carolina Women, a two-day event with the theme “Celebrate Missions.”

“Sleep is essential for you to do your best,” said Phyllis Elvington, the speaker for all three main sessions.

Elvington focused on asking the women to evaluate how they were doing mentally, physically, spiritually and missionally.

She asked the women of the five things – exercise, meals, beverages, sleep, checkups – which one was the most needed area of work.

“We have to do our part,” she stressed. “God’s going to do His part.”

She asked if their priorities are in the right order and how much stress they are under. She encouraged them to drink more water and less sweet tea and diet sodas and asked them to consider exercising more.

Elvington jokingly told the ladies that



Women cut T-shirts into strips to form jump rope during a Carolina Women breakout session Oct. 5. (BR photo by Dianna L. Cagle)

she would rather wear out than rust out, but she paired it with Paul, who was set apart and different, and Isaiah, who she said she tries to imitate by offering herself: “Here am I.”

She also challenged the women to spend five minutes praising God each day by reading a song and praying to/praising God.

She laid out three Bible reading plans through the end of the year for the women to choose: Paul’s epistles (Romans to Philemon); the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) and Psalm 63-150.

“If you’re not in love with Jesus, if

you’re not abiding in the vine, you’re not going to be on mission for Jesus,” Elvington said. “We want to be on mission for Christ, but we have to be in a place where Jesus is our top priority in order to do that.”

She modeled two five-minute prayers for the women. The first was based on the prayer of Jabez (1 Chronicles 4:9-10), and the second on Solomon’s prayer in 1

Kings 8.

In her breakout session, Elvington taught women to “Celebrate the Word.”

She inquired about their Bible knowledge by asking them to list the 10 commandments, then added the order of the commandments to the exercise.

“We’ve got to love the Word,” she said. “James says to be doers of the word and not hearers only. We do not obey what we do not know.”

She went over several key scripture passages: love chapter, 1 Corinthians 13; shepherd’s psalm, Psalm 23; Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7; resurrection

chapter, 1 Corinthians 15; faith chapter, Hebrews 11; suffering servant, Isaiah 53; birth of Jesus, Luke 2; and the comfort chapter, John 14.

She asked the women to familiarize themselves with these special chapters to share with others, as well as the simplified Romans road verses: 3:23; 6:23; 5:8; 10:9-10; and 10:13.

“We have got to teach children the word of God. It will never leave them,” she said. “The reward for obedience is more work to do for the King.”

Music was provided by Cindy and Steve Johnson. Cindy serves Old Town Baptist Church in Winston-Salem as contemporary worship leader and women’s ministries director. CrossWalk, a two-woman drama team, offered selections to challenge the women as well as make them laugh. Renee Henderson as Bertie the Bag Lady performed during a Friday evening after hours session.

Three missionaries shared throughout the three main sessions: Bert Yates, Phyllis Foy and Deen Sweatman. The Carolina Women were offered 16 different breakout sessions across three time periods. Carolina Women is offered every other year through WMU-NC. Carolina Girls is offered on the alternating year. **BR**

7 myths about sex abuse in churches

For most Southern Baptist pastors, the idea that their church might harbor an abuser is horrific. Almost every Southern Baptist pastor I know got into the ministry to serve and protect God's people. They are genuinely heartbroken by this.

Yet we are still here, and that's in part because of a few myths that are all too commonly believed in our churches.

• **Myth 1: Sexual abuse in the church is not really a problem, but simply the latest leftist-attack on the church.**

The problem of sexual abuse in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) did not begin in February with the publication of an article in a newspaper. Survivors and advocates have been calling our attention to this for years.

Believing this myth has caused us, as a convention, to miscategorize the words of people like Christa Brown, Tiffany Thigpen, Mary DeMuth, Anne Marie Miller, Dave Pittman, Jules Woodson and so many other victims as attacks from adversaries instead of warnings from friends.

It is wrong to characterize someone as "just bitter" because they raise their voice when their important warnings were not heeded.

Anger is an appropriate response in that circumstance, and it's doubly bad when we use their anger to reaffirm our myths.

LifeWay's recent research survey on abuse uncovered that 1 in 10 churchgoers under 35 have left a Southern Baptist church because they felt abuse was not taken seriously.

When we fail to take reports seriously, or try to save face by minimizing it, not only do we put more people in harm's way, we create obstacles to faith for those affected.

Dealing with this issue is not a distraction from the mission; it is the mission.

• **Myth 2: Abuse only happens in Catholic, liberal, complementarian or "fill-in-the-blank" churches.**

For years, many evangelicals believed this was a Catholic problem because they have what we consider an unbiblical view of clergy marriage.

The danger of this myth is that it is naive. It fails to recognize that wherever people exist in power without accountability, abuse will fester.

Abuse is not an ideological problem as much as it is a depravity problem. Ideas matter, and certain worldviews most certainly exacerbate our depravity, but to brush this aside as only a problem for

those who believe differently than we do inevitably makes us turn a blind eye to those in our midst.

Of all people, we evangelicals should have known this. Jesus said there would

be wolves in sheep's clothing, and that there would be shepherds who would not guard the flock.

• **Myth 3: The church is best equipped to handle this internally.**

I have heard this myth repeated: Doesn't Paul say in 1 Corinthians that we shouldn't take other brothers and sisters to court?

Doesn't he say that's a bad testimony?

The language of 1 Corinthians 6 most properly refers to civil lawsuits, like property cases, not criminal violations.

First Corinthians 6 must be read alongside Romans 13, which says we must submit ourselves to governing authorities because God has given the responsibility to execute justice.

If we are dealing with a criminal issue, we disobey scripture by not involving the proper authorities.

• **Myth 4: A posture of grace requires giving the benefit of the doubt to those accused and offering the convicted a second chance.**

There is a charitable impulse in us to give the benefit of the doubt to someone, especially when it is someone we know and love. But what about "benefit of the doubt" for the one bringing the accusation?

We must ask, if I or one of my children had been abused by a trusted leader, how would I want those in authority to respond to their cries for help? I'm not saying we throw out due process and rush to judgement, just that we err on the side of offering protection and compassion for the abused, as we allow due processes to run their course.

Furthermore, the Christian understanding of grace never means naively enabling abusers a second chance to perpetuate abuse. Christian teachings on grace and forgiveness never mean covering up sin in ways that expose others to harm.

• **Myth 5: Enduring abuse in marriage is part of learning to love like Jesus.**

Another version of this myth is expressed when someone says, "You know, people will always let you down, but Jesus never will, so deal with it."

Would you say the same thing about the robbery of your home? Does learning to endure suffering mean saying or doing nothing when you are robbed, or not tak-

ing steps to ensure it won't happen again?

We say, "God hates divorce." Yes, but God also hates abuse. And we don't enable one thing God hates to try and prevent another.

We are pursuing what God loves – helping the vulnerable find protection. Our hope is that in so doing the abuser will come to repentance. But if the offending party will not seek repentance, that is not on us or the abused spouse. Their abuse is ending the marriage, not our steps toward protection. Being casual or deferential in relation to abuse in an attempt to avoid divorce is like saying, "Let us do evil that good may come."

• **Myth 6: We would know an abuser if one was in our church.**

This is a very dangerous, though often believed, myth.

Abusers are often very likable. That's part of what makes them effective. They can be disarming and downright charming.

They thrive in environments of naive assumptions and no accountability. If abusers are easy to identify, how did prominently known abusers get to their positions of power and influence?

The majority of abuse happens in private, where abusers have enormous power over their children, spouses, or students. If we expect abusers to feel ominous, then we add to the isolation

and sense that "no one will believe me" that survivors often feel.

• **Myth 7: Updating our policies will take care of the problem.**

New policies will not, by themselves, fix this problem. However, they are an essential step toward fixing it, which is why we have focused so much on better equipping local churches to change their policies.

That's why we developed the Caring Well Challenge (caringwell.com).

But those policies must be paired, voluntarily, in our local churches by changes in attitude and culture. Local churches have to decide that they are going to be places that prioritize the safety of victims and respond immediately to reports entrusted to them.

We need to foster cultures of openness and protection in our local churches, where people feel like they know and are known enough to feel safe disclosing something, and even where people are close enough to one another to sense when something is wrong and ask questions.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – J.D. Greear is president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of The Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham, N.C. This column is adapted from a talk he gave at the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission's 2019 national conference, Oct. 3, in Grapevine, Texas.) **BR**



J.D. GREEAR
Guest Column

CHURCH NEWS



Meherrin Baptist Church, Murfreesboro

The 290th anniversary of Meherrin Baptist Church, Murfreesboro, kicked off Oct. 5 with a barbecue supper and fellowship. Oct. 6 activities included an extended worship service at 10:30 followed by a meal. Milton A. Hollifield, executive director-treasurer of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), preached the message. The church was founded in 1729 as Parker Meeting House by Joseph Parker and, in 1735, the first house of worship was erected. Meherrin, which is the second oldest Baptist church in the state, is the mother church to many churches in the area, and has the distinction of being the birthplace of the N.C. General Meeting of Correspondence (1803), which merged into the BSC. In March 1808 and again in May 1813, the general meeting was held in the church. In 1842, the BSC held a memorial meeting at Meherrin. John Porter serves as pastor. (Contributed photo)

October 27

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

November 3

God's Will and the Holy Spirit

Focal passage: 1 Corinthians 2:6-16

I was living in Europe, my car windshield was embarrassingly dirty, and I had no idea how to translate “windshield wiper fluid” into Hungarian. Instead of asking for help, I decided to trust my instincts.

I walked down every aisle at my local automotive store, scanning the labels and analyzing the colors of the liquids. Hoping for the best, I made my purchase.

As I refilled my fluid and tested out my wipers, I realized I had made a terrible mistake.

Globs of blue gunk poured out onto my window.

The liquid I had assumed was windshield wiper fluid was actually antifreeze.

And, just in case you're wondering, antifreeze does not clean windows. Without a correct translation of those labels, I was lost.

I'm afraid many people read God's Word and seek His will just like I shopped for wiper fluid.

They rely on educated guesses to make sense of what God is saying, but miss the point.

You see, we were never meant to fully

understand God's will for our lives in our own strength.

But God has not left us without help. He has given us His Holy Spirit, who guides us as we seek to know His will.

Paul writes, “*God has revealed these things to us by the Spirit, since the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God*” (1 Corinthians 2:10).

The world is full of people using earthly reasoning to make life choices. They have rejected the wisdom of God because they do not know Him. According to Paul, “*the person without the Spirit does not receive what comes from God's Spirit, because it is foolishness to him*” (1 Corinthians 2:14).

As people who belong to Christ and have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, we are not without hope, and we don't have to live with antifreeze on our windows. Through God's Spirit, we “*can evaluate everything*” and discern the deep truths of God (1 Corinthians 2:15).

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



EMILY KISTLER
Member, Parkwood Baptist Church,
Gastonia

Focal passage: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Several years ago, my friend Cheryl and her husband adopted a beautiful baby boy named Justin. At the moment those papers were signed, Justin legally became their son, and they became his parents.

Can you imagine how crazy it would be for Justin to embrace his parents and then reject all other members of his new family? What would you think if Justin ignored his older brother? How would you respond if he treated his grandparents as strangers?

As crazy as it may sound, this is exactly what many of us

do as believers.

When we repent and believe the gospel, we are adopted by God as His son or daughter. Although this relationship is primary, it is not solitary. The moment we are adopted into Christ, we gain an entire family of fellow believers, known as the church. And yet, how often are we tempted to neglect these new relationships?

God has many purposes for His church.

One purpose is that we would point each other towards God and His truth.

Each person who knows Christ has been indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit works in and through each of us.

Through the Holy Spirit, we have been given what the Bible calls spiritual gifts. There is great diversity in these gifts - knowledge, faith, discernment, etc. And yet, all these gifts come from God. “*There are different gifts, but the same Spirit*” (1 Corinthians 12:4).

These gifts are not for our own accolades or glory; they are for building up fellow believers in the faith and pointing them toward the truths of God and His will for our lives.

According to 1 Corinthians 12:7, “*A manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good.*”

It would seem crazy for Justin to ignore his grandparents and miss out on all the blessings of his extended family. It is just as crazy for us as believers to miss out on what God can do as He works in and through our brothers and sisters in Christ by the power of the Spirit.

October 27

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

November 3

Walking Differently

Focal Passage: Ephesians 4:17-32

“Wonder what this professor is like?” I stood awkwardly outside of the classroom, during my first semester teaching, with students who had no idea I was the professor. I was only a few years older than my students.

I looked like them, dressed like them and used the same lingo as them.

“I guess we will all find out together,” I said with a smile.

As class started and I introduced myself, students were surprised. Nevertheless, there was an immediate comfort with someone who was seemingly just like them.

As the semester progressed, students began to see me as “other.”

While I was familiar with their interests and shared in a similar culture, my life was markedly different from theirs and it wasn't just because of the professor to student divide. The fact that I was open about my faith and lifestyle made me seem odd.

In Ephesians 4, the Apostle Paul calls upon believers to live in a way that makes

a clear distinction between our lives and the lives of unbelievers (Ephesians 4:17-24).

While we live in the same culture and share many of the same customs, the core commitments of our lives are radically different because we live in two different kingdoms.

As citizens of a better kingdom with the better King, we speak truth in moments where others would speak lies. We forgive when others would hold grudges. We give in moments where others would steal (Ephesians 4:25-32). We are, well, odd.

We ought to be a people who are strange to those around - not because we speak in code or all dress alike, nor because we are unable to function in culture. Rather, the priorities of our lives and the affections of our hearts ought to reflect our commitment to King Jesus and his people.



DAYTON HARTMAN
Lead Pastor,
Redeemer Church,
Rocky Mount

Focal Passage: Ephesians 5:1-14

We often think love is demonstrated by what we do. This is true in most situations. However, there are ways in which love is demonstrated by what we choose not to do.

In Ephesians 5, Paul commands believers to “*walk in love.*”

In the following verses he illustrates what this means in some interesting ways.

He tells Christians that walking in love is to resist sexual sin.

Why? Because sexual sin is inherently selfish.

Paul tells us to avoid coveting, because coveting is inherently selfish.

He calls upon Christians to avoid filthy speech and crude joking, because they are not loving, they are destructive (Ephesians 5:3-4).

Walking in Love

Love, by definition, is other-centered. Thus, it will not be selfish, and it will not be destructive.

The evidence that we are in Christ is that we love, and we throw off the impulses of selfishness and the destruction of others (Ephesians 5:5-6).

Before Christ, our lives were marked by selfish and destructive affections instead of true affection, true love (Ephesians 5:7-14).

Thus, the believer must regularly ask “Am I walking in love or selfishness? Am I building up or being destructive?”

Think about how this plays out in church life.

Are you pursuing your agenda at the expense of the mission Jesus has given us, or at the cost of offending or hurting other believers?

Do you engage in gossip, destructive or divisive behavior?

Believers are called to walk in love. Walking in love is often manifested in what we choose not to do. How are you walking?

Visit **BRnow.org**

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE

AROUND THE STATE

Honor

K. ALLAN BLUME was given the title pastor emeritus by his former church, Mount Vernon Baptist Church, Boone. Blume, former editor/publisher of the *Biblical Recorder*, served as senior pastor for Mount Vernon for 17 years (October 1994-April 2011). Blume currently is serving as intentional interim pastor of Pittsboro Baptist Church, Pittsboro, and as a tour representative for Franklin Graham's Decision America: Tar Heel State Tour, a ministry of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Charlotte, NC. He and his wife, Pam, reside in Cary.



K. ALLAN BLUME

ACP

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from the ACP helps us celebrate the Kingdom work that is taking place. It can also help you and your church see trends and make wise decisions about future ministry. Your information also helps us as a state convention better fulfill our mission as we seek to assist your church in fulfilling the Great Commission.

To learn more about the Annual Church Profile, visit ncbaptist.org/acp. If we can answer any questions or offer any assistance related to the ACP, contact state convention staff member Russell Schwab at rschwab@ncbaptist.org or 1 (800) 395-5102, ext. 5582.

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now" – Philippians 1:3-5 (NKJV). **B**

CHURCH NEWS



Freedom Biker Church, Monroe

Boys and girls from Cameron Boys Camp and Camp Duncan were at Freedom Biker Church, Monroe, on Sept. 28 for the presentation of \$7,660 to Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina (BCH). BCH provides for these boys and girls as well as other people at its facilities scattered across the state. The church sold \$10 raffle tickets for a motorcycle giveaway to raise the money. The celebration also included free barbecue plates. Pictured with the check are, from left: Micah Lee, BCH director of development for Metrolina region; Brian Davis, associate executive director-treasurer for the Baptist State Convention of N.C.; and Phillip Morris, pastor of Freedom Biker Church, Monroe. This fundraiser kicks off the 2020 Ride to Clyde, an across-the-state visit to BCH facilities by motorcyclists May 6-9, 2020. Registration for the ride opened Oct. 1. Visit ridetoclyde.com. (Contributed photos)

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Pastor

White's Memorial Baptist in Franklinville, NC, is seeking a missions-minded **full-time Senior Pastor** to provide preaching and leadership in areas of spiritual growth, administration, and outreach. Personal characteristics and requirements: called by God; evangelism; displaying Jesus through word, action and discipleship; agree to 2000 Baptist Faith & Message; licensed and ordained by a Southern Baptist church; completed college and seminary; 5+ years experience in ministry. Email/mail résumé to: ktrogdon@triad.rr.com or to: WMBC, Search Committee, 2930 Whites Memorial Rd., Franklinville, NC 27248. Résumés accepted until Dec. 15, 2019.

Gatesville Baptist Church is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Interested applicants may submit résumés via e-mail: pastorsearch.gbc@gmail.com or via mail: Gatesville Baptist Church, Attn: Pastor Search, 201 Court St., Gatesville, NC 27938, by November 15, 2019.

First Baptist Church of China Grove, North Carolina, a Southern Baptist church with conservative values, is seeking a **full-time Senior Pastor**. With the local mission field being the 4,000 residents of China Grove, we are seeking a pastor to help disciple us in preparation for impacting our community. For additional information and to submit a résumé, please visit <https://www.chinagrovefbc.com/job-opportunities>.

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.

Church Staff

Youth and Children's Minister/Director (part-time). St. John's Baptist Church, Raleigh, NC (CBF) is seeking a part-time youth and children's minister/director. This position will develop and lead ministries focusing on children (and families) through high school, offering Christian education in a safe and nurturing environment. Please express interest by sending résumé and/or questions to resumes@stjohnsbaptist.com.

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.

Placing a classified ad in the *Biblical Recorder*

Choose one of three avenues:

- Send e-mail to: alison@BRnow.org.
- Purchase ads at BRnow.org/Advertise.
- Send a Fax to (919) 467-6180.

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

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

ADVERTISE

(919) 459-5691

Guide

Continued from page 1

Allen and Ratcliffe said they view the “Responding Well” resource as a complement to the ongoing efforts by pastors, churches and leaders across the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) to address and respond to cases of sexual abuse.

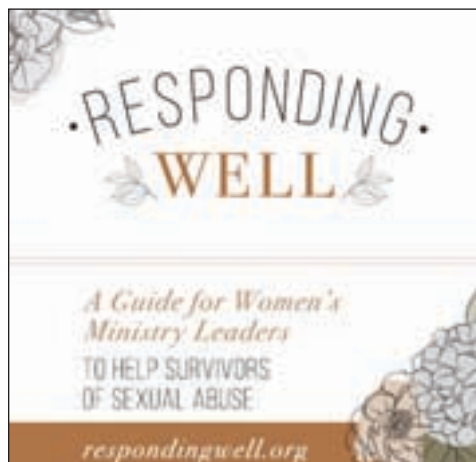
“We are thankful for the efforts that pastors and leaders across the Southern Baptist Convention have devoted to equipping churches to respond to the issue of sexual abuse and care for victims,” Allen said.

“The ‘Responding Well’ resource aligns with those efforts.”

Ratcliffe added: “Our prayer is that God would use the ‘Responding Well’ resource to help women minister to, care for and support other women who have suffered from the pain of abuse in their lives.”

In June, LifeWay Christian Resources, the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and those working with the SBC Sexual Abuse Advisory Study worked together to produce *Becoming a Church that Cares Well for the Abused*, a free multimedia resource geared toward church staff members, lay leaders and volunteers.

The resource, available at churchcares.com,



is a comprehensive training curriculum that combines a handbook with 12 video lessons from experts in the areas of social work, law enforcement, trauma counseling, abuse counseling, legal services and pastoral care.

Southern Baptist leaders are also encouraging churches to take the “Caring Well Challenge,” which is a multifaceted effort to prevent abuse and care for abuse survivors. More information on the challenge is available at caringwell.com.

Executive leaders with the North Carolina and South Carolina Baptist state conventions said the “Responding Well” resource will help church leaders prevent abuse and care for the abused.

“I’m grateful for the opportunity to work with our friends at the South Carolina Baptist Convention to develop such a valuable resource for women’s ministry leaders,” said Milton A. Hollifield Jr., executive director-treasurer of the SBC.

“I believe pastors can also benefit from the information contained in this guide to help them prevent abuse and provide the appropriate care to the abused.

“My prayer is that this resource would be used by God in a mighty way.”

“Here at the South Carolina Baptist Convention we are committed to providing the best resources possible so churches have the necessary tools to recruit, screen and train volunteers and staff in order to prevent abuse before it can begin,” said Gary Hollingsworth, executive director-treasurer of the South Carolina Baptist State Convention.

“Additionally, we are committed to helping churches know how to best care for and minister to persons who have been victimized by any type of abuse. This resource will go a long way to those ends.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Information from Baptist Press was used in this report.) **BR**

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NEWS

- Both the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering (LMCO) from last year and this year’s Annie Armstrong Easter Offering (AAEO) surpassed goals set by the International Mission Board and the North American Mission Board. Southern Baptists collected \$156.6 million for the third-largest LMCO offering ever received. The AAEO hit an all-time high with \$62.2 million. The Cooperative Program exceeded its budget for the fifth year in a row with more than \$196.7 million collected.

- Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary launched the Center for Biblical Studies Oct. 3. The center was formed to focus on scholarly excellence and biblical fidelity in ways that are hermeneutically sound and in keeping with historic Christianity and Baptist confessions of faith.

- The Pew Research Center studied five types of religious expressions and activities, namely wearing religious clothing or jewelry, praying before a sporting event, inviting other students to youth groups or services, praying before eating lunch, and reading religious scripture during the school day. The study found that many teens participate in or witness religious activity on campus.

- Most Protestant pastors feel confident about the discipleship taking place in their churches. But there’s still plenty of room for growth, according to a new study from LifeWay Research.

- More news is available at BRnow.org, including stories from the Caring Well conference, an explainer about the controversy surrounding the NBA and China, and more.

N.C. BAPTIST PASTORS' CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 10-11, 2019

One

WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE FOR US TO BECOME ONE?

speakers

 Alvin Summers First Baptist Church of Indian Trail Marshville	 Daniel Ritchie Speaker/Author Huntersville	 James Fisher St. Paul Baptist Church Greensboro
 J.J. Washington First Baptist Church Woodstock Austell, Ga.	 Mike Cummings Deep Branch Baptist Church Pembroke	 Mike Stone Emmanuel Baptist Church Blackshear, Ga.
 J.D. Greer The Summit Church Raleigh-Durham	 <p style="color: #008080; font-style: italic;">worship</p> led by Matthew Slomp	

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