

My next chapter

At the semi-annual meeting of the *Biblical Recorder's* board of directors on Mon., Oct. 1, I shared my plans to retire as editor-president at the end of May 2019. As noted in the cover story of this print edition, I will complete eight years in this place of ministry at that time.

It has been an unbelievable honor to serve North Carolina Baptists and Southern Baptists in this role.

By the grace of God, I began ministry as a youth evangelist, served more than seven years on the staff of two churches and pastored two churches for nearly 30 years before coming to the *Recorder*. My plan was to eventually retire as a pastor, but our Father had another plan, which was a big surprise to me! He confirmed very clearly that I was to accept the calling to rebrand the *Biblical Recorder* and lay the foundation for an effective future of communication through North Carolina's Baptist state newspaper and website.

I liken these eight years to one stage of a rocket. When that stage completes its task of taking the rocket to another level, it falls by the side so another booster can ignite and take the payload to the next level. The payload of the *Biblical Recorder* will be lifted by the next rocket stage under the leadership of a new editor.

I believe strongly in the mission and purpose of the *Biblical Recorder*. Independent journalism is an absolute necessity in Southern Baptist life. If we lose it, we will lose more than information. Our mission will be crippled by a shortage of communication that is necessary for the financial strength of the Cooperative Program and our mission offerings.

We must also be committed to policing ourselves with journalism that carries a biblical mission. We cannot depend on secular media outlets to report our news – good or bad.

In 1780, John Adams, one of America's founding fathers and second president of the United States, said, "The liberty of the press is essential to the security

of freedom in a state" The truth of his statement stretches beyond the secular state. A free, autonomous church also needs a free press.

I hope North Carolina Baptists will support the next stages of the *Biblical Recorder's* vital ministry of communication and information.



K. ALLAN BLUME
Editor

I am not retiring from ministry. That is probably an impossible option for a God-called minister of the gospel. After May 31, I will continue serving in Baptist churches and in Baptist life wherever God opens opportunities for ministry.

I appreciate your support and your prayers. Please pray for the *Biblical Recorder's* search committee also as they do their work.

N.C. Pastor Andrew Brunson released

We prayed and asked N.C. Baptists to pray, so we are thrilled that North Carolina pastor Andrew Brunson was released by Turkey and is now back in the United States. Brunson was imprisoned in Turkey for almost two years over his alleged ties to an outlawed group, but was freed by a Turkish judge Fri., Oct. 12.

The 50-year-old pastor was facing terror and espionage-related charges and was detained by Turkey as part of a government crackdown following a failed coup attempt months earlier.

According to The Associated Press, he told the court in his final trial, "I love Jesus, I love Turkey. ... We helped everyone – Kurds, Arabs – without showing



Pastor Andrew Brunson prays for President Donald Trump Oct. 13 after his release in Turkey and return to the United States. (Screen capture from NBC News)

any discrimination."

Originally from Black Mountain, N.C., he lived with his family in Turkey for nearly two decades and led the small congregation of Izmir Resurrection Church. Brunson, who routinely denied all of the government's claims over the course of his 18-month imprisonment, appeared at the hearing Friday wearing a black suit, white shirt and red tie, while his wife Norine watched from the visitors seating area, according to Reuters.

The *Biblical Recorder* reported several times that United States officials regularly rejected accusations against the American pastor as well, and amid mounting pressure, Brunson was moved from prison to house arrest in July.

Brunson was flown to Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany, a senior U.S. administration official said Friday night. After a brief stay, he returned to the U.S. aboard a military jet shortly before meeting with President Donald Trump, who had advocated persistently for Brunson's release, leading to an intense economic showdown between the two NATO allies.

A memorable moment at the White House drew national attention when Brunson fell to one knee in the Oval Office and placed his hand on the president's shoulder in prayer, asking God to give the president "supernatural wisdom to accomplish all the plans you have for this country and for him."

Annual meeting

Pray for the coming annual meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), Nov. 5-6 and the Pastor's Conference on Nov. 4-5. These are important gatherings that shape much of our mission. Between sessions, please drop by the *Biblical Recorder's* booth to meet our staff and register for some really great giveaways (see page 15). I hope to see you there.

Early voting

In the last issue of the *Recorder*, I wrote about voting early if you are planning to attend the BSC annual meet-



IS EVERY LEADER IN YOUR CHURCH GETTING THE BIBLICAL RECORDER?

ing in Greensboro. Election Day falls on Tues., Nov. 6, during the two-day yearly event. While you can no longer register to vote at this point, if you are registered, you have options on helping you research your vote.

There are two options you need to consider. You can take advantage of early voting or cast an absentee ballot.

Early voting in North Carolina begins Oct. 18 and ends Nov. 1. If you want to vote by absentee ballot, your application for the ballot must be mailed by Oct. 30. Your absentee ballot must be submitted by mail no later than Nov. 5. If you have heard the discussions about "Voter ID" laws, you may be confused about the necessity of proper identification.

This is all you need to know: No photo ID is required to vote. If you need to confirm that you are registered to vote, contact your board of elections, secure an absentee ballot, locate your polling place or identify the candidates in your precinct, visit ncvoterguide.org or ncsbe.gov. These are government websites.

If you would like to learn the views of candidates, the North Carolina Family Policy Council provides a list of the candidates for public office at local, state and federal levels. They also publish a voter guide on major moral issues. Visit their website and order voter guides for your church or Bible study group at ncfamilyvoter.com. **BR**

BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

(ISSN 0279-8182)

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

Volume 184 No. 21
(919) 847-2127
Fax (919) 467-6180
BRnow.org

K. Allan Blume, Editor/President
editor@brnow.org

Seth Brown, Content Editor
seth@brnow.org

Dianna L. Cagle, Production Editor
dianna@brnow.org

Alison McKinney
Business and
Advertising Manager
(919) 459-5691
alison@brnow.org

Dee Dee Vogt
Editorial Aide

Liz Tablazon
Circulation Manager
(919) 459-5693
liz@brnow.org

Carly Conley
Graphic Designer

Board of Directors: Nate Jones, chair; Tony Honeycutt, vice chair; Angela Brady, secretary; David Clary, treasurer; Kevin Atchley; Frankie Gordon; Lisa Harris; Gerald Hodges; Todd Houston; Cindy D. Jennings; Dan Meyer; Frank Norwood; Jim Pennington Jr.; Donna Robinson; Donnie Seagle; Meredith Snoddy; Marilyn Thurman; Aaron Wallace; Tammy Weeks; and Keith Whitfield

Subscriptions

- Individual subscriptions, \$15.99 (one year); \$27.99 (two years); \$39.99 (three years)
- Bulk Plan (10+) \$11.50
- Family Plan, \$12.50
- Club Plan, \$13.50
- Single copies, .60 cents each

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

Publication

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

Periodicals postage paid at Raleigh, NC 27676.

Postmaster

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

IN FOCUS

A WORD FROM OUR LEADER

Encourage your pastor

There has never really been a day when I have not been around pastors. Both my father and great-grandfather served in pastoral ministry, and I have also had the wonderful privilege of pastoring churches in Texas and here in my home state of North Carolina. In my current role as executive director-treasurer of the Baptist state convention, rarely does a day go by when I do not have some form of communication with one or more pastors from our N.C. Baptist churches.



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive
director-treasurer

For all of my life, I have experienced and witnessed the unique demands that ministry places on a pastor and his family. The challenges that come with balancing ministerial, personal and family responsibilities are real. There always seems to be one more call to make, one more visit to make or a little more sermon preparation to conduct.

While we all need encouragement in life, I can think of no group of people who need it more than pastors. Since October is recognized as pastor appreciation month, I hope you will take time to let your pastor, pastoral staff and their families know how much you as an individual and as a congregation value them and their leadership.

In thinking back on my own days as a pastor, I can remember how something as simple as a card or a handwritten note meant to me. If a pastor at your church has ministered to you in a meaningful way, take time to let him know. Don't be afraid to be specific. Also, be sure to let your pastor's wife know how much she is appreciated, as well. Many people do not realize the sacrifices that are made by ministers' wives and their children.

Be sure to let your pastor know you are praying for him and his family. Pastors invest countless hours in ministry and service to others that they often neglect their own health and well-being. Pastors often carry the weight of the many burdens that are shared with them. Emotional fatigue, depression and burnout are realities in many pastors' lives. Pray for the spiritual, physical, mental and emotional health of your pastor.

If you or your congregation have the means to bless your pastor and his family with a gift, a financial bonus or a much-needed vacation, explore ways that you can bless them in that regard. Most pastors love books, commentaries and other resources that can assist them in their pastoral responsibilities, yet they often have limited funds to devote to these items. Would you consider purchasing him a gift card to his favorite place to buy books or give the family a gift card to a restaurant?

These are just a few ways that you can encourage your pastor. There are many more ideas that could be added to this list. The overwhelming majority of pastors do not pursue such recognition and rewards. That is not the reason ministers enter pastoral ministry. However, a little bit of encouragement can go a long way in reminding him of your appreciation for all he does to lead and minister to your congregation and individuals in the community where your church is located.

"Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you" (Hebrews 13:17). **BR**

Philadelphia: finish the race

Sixth in a series

"It's not how you start, but how you finish." In the proverbial story of the tortoise and hare, the hare darts out quickly, but a series of distractions and compromises renders its defeat.



CLAY SMITH
Guest Column

The tortoise, however, plods consistently and faithfully – step after step – and wins the race.

We have all seen the horrors of many morally compromised pastors who are like that hare. So much promise, so much potential, such a great start to ministry, yet they have been ecclesiastically disqualified. They do not finish well.

The same could be said for many churches. They start out with a bang, but are now limping along, wandering from the path. How about your church? Is your church standing strong in a world that wants her to fall?



The Church at Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13) was one of only two churches in Revelation where Jesus did not register a complaint. In fact, He commended them for their faithfulness in the midst of great persecution and suffering. This congregation was small, but strong.

They were banished as outsiders from their formerly Jewish community, but now insiders in the Kingdom of God. As a result, Jesus, *"the one who has the key of David,"* gave them the following three assurances:

See Race page 10

Disaster relief & cooperation

During my years of service to Southern Baptists, I have frequently been asked why I am a Southern Baptist. Early on, I humorously but accurately responded that I was born one. My dad was a Baptist pastor for more than 50 years in North Carolina. Truth is, my Baptist roots go back for several generations.

As time progressed, I answered more seriously that I was Southern Baptist by choice because I believe in our ecclesiology (the way we do church), our missiology (the cooperative way we do missions) and our theology (our commitment to the Bible and the Baptist Faith & Message). These issues are still prime motivators in my passionate commitment to Southern Baptist life.

Recent events in my state have provided a visible example of why I am proud to be a Southern Baptist. Hurricane Florence pummeled North and South Carolina. On Sept. 16, my home church, First Baptist Church in Hendersonville, which gives over 10 percent of its undesignated receipts to the Cooperative Program (CP), commissioned a disaster relief team to assist with the dire needs of those most affected by Florence.

We were certainly not the only church or association to immediately send teams to those in need. In fact, if you have been watching the hurricane coverage, you have noticed the many volunteers in yellow shirts and hats. Southern Baptist disaster relief teams are generally among the first to arrive and the last to leave. These teams come from churches large and small, and from associations and state conventions across the United States.

I am Southern Baptist because of our missional partnerships, which enable us to respond quickly and in large numbers whenever and wherever there is a need. Many churches, like ours, have disaster relief teams they can send at a moment's notice. In other

situations, smaller churches join together through the local association to form teams. This associational partnership enables every church of every size to be integrally involved. The state convention often trains and coordinates these teams for maximum effect.

For example, North Carolina has trained over 14,000 people for disaster relief work. Right now we have disaster relief teams from states across the Southern Baptist Convention on the ground working together to meet physical needs and share Christ. When the situation demands a large and lengthy response, the North American Mission Board works to coordinate the efforts of these many teams.

The local church, whatever its size or location, is at the heart of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). The local association is essential to our missional task as it helps local churches band together for larger missional work. This is particularly true for our smaller rural churches, but the larger church can and should profit from working together with other churches in the association.

The state convention does vital work on a larger scale to help churches cooperate for greater missional impact. The national convention entities take this missional work to the ends of the earth. All of these various levels deserve adequate funding to do their specified role.

I am passionate about seeing our CP giving grow at every level. We are living in a time of desperate need of the gospel, and yet, last year the average church in the SBC gave less than 5 percent of its undesignated funds to causes at the state or national level through the Cooperative Program.

For the sake of the Kingdom, we can and must do better.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Ken Hemphill is special assistant to North Greenville University's president.) **BR**



KEN HEMPHILL
Guest Column

Harrison withdraws BSC presidential bid; Barrett to nominate Scoggins

Biblical Recorder

John Mark Harrison, pastor of Apex Baptist Church, announced Sunday, Oct. 14 that he will be preaching “in view of a call” at a church out of state the following week. He told the *Biblical Recorder* that, due to the potential transition, he is withdrawing his candidacy for president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC).

“I asked the church to pray for me that I would be able to hear the Lord’s leading. I am very thankful for a loving church family that has been nothing but supporting and encouraging,” Harrison said. “They are wonderful people who are kingdom-minded and desire for the kingdom of God to advance.”

Michael Barrett, who intended to nominate Harrison, told the *Recorder* he will now nominate Steve Scoggins, pastor of First Baptist Church in Hendersonville, for BSC president. Barrett is the outgoing pastor of Pleasant Garden Baptist Church. He plans to retire at the

end of this month.

Barrett commended the Cooperative Program (CP) giving record of FBC Hendersonville and described Scoggins as an excellent candidate for the office, someone with a “great heart for his church” and a “creative mind” who would continue to invest in young leaders.

“He’s committed to God’s Word, dedicated to missions and evangelism, and dedicated to being a good shepherd,” Barrett said. “His skills put him in a position to step in and give good leadership to our convention at this time. He will strive to bring young pastors to the table to help serve and lead our convention.”

On hearing the news of Scoggins candidacy, Harrison said, “I’m grateful



STEVE SCOGGINS

for the passion of men like Barrett and Scoggins who are reaching out to the next generation and embracing younger leaders.

“These guys have a track record of leading well and serving our churches and convention well, so I’m excited to see them continue on that course.”

FBC Hendersonville gave more than \$370,000 through the CP in 2017, according to BSC financial records. The 4,000-plus member church has recorded approximately two-dozen baptisms for the past five years in the Annual Church Profile, but nearly tripled that number for 2018.

In a statement to the *Recorder*, Scoggins said he is disappointed Harrison would not have an opportunity to serve as president of the state convention, explaining that Harrison “would have been a great leader for our convention.”

Scoggins also emphasized that he is honored to be considered for the role and wants to hold up the members of his congregation as examples to other N.C. Baptist churches, due to their commit-

ment to CP giving and missions involvement.

Scoggins is a graduate of Samford University near Birmingham, Ala., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He has served on staff at churches in Alabama, Oklahoma, Georgia and North Carolina. He was pastor of FBC Hendersonville from 1992-2001 and again from 2014 to present. Scoggins has also spent more than 10 years teaching classes at Fruitland Baptist Bible College.

He has served on the board of directors for the *Biblical Recorder* and *The Alabama Baptist* news journals, and served in denominational roles for the Alabama State Board of Missions and Southern Baptist Convention.

Scoggins and his wife, Karen, have five grown children and 11 grandchildren.

Harrison plans to remain on the schedule to deliver the convention sermon at the BSC annual meeting Nov. 5-6 at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro, N.C. Convention preachers are elected up to two years in advance by messengers to the annual meeting. **BR**

Blume Continued from page 1

Blume led the historic news outlet through rebranding and the launch of a new website in his first year.

Today, the *Recorder* reaches farther than ever, offering multiple news formats, including an e-newsletter and digital edition. The website, *BRnow.org*, draws nearly 1 million unique visitors each month.

“He did not lose his heart for missions or church ministry when he became editor of the *BR*,” said Milton Hollifield Jr., BSC executive director-treasurer.

“Much to the contrary, Allan continued to challenge Baptist people to engage in missions through the content of his newspaper as stories are published in each edition about international and North American mission work.

“Under the leadership and guidance of Allan Blume, the *BR* has become one of the most popular Christian news sources in our country,” Hollifield said.

Blume said he is “incredibly grateful” for the support of Hollifield and state convention staff, adding the news agency could not thrive without their partnership.

“I am so honored to have served North Carolina Baptists as the *Biblical Recorder*’s editor,” said Blume.

“I strongly believe in the *Biblical Recorder*’s unique mission, and I value our Great Commission partnerships with all N.C. Baptist organizations and ministries, as well as those tied to the Southern Baptist Convention. I’ve learned that no other organization in our state or in

the Southern Baptist Convention has the exact assignment God has given us. It’s a calling that must keep moving forward.”

Blume said he made the retirement announcement eight months before his departure with the news outlet’s best interest in mind.

“The board of directors deserves ample time to pray for God’s next steps and strategically plan for a productive future,” he said.

In a statement, the board of directors expressed appreciation for Blume’s leadership and said it plans to “start the process of searching for and identifying the next editor of the *Biblical Recorder*.”

“I and my fellow Board of Directors members have had the privilege of working with Allan as Editor and President of the *Biblical Recorder* for almost 8 years,” wrote Nate Jones Jr., board chairman and member of Cross Culture Church in Raleigh.

“Through his dedication and hard work, we’ve witnessed remarkable achievements and found a brother and a friend along the way. We wish him well in this next chapter of life and look forward to working with Allan through a period of transition for the *Biblical Recorder*.”

Blume plans to continue living in Cary, N.C., and make himself available for preaching and interim pastorate opportunities across the state.

He and his wife, Pam, are members of First Baptist Church in Cary. They have one adult son who lives in Atlanta, Ga. **BR**

Hearts Continued from page 1

“Some days, they were locked out of the house all day long while strangers drifted in and out,” Stewart confides.

The situation took an unexpected turn when police were called to the neighborhood. The boys had broken into a neighbor’s home.

“They weren’t trying to do anything wrong. They were looking for food,” Stewart explains. “They were hungry and desperate.”

Their act of desperation became a crucial turning point in their lives. The Department of Social Services removed the brothers from their mother’s care, and they came to live at Baptist Children’s Homes.

Their family in tatters, all the boys had left were each other. At BCH, the ministry is designed to keep siblings together.

“Our cottages are like large family homes,” Stewart says. “They are large enough for three brothers to have a safe place where they can be together – surrounded by people who love and care about them.”

Help solve the problem of hunger

One in nine people on this earth suffers from hunger. They go to bed each night with bellies that ache and with children who cry for food.

Most churches recognize Global Hunger Sunday in October. Global Hunger Relief (GHR) is an initiative of Southern Baptist organizations working together to combat hunger.

Those people include the boys’ cottage parents who not only ensure that their every-day needs are met, but show them God’s unconditional love.

“Jesus says, ‘Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,’” Randy recites. “This verse speaks to the heart of what we give to the girls and boys who come to us at Baptist Children’s Homes.”

Ultimately, through the care and compassion the brothers received, they gave their hearts to Jesus.

“This is a generation of young people who are coming through our doors,” Stewart asserts. “We have an opportunity to share the gospel with them and see their lives change.”

Through the support of Baptist Children’s Homes’ Annual Offering, North Carolina Baptists are a part changing these brothers’ lives. To watch their video and download offering resources for your church, visit bchoffering.org.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – The brothers’ names are not used to maintain their privacy.) **BR**

One hundred percent of your gifts go directly toward feeding hungry people, 80 percent internationally and 20 percent in North America. All overhead expenses are covered by the Cooperative Program, Southern Baptists’ unified plan of giving. In 2017, 5.5 million dollars was given to GHR.

Visit globalhungerrelief.com. **BR**

BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION ANNUAL MEETING

3 things to know about breakout sessions

By CHAD AUSTIN | BSC Communications

Breakout sessions are an important part of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) annual meeting. Each year, a number of pastors, ministry leaders, church practitioners, convention staff and others offer sessions that address a variety of topics.

This year's meeting includes more times allotted for sessions and more offerings. Given these changes, here are three things you need to know to help you make the most of your time at annual meeting.

More session times

This year's annual meeting includes a revamped schedule, highlighted by more opportunities for attendees to take part in breakout sessions.

The schedule includes three separate times for sessions during the course of the two-day meeting.

Those times are Monday afternoon at 3:30 p.m., Tuesday morning at 10:45 a.m. and Tuesday afternoon at 3:15 p.m. The new schedule is a change from recent years in which breakout session offerings were held during back-to-back time slots on the Tuesday afternoon meeting session.

One hour is allotted for breakout sessions during each time period. Be sure to check the complete schedule at ncannualmeeting.org/schedule.

More session offerings

More than 40 different breakout session are offered for attendees to choose from – nearly double the number of sessions that have been available in recent years.

Please note that not all sessions are offered during each of the three allotted times for breakouts. Some sessions will be offered multiple times, but some are offered only once.

Plan accordingly to make sure you join the sessions you want to attend. The times when each breakout session is being offered are listed at ncannualmeeting.org/breakouts.

More session variety

Breakout sessions provide practical training and equipping in a variety of ministry areas such as evangelism, disciple-making, pastoral ministry, lead-



ership, prayer, missions and more. Many of the sessions are closely aligned to the annual meeting theme of “Who is My Neighbor?” Several sessions will focus on loving our neighbors who may be from

a different cultural, ethnic, religious or other backgrounds than our own.

A complete listing of breakout session titles and descriptions is available at ncannualmeeting.org/breakouts. **BR**

OTHER EVENTS

Before and during the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) annual meeting each year, a number of events take place. Most of the events are at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro. Here is a list of events supplied to the *Biblical Recorder*.

● **N.C. Pastors' Conference, Nov. 4-5** – The seven churches in Revelation chapters 2-3 will serve as the expository theme for this year's North Carolina Pastors' Conference Nov. 4-5 at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro. Sunday's event (beginning at 5:30 p.m.) features Clint Pressley and J.D. Greear. Monday morning's pastors include: Tony Merida, Chris Griggs and K. Marshall Williams, senior pastor of Nazarene Baptist Church in Philadelphia, Pa. It begins at 8 a.m. Monday afternoon's leaders include: Thabiti Anyabwile and Russell Moore. That session begins at 1 p.m. Matt

Capps, pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Apex, serves as this year's conference president. Visit ncpastorsconference.org.

● **Ministers' wives, Nov. 5** – The North Carolina Baptist Ministers' Wives meets Nov. 5 from 9-11:45 a.m. This year's speaker is Shannon Warden, an author and counselor. The theme is Encouraged 2 Encourage. Look for signs to the room. Visit ncbminwives.wixsite.com/ncbmw/events.

● **Missionary fellowship, Nov. 5** – The N.C. annual meeting of international missionaries (active duty personnel on stateside assignment, emeriti, former, retired or newly appointed); Nov. 5; 11 a.m.-1 p.m.; lunch costs \$12. Contact Jack and Ruby Gentry at (336) 766-1109 or email gentryclemmons@aol.com. The meeting is held at Lindley Park Baptist Church, 4010 Walker Ave., Greensboro.

● **Southeastern Alumni & Friends Lunch, Nov. 5** – Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary invites alumni and friends to its annual lunch at the BSC annual meeting. The cost is \$10. It will be held in the Blue Ashe Room from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Register at: eventbrite.com/e/southeastern-alumni-friends-luncheon-nc-baptist-convention-2018-tickets-50460027300.

● **N.C. Young Pastors Lunch, Nov. 5** – Gather over lunch Nov. 5 in the Grandover Room from 11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. to hear a panel discussion with Russell Moore, Amy Whitfield and Brian Upshaw about how the convention operates and how N.C. young pastors play a vital role in its future. There are only 150 seats available. Register by Oct. 29 at signupgenius.com/go/30e0a4dada62faf58-ncyoung.

● **Hispanic banquet, Nov. 5** – The Hispanic banquet Nov. 5 from 2-6 p.m. features William Ortega, BSC senior consultant for Hispanic church planting. It will be held in Guilford G and is free. There are some rooms available at discounted rates (\$25 for individual; \$50 for two to share). Visit ncbaptist.wufoo.com/forms/banquete-hispano-y-conferencia-2018/.

● **GuideStone Annuitant/Retiree Breakfast, Nov. 6** – Join the BSC Compensation and Benefits Services team for breakfast in Guilford G between 7-8:15 a.m. Cost is free; register by Oct. 31 at ncbaptist.org/guidestonebreakfast or call (919) 459-5637.

● **IMB breakfast, Nov. 6** – Join the Great Commission Partnerships Office Nov. 6 for International Mission Board breakfast – “Every church. Every nation.” – in the Blue Ashe Room. It begins at 7 and ends at 8:30 a.m. Cost is free, but register by Nov. 1 at ncbaptist.wufoo.com/forms/z848l8wltlkcyl/.

● **Heavenly banquet, Nov. 6** – The heavenly banquet with the theme “Welcoming Neighbors and Practicing Hospitality” meets Nov. 6 at noon in Guilford G. The cost is \$10. Register by Oct. 23 at ncbaptist.wufoo.com/forms/heavenly-banquet-2018/.

● **North American Partnerships Dinner, Nov. 6** – Join the BSC Great Commission Partnerships Office for the North American Partnerships dinner Nov. 6 from 4:45 to 6 p.m. at Mercy Hill Church, 3815 Clifton Rd., Greensboro, NC. Dinner is free, but register by Nov. 1 at ncbaptist.wufoo.com/forms/zlogfmk10ofvi9g/. **BR**

PEW UPHOLSTERING & REFINISHING
REVERSIBLE PEW CUSHIONS
NEW PEWS CARPETING
COMPLETE RENOVATIONS
1-800-289-7397
Church Interiors Inc.
The Nation's Leading Church Renovation Specialists
High Point, North Carolina
www.churchinteriors.com

FRUITLAND BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE
ENROLL NOW FOR NEW QUARTER ON JANUARY 7, 2019

- Preparing the “God Called” to minister since 1946
- Our graduates are serving churches all across the S.B.C.
- Earn an Associates Degree in Religion (choose from Christian Ministry, Church Planting, and Christian Worldview tracks)
- Our Associate degree is now fully available online
- Courses offered for Spanish speaking students at several N.C. locations (Call Robert Fernandez at 828-399-0109)

VA BENEFITS AVAILABLE
POST-9/11 GI BILL

For more information call (828) 685-8886, or write: David Horton, President, Fruitland Baptist Bible College, 1455 Gilliam Road, Hendersonville, N.C. 28792
 Owned and operated by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina

Human dignity addressed by ERLC in Capitol Hill event

By TOM STRODE | Baptist Press

Human dignity, as a biblical doctrine, should shape how Christians view the unborn, elderly and refugees as well as religious liberty, sexual assault and civil discourse, Southern Baptist ethics leaders told a gathering on Capitol Hill.

The expansiveness of human dignity was set forth Oct. 2 by staff members of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) in the final of three sessions this year of its annual ERLC Academy.

Russell Moore, the ERLC's president, and Daniel Darling, the commission's vice president for communications, addressed questions for an audience consisting primarily of congressional staffers and non-governmental organization workers. The biblical view that all human beings are made in God's image demonstrates the purposefulness of their existence, Moore said.

"Humanity is not an accident," Moore told the gathering in the Cannon House of Representatives Office Building. "Humanity is not just a sum of biological processes. Humanity is a picture that God has embedded in the world of Himself and points us ultimately to the true and perfect humanity in the Lord Jesus Christ."

If the biblical view of human dignity is lost, "we start to think of people simply in terms of either their cognitive functioning or in terms of their sexual vitality or in terms of their power" in ways that are ultimately degrading, Moore told the mostly millennial generation audience.

In "dehumanizing other people, we end up dehumanizing ourselves," Moore said, adding the result is "a kind of social Darwinism."

Moore and Darling – authors of the new book *The Dignity Revolution: Reclaiming God's Rich Vision for Humanity* – addressed the following topics as part of a format that consisted of questions from Travis Wussow, the ERLC's vice president for public policy, and the audience:

The #MeToo movement

The "baseline issue" on sexual mistreatment of women, Moore said, is "whether or not power itself means right." The pattern often has been "men using power in order to see women only in terms of their sexual availability or attractiveness, and often in ways that are abusive and violent and deadening to the soul."

When it happens in the church, it can create "a crisis of credibility," Moore said. "[S]ometimes what tends to happen in churches is when something awful happens, there's a sense of: 'Well, let's

treat this as a public relations matter because we don't want people on the outside to think this is what Jesus is about.' That is what actually takes away the credibility of the church. Jesus never deals with sin within the church by covering it up but by exposing it."

The Kavanaugh confirmation controversy

Two biblical principles exist, Moore said, in the debate over Brett Kavanaugh, the Supreme Court nominee who was accused of sexual assault en route to his confirmation Oct. 6.

Proverbs [17:5] says, "*The one who justifies the wicked and the one who condemns*

the righteous are alike an abomination to the Lord," he told the audience.

The Kavanaugh situation is "fraught with ambiguity" because people don't know everything that happened, Moore said.

"I don't worry about the people who would say, 'I think she's telling the truth. Let's believe her.' I don't worry about the people who are saying, 'I think he has been unjustly accused because of the sort of track record we've seen elsewhere in his life.' Those are legitimate disagreements we can try to work on.

"What I'm worried about are the people who would say, 'Well, boys will be boys. This doesn't matter. It was a

long time ago.' Or the people who will say, 'Well regardless of whether it's true or not, somebody with that kind of track record shouldn't be on the court.'"

Public discourse

Darling said, "[W]e've stopped seeing people as ideological opponents, and we now see them as mortal enemies."

Some of this results from arguments being "mediated through digital forms," Darling told the audience. "It's easy to get what I call 'keyboard courage' where we just hammer away at people because we don't see that person on the other side of Twitter as an actual human being.

See ERLC page 16



Leaders discuss renaissance of associationalism

At the first ever North Carolina Associational Mission Strategists Conference, Sept. 20, speakers addressed the challenges and future of associational ministry. The meeting was held on the campus of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) and included, above, left to right: Ray Gentry, director of ministries at Southside Baptist Network, McDonough, Ga., and executive director, Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders; Bob Lowman, executive director, Metrolina Baptist Association, Charlotte; Rick Wheeler, lead missional strategist, Jacksonville (Fla.) Baptist Association; and John Ewart, associate professor of missions and pastoral leadership, SEBTS. Gentry pointed to the adoption of a study team report by 150 associational leaders June 10 that said the Southern Baptist Convention is witnessing a renaissance of associationalism. He called on pastors and associational leaders to read the report. "Personalize it, but don't ignore it," Gentry said. "This is a God-send for each of us to use to raise the bar." Lowman said age is a barrier to effective associational leadership. "We need to see that younger generation step into and buy into associational leadership." Wheeler noted, "The greatest challenge is the lack of clarity on what our specific vision, our specific function is to be as an association. ... What is that distinct thing that is going to make your network – your association – the go to for 'fill in the blank'?" He said the answer depends on the unique settings and ministries of each association's churches as well as their mission field. Ewart asked, "How can we help our churches be healthy, and what role does the associational leader play in that? That should be part of the association's strategy. Associational mission strategists can only be effective if they are intentional leaders."

Jim Shaddix, left, the W.A. Criswell professor of preaching at SEBTS, spoke on "Developing a vision for discipling in associational ministry." Shaddix said when he began seminary he handed a director of missions (DOM) his résumé, hoping to land a church position. The DOM suggested Shaddix join a church, win people to Jesus and walk the aisle with new converts every week. Shaddix followed the counsel, was soon asked to lead a Bible study, then invited to lead a new church plant. "That's how I became a pastor," said Shaddix. "I will forever be grateful for that brother for shepherding me early in my ministry days. So, don't ever underestimate the kind of influence you have in associational missions."

SOUTHERN BAPTIST BRIEFS

Annie Armstrong offering tops \$61 million

(NAMB) Kevin Ezell, president of the North American Mission Board (NAMB), announced to trustees during an Oct. 1-2 meeting that the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions broke the \$60 million mark for the first time ever in 2018, with Southern Baptists giving \$61.1 million.

“We are so thankful to not only break \$60 million but to break \$61 million at the same time,” Ezell told trustees in New York. “We are indebted to you and to your pastors and what an incredible thing that is.”

Last year’s record-breaking offering eclipsed a pre-recession high that had not been surpassed since 2007. Current Southern Baptist Convention president J.D. Greear also expressed his excitement. “Wow – thank you Southern Baptists for showing what we can do together by your record-setting generosity to the North American Mission Board,” said Greear. “May God make us abound more and more in our generosity to the Great Commission!”

National CP ends fiscal year 2.63% over goal

(Baptist Press) The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) ended its fiscal year \$5,044,828.14 over its 2017–2018 budgeted goal and \$101,902.94 under the previous year’s Cooperative Program (CP) Allocation Budget gifts, according D. August Boto, SBC Executive Committee interim president and executive vice president for convention policy.

The total includes CP receipts from state conventions and gifts from churches and individuals for distribution according to the 2017-18 SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget. The year-to-year comparison includes a one-time \$3.1 million gift of from the Florida Baptist Convention in the SBC’s 2016–2017 fiscal year following the sale of the state convention’s building.

“We are grateful to God for the faithfulness of Southern Baptists who give regularly to support their church ministries,” Boto said.

The SBC received \$197,044,828.14 in CP allocation gifts for the year. This amount is 0.05 percent less than it received during the last fiscal year, and is 2.63 percent more than its budgeted goal of \$192 million.

NAMB, Revitalize add focus outside South

(NAMB) The North American Mission Board (NAMB), in partnering with the new Revitalize Network initiated by Thom Rainer, will provide resources, tools and coaching to churches in need of revitalization outside the South.

“One of the biggest things we hear expressed from established churches outside the South is the need for revitalization resources,” NAMB President Kevin Ezell said. “Thom’s new network will offer a great solution for that. This will revolutionize the access these churches have to revitalization tools.”

Rainer, who has announced his retirement from LifeWay Christian Resources, announced the Revitalize Network’s formation Sept. 10.

Through NAMB’s partnership with the network, the mission board will help pay for a revitalize “bundle” that includes assessments to help a pastor better know himself, his church and the community they’re trying to reach.

Rainer announced Aug. 27 that he would retire from LifeWay after his replacement is found or by the end of August 2019, whichever comes first. The Revitalize Network subsequently launched with LifeWay Christian Resources, California Baptist University and Brentwood (Tenn.) Baptist Church as network partners.

Visit RevitalizeNetwork.org and/or namb.net/church-replanting.

Sebastian Traeger to leave IMB EVP post

(Baptist Press) Sebastian Traeger, executive vice president (EVP) of the International Mission Board (IMB), has announced he will resign Nov. 15 at the next meeting of IMB trustees.

Traeger tied his resignation to the departure of David Platt as IMB president to pastor a church in northern Virginia.

“I believe the primary role of an EVP is to lead alongside the president, and in light of David’s transition, I want to respect this opportunity to give our future president total freedom to choose the right person to serve alongside him in the future,” Traeger stated to missionaries in a Sept. 28 letter. Traeger became the IMB executive vice president in November 2014 after Platt’s election by IMB trustees in August of that year.



SEBASTIAN TRAEGER

Full stories available online at BRnow.org.

NOBTS President Chuck Kelley announces retirement

By GARY D. MYERS | NOBTS

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary President Charles S. “Chuck” Kelley Jr., announced his plan to retire at the end of the current academic year during Founders’ Day chapel Oct. 2.

Kelley will continue to lead the seminary through July 31, 2019.

“This is the biggest decision of my life in a lot of ways,” Kelley said in an interview. “I have been a part of almost half of the 100-year existence of NOBTS; it is very much the fabric of my whole life, and it has been a joyful, wondrous journey. This is a happy decision for us. We have served the seminary in a variety of ways and are thrilled to do so now in a completely different way.”

The public announcement came during Kelley’s Founders’ Day presentation called “A Walk through the Presidents.” During the chapel service, Kelley noted the highlights of the seven other presidents who have served since the seminary launched 100 years ago. He concluded with the story of his presidency and the announcement about his future.

After much prayer and several years of planning, Kelley said the conclusion of the centennial celebration offered a great opportunity to announce the transition. Kelley expressed his desire to see new leadership in place that will set the course for the next era of ministry.

Kelley notified trustee chairman Frank Cox, senior pastor of North Metro Baptist Church in Lawrenceville, Ga., of his retirement plans in a written statement on Sept. 24. Shortly before the chapel service, Kelley announced his plans to the executive committee of the NOBTS trustee board, which was on campus for its regular fall meeting.

“Dr. Kelley has been committed to training and equipping young ministerial students all of his life, first as a professor of evangelism and then serving as the longest-tenured president of our institution. We applaud him,” Cox said on behalf of the board.

Cox praised Kelley’s leadership following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, when the school faced its greatest challenge. The board has great appreciation for Kelley’s accomplishments at NOBTS, his commitment to evangelism, and for the many contributions he and his wife Rhonda made to the Southern Baptist Convention as a whole, Cox said.

In his retirement years, which will be spent primarily in Fairhope, Ala., Kelley plans to begin a renewed focus on research into the SBC’s evangelism issues.

Kelley, who has studied evangelism



New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary President Charles S. “Chuck” Kelley Jr., announced his plan to retire at the end of the current academic year during Founders’ Day chapel Oct. 2. (NOBTS photo by Boyd Guy)

practices and baptism statistics in the SBC since 1982, believes the decline in baptisms represents a profound crisis for Southern Baptists. He intends to write and speak on evangelism and discipleship.

Trustees voted to amend the bylaws concerning the presidential search team. The bylaws call for trustee chairman Frank Cox to appoint a committee with 11 voting members – including the board chairman, the immediate past chairman, one faculty member, one student and seven other board members. The board approved a bylaw amendment that added two trustee alternates. The alternates will attend all the meetings but will not have a vote unless another search committee member withdraws from the committee.

Cox announced the names of the search committee members Oct. 11.

Trustees also named Kelley chancellor of the school through July 31, 2019, a required step in the initiation of the search process. The bylaws state the office of president must be vacant before the trustees can start the search. The role of chancellor indicates the seminary will continue normal operations under Kelley’s leadership while the trustees seek the next leader.

Trustees affirmed that the Kelleys will have use of the presidential on-campus apartment in retirement. The board of trustees unanimously elected Kelley as the eighth NOBTS president in 1996 following a 20-year tenure by Landrum P. Leavell II. A professor of evangelism at NOBTS since August 1983, Kelley assumed the office of president March 1, 1996. Since his election, Kelley has led NOBTS through a rapidly changing academic and ecclesiastic landscape and rebuilt the campus twice – once due to extensive Formosan termite damage and a second time in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

NOBTS will devote the spring edition of the *Vision* magazine to the many contributions Kelley and his wife Rhonda have made at the seminary and throughout the ministries of the Southern Baptist Convention. **BR**

Hurricane Michael wreaks havoc in wake of Florence

Biblical Recorder

In the wake of Hurricane Michael, North Carolina Baptist leaders are urging people to volunteer more than ever.

With the combination of two strong storms (including Hurricane Florence from September), within less than a month, work orders are piling up at 13 recovery sites across the state. Baptists on Mission (also known as N.C. Baptist Men, NCBM) are receiving requests for help from many of the same people helped during Hurricane Matthew from two years ago.

A report from Eastern Baptist Association quotes Richard Weeks, director of missions, about Sampson and Duplin counties: “The water that got into houses during Matthew, we could measure in inches. The water from Florence we measure in feet.”

The Red Springs Mission Camp is being used to distribute supplies to more than 20 sites from its warehouse.

To volunteer or donate, visit baptistsonmission.org. **BR**



Gov. Roy Cooper, center, prays with Baptists on Mission workers and homeowners during a visit to Wilmington Oct. 9. Cleanup after Hurricane Florence continued as Tropical Storm Michael added to the damage list Oct. 11 in North Carolina. (Baptists on Mission Facebook photo)

The Summit devotes staff day to relief efforts

By **SETH BROWN** | *BR* Content Editor

Nearly 200 staff members from The Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham, N.C., devoted a day Oct. 9 to participating in disaster relief efforts in the wake of Hurricane Florence. The group tackled 12 projects under the direction of Baptists on Mission (also called North Carolina Baptist Men; NCBM) based out of a recovery site at Hyde Park Baptist Church in Lumberton, according to on-site reports.

J.D. Greear, pastor of The Summit and president of the Southern Baptist Convention, said he wanted the staff to experience the evangelistic opportunities created by disaster relief efforts and see what kind of impact Cooperative Program ministries can make on communities.

Greg Riggs, NCBM site coordinator, said the Lumberton operation has completed 180 house cleanup projects and is currently engaged in more than 380 others. He estimated several hundred more are on a waiting list.

Riggs expressed gratitude for the large group of volunteers from The Summit.

“We need money, but we need labor as much as anything else,” he said. “Money won’t clean those houses out. The manpower is what we need. If people will come with a servant’s heart, we’ll move mountains.”

Riggs, an avid fisherman, recounted his experience as a volunteer on the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina in 2005. He worked with a team removing downed trees from damaged rooftops.

“One day while we were up on a house, a guy was saved,” Riggs said. “From that experience, I realized what I was really fishing for – I’m fishing for men. I’m fishing for men, now.”

Greear said encounters like Riggs’ are what he wants The Summit leaders to experience.

“Our staff is engaged in evangelism every single day,” Greear said. “We wanted to see this kind of evangelism,

participate in it and support it so we can better inform our people, so they can catch this vision and realize God has a plan for them also.”

He continued, “If you have a servant’s heart and willing hands, you can prepare a meal, you can clean out a house, you can sit on a porch, pray with someone and give them hope. I want our staff to see that.”

Lori Francis, The Summit’s director of sending, met a family whose mobile home was damaged during the recent storm. The Arthurs, along with their son and grandson, have been living in the mobile home as a temporary shelter. It sits on the same property as their house, which still has damage from Hurricane Matthew in 2016, she said.

Amid debris, Francis recounted stories from the Bible about Jesus, Peter and a storm. Another staff member, Tony Diana, told the Arthurs how Jesus is able to “sympathize with our weaknesses” from Hebrews 4:14-16 and prayed for them.

The grandmother, Clara, started crying, Francis said. “No one had been to see her yet, and she was so thankful.” The Summit staff members shared the gospel with the Arthurs, and have plans to connect the family with N.C. Baptist churches in the area. Clara was open to discussing more about Jesus, staff members said.

Francis also praised the work of NCBM volunteers and leaders, including Riggs, Tom Beam, NCBM mobilization consultant and Richard Brunson, NCBM executive director.

“It was beautiful to pray with their long-term blue hat and yellow hat volunteers,” she said. “I believe it was motivation for our staff to work with intentionality and joy. We love our partners at NCBM.”

As The Summit staff removed debris and cleaned houses in North Carolina, the National Weather Service predicted another storm would hit the Florida Panhandle and move northeast in the coming days. Greear said Southern Baptists should prepare to “pray, give and



Pictured are The Summit staff members, from left: Eric Stortz, director of cultural engagement; J.D. Greear, pastor; and Amy Kavanaugh, communications project manager. (Contributed photo)

go” as they brace for Hurricane Michael, which struck Florida Oct. 10 before traveling up through the Southern states to hit North Carolina as a tropical storm.

“We’re praying this thing will pass with no incidents, but if it hits, it provides us an opportunity to do what Christians do best,” said Greear, “to put the love of Christ on display in a way that awakens in people an awareness for their need of the message of the gospel that we bring.”

Greear also said he is thankful for how the Cooperative Program supports disaster relief and other ministries. “All of our cooperative giving goes toward mission, and it’s spent in wise and prudent ways. But there are a few things, when you see them in action, you’re like, ‘I’m really glad I give to this. I’m glad I play a small part in it,’” said Greear. “Things like disaster relief remind me, not only why it’s important to give, but why our church is committed to the Cooperative Program.”

NCBM is funded by the North Carolina Missions Offering. Visit ncmissionsoffering.org. **BR**

Al Mohler's 25 years at Southern Seminary celebrated

SBTS Communications

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's trustees presented a resolution of appreciation to R. Albert Mohler Jr. to celebrate his 25th anniversary as president of the institution during a special chapel service Oct. 9.

A sermon by Atlanta-area pastor James Merritt and reflections from Mohler, who became the seminary's president in 1993, also were part of the celebration at the Louisville, Ky., campus. Trustee vice chairman and North Carolina pastor Clint Pressley presented the resolution, reading the text to a filled-to-capacity Alumni Memorial Chapel. Mohler received the framed document alongside his wife Mary.

The resolution notes key milestones and qualities of Mohler's presidency and concludes with these words: "Now Therefore Be It Resolved that the Board of Trustees of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary express their appreciation to R. Albert Mohler Jr. for his unyielding commitment to God's Word, his zeal for the Great Commission, and his twenty-five years of visionary and effective leadership of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary."

Merritt, lead pastor of Cross Pointe Church in Duluth, Ga., preached from Nehemiah 6 recounting Nehemiah's rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem after they had fallen into disrepair.

Merritt drew parallels from Nehemiah's ministry to Mohler's tenure as Southern Seminary's president – specifically to his task in his earliest years of returning the seminary to the doctrinal fidelity established by its founders.



R. Albert Mohler Jr. and his wife Mary receive a resolution of appreciation during an Oct. 9 special chapel service in recognition of his 25-year tenure as president of Southern Seminary. (SBTS photo by Freddy Sinarahua)

Mohler became president amid theological controversy at the seminary over the inerrancy of the Bible. He was elected by the trustees to realign the Southern Baptist school with the confessional identity of its founders and the beliefs of Southern Baptists.

Merritt made three observations about leadership from the passage: Leaders must (1) hold strong convictions; (2) handle sinister criticism; and (3) have steadfast courage. For each, Merritt told stories from Mohler's

presidency that demonstrated how he exemplified those qualities.

"It took guts to rebuild the walls of a city at the threat of your life," Merritt said. "It takes guts to rebuild the theological walls of a seminary when you are literally one David standing against the Goliaths of the media and the faculty and the student body and the community and public opinion."

'Faithful Southern Baptists'

Following Merritt's sermon, Mohler expressed his gratitude that, like Nehemiah and the wall of Jerusalem, he did not build the seminary but, rather, helped repair the work already done by faithful Southern Baptists before him.

"I'm so thankful that we didn't have to go back and start on uncultivated land and with not one stone upon a stone – we could rebuild a wall that faithful Southern Baptists had built for so many generations," Mohler said.

"The wall did need to be rebuilt. It was, like Jerusalem, not what it had been. Its defenses were down and there was rubble that was an insult to the glory of God. But I want to say with humility: it was not our charge to build a wall that had never existed but to rather rebuild a wall."

Mohler also thanked those who played significant roles in his work as president during the past 25 years. He specifically honored his wife Mary and former senior vice presidents David S. Dockery, Danny Akin and Russell Moore. The seminary's faculty also adopted a resolution in Mohler's honor during an Oct. 8 anniversary banquet. **BR**

'Gosnell' helps uncover 'horrors of abortion'

By DAVID ROACH | Baptist Press

A trio of forthcoming movies hailed by pro-life activists – led by "Gosnell" opening Oct. 12 – could influence Americans' thinking on abortion, critics say.

Christians "have been behind the curve, and we're just now starting to realize the importance" of promoting the sanctity of unborn life through film, Christian filmmaker and media consultant Phil Cooke told Baptist Press (BP). Gosnell's potential impact is indicated by "just how furious people on the other side, the pro-abortion people, have been in trying to stop the movie, trying to reduce its credibility, trying to not get it aired in theaters."

Gosnell, produced by Phelim McAleer and Ann McElhinney, tells the true story of Philadelphia abortionist Kermit Gosnell, who is serving three consecutive life sentences for murdering three infants born alive after abortion attempts and committing involuntary manslaughter of a woman during a botched abortion.

Set for 2019 release are "Unplanned," the story of Abby Johnson, a Planned Parenthood clinic director turned pro-life champion, and "Roe v. Wade," which relates the backstory behind the landmark



1973 U.S. Supreme Court ruling.

Gosnell's release, by and large, has not been covered in mainstream media outlets. That reality is "the result of both malign neglect and active suppression of inconvenient truths," conservative commentator Michelle Malkin wrote in a *National Review* article. Facebook and NPR have refused to run paid advertising for Gosnell, and crowdsourcing website Kickstarter banned Gosnell's producers from using the platform to raise money, according to media reports.

Nevertheless, Gosnell (rated PG-13 for realistic language and violent images) is "a must-watch for anyone who wants to

understand the controversy over abortion in America," Christian film critic Michael Foust told BP.

"It does a great job spotlighting a group of heroic pro-choice prosecutors who did what was right in bringing the case," said Foust, who covers entertainment for several Baptist state papers. "But it also does something more important by educating the public about abortion procedures and abortion laws."

"Yes, what Kermit Gosnell did was illegal and horrific – snipping the spinal cords of babies – but let's not forget that second- and third-trimester abortions take place in clinics every day in the

U.S.," Foust said in written comments.

Roe v. Wade began filming earlier this year, according to media reports, and reportedly has had crew members resign over the film's pro-life content. Unplanned co-writers and co-directors Chuck Konzelman and Cary Solomon – who also co-wrote "God's Not Dead" – told *The Hollywood Reporter* they are preparing for opposition as the film nears release.

Despite such pushback, pro-life filmmakers should continue to share life-affirming stories, said Cooke, author of *The Way Back: How Christians Blew Our Credibility and How We Get It Back*. "You get this drip, drip, drip in our culture today of" news reports and entertainment suggesting that "even up to the last minute, abortion should happen," Cooke said. With "the accumulation" of such media content, "there's no wonder we see the direction in our culture heading the way it is."

Other pro-life films recommended by Foust and Cooke include "Bella," the story of a young woman who decides against abortion through a friend's intervention; "October Baby," the story of a young adult who learns she survived a failed abortion attempt as an infant; and "Crescendo," a short movie that tells how Beethoven nearly was aborted. **BR**

2019 SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

NAMB, Alabama Baptists plan for Crossover 2019

By TOBIN PERRY | NAMB

With eight months until Crossover 2019, Birmingham-area Southern Baptists are looking to build upon a record number of faith commitments last year. Although specific plans have not been finalized, the North American Mission Board (NAMB) is partnering with seven Alabama Baptist associations in the effort. Door-to-door evangelism in the suburbs and a Send Relief outreach downtown are expected to be part of the Crossover plans prior to the June 11-12 SBC annual meeting.

“We will be working closely with our state and local Baptist partners in Alabama to plan a Crossover that is a great fit for Birmingham and Alabama,” NAMB President Kevin Ezell said. “We always want Crossover to be something that local Baptists feel they can own and fully participate in. I hope everyone planning to attend SBC 2019 will make plans to arrive early and participate in this opportunity to share Jesus with those in and around Birmingham.”

The Southern Baptist Convention started Crossover in 1989 as a way to engage the host city of the SBC’s annual meeting with the gospel. North American Mission Board partners with the local state convention and the local SBC associations in the area to coordinate the effort.

For the last two years, NAMB, local Southern Baptist associations and Harvest America have worked together to host evangelistic crusades the Sunday before the annual meeting.

The crusades have followed door-to-evangelistic efforts the proceeding week and street evangelism the day before.

Though these crusades have been fruitful, logistical challenges make it impossible to repeat in Birmingham next June.

“Originally, we planned to partner with Harvest again for a Birmingham crusade,” Joel Southerland of NAMB said. “However, the logistics didn’t allow that to happen. After much consideration with Harvest and local leaders, we decided to go a different direction. Harvest is a great partner, and we look forward to working with them again in the future.”

Last year tens of thousands of people attended the 2018 Crossover Harvest America Crusade in Dallas, and more than 100,000 watched online. A record 4,229 people came to faith in Christ through last year’s Crossover activities, which includes salvation decisions at the crusade, online and through door-to-door and street evangelism in the preceding week. Alabama Baptists hope next year’s Crossover events will give them a similar opportunity to saturate Birmingham with the gospel.

“The 2019 Crossover Birmingham will offer the SBC, and especially Alabama Baptists, the opportunity to make a significant impact on the greater Birmingham area as well as the inner city,” said Sammy Gilbreath, director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions office of evangelism. “It will be a joy to partner with Joel Southerland at NAMB in developing the strategy, and then implementing it to reach the city for Christ. Their expertise and passion for this ministry help motivate and train hundreds of volunteers for this incredible opportunity.”

NAMB will communicate more details about Crossover events and opportunities in early 2019. **BR**

SBC 2019 online hotel registration open

By DIANA CHANDLER | Baptist Press

Online hotel registration for the 2019 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting was delayed a few days because of unanticipated renovations.

Changes in hotel room availability near the meeting site, the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex (BJCC), necessitated the delay, the SBC Executive Committee (EC) said. Many rooms were to be utilized at the downtown Sheraton Hotel, where unanticipated renovations on a tower of 300 rooms will still be underway when the SBC convenes June 11-12, 2019.

Rooms at other hotels are being secured to accommodate the change, which the EC described as unavoidable.

Rooms generally become available Oct. 1 but were delayed until Oct. 12.

A shuttle service and parking options are also being studied to enhance attendees’ convenience, Bill Townes, SBC Executive Committee vice president for convention finance, told Baptist Press.

“While each host city offers unique opportunities and challenges, we recognize that recently announced ongoing infrastructure upgrades in the City of Birmingham will enhance the need to



diligently examine additional parking and transportation options for attendees, including the use of shuttle buses,” Townes said. “We will be working with our local arrangements committee in Birmingham, representing Alabama Baptist church, association and state board of mission leaders to continue to address these issues and come up with creative solutions.”

Birmingham, a central southern hub, remains an optimal location for Southern Baptist participation, Townes said.

“The location of Birmingham in close proximity to many Southern Baptist churches should result in excellent attendance,” he said. “In working with dedicated Alabama Baptists on our local arrangements team and the committed

staff of the Greater Birmingham Convention and Visitors Bureau, our convention planning team is confident that the City of Birmingham will provide another great destination experience for our Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting in 2019.”

Southern and southeastern states have drawn the highest messenger attendance, according to EC data.

The 2019 meeting marks the first time the SBC will convene in Birmingham since 1941. SBC messengers in 2014 approved Birmingham as the 2019 meeting site, according to official SBC records. The EC recommended Birmingham to messengers after also considering Indianapolis and Nashville.

Visit sbcanualmeeting.net. **BR**

Race Continued from page 3

1. “I have put before you an open door which no one can shut” (v. 8a)

2. “I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan ... to come and bow at your feet” (v. 9)

3. “I will keep you from the hour of testing” (v. 10a)

Jesus promises final victory to all those who stay faithful and finish strong. Their temporary difficulty will be rewarded with eternal glory. Jesus says, “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God” (7:12).

Ancient Philadelphia was founded in the late second century, B.C. Eumenes II named the city for the love of his brother, Attalus II (159-138 B.C.), whose loyalty earned him the nickname, “Philadelphos,” literally “one who loves his brother.” In A.D. 17, the city was destroyed by an earthquake and rebuilt by Tiberius Caesar. Out of gratitude they renamed the city Neocaesarea (New Caesar) for a short time.

Just as the city changed names, Jesus promises to change the names of His faithful church in that city. He says, “I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God ... and My new name” (3:12b). The reward for their perseverance would be a name forever intertwined with His (see Revelation 19:12).

Jesus calls the early Jewish non-believers a “synagogue of Satan” (3:9). While they may have scoffed at such a designation, the enemy was at work through them inciting distraction and compromise. Satan is still on the move today, seeking those whom he can devour (1 Peter 5:8).

North Carolina Baptist churches may not be facing the same level of persecution as our first century counterparts, but the pressure is mounting. Let us stay faithful to the end. Let us finish strong. After all, it’s not how you start, but how you finish.

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

BRnow.org

BE SURE TO
CHECK OUT
OUR WEBSITE

Kavanaugh confirmation: prayer, civility urged

By TOM STRODE | Baptist Press

Southern Baptist leaders called for prayer and the restoration of civility in public discourse in the wake of the highly divisive battle that ended with Brett Kavanaugh's narrow confirmation to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Senate confirmed Kavanaugh, 53, in a 50-48 roll call Oct. 6 after an already bitter struggle over President Donald Trump's nominee escalated when sexual assault allegations were made against the federal appeals court judge. The vote followed party lines in the Republican-majority chamber with one exception: Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia joined the GOP in supporting Kavanaugh.

Kavanaugh sat in on the high court's oral arguments for the first time Oct. 9.

The confirmation vote came two days after the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) delivered a report to the Senate on its latest scrutiny of Kavanaugh following assault accusations that dated to his high school years in the early 1980s. After reading the report, some senators said the investigation provided no corroboration of the allegations.

Southern Baptists outside and inside Congress said they would pray and appealed for prayer.

"Now that the confirmation process is over, we must pray for healing for our country after a time of such division," said Russell Moore, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC), "and for the future of the Supreme Court, especially in the areas of religious freedom and human dignity."

Moore also said in written comments for Baptist Press (BP), "One of the reasons the Supreme Court is so important is because of the way the judiciary has taken more and more power unto itself over the past several decades. We pray that Justice Kavanaugh and the other justices on the Court will have wisdom and discernment as they decide cases that will affect the lives of millions of Americans, born and unborn, for generations to come."

Evan Lenow, associate professor of ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, noted, "During these very contentious days, it is important for us to heed Paul's words to Timothy in 1 Timothy 2:1-2 where he urges him to pray for all people, especially those in authority, 'so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.'"

"I hope that we do not forget the final part of this admonition – to live in godliness and dignity," Lenow, director of the seminary's Land Center for Cultural Engagement, said in written comments to BP. "While much of the political discourse of our day is rancorous, we need to remember that we should be dignified and gracious with all people, especially those with whom we disagree."

Many foes of Kavanaugh – considered an originalist who interprets the Constitution based on its initial meaning – fear his confirmation will upset the balance of the high court. Trump nominated him to replace Anthony Kennedy, often a swing vote between factions on the bench. Abortion-rights supporters are particularly concerned that Kavanaugh could be a fifth vote to reverse the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized

abortion. Kavanaugh's record as an appellate judge has received favorable reviews from nearly all pro-life and religious freedom advocates.

No abortion cases are pending on the Supreme Court's docket for this term so far, but there are 14 involving the controversial issue before federal appeals courts, according to a Sept. 7 article in *The New York Times*. Those include state restrictions on the procedure and requirements for abortion providers.

Religious freedom and gender identity cases also are absent at this time from the high court's 2018 term docket, but the justices could review some lower court decisions on those issues before it adjourns in summer 2019. With its Kavanaugh vote, the Senate has now confirmed 69 of Trump's federal judicial nominees since he took office in January 2017, and he has about the same number awaiting confirmation. In 21 months, senators have approved two Supreme Court justices, 21 circuit court of appeals judges and 46 federal judges. At the appeals court level, Trump has had the most impact in the Fifth Circuit in New Orleans, where five of his nominees now serve, and the Sixth Circuit in Cincinnati and Seventh Circuit in Chicago, each of which have four of his nominees on the bench. The Senate confirmed Neil Gorsuch – Trump's first Supreme Court nominee – in 2017.

A judge on the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals for 12 years, Kavanaugh was approved 57-36 by the Senate in 2006 after a three-year delay following his nomination.

Previously, his experience included time as a senior associate counsel and staff secretary for President George W. Bush, as well as a Supreme Court clerk for Kennedy. **BR**

LifeWay search committee seeks nominations

By CAROL PIPES | LifeWay Christian Resources

The LifeWay Christian Resources presidential search committee is accepting nominations for a successor to Thom Rainer, chairman Kent Dacus has announced.

The search committee met Sept. 24 to develop a process for their search of the new LifeWay president and CEO, Dacus reported.

The committee, which is accepting nominations at LifeWayCEO@carterbaldwin.com, will work with the executive search firm CarterBaldwin to identify potential candidates.

Dacus asked Southern Baptists to continue to pray for the committee as they seek God's guidance in choosing LifeWay's next leader. "We do not take our task lightly," Dacus said.

On Aug. 27, LifeWay President and CEO Thom S. Rainer announced his plans to retire in the coming year after 13 years in leading the SBC entity.

A seven-person search committee was named to find LifeWay's next leader during their Aug. 27-28 trustee meeting in Nashville. **BR**



2017-2018 Lottie Moon offering nears \$159 million

Since members of Highland Baptist Church in Shelbyville, Ky., have traveled to Brazil and met its people, they now feel strongly the weight of their own responsibility – and the blessing of partnering with IMB missionaries to reach the people of Brazil with the gospel. In the 100th anniversary since Southern Baptists named their global mission offering in honor of esteemed missionary Lottie Moon, churches gave \$158.9 million to sustain their international missionaries worldwide – the second-highest Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions ever received and close to the national goal of \$160 million. The Lottie Moon offering is crucial in supporting nearly 3,700 full-time missionaries, who are key strategic workers in some of the toughest areas on earth. (IMB photo)

9Marks at SEBTS: mobilizing a church on mission

By LAUREN PRATT | SEBTS

Understanding the purpose and practice of missions as well as creating a culture of generous support of missionaries were just a few of the many ways that 551 church leaders were challenged to lead their congregations toward being Great Commission focused at the 2018 9Marks conference, hosted at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) Sept. 28-29.

The speaker lineup for this year's gathering included some new and familiar names alike. Speakers included John Folmar, pastor of United Christian Church of Dubai in the United Arab Emirates; Mark Dever, senior pastor of Capitol Hills Baptist Church (CHBC) in Washington, D.C.; Andy Johnson, associate pastor of CHBC; Trip Lee, young adult pastor at Dallas Concord Church in Dallas, Texas; Chuck Lawless, dean of doctoral studies and vice president of spiritual formation and ministry centers at SEBTS; and Thabiti Anyabwile, pastor of Anacostia River Church in Washington, D.C.

Folmar, the conference's first keynote speaker, taught from Isaiah 2:1-5. Folmar described this as "the divine forecast of the modern missions movement." He described the kingdom foreshadowed by Isaiah as "one international people of God" and a kingdom of peace, which is fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus, as Folmar noted in Hebrews 12:22-24.

Folmar gave two application points for the passage: that the church is God's evangelistic plan and that healthy churches are launch pads for further missions outreach.

"Be part of making Christ known through the manifold wisdom of God that is the local church," said Folmar.

The second keynote speaker was Dever who communicated to attendees on the understanding and practice of missions, noting that a biblical understanding of missions is a key aspect of church health. In regard to understanding missions, Dever explained that pastors need to both model and preach evangelism in creating a missions-minded church.

Dever said pastors need their congregations to understand that evangelism is not an option; it's a command.

"Missions isn't something occasional or optional; it's an essential extension of what God has done to ... bring glory to himself through us," said Dever.

Using the text of 2 Timothy 4:1-5, Johnson pulled three questions that the text addresses: What does a



Participants in the 9Marks conference in Wake Forest fill Binkley Chapel at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS). Below, Thabiti Anyabwile, right, pastor of Anacostia River Church in Washington, D.C., shares during a panel discussion with Chuck Lawless, left, dean of doctoral studies and vice president of spiritual formation and ministry centers at SEBTS. (SEBTS photos)



faithful missionary do, how does a faithful missionary work and who does a faithful church support? Johnson helped pastors understand who to support on the mission field, explaining that it takes patience and discernment as churches look for and follow up with the missionaries they send out.

"One of the great truths of scripture is that the work of missions is the work of God, so our faithfulness will never be in vain," he said.

Friday night's session concluded with a message from Lee on Romans 10:14-17, noting that "gospel action is driven by gospel agony."

Lee outlined three ideas in the text regarding lostness: A person cannot call on a savior [he or she has] never heard of, a person can hear the right message and respond the wrong way and faith comes through hearing God's Word.

Saturday morning began with a message from Lawless on Ephesians 6:18-20 paralleled with Colossians 4:2-4, speaking on the importance of partnering in prayer for missionaries.

Both passages, Lawless noted, begin and end with a call to pray. Paul emphasizes in Ephesians the need for the church to be alert in prayer while also praying specifically for boldness to proclaim the gospel. In Colossians, Lawless noted how Paul calls the church to pray with urgency and persistence while also praying for doors to open for him to share the gospel and that he

would proclaim it clearly.

Lawless said Paul is encouraging the church to pray "proactively," not "reactively."

"If we send them out, we better send them out with our prayers ongoing," said Lawless.

The conference concluded with a message by Anyabwile on 3 John 1:5-12, discussing how churches should give and support missionaries in a manner that displays the worthiness of God. Anyabwile taught that churches must exemplify faithful hospitality when missionaries are home and faithful generosity when their missionaries depart.

"Let us beware in ourselves, and let us teach our people to watch in themselves, any tendency toward self-promotion and selfishness that would innervate the gospel mission," he said.

Before the Saturday morning sessions took place, the Center for Preaching and Pastoral Ministry hosted a Pastor's Roundtable breakfast in the Ledford Event Room. Jim Shaddix, director for the Center for Preaching and Pastoral Leadership, moderated a panel discussion with Lawless, Johnson and Scott Hildreth, director of the Center for Great Commission Studies.

Questions from Shaddix included topics such as how new pastors can lead their congregations to be missions-minded and how the panelists have seen pastors lead in that way. A time of Q&A from the audience concluded the breakfast.

Speakers participated in panel discussions throughout the conference, which were moderated by Jonathan Leeman, editorial director for 9Marks.

In the 9Marks at Southeastern conference's 10th year, missions was a continuation of the previous nine conferences, which specifically emphasized a different mark of Dever's book, *9 Marks of a Healthy Church*. Dever announced at this year's gathering that 9Marks at Southeastern will be emphasizing prayer at the Sept. 27-28 conference in 2019. **BR**



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



Children at Camp Change learn practical money skills. (Contributed photo)

Stewardship camp touches young hearts

By DEE DEE VOGT | BR Editorial Aide

When Amanda Burke and Rebecca Lindhout of Antioch Baptist Church in Lillington, N.C., started Camp Change two years ago, they hoped to impart their own passion for financial stewardship to the next generation.

Their efforts have reaped rewards both temporal and eternal.

This summer, 14 children professed faith in Christ during the camp, according to Lindhout, and a four-year-old voluntarily tithed 50 percent of her \$4 because, “I know that money comes back to help missions.”

Started in 2017, “Camp Change” – a camp for first through seventh-graders – teaches practical skills such as budgeting and tithing, in addition to behavior and belief systems that undergird how people manage money, Burke told the *Biblical Recorder*.

Located near a Title I elementary school, the camp is offered at only \$20 per week.

Generous support from Antioch’s Woman’s Missionary Union and Baptists on Mission (also called North Carolina Baptist Men; NCBM) participants enabled Camp Change to provide six “experience” tracks for 64 children, doubling enrollment from the previous year.

This summer, entitlement and con-

tentment were the focus of all activities. Drawing from New Testament stories, leaders guided children through the Bible’s teaching on stewardship.

Students learned to recognize entitlement – like both the younger and older sons in the parable of “The Prodigal Son” – and saw that God can change it into generosity, both in money and service, like Jesus did in the story of Zaccheus.

A newly-added homework segment enabled kids to have structured discussions with their parents about how a household budget works.

One young lady was excited to learn her mother went to work each day to earn money so they could buy food, according to Lindhout. “These are conversations we should be having with our children,” she said.

A field trip to the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina’s offices in Cary provided an opportunity to see how missions and ministry funds from N.C. Baptist churches are used on a larger scale.

That visit spurred an interest in the NCBM Appalachian backpack ministry, which is now underway at Antioch Baptist.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – *The Camp Change curriculum and corresponding children’s books are tentatively scheduled for release in February 2019. For more information, visit antiochweb.org/camp-change.*) **BR**

AROUND THE STATE

Obituary

WILLIAM “BILL” EDWARD SAYLOR, 85, died Sept. 28.

A Tennessee native, he was a graduate of Southwestern Seminary with a bachelor’s and master’s degree.



BILL SAYLOR

He was called to ministry at First Baptist Church, Lake Charles, La., under Paul Roberts, and pastored eight different churches in his lifetime, in Texas, Tennessee, Ohio

and North Carolina. He did nine interims following his retirement. Saylor had a lifelong passion for missions after doing a two month summer student mission trip to Jamaica with the Baptist Student Union. He did volunteer mission trips to Russia, Romania, Australia, Africa, Jamaica, Brazil (took a crew and built a church in one week) and China (taking teams many times to teach conversational English at ChongQing University and high schools to witness).

He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Betty Schwartz Saylor; five children, Paul Saylor, Elizabeth Renna, Joel Saylor,

Sharon Stilwell and Micah Saylor; three grandchildren; sister, Carolyn Holly; and brother, Charles Saylor.

Memorials to: Novant Hospice Matthews, 324 North McDowell St., Suite 200, Charlotte, NC 28204; or First Baptist Church Mission Fund, 301 South Davidson St., Charlotte, NC 28202.

Staff changes

Big Rock Creek Baptist Church, Bakersville, called **CHRIS RENFRO** as senior pastor. He previously served at Valley Haven Baptist Church, Banner Elk. Chris and his wife, Lindsey, have two children.

Retirement

AL JAMES, pastor of Hales Chapel Baptist, Zebulon retired Sept. 23. He previously served as pastor of Carey Baptist Church, Henderson, was an International Mission Board missionary and pastored in Georgia, Mississippi and Louisiana. James continues to serve as the associate dean for ministry studies, the EQUIP network coordinator, and professor of missions at Southeastern Seminary. He is available for supply preaching and interim pastorates. Contact (919) 410-5430 or ajames@sebs.edu.

CHURCH NEWS

Oakwoods Baptist Church, Wilkesboro

Pastor Robert Duncan was recognized July 29 for 28 years of service at Oakwoods Baptist Church, Wilkesboro. Earlier this summer, Robert and Becky Duncan announced their calling to enter the mission field full time and establish Robert Duncan Ministries. Duncan was called to Oakwoods on Jan. 7, 1990. He led the church in increasing its seating capacity and land to ensure future growth projects. His outreach to the area (more than 400 baptized) as well as all of North Carolina, other states – including New Mexico, West Virginia, Texas and Kentucky, as well as other countries – Brazil, Cuba and India, was mentioned in the service. The couple sang a favorite duet: “Thank You Lord for Your Blessings on Me,” and were presented a certificate by Burt Wilbur, director of missions of the Brushy Mountain Baptist Association, for Oakwoods being named church of the month. A laying of hands by ordained deacons and ministers closed the service and prayerfully opened the next chapter of the Duncan’s missionary work. (Contributed photo)



ROBERT DUNCAN

Durham Memorial Baptist Church, Charlotte

Gene Boatwright, minister of music/senior adults at Durham Memorial Baptist Church, Charlotte, recently celebrated 30 years of ministry and service to the church and community. The choir sang “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross,” and several pastors shared personal stories of Boatwright’s ministry. He previously served churches in Spruce Spine, Rocky Mount and High Point, all in North Carolina, and also worked at a church in Seneca, S.C. He began service at Durham Memorial in 1988. A collage of photos was framed and presented to him, and many cards were collected and presented. (Contributed photo)

Servants on Site

Rebuilding Hope, Inc. (RHI), based in Henderson, N.C., sponsors a Servants on Site (SOS) week each summer. This eighth consecutive SOS – FIXED – was held in the latter part of June and drew groups and individuals from Alabama, South Carolina and North Carolina. The participants stayed at Crossroads Christian School and worked on 18 projects in Vance, Granville and Mecklenburg counties. The week is designed for students, sixth grade and up, and their leaders. Sponsor churches host lunch on site each day. Central Baptist Church in Hendersonville hosted each night’s worship service. Next year’s dates are already set: June 22-29, 2019. Contact RHI at rebuildinghope.radiantwebtools.com. RHI also coordinates other efforts in the community throughout the year.

Submissions

The *Biblical Recorder* is pleased to publish staff changes, church news and events with a statewide interest.

Send to dianna@BRnow.org or *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512. Call (919) 847-2127.

October 28
BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE
November 4

A Prayer of Surrender
Praying for Ourselves

Focal passage: Matthew 6:10-11a; James 4:6-10, 13-17

As we study the “Model Prayer,” it becomes clear that all of life must be shaped and formed by this pattern.

The first request – to cause God’s name to be honored in our lives – must be the foundation.

But how will God’s name be honored in our lives?

Jesus says we must also pray His will be done in all things (v. 10).

When our will and desires are aligned with God, we give Him glory.

A particularly good example of this is in the book of James. In chapter 4, we see many verbs helping to further clarify what it means to bring our wills in alignment to God’s plans.

We are to “*submit ourselves to God*,” “*resist the devil*” and “*draw near to God*” as a way of honoring God and declaring His will to be done (4:6-10).

Jesus then becomes not only our model of prayer, but reemphasizes His Lordship in our lives as we seek His will.

Even in our day-to-day plans, we must bring God’s will into our lives (4:13-17)!

Our constant prayer should be that God’s will be done and that His Kingdom would be realized in our lives – both on this earth and in His heavenly realm.

Like a kid who asks for candy for breakfast, many times we go to God to get our own way. Or, like a teenager who doesn’t submit to his or her parents, we deem them unworthy of trust and take matters into our own hands.

Perhaps we’ve made up our mind and have implemented certain plans for life, scarcely inviting God into the process.

With this model prayer, Jesus invites us back into relationship with Him.

His plans are for His glory and our good.

Building upon the foundational prayer of our lives (that God would be honored), we’ve seen that another important aspect of prayer is to align our hearts with the will of God.



TYLER FRANK
*Young Adult Pastor,
Biltmore Church, Arden*

Focal passage: Matthew 6:11b; Isaiah 38:1-6, 15-17

With the “Model Prayer,” Jesus profoundly redirects the focus of our prayers. If we are honest, we often start with our needs and how God can help us. Perhaps afterward, we make sure to focus on praise and thanksgiving.

To be sure, God loves to hear us and our requests! The image of the children coming to Jesus applies to all disciples. However, once we have focused on His glory and honor, we then are aligned with His will. God reveals both His purposes (6:9-10) and gives us provision (11-14).

A good example of this is the story of Hezekiah’s sickness and recovery in Isaiah 38. Surrounded by enemies, Hezekiah became sick unto death (v. 1). He appealed to God for help in his time of need. By God’s grace, he was healed.

Now, this isn’t a prescription for every

physical ailment people have in this world. Rather, it is an encouraging example to give us hope when we ourselves pray. God does answer our prayers for His glory and our good.

By healing Hezekiah, God is glorified and Hezekiah was helped. With us, God seeks to hear from His followers and desires to meet our needs as well – conforming us to His image (Romans 8:28-29). With our minds and hearts aligned to God’s glory, reputation and Kingdom, we can then ask for our daily needs. Physical needs (bread), interpersonal needs (forgiveness) and spiritual needs (temptation) are all connected, and God knows what we need.

When we see Him as our Father, we can trust His motivation. Like Hezekiah, we can humbly appeal to God’s reputation and glory, knowing God will work in and through us according to His will. Prayer is simply talking with God.

As we converse with Him by his Spirit and His Word, we are changed to become like Him (2 Corinthians 3:18). We can pray for ourselves, because our lives are aligned with God.

October 28
EXPLORE THE BIBLE
November 4

With Obedience
With Works

Focal Passage: James 1:19-27; 2:1-4

I loved to spend time looking in the mirror when I was growing up. One of my favorite things to do was dress up in my grandmother’s clothes, put on her jewelry and play in front of her mirror.

I wanted to wear all the shiny and beautiful things she wore because I wanted my reflection to be just like hers.

Scripture calls us to take a careful look at our lives.

Are we reflecting the image of Christ in our words, deeds and attitudes toward others?

The grace we have been given in Christ requires a response from us.

Our faith must result in the setting aside of things that hinder us from being both hearers and doers of God’s Word.

As Christians, we are called to live out the truth of the gospel by ridding ourselves of anger and other things that are not of God.

Instead, we are to act on the things we learn from God’s Word.

James discusses several areas in our behavior toward others that exhibit a faithful response to the work of Christ in our

lives. One of these ways is our speech. What we say is an indication of what is in our hearts.

James also points out that God has a heart for those who are needy and vulnerable.

Our actions toward them display either sincere faith in God or the lack of it.

Character traits of a believer in Christ include compassion, justice and care for the needy.

If our lives do not reflect growth in Christlikeness, it is safe to assume that we have become only hearers of God’s Word.

If we desire to be more like Jesus, we will act on what is revealed to us in scripture.

As we receive the implanted word (James 1:21) we begin to mirror God’s character in our lives.

We become those who are careful with our speech. We seek the fair treatment of others.

We become obedient followers of Jesus who care about what God cares about.



ANTENESHIA SANDERS
*Member,
The Summit Church,
Raleigh-Durham*

Focal Passage: James 2:14-26

If we stop and think about it, the relationship between faith and works is foundational to our everyday lives.

Because you believe that your favorite chair is sturdy, you sit down in it to have your morning coffee.

You believe that the door you’re walking into will open, so you turn the knob and pull. Belief is always displayed by action.

Scripture tells us that our saving faith must be accompanied by works as well.

Now, we know that salvation is by faith alone, and we are not justified by works.

We rest in the finished work of Jesus to make us righteous before God. However, the natural response to receiving such a salvation is to act on our faith.

When we believe God is who He says He is, the natural response is obedience.

James tells us that merely saying we believe in God is not enough.

He warns that even the demons be-

lieve. The difference between real faith and a mere statement of belief is submission to God and obedience to Him.

Scripture reminds us of two of our spiritual ancestors whose faith was exhibited by their works. Abraham and Rahab both believed God in a way that caused them to risk everything to obey Him.

They did not just merely agree with God in their minds or with their words. They trusted God’s character and the response to their faith was action.

Saving faith is always demonstrated by works.

A profession of belief in God that is not accompanied by obedience to Him is an empty, dead faith. Genuine faith in God causes a godly person to act accordingly.

As a result of the great salvation we have been given by God in Christ, we are moved to action.

We seek to obey God and His Word, and we submit our lives to the Lordship of Jesus. Because God is exactly who He says He is, we put our faith in Him and demonstrate with our lives our love for Him!

VISIT THE **BR** BIBLICAL RECORDER BOOTH
at the BSCNC's annual meeting, Nov. 5-6 in Greensboro

REGISTER FOR OUR GIVEAWAYS



Grand Prize
TOTAL VALUE OF \$715.⁰⁰



GRAND PRIZE IS TWO OLIVE TREE
BIBLE STUDY PACKAGES:

Bible Study Premier Edition

retail value of \$429.⁰⁰

Spurgeon bundle

retail value of \$286.⁰⁰

Olive Tree Bible Software has been inspiring people to connect with God and the Bible through technology since 1998! We want pastors and laity to be well-equipped, able to study God's Word wherever and whenever they want. That's why the Olive Tree Bible App gives instant access to Bibles, audio Bibles, commentaries, dictionaries, Greek and Hebrew Tools, devotionals and more—just tap and use multiple resources at once! We have thousands of reliable, Biblical resources available for purchase: individually or in bundles. If you make notes or highlights, they can sync across any of your devices. And speaking of devices, you can download our app to iOS, Android, Mac, Windows, and Kindle devices. You'll never have to be far from your Bible and study tools ever again.

OLIVETREE.COM

"The Olive Tree Bible App is my default mobile Bible. I use it for devotions every day, usually from my iPad..."

JOHN PIPER



Additional Prizes



3 CSB Spurgeon Study Bibles

...featuring thousands of excerpts from Spurgeon's sermons, chosen and edited by Alistair Begg



3 CSB Disciple's Study Bibles

...featuring discipleship themed study notes, as well as tools and resources that equip Christians to disciple others

* Holman Bibles provided by Lifeway Christian Resources

Stop by the BR booth to register for these prizes.
Drawings will be held 4:30 pm on Tuesday, Nov. 6

Women's GIVEAWAY



2 CSB She Reads Truth Bibles

... includes almost 200 devotionals, 66 artist-designed key verses, reading plans for every book of the Bible and much more

This giveaway will take place at the Minister's Wives Conference, thanks to our partnership with Embrace Women's Ministries

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Pastor

Oakwoods Baptist Church, Wilkesboro, N.C., is prayerfully seeking a **full-time Senior Pastor**. We are a rural, conservative, evangelistic, mission-minded church. A résumé with a statement of Christian journey and personal testimony may be mailed to: Oakwoods Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, 2385 Brushy Mtn. Road, Wilkesboro, NC 28697. Deadline to receive résumés is November 19, 2018.

First Baptist Church, Sanford, is currently seeking a **full-time Senior Pastor**. We are searching for a man of God who is called to lead our church into the future with vision and innovation. Candidates must have a minimum of five years of pastoral experience, with excellent leadership and communication skills. Minimum educational requirements are a bachelor's or a master's degree from an accredited seminary/divinity school. A résumé may be mailed to First Baptist Church Pastor Search Committee, 202 Summit Drive, Sanford, NC 27330, or sent electronically at fbcstanford-pastorsearch@gmail.com. The deadline to submit applications is November 10, 2018.

FULL-TIME PASTOR. White Springs Baptist Church, Lancaster, SC, is seeking a full-time pastor. Please mail résumé to White Springs Baptist PSC, PO Box 148, Lancaster, SC 29721, or email to whitespringspastorsearch@gmail.com. Résumés accepted until Oct 31.

Miscellaneous

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina Committee on Nominations asks for recommendations of people to serve on the: Convention Board of Directors; Institution & Agency Boards; and Convention Committees. Visit ncbaptist.org/recommend. Submissions received after Jan. 31 of each year will be held for consideration the following year.

Advertise your ministry or business? The **Biblical Recorder** offers competitive denominational and nondenominational rates for media outlets our size. Contact alison@BRnow.org for information or visit BRnow.org/Advertise.

MOVED? Don't forget to change your address with the *Biblical Recorder*. Contact Liz Tablazon at (919) 459-5693 or liz@BRnow.org.

Do you have staff changes at your church or association?

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

Prayer changes things.
So can you.

**Wheelchair Ramp Repair
Needed in Trinity**

Call **877.506.2226** today!
ncbam.org

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.

Kivett's - Your Source for Renewal

Complete Renovations • Refinish
New Pews • Steeples • Stained Glass
Steeple Cleaning • Baptistries

www.kivetts.com

KIVETT'S INC.

The Largest Family Owned
Church Furniture Manufacturer in the US

1-800-334-1139 • Clinton, NC

**Interstate
Transportation
Equipment, Inc.**

The South's Oldest Bus Company
Since 1947

interstatetransportation.com



New and Used Buses
Financing Programs Available



HIGH POINT, NC • 800.726.0779

ADVERTISE - (919) 459-5691

ERLC

Continued from page 6

We see them as sort of an avatar to be crushed or the sum total of their arguments.

“And I think for Christians it doesn’t just matter that we speak out on an issue, but it matters how we speak,” Darling said.

“[C]ivility and courage actually can go together.”

The elderly, immigrants and refugees

Fear often is a controlling factor, Moore noted, in issues involving the elderly, immigrants and refugees.

With regard to physician-assisted suicide, he said, “[T]here is a discounting of the elderly in our culture that I think is rooted fundamentally in fear of death.”

The roots of a “sort of euthanasia mentality” can be heard when people say, “I don’t ever want to be a burden to my children,” he said.

“In reality, God has created us to be completely dependent at the front end of our lives and to be completely dependent at the back end of our lives. We need other people to care for us.”

Regarding immigrants and refugees, Moore said one of the matters “often at the heart” of the debates “is an appeal to

fear.” Christians can debate what are the best policies, he said, but “what we can’t do, though, is to surrender to this idea that people are themselves a problem to be dealt with.”

Religious freedom

Among the things “that religious liberty recognizes,” Darling said, “is the humanity of people.”

The ability to think, reason and believe is part of being human, he told the audience. “A government that takes that away is essentially denying you part of your humanity.”

The ERLC Academy, which completed its fourth consecutive year, seeks to equip the next generation of leaders to apply the gospel of Jesus to the moral and ethical issues facing the church in society. It was held previously in Nashville in 2015 and 2017 and in Washington in 2016.

This year’s first two ERLC Academy events also were held on Capitol Hill. Moore spoke on how to think about ethics and moral problems in the May session and on the conscience and temptation in July.

The Good Book Co. – which published Darling’s book – sponsored the Oct. 2 session. **BR**



The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission’s Travis Wussow, from left, Russell Moore and Daniel Darling discuss human dignity during the ERLC Academy event Oct. 2 on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. (Photo by Anne Kim)



“You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13, CSB).

Jeremiah’s words clarify what whole-hearted seeking of the Lord in prayer really means. It involves seeking the Lord with one specific goal in mind – to “find” God.

“Find” has the idea of reaching, obtaining and experiencing. God’s holy presence within us becomes the treasure we seek. We must also seek with our entire heart. “All” requires that we devote ourselves to the task without distractions or partial commitments. The term “search” describes a careful, intentional journey that is completed.

Every avenue should be explored and all energy should be expended on this journey because, in the searching, we come to know the Lord more fully.

In 1905, when the Lord poured out revival on the campus of Asbury College in Wilmore, Ky., E. Stanley Jones was completing his studies and looking forward to God’s next ministry assignment. Only one thing troubled him as he looked toward graduation – he had not a clue what God wanted him to do next. That winter, Jones and other students began seeking the Lord through spontaneous prayer gatherings. One night, their ordinary intercession turned into a whole-hearted, desperate desire for God’s presence. Jones and his friends were overcome with God’s nearness.

They soon discovered God was moving mightily all over campus, which eventually spread through the town and beyond.

Jones’ heart was filled with a sense of God’s nearness, peace and confidence about his spiritual life and future. He was later asked to address a missionary meeting of students. The invitation made Jones nervous, and he began to pray diligently for the Lord’s help. Despite his anxiety, Jones sensed that God wanted to call someone to full-time missionary service. When he gave the appeal, much to his own surprise, Jones was the one God called into missionary service. He eventually became one of the best-known missionaries to India in the 1900s.

Today, dying churches and lost neighbors are waiting to find the Lord. When will we treasure the Lord’s manifest presence so much that we will get serious about the search?

(EDITOR’S NOTE – This article was adapted from the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina’s 2018 Prayer Guide. Download it here: prayfor30days.org.)



CHRIS SCHOFIELD

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Chris Schofield is director of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina’s Office of Prayer. He can be reached at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5514, or cschofield@ncbaptist.org.)

