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THREE FORKS ASSOC.  
CONTINUES MISSIONS LEGACY

# BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

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International Mission Board, Baptist Press

**W**e can accomplish more together than you or I can by ourselves. That is the guiding principle of Southern Baptist missions.

This principle is reflected as churches pool their financial and personnel resources to do missions collaboratively throughout the world through the Cooperative Program (CP) and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering (LMCO) for International Missions.

Otherwise, individual efforts would be bound by individual resources. But collectively, Southern Baptists share resources with each other, which results in training, strategy and best practices, coordinated logistical support and provisions for missionary health care and child education.

Carlos and Lily Llambes, whose story is featured during this Nov. 30-Dec. 7 Week of Prayer, have experienced the

**See Sacred page 12**



## FOR N.C. BAPTISTS' FUTURE

BR staff

**A**t the 2014 Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) annual meeting, over 1,800 attendees heard reports and took decisive action Nov. 10-11 to make greater things happen in North Carolina and abroad.

Based on John 14:12, “Greater Things” was this year’s theme that encouraged North Carolina Baptists to embrace the truth that God, through the power of His Holy Spirit, wishes to accomplish greater things through His people.

The Credentials Subcommittee of the Committee on Convention Meetings reported the totals for those who registered for the convention: 568 pastors; 236 spouses; 240 church staff; 598 laity. These account for the 1,642 messengers. With 243 visitors, the final, yet unofficial number totaled 1,885. 1,648 messengers were reported in 2013 with 1,899 overall gathered at that annual meeting.

### Budget

In mid-October, the BSC Board of Directors (BOD) approved a reduced Cooperative Program (CP) budget for

2015. This CP budget of \$29 million is \$1 million less than 2014.

The budget increases the percentage going to the Southern Baptist Convention to 37 percent, up from 36.5 percent in 2014.

Larry Burns, messenger of Mulberry Baptist Church in Charlotte, requested an amendment to the budget.

Burns said budgets are about priorities, and Christians have a biblical mandate to care for orphans as well as be an informed people.

He requested an amendment to reduce dollars for scholarships and

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### Inside:

- Executive Committee
- Ministers’ wives

- Marriage policies

- Breakout sessions

- Baptist Children’s Homes

- Baptists on Mission

- Biblical Recorder booth

- Theme interpretation

Center photo, from left: Joel Stephens, Cameron McGill, Timmy Blair and Milton Hollifield. Right photo: Jonathan Falwell (BSC photos by K Brown)

## Pastors pursue holy calling

By K. ALLAN BLUME & RICK HOUSTON | BR

**T**he 2014 North Carolina Pastors’ Conference (NCPC), held at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro, focused on the pastor’s call to live content in the care and provision of the Lord by pursuing personal holiness rather than worldly passions.

The theme for this year was “The Pursuit” based on 1 Timothy 6:11.

Josh Phillips, conference president and pastor of Cherry Grove Baptist Church in Cerro Gordo, commenced the two-day event.

Preaching from 1 Timothy 6, Robert Smith Jr., professor of Christian preaching at Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Ala., emphasized the theme of the conference: “But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.”

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Tony Merida, pastor for preaching and vision at Imago Dei Church in Raleigh, speaks to the North Carolina Pastors’ Conference Nov. 10. (BR photo by K. Allan Blume)



# Is there value in the annual meeting?

Every busy pastor, church staff person and lay leader has to look at their schedule and ask the question, “Is it worth my time to attend the annual meeting of the Baptist State Convention (BSC) in Greensboro?” For some the distance is only a few miles; for others the trip is more than 200 miles, translating into as much as four hours of driving each way.

Weighing the investment of time, the expense of travel and the potential of an overnight stay is not a light matter when church budgets are tight and the demands on one’s time are increasing.

Some have said there was a time when their vote at the annual meeting was essential. The prospect of turning the state convention in the same direction as the Southern Baptist Convention was important to them. So they made attendance a priority. Now, some of the same people say they trust the BSC leadership and the committees in place. They no longer sense the urgency to attend. Involvement is perceived as a luxury, no longer a necessity.

It is reported that many in the categories of Generation X and Millennials are either less interested or completely uninterested in the workings of denominations. Therefore they are not likely to consider attending annual sessions.

With due consideration for the researchers who analyze unique generational preferences, I wonder if the absentee generations simply have not been given the information they need to convince them of the value of working together through existing structures. I understand they perceive these systems to be outdated and cumbersome. In some cases that is true, but not in all cases.

As one who has experienced North Carolina Baptists’ internal operations, I strongly encourage skeptics to take a closer look. Tightening the belt, overhauling the purpose and fine-tuning the mission of the BSC have driven the agenda for almost eight years. It is impressive to see the clear hand of God reshaping us.

Even the annual meeting schedule is more efficient. Until a few years ago, the meetings continued into Wednesday morning. Now everything is packed into a 28-hour period, ending Tuesday evening.

But, maybe there are some principles that transcend the issues of distance and generational characteristics when identifying the value of annual meetings. I offer two points to ponder.

First, there is something everyone can contribute to the annual meeting.

Your vote is still important. Electing the right people to give leadership to the BSC is not a light matter. Supporting resolutions that address emerging issues and voting on a

Cooperative Program missions budget that will impact the world with the gospel are not small concerns.

As you interact with peers at the annual meeting there is the potential that God may say something through you to minister to a fellow N.C. Baptist. It is like serving on a mission trip. You may go with one purpose in mind, but in the great wisdom of God, He uses you in ways beyond your imagination. Being available is the key.

Then there is the potential for giving your leadership to a convention-related ministry. There are many places to serve. Invest some time in the big picture of Kingdom work.

Second, there is something you receive as you attend the annual meeting.

Through a message at the pastors’ conference, a report from a convention agency, a theme interpretation, the music or a sermon, God speaks to messengers in unique ways. There may be a powerful word from God that impacts your life,

your family and your ministry.

We are blessed that the convention sessions are available by live streaming on the Internet. But one of the great benefits of being in the meeting halls is the abundant networking that happens. Connecting with ministry partners and special friends is huge.

In a conversation with David Horton, president of Fruitland Baptist Bible College, he described the networking

at the meeting as “social media on steroids.” I like that. But the “media” in this case happens to be face-to-face conversation instead of distant electronic communication. I treasure the personal conversation at these meetings.

Don and Julie Wright attended this year’s convention as messengers from First Baptist Church in Cary. They have been active members of a N.C. Baptist church since 1984, but have never attended the BSC’s annual meeting. “We were greatly impressed and enjoyed the exhibits and meeting people,” he said.

But the couple was really moved by all of the networking they encountered. “We found that we had mutual acquaintances with many people. We really enjoyed the exhibits and talking with people.

“We were both very impressed by the presentation of the Baptist Children’s Homes. As a result of that, we understand the financial need they constantly have and the importance [of their work]. It was impressive. And the fact that they have branched out into Guatemala with their services was very impressive.”

Wright was thankful for the healthy working relationship between North Carolina Baptists and the Southern Baptist Convention. He expressed appreciation for every segment of the meeting. “You see the Spirit around you; you see enthusiasm and the love of Christ shown to one another, and the commitment to service. In our entire experience we have nothing negative to say. We were positive and uplifted the entire time.”

Josh Eller also attended his first annual meeting.

He served on the staff of three N.C. churches, but is now in his first year as pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in McLeansville. “When I walked in the thing that impressed me the most was the cooperative effort of all the churches,” he said.

Eller, 34, grew up in a Baptist church and was aware that Baptists are doing a lot of ministry in the state, “But when you see it first hand, it just puts it in a real-life perspective of what we are trying to do together,” he said. “When I saw all of the different missions that the convention supports – the Baptist Children’s Homes, the disaster relief work of Baptist Men – when you see what all our money is going to, it is an encouragement.

“It reinforces to me that our church wants to be involved in something that we couldn’t do ourselves. Knowing that we are partnering with other churches, we can accomplish a lot of things we could not do on our own,” Eller added.

I asked if he had any concerns. “The only thing I saw that concerned me was that when I walked in the convention center, I felt young,” Eller said. “At 34 years old, I am young. But looking around I asked, ‘Where’s my generation of pastors?’ ... It was such a concern. I’m not sure why my generation of pastors are not participating. I don’t see them. It looks like an older generation of pastors at the meeting.”

Let’s get on the same team to impact lostness in our state. We can do more together. **BR**



**K. ALLAN BLUME**  
Editor

**“It reinforces to me that our church wants to be involved in something that we couldn’t do ourselves. Knowing that we are partnering with other churches, we can accomplish a lot of things we could not do on our own.”**  
— Josh Eller

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# Group proposes purchase of UNC Battle House

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

**T**he Business Services Special Committee (BSSC) of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) has received a proposal to purchase the Battle House on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC). The Carolina Christian Study Center (CCSC), a newly formed non-profit organization, has expressed interest in purchasing the property.

Jimmy Adams is an attorney, a member of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Greensboro, and the chairman of the convention's BSSC. He said CCSC submitted a 15-page proposal and a six-page letter of intent to the committee in August.

The Battle House was purchased by North Carolina Baptists in 1964 for \$102,500 as a base for Baptist Student Union (BSU) ministry on the university campus.

The house is named for Kemp P. Battle, president of UNC from 1876-1891, and a former treasurer of the State of North Carolina. It has undergone many renovations and improvements to accommodate BSU ministry during the 50 years of BSC ownership. It sits prominently in the Historic District of Chapel Hill, directly adjacent to the university's main campus.

In recent years BSU transitioned to the name Baptist Campus Ministry (BCM).

The CCSC website ([ncstudycenter.org](http://ncstudycenter.org)) describes the organization's mission. "As a study center at UNC, our mission is to welcome the university community into Christian formation and the pursuit of truth for the common good. Translation: we are a hospitality center dedicated to Christian education and community-building."

Madison Perry, executive director of CCSC, said the vision was born out of a similar Christian study center on the campus of the University of Virginia (UVA) in Charlottesville, Va. He said the center has had a "massive impact on the university culture, the town of Charlottesville and the state of Virginia. It is a great model, and those who look at it have great hopes for what can be done in Chapel Hill."

The UVA center was founded by Daryl Richmond, an unassuming Baptist minister from North Dakota who pastored a church near Charlottesville. "He had a passion for discipleship. He got involved in lifting weights and doing other things to spend time with students and professors to get them connected with truth claims. The Lord blessed his work," Perry said.

The center began with resources aimed at enriching the spiritual life and the mind of the students in the UVA community. It became a hub for initiating many campus ministries and Christian activities.

"When I first learned about the center and visited it, I was immediately jealous," Perry said. "I wondered why there was not anything similar in Chapel Hill. I learned one of the reasons [was] there was not a right location for it."

Supporters of the project have been looking for a "hospitable building close to the campus that can be welcoming to students and faculty," he said.

Perry grew up in Kinston, N.C. He is a 2006 graduate of UNC with a double major in Spanish and political science. He recently completed a law degree from UNC and is taking some divinity classes at Duke University. He plans to graduate in the spring with a master of theological studies.



There is an offer to purchase the Battle House in Chapel Hill. It was purchased by N.C. Baptists in 1964 to serve as a base for what was then known as Baptist Student Union. (BR photo by K. Allan Blume)

"I am committed to the truth and integrity of scripture. I have never been to a school where I have agreed one hundred percent with what any professor said. Duke has prepared me well to converse with students who are confused about where to find the truth," he said.

"One thing Duke is really good at is studying the philosophical presuppositions underlying modern culture. ... It can be a tremendous blessing to understand where different people are speaking from. I feel better prepared to take scripture seriously for the rest of my life."

Perry explained, "This kind of center brings in all kinds of participants, especially when it is close to the university campus. Where a lot of people are transient, a hospitality center is like a good coffee shop, it's a good 'third place' for people."

They will host regular classes, seminars, discussion groups and speakers. The plan is to engage students and faculty in serious discussions about eternal truth. The hope is to open doors for the discussion of basic spiritual questions with participants.

"When I was a graduate student at UNC, I long-respected the Battle House property and the students groups it hosted," Perry said. "The more I learned about the UVA center, the more I wondered whether a similar ministry would be appropriate for that property."

"Given where the Battle House is located, it's hard to imagine a more welcoming place for any stranger to come and know the love of Christ. Christ's love does not say, 'Because you agree with me, therefore I love you.' Jesus welcomes everyone into His transforming grace."

CSSC is engaged in consultation with campus ministries and local churches. "We have the strong support of J.D. Greear at The Summit and Pastor Andy Davis at First Baptist, Durham," Perry said.

The letter of intent submitted to the BSSC includes the names of pastors, prominent attorneys in Raleigh and Charlotte, and a seminary professor who have expressed interest in supporting the project. Their acceptance will be finalized "pending approval of this

transaction," the letter says.

Adams said the Business Services Committee has reviewed the proposal, but has not voted. They are reviewing the value and history of the property before making any decisions.

As a graduate of UNC, Adams said the Battle House "has always been a special place. Carolina was Carolina, in some respects, because of the Battle House for me and a lot of other people. I think from the standpoint of not just me and my family, but a lot of people, the emotional connection to Chapel Hill is at least influenced by our emotional connection to the Battle House."

"So that's a big consideration that I have in my leadership role, [and] I have tried to take this into consideration as I try to do what I am doing [on the committee] in this whole big question of how the convention should use the Battle House, if it should be sold, and if so, how should it be sold," Adams said.

He came out of the "traditional Baptist background" of First Baptist Church, Columbus, Ga. "When I began at Carolina in the fall of '84, I didn't know anybody in Chapel Hill. The Battle House was where I found my group. I was heavily involved in the BSU for four years. I spent every Thursday night there."

"The folks in the BSU were my college friends and my college family. I met a lot of folks who are still my friends today. Most significant to me, I met my wife there. I can tell you which floor board my wife was standing on when I first laid eyes on her."

As committee chairman Adams said, "I want to see what's best for both the convention and the legacy of the Battle House. It's always been a place for students. I want it to continue to be that way. I've told folks that it would be really very disappointing to one day go to ... the Battle House and find that it was completely inaccessible because it was either a private residence or owned by somebody that locked it up."

"That is one of the endearing qualities about the proposal on the table from the [CCSC] group. Although its use will be different from what it was when I was there, because the world has changed, the plan is still to have

See Battle page 9



# Three Forks Assoc. celebrates 175 years of missions

By **MICHAEL MCEWEN** | BR Content Editor

**P**rayer, fasting and missions.

After a few years of emphasizing obedience in these things, Three Forks Baptist Association (TFBA) was established in 1841 in the mountains of North Carolina. It is named after Three Forks Church – originally founded in 1790 – in Watauga County.

Decades before TFBA's conception, a number of Landmarkists including Daniel Parker and Alexander Campbell preached strongly against the establishment of a state convention and in addition, missions. The Mountain Association, formed in 1799, was known for its “anti-missions” stance where neighbor Yadkin Association was friendlier toward it. In fact, historian M.A. Huggins writes that as “the years passed the Mountain [Association] came to be the recognized leader of the anti-missionary Baptists of Western North Carolina.” In the early 1800s, a priority of missions – amidst other variables – influenced a number of historical events:

- In 1805, Martin Ross and others organized the first Missionary Society in North Carolina, called the Philanthropic Baptist Missionary Society.

- In 1814, the North Carolina Baptist Society for Foreign Missions was established and Domestic Missions in 1817.

- In the Chowan Association, Ross introduced in 1826 a resolution requesting the organization of a Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

- On March 26, 1830, The Board of the Baptist Benevolent Society met in Greensboro to pass the motion that the Society be transformed into a state convention. A proposed constitution, written by Thomas Meredith, was presented to the convention which officially affirmed the institution known today as “The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.”

- Eight years later, Mountain Association declared itself “an anti-missionary body hostile to the Baptist State Convention and other institutions of the day.” Huggins writes, “[T]he formation of the [Three Forks] association occurred about three years after the Mountain [Association] became definitely anti-mission.

According to minutes in 1841, a meeting was held at Three Forks Baptist Church to establish a new association known today as Three Forks Baptist Association. Ten churches were in attendance: Bear Creek, Beaver Creek, Cove Creek, Ebenezer (Zionville), Old Fields, Pine Grove, Roan Creek (First Baptist Church in Mountain City, Tenn.), South Fork, Three Forks North Fork and Three Forks South Fork.

On Sunday, Oct. 19, Three Forks celebrated its 175th anniversary at Watauga High School. O.S. Hawkins, CEO of GuideStone Financial Resources, gave the keynote message.

Barry Nealy, TFBA's director of missions, said Hawkins was a great pick for the keynote because he “represents the mission efforts of Southern Baptists.” Encompassing 37 churches, TFBA has birthed several ministries over the years such as its jail ministry. Nealy said the association's pastors are enthusiastic about preaching at the jail. “The men and women are ... attentive to [the pastors]. We have a couple who act as the chaplains [Kris and Becky Fowler] who go in with pastors. These pastors rotate within [the jail], and speak in each of the cell blocks for ten to fifteen minutes.”

Numerous rededications and professions of faith have



O.S. Hawkins, left, was the featured speaker during Three Forks Baptist Association's 175th anniversary. Barry Nealy is director of missions for Three Forks. (Contributed photo)

been made through this ministry.

Nealy said Kris Fowler started a nonprofit, Eagle Rock Ministries, which began as a ministry that bought gifts for inmates' children and families. Last year Fowler had more than \$30,000 donated, and approximately 750 children were provided for in four counties.

Housed at First Baptist Church in Boone, TFBA's Christian Outreach Center was started in 2007. The center, directed by Larry Woodrow, aids over 100 families every week to receive food items.

According to center's website, “[E]ach family meets with a counselor for encouragement, guidance and prayer before selecting several food options for their home, much like we do at the grocery store. A team meets on Wednesday mornings to assemble and distribute about 300 food bags to school children selected by their guidance counselors. These are placed in the child's backpack on Friday at school so that those who need free lunches can have some nutrition available on weekends.”

Three Forks also works with local community colleges and universities such as Appalachian State University and Lees-McRae in Banner Elk to minister to campus students.

Nealy said another well-received ministry of TFBA is Bethlehem and Beyond. It was created to emphasize the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ as the true meaning of Christmas. Connecting with local business owners and the surrounding community, the ministry includes caroling, a live nativity and church parade floats during the month of December.

“All of these activities are meant to put Jesus into the discussion and not Santa Claus,” Nealy emphasized.

Nealy said the TFBA has residential quarters to host mission teams for local projects or church retreats. This lodging can accommodate 25 people. “Missions teams will come up and ski in the winter and then go work with a local agency like the Hospitality House. ... The ministry of hosting and having lodging is much below what they'd have to pay to stay in a hotel.”

Founded on missions 175 years ago, TFBA continues their missions heritage to this day.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – For more information about Three Forks Association, go to [3forksassoc.org](http://3forksassoc.org), and for details about the Christian Outreach Center, visit [christianoutreachcenter-boonenc.org](http://christianoutreachcenter-boonenc.org).) **BR**

## Exec. Committee hears of ministry opportunities

By **MICHAEL MCEWEN** | BR Content Editor

**T**he Executive Committee (EC) of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) met Nov. 10 in conjunction with the 2014 BSC annual meeting at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro.

On behalf of the Christian Social Service Special Committee, Wanda Dellinger reported that the UNITE Youth Festival Oct. 17 had a record attendance this year. Sponsored by Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, UNITE is a day of youth evangelism, worship and fun that invites middle and high school youth to hear about the love of Christ. Thirty-nine decisions were made.

Dellinger also reported that the Guatemalan orphanage has their first two babies in care. The Good Shepherd Children's Home is Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina's affiliate orphanage in Xela, Guatemala. This orphanage provides a caring home for impoverished and abandoned children of the Quiché tribe.

In the financial report, Beverly Volz, BSC senior accountant, said that through the end of October, Cooperative Program receipts totaled \$23.6 million – 6.86 percent behind budget compared to last year. Also,

the BSC is less than one percent behind in the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions while the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions is ahead 2.52 percent compared to 2013 gifts.

Brian Davis, associate executive director-treasurer of BSC, reported that the North Carolina Missions Offering (NCMO) is about 2 percent behind its goal. The NCMO is a special offering that supports the ministries of N.C. Baptists on Mission, Church Planting, Mission Camps, Associational Projects and Mobilization Ministry Projects. The 2014 offering goal is \$2.1 million.

Davis was hopeful this goal would be met by the end of the year.

John Gore, president of North Carolina Baptist Men, said that volunteers are finishing projects in Elizabeth City and Washington, N.C. after tornadoes hit April 25.

In miscellaneous business, Michael Barrett, EC president, noted that current EC members will serve through December and January. Election of new committee chairs and at-large EC members will take place during the Jan. 27, 2015, board meeting at Caraway Conference Center. No new business was presented during the meeting. **BR**



# Brothers go from homeless to hopeful

By J. BLAKE RAGSDALE | Baptist Children's Homes

**T**homas points his toes toward the sky as he swings. The eight-year-old laughs soaring higher and higher into the autumn air.

Inside the cottage that sits just a few yards away, twelve-year-old Jonathan practices on the living room piano. Jonathan, who has just begun lessons, carefully plays the familiar notes of "Happy Birthday."

The two brothers live at Mills Home in Thomasville, and for them, today is a normal day. "Normal" would be the last word used to describe their lives before coming to Baptist Children's Homes' (BCH) oldest campus.

Thomas and Jonathan's parents separated, and their mother moved out of state. The boys were left solely in the care of their father who struggled to provide for his children. Eventually, the trio were homeless.

"For awhile we slept in a church," Jonathan recalls.

They moved around staying in a variety of indigent shelters. In their most desperate times, the small family was forced to make do.

"My dad didn't have a lot of money," Thomas confides. "Sometimes we slept under a bridge and stuff."

Eventually, the Department of Social Services became involved and contacted the brothers' grandparents, Craig and Kathy. The couple gladly took their grandsons into their home, but they knew their health and age would make it impossible for them to care for the boys long-term.

"My husband and I are on a fixed income, and we both have a lot of medi-



Jonathan, left, and Thomas are brothers who have been given hope through the ministry of Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina. (BCH photo by J. Blake Ragsdale)



cal issues," Kathy explains. "The boys wanted to be involved in sports and a lot of different activities that we could not afford to give them. It hurt us to have to tell them 'no.'"

Craig and Kathy are members of Long Shoals Baptist Church in Lincolnton, a church that has long supported BCH. With the assistance of their pastor, Kenneth Gibson, the couple reached out to BCH for help.

In June 2014, Thomas and Jonathan moved to Mills Home and lived in Bright-Brown Cottage. Bright-Brown is an emergency care cottage and provides immediate care for children.

"Their coming to BCH has been a blessing to me and my husband," Kathy says. "They're my boys now, and I'm going to do what's best for them even though I can't have them with us all the time."

Two weeks after arriving, the boys moved from Bright-Brown to Alumni Cottage, a cottage for boys with more long-term needs.

"I didn't know what to expect when we came here," Jonathan admits. "I didn't think I'd like it, but I came and started having fun. I'm still having fun."

At Alumni, Thomas and Jonathan sleep

in their own bedrooms and are provided with the comforts of a family home. "My houseparents do things for us," Thomas says. "They like being kind."

The houseparents, Shawn and Samantha Snipes and John and Glenda Mercer, take care of the brothers and the other boys living in the cottage. "They're like regular parents. They are there for us all the time," Jonathan says.

Since coming to Mills Home, Thomas and Jonathan have also learned that they can count on the kindness of churches and other BCH friends.

"It's special when people bring us things," Thomas says. "I feel happy because I get things I need like clothes."

Jonathan agrees. "It makes me feel a little better inside. It shows that they have that much love for us."

While the boys have settled into their new home, their relationship with their grandparents has grown and is as strong as ever. They see Craig and Kathy regularly and recently went on a weekend visit to celebrate Jonathan's birthday as well as his "Paw Paw's."

"Jonathan has matured since coming to BCH. I can tell that," Kathy observes. "And Thomas is so full of himself. He's so happy and giggly."

The times weren't always happy for Thomas, Jonathan and their grandparents, but the smiles have since returned to everyone's faces. As Kathy says, BCH has provided them "hope."

"There is always something going on for them at Mills Home, and they are with other children just like them," Kathy says. "They feel like they are in the right place – the place where God wants them to be."

Visit [bchfamily.org](http://bchfamily.org). **BR**

## BCH's Blackwell highlights triumphs over tragedies

By DIANNA L. CAGLE | BR Production Editor

**M**essengers have a hard time not crying each time the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina (BCH) has a presentation at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's annual meeting.

Filled with music and praise, the Nov. 10 presentation by BCH to the messengers at the meeting was no different. Sharing a story of one of the developmentally disabled adults, Michael C. Blackwell, BCH president, highlighted the story of Sedric, who lives in Stegall Home in Marshville, one of nine homes for special needs adults.

Sedric, who turns 28 on Nov. 22, was beaten and burned at age 4 resulting in a traumatic brain injury and confinement to a wheelchair.

"He was starved every day," said Blackwell. "He slept on the floor. He wore the same dirty clothes to school every day."

**"By God's grace and your generosity my family was rescued by the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina. Hope came in the form of Christian love and care."  
— Joe Knight**

Teachers would bathe him at the school and change his clothes, but before he went home for the day, they had to change him into his dirty clothes. They knew the punishment he would suffer at home.

"He wasn't even allowed to use his wheelchair at home," Blackwell said. "It stayed firmly fixed on the front porch, and Sedric had to scoot around on the floor."

A resident with Baptist Children's Homes for seven years, Sedric received a surgery that required his legs be in casts for three months.

"Today, with pure determination and with great assistance, he walks maybe 200 feet a day with assistance of caregivers and physical therapists ... the first steps he's taken in 20 years," Blackwell said.

Sedric was among 225 residents and staff members who participated in the BCH "Rise Up" presentation to messengers.

"One of these days ... I won't need this wheelchair no more," Sedric shared. "One day I'll be in heaven walking the streets of gold with a new body ... new legs."

Since becoming BCH president in 1983, Blackwell has spoken in all 100 counties of North Carolina.

"We have been honored ... trusted and loved and respected for 129 years," Blackwell said. "We are in 19 North Carolina communities and now have five babies in our new orphanage in Guatemala."

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# ‘God’s at work,’ speaker says to ministers’ wives

By DIANNA L. CAGLE | BR Production Editor

It’s not often that ministers’ wives are able to gather together and fellowship.

The North Carolina Baptist Ministers’ Wives gather each November for its annual meeting just before the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina convenes its annual meeting. The Nov. 10 meeting brought together 83 ladies.

Although not a pastor’s wife, Beth Greer ([lifeandgodliness.com](http://lifeandgodliness.com)) told the women she has “a heart for you.” Greer, who lives in Lexington, S.C., led worship and served as the speaker. “[Jesus] knows you. He knows your struggle. He knows the people in your church. He knows who your pastor is. He knows and He cares and He is moving and He’s always at work ... for His glory, his purposes and for your good. Whether you see it, feel it, no matter what people say. He’s in charge.”

Greer was raised in Brazil where her parents were missionaries. She teaches preschool at a church four days a week. She and her husband, Tom, have been married almost 30 years and are members of First Baptist Church in Columbia, S.C. They have two daughters; both are students at the University of South Carolina.

Greer shared a story of two women she met while in Moldova. They are from another country and shared a Bible with a group of people. Each one would take a page and memorize it – front and back.

“When they get back together they exchange papers so they can literally eat the word of God and live it,” she said.

Minister wives need to know God is at work, Greer said.

“Whether you and I see it, feel it or experience here in this country, God’s at work,” she stressed. “God reigns; He knows our life.”

She shared mainly from Psalm 139.

“He’s intimately acquainted with all of my ways,” she said. “There is a hedge of protection around you that cannot be penetrated unless God gives permission.”

Everything that women face “has to



From left: Harriett Lovett, secretary/treasurer 2014-2016; Chrissie Redding, Central #1 representative; Lisa Miller, president; Ginnie Varnam, president elect 2015-2016; Jan Tyson, vice president; Amy Harmon, 2015 retreat chair; Diane Smith, 2015 retreat vice chair; Dakota Spurling, Western #2 representative; Kim Gates, 2015 retreat vice chair; Cheryl Reeves, Western #1 representative; and Betty Smith, Eastern. (BR photos by Dianna L. Cagle)



Beth Greer shares a song with the N.C. Baptist Ministers’ Wives Nov. 10.

sift through the Hand of God,” she said.

Too many women are walking around as if defeated.

“We forget that the power that raised the Son of God is in us,” she said.

Too many are carrying burdens God never intended for them to carry.

“Instead of laying them ... on the altar,

what happens is we put strings attached to them because we don’t think Jesus is going to do His work,” Greer said. “God is always at work, whether we see it, feel it ... listen, your relationship with Jesus is not based on how you feel. It’s based on the person of Jesus Christ. Praise Him.”

Jesus was always Plan A for God, Greer said. She encouraged women to look to God to find their worth.

“What I have to do, on a daily basis sometimes ... I rebuke that thought that I’m not worthy, that I’m not loved, that I’m not fashioned after [God],” she said. Thankfully when God looks upon His children He doesn’t see the people but Jesus and His blood covering over the multitude of sins, Greer said.

She urged women to look to the “pure Word of God,” because it “is all we need for life and godliness.”

Officers at the summer retreat met to discuss open offices, most of which have been filled. The organization has three vacant offices: publicity chairperson, 2016 retreat chair and 2016 retreat vice chair. Officers are: Lisa Miller, president; Jan Tyson, vice president; Ginnie Varnam, president elect 2015-2016; Harriett

Lovett, secretary/treasurer 2014-2016; Amy Harmon, 2015 retreat chair; Diane Smith and Kim Gates, 2015 retreat vice chairs; Becky Blakely and Julie Pierce, scrapbookers. Regional representatives include Betty Smith, Eastern; Chrissie Redding, Central #1; Gina Powell, Central #2; Cheryl Reeves, Western #1; and Dakota Spurling, Western #2.

The summer meeting also raised the budget for the July retreat and November annual meeting to try to attract more ministers’ wives.

Total deposits/receipts (11/11/2013-11/10/2014) are \$9,771.35 with expenses totaling \$10,040.84. Balance to date is \$7,063.45.

The events the group plans each year – retreats for minister wives and new minister wives and the annual meeting – make up most of the financial report. The group receives money through retreats, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), offerings at its annual meeting and the Woman’s Missionary Union of North Carolina. The expenses are related to its meetings along with deposits for retreats and a booth at the BSC annual meeting. **BR**

## Resolution affirming God’s institution of marriage in North Carolina

Whereas in May 2012, 61 [percent] of North Carolinians voting approved an amendment to the state constitution declaring that the marriage of one man and one woman is the only legal domestic union in North Carolina, and

Whereas in October 2014, the U.S. District Court invalidated the constitutional amendment and all related state laws thereby recognizing the legitimacy of same-sex marriage, and

Whereas there has been a recent contradictory ruling in a federal circuit court

as to the constitutionality of individual state bans on same-sex marriage, which may increase the probability of the Supreme Court of the United States reconciling conflicting circuit court decisions, therefore

Be it resolved that the messengers attending the 184th meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina exhort all believers to pray earnestly that the Supreme Court of the United States will agree to hear these conflicting cases, and affirm the authority of states to de-

termine the definition of marriage, and

Be it further resolved that the messengers encourage and pray for those individuals who are persecuted as they refuse to violate their deeply held biblical convictions on the issue of same-sex marriage, and

Be it finally resolved that the messengers affirm the biblical teaching that marriage is between one man and one woman.

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# Breakout sessions train attendees for greater ministry

BR staff

**O**n Nov. 11 during the annual meeting, 22 breakout sessions were offered for N.C. Baptists to learn from the Baptist State Convention staff. These sessions helped attendees use ordinary things and everyday experiences to build relationships with lost people to point them to Christ.

## Knowing Your Mission Field

During one session, Michael Sowers, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) strategy coordinator for the Triad area, shared five questions with church leaders to help them begin identifying the lost people in their communities and develop a strategy to engage them.

The questions were:

- Who are the people?
- What motivates people?
- When are they available?
- Where are people available?
- How am I going to engage them?

Sowers suggested drawing a map of the community as one works through these questions, writing down people's names and marking the places where people live, work and play. Answering the questions should naturally lead to the formulation of a strategy for reaching the lost.

"Jesus said His mission was to seek and to save the lost," Sowers said. "That's what this is all about."

## Step-by-Step Disciple-Making

Brian Upshaw, disciple-making team leader with the BSC, shared a step-by-step process with pastors and church leaders to help them lead people from salvation to Christian maturity.

There's no one-size-fits-all method of making disciples, but Christ's life reveals several examples that are applicable to local church ministry when it comes to fulfilling the Great Commission.

The process is based on patterns of Christ's life and ministry found in Mark

9-13 where we see Jesus relating with the masses, the 12 disciples and a small group of three in Peter, James and John.

"The smaller the circle, the more intimate the relationship," Upshaw said.

Jesus' approach can be applied to local churches, using ministry structures already in place, Upshaw said.

Preaching is like Jesus' ministry to the masses, while Sunday School and small group Bible studies are akin to Jesus' time spent with the disciples.

Most churches fall short in taking the next step of making discipleship personal, intentional and relational, Upshaw said. He encouraged church leaders to invite two or three other people to commit to spending a season of time studying the Bible together as a way to get started in relational discipleship.

"If we are following Christ, being changed by Christ on mission for Christ in every relationship we have, that's how you build a disciple-making culture," Upshaw said. "And that's how a process of discipleship emerges."

## The Church's Mission Heart

Patrick Fuller, the strategy coordinator for the Metro Charlotte area, said the first step for a church to put together a missions game plan is to refocus its relationship with Christ.

"All of our churches are in a different place, but I'm convinced that almost all of our churches break the heart of God," Fuller said.

"Hardly any of us are where we need to be. What we have discovered is God's plan for a church to have a missions-driven heart is not what we've done. If we are going to be the church God wants us to be, we must refocus."

He strongly encouraged churches to select a specific people group in the



Michael Sowers, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) strategy coordinator for the Triad area led two breakout sessions Nov. 11 during the BSC annual meeting. (BR photo by Michael McEwen)

community to target for ministry. After reaching out locally, opportunities would expand by region, state, national and global.

"We can't turn outward until we first come inward to the Holy Spirit and realize who we are and what God wants for us," Fuller continued. "When each of us falls in love with that group of people and grabs a mission heart for that group, the mission opportunities are endless."

## The Church Renewal Journey

Bob Foy is a church renewal consultant for the BSC and North American Mission Board missionary, but there was a time in his life when church work was a responsibility and not a passion.

"Really, honestly, I think I was doing church as hard as I could do church," Foy admitted.

"I was awakened to a totally new Christian life, awakened to the fact I love God. How do I show that? I'm not a singer. I'm not a teacher. I was an electrician."

He cited an alarming statistic that 800-1,000 churches close their doors every year. A primary reason for that, Foy continued, might very well be that lay people don't fully recognize or understand their own gifts for ministry. In short, ministry is not just the pastor's job.

"My favorite verse in the Bible is 1 Peter 4:10 and 11," Foy said. "It says God has given us a vast variety of gifts to

build up and edify the body, and then it says, 'Are you called to speak?'

"I thought for years and years that meant pastors. No. If you have the hope of Jesus Christ in your heart, you're called to give testimony. The scripture says, 'Speak as though God is speaking through you.' Can the layperson do that? Yes."

Foy then outlined a free Church Renewal Program that is funded by the Cooperative Program, which he's seen have truly amazing success. The program includes five weekends for lay renewal; lay ministry; marketplace evangelism; prayer; and an Acts 1:8 challenge.

## No campus left

Jonathan Yarboro, interim team leader and consultant for collegiate partnerships of the BSC, addressed how churches can mobilize missionaries on every campus in the state until there is "no campus left" without a gospel presence.

Yarboro said, "I hear a lot of churches ask, 'How do you keep college students from walking out the doors and leaving churches?' I think when we have a defensive posture like that, ... I think we begin losing the battle when we ask that question."

"I think you have to get in front of that and begin asking, 'How do we reach more college students?'"

A few attendees asked questions about different models of ministry concerning residential university settings versus non-residential commu-

nity college settings.

Yarboro said, "There are 1.2 million college students in North Carolina. 840,000 of those are in community colleges. We've put all our energy historically into a group that is 240,000 strong. ... So, how you go about reaching community college students is very different from how you go about reaching the others."

Community college students are primarily commuters, said Yarboro. If churches want to build relationships and share the gospel with these students, they first have to create a social life on a campus full of commuters.

**"What we have discovered is God's plan for a church to have a missions-driven heart is not what we've done. If we are going to be the church God wants us to be, we must refocus."**  
— Patrick Fuller





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# Same-sex marriage breakout prepares churches

By **MICHAEL MCEWEN** | BR Content Editor

**O**n Nov. 10 at the North Carolina Baptist State Convention (BSC) annual meeting, Lynn Buzzard led a discussion related to potential challenges facing churches in light of the recent actions of the United States circuit courts regarding same-sex marriage.

Buzzard, a retired professor from the Norman Adrian Wiggins School of Law at Campbell University, said that like Ezekiel we may see our culture as a valley of dry, dead bones.

“Yet God says to Ezekiel, ‘Now, speak to the Spirit and ask Him to give life to the bones.’ God gives life to bones,” he emphasized.

Buzzard walked through five different levels of issues same-sex marriage creates.

Churches need to begin by “clarifying church policy about solemnizing gay marriage,” said Buzzard about the first level. This requires how churches can clarify, protect and prevent gay marriage from entering their local churches.

Policies should also include statements about what a Christian understanding of marriage is and why same-sex marriage is inconsistent with God’s view of gender and the family.

At level two, he said, church policies and practices should adopt official stances toward gay and lesbian individuals both inside and outside the church. “Are they welcome to come [to worship] or not welcome to come? Are they welcome to come if they aren’t allowed to promote their agenda? But welcome otherwise? What’s the policy going to be about people in the church who are well known, but gay? How’s the church going to minister to someone who comes to the church and says, ‘Yes, I have homosexual impulses and those kinds of orientations.’ How do we respond?” asked Buzzard.

The Gospel of John talks about truth and grace, said Buzzard. “Remember, it’s not grace without truth or truth without grace. It’s both.”



Lynn Buzzard, a retired professor from the Norman Adrian Wiggins School of Law at Campbell University, walked pastors and church leaders through five levels of issues same-sex marriage creates. (BR photo by Michael McEwen)

At the third level, Buzzard said churches need to recognize the impact of gay marriage and radical agendas on freedoms of religion and conscience. These are more radical, agenda-driven movements by same-sex marriage proponents.

Buzzard emphasized that level four is by far the most important. This is the church’s biblical understanding of marriage and sexuality.

“A lot of marriages in churches are in trouble because we don’t teach about it. ... Before we start listing all the bad marriage policies of someone else, we should start listing them in our own communities.”

The culture and world is full of materialism, relativism and hedonism, said Buzzard.

“If you think 15 minutes of Sunday school can undo

the hours of movies, music and professors, then you’re wrong.”

This is why in level five that churches need to recognize the nature, scope and impact of radical shifts in culture.

Buzzard provided a few helpful points for churches and church leaders:

- Policies need to be shaped by doctrine.
- Don’t blindly copy but think through your policies.
- Don’t adopt policies you won’t follow.
- The rule itself is not the highest level of God’s order. God is.
- Frame your policies in positive terms.

Directors of missions across North Carolina have received resources developed by BSC staff in consultation with Buzzard, titled, “Samples and Templates for the Development of Position Statements on Marriage, Wedding Policies and Facility Use Policies.” This resource was provided to use as they assist church leaders with legal issues.

“The gospel cannot and should not be reduced to a policy. There will be great opportunities to share the life transforming truths of Jesus, while standing firmly upon the teachings of scripture about marriage, as we engage our communities and culture,” said Brian Davis, BSC associate executive director-treasurer.

Buzzard agreed.

He said, “We cannot attract people to our understanding of marriage simply by pointing out bad marriages. This is true of anything. If someone is engaged in destructive behavior, it doesn’t do much to simply pass resolutions against their destructive behavior. If something is ugly, people aren’t going to see that it’s ugly until they see something beautiful.”

Buzzard asked, “How do we disciple and equip ourselves and believers to thrive in a cultural captivity?”

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Churches can download the resource, “Samples and Templates for the Development of Position Statements on Marriage, Wedding Policies and Facility Use Policies” at <http://blog.ncbaptist.org/clpa/>.) ■

## Breakout Continued from page 7

He said, “You have two years maximum to be able to develop a social construct and to be able to share the gospel with them, and also to be able to connect them to a local church.”

For churches that struggle with low attendance in their college ministries, Yarboro said, “Cast a vision for what you want these students to be: that they are going to be on mission, and that you’re going to take campuses in the name of Jesus.”

### North America Mission Opportunities

Chuck Register, BSC executive leader for church planting and missions partnerships, led the North America Mission Opportunities breakout session.

Encouraging churches to commit for three years instead of just one is “best for them,” Register said. The first year churches require a lot of the church

planter; the second year, a lot less but still need help. By the third year, churches are able to be fairly independent because they have learned the area and have familiarized themselves with the church’s needs. Participants heard from representatives from Send Boston, Send New York and Send Toronto, along with a representative from Metropolitan New York Baptist Association.

There are many needs in each of the cities, and mission trips can be planned to fit each of the church’s groups.

Contact Chuck Register at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5532, or [cregister@ncbaptist.org](mailto:cregister@ncbaptist.org).

### Passion, Purity and Porn

“Your sexual purity is essential to your walk with God,” said Eddie Thompson, BSC consultant for family evangelism and discipleship.

Immorality is the “plague of our day,” he said to participants in the session on

Passion, Purity and Porn.

“Sexual purity begins in the mind and not the body,” Thompson said.

He shared statistics of porn use and growth as well as tips to help church leaders and members with temptations.

Helping people know their identity in Christ helps them stay focused on God’s purpose. Thompson’s slides and statistics are available for people to use or he can come to the church or association.

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# Battle

Continued from page 4

an open, accessible place for students, in addition to the other plan they have to do apologetics and intellectual Christian thought.”

Adams said the university has expressed an interest in the property, but their intention would be to use it for office space.

An appraisal is currently in process. The property has historical value, but that may diminish its monetary value and certainly limits what can be done on the property, according to Adams.

When asked about the committee's timeline, he said, “I'm more interested that it be done right than it be done fast. I think the speed will take care of itself. I think the folks that are interested in acquiring the house are more interested in doing it right.”

Some other BCM properties have been

sold or are in the process of being sold. “A lot of those have been easy situations,” Adams explained. But he does not see the Battle House as an easy decision. “People will disagree with decisions of all types. Sometimes it is more about how a decision was made as opposed to what the decision was.

“Having an understanding of how it is currently being used, I think it is being underused because of the way campus ministry has evolved. Even before the change in ministry strategy that was implemented last year, campus ministry at Chapel Hill has been less focused on the use of the Battle House than it was when I was there.”

Adams believes the proposal on the table “poses the best combination of all things and likely comes closest to meeting all of the convention's objectives

while at the same time being consistent with and not doing any harm to alumni concerns.”

There was a time when everything happened at the Battle House. There were meals, Bible studies, discussions and a lot of fellowship gatherings. But Adams recognizes that ministry trends have transitioned the Battle House away from being the place of gathering. “It has turned into a residential place for a few people,” he said. “The Battle House as a facility has been underutilized as a ministry tool.

“Given the overall shift in ministry and the overall use of the building, I feel like being a good steward in this context will completely change the use of the Battle House. I think it can return to its prior position of being a valuable ministry tool in addition to being a place that evokes powerful and positive memories for the folks that experienced it back in my days.”

The facility is in poor condition, in part because improvements require special permission due to its status as a registered historical building. New owners will be in a position to return the facility to “its former glory,” Adams added.

Although CCSC is not required to be officially endorsed by the UNC administration, Perry said a healthy relationship with the university is important. “We conceive of the university as a place where all voices are welcome. We currently have every reason to expect that will be the case with regard to our activities.

“I have found strong support among alumni and friends who are excited about our vision,” Perry said. “A number of alumni and friends of UNC would really value a voice that consistently turns to scripture. ... There are givers who would be willing to donate significantly to insure there is a thoughtful and strong Christian voice on the UNC campus.”

John Butler, BSC's executive leader for business services, said, “For most of the 50 years that the convention has owned the Battle House, it served us well as a place that Baptist students could gather, study, fellowship and worship.

“However, changes in technology and culture have dramatically changed the way campus ministry takes place in the last decade. As ministry to students moved directly to the campus through small discipleship groups and direct engagement of the campus culture with the gospel, the sheer number of students involved in the ministry limited the use of the Battle House as a central place for students involved in our ministry to meet,” he added.

“We are intrigued by the possibility of this historic property continuing to be used for Kingdom purposes as a Christian study center. God is not through using this property for His glory, and we are committed to being a strong influence on its use and purpose whether as its owner or a partner with another evangelical group.”

BSC also owns properties on the campuses of Western Carolina University, Appalachian State University, N.C. State and UNC Asheville. The Asheville property is currently for sale. Property at East Carolina University was sold earlier this year.

The BSC board of directors voted to transfer the property at UNC Pembroke to the Burnt Swamp association last month. The Associated Campus Ministry Building at UNC Greensboro is partly owned by BSC. **BR**

## DIVINE APPOINTMENTS

In September at the Carolina and East Carolina football game in which UNC got shellacked, I had a very interesting divine appointment. We sold our extra ticket to a ticket scalper, and we prayed and wondered if the person who buys that ticket might be a divine appointment. A young man named Colin bought that ticket and sat beside us. The first thing Colin told me was that he had waited an hour and a half to buy a ticket from another guy who never called him back, and then he had an opportunity to buy our ticket.

I knew this was a divine appointment. Colin was an impressive young man, and we hit it off immediately. He is a fraternity consultant with the ATO fraternity from Indianapolis. As we got to know each other he asked me what I did, and I told him that I was a church consultant. He immediately said, “You might be interested to know that the ATO stands for Alpha Tau Omega and it's from the Bible.” I did know that. Then I ask him if he had a church background. He made a long pause and then said, “Well kinda, I grew up Catholic but I haven't been since I was a little boy.” Friends at work recently invited him to a nondenominational church, and he had been there one time. He said he really liked it. I showed him “The Story” app on my phone [viewthestory.com](http://viewthestory.com). I also showed him the 3 Circles Life Conversation

Guide app from my phone ([LifeOnMissionBook.com](http://LifeOnMissionBook.com)). It was obvious from our conversation that God was working in his life. We had a great conversation, and he was very open to the gospel. He even asked me if I knew of a good church in Chapel Hill as he was headed there later that evening. I told him that if he did not mind me having his email I would send him these apps that he had just looked at on my phone. I later shared the apps via email, and he responded the same day.

After Colin shared his mailing address, I mailed him a Bible along with some study materials. An email from Colin said, “I won't be back in North Carolina until February, but I have been doing a lot of thinking and soul searching based on our conversation at the game.

“It has really made me re-evaluate a lot of decisions I've made in the past and given me a pretty fresh outlook on life and what I'm doing as well. Thank you for reaching out again! It's always good to hear I've got people like you on my side.”

You never know when the person sitting next to you was sent by God for you to share your story and His Story with them and begin a disciple-making relationship.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Marty Dupree is a consultant on adult evangelism and discipleship for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Contact him at (800) 395-5102 ext. 5565, or [mdupree@ncbaptist.org](mailto:mdupree@ncbaptist.org).)

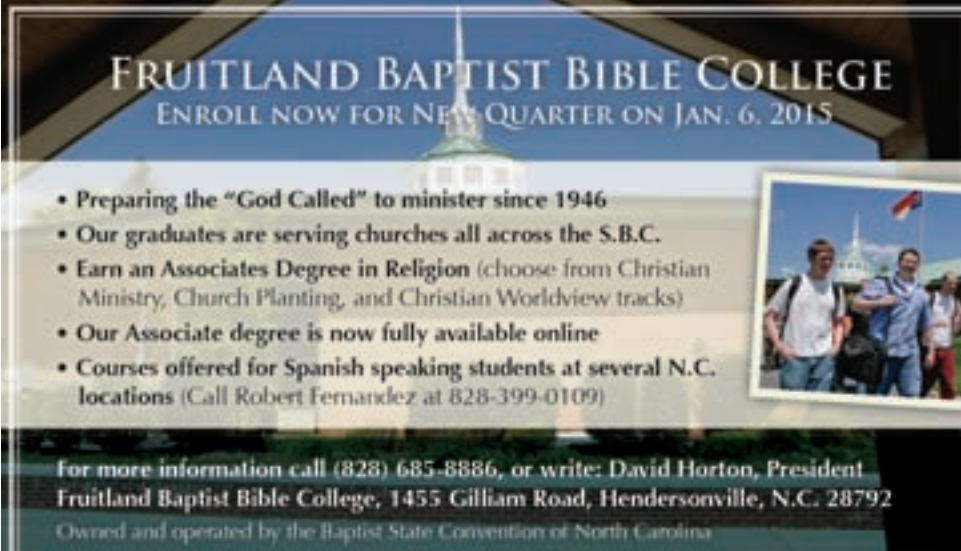


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# Future

Continued from page 1

increase financial support to both the Baptist Children's Homes and the *Biblical Recorder*.

The amendment failed to receive a majority vote. With no other amendments presented, the original budget was approved by the messengers.

## Articles and Bylaws

Six amendments to the convention's bylaws were presented to messengers, which include: changing the procedures and requirements for submitting resolutions for consideration at annual meetings; setting procedures for meetings of the BOD when weather or other factors cause meetings to be cancelled; clarifying qualifications and limits on who can serve on the BOD; updating wording related to the Christian Life & Public Affairs Committee; updating names for Fruitland Baptist Bible College (from Institute) in BSC documents; clarifying inconsistencies on the description of trustees for North Carolina Baptist Hospital. Messengers approved all six amendments.



C.J. BORDEAUX

## Committee on Nominations Report

The Committee on Nominations is responsible for receiving, reviewing and presenting recommendations provided by North Carolina Baptists for service on the BOD and committees of the convention as well as the boards of the institutions and agencies of the convention. The committee's report was approved with no additional nominations from the floor. These are available online at [www.brnow.org/News/October-2014/Committee-on-Nominations-report](http://www.brnow.org/News/October-2014/Committee-on-Nominations-report).

## Committee on Resolutions and Memorials

Two resolutions were brought before messengers Nov. 11: the Resolution of Continued Support and the Resolution in Support of Religious Liberty. Submitted by David Gasperson, pastor of Warsaw Baptist Church in Warsaw, the Resolution of Continued Support asked N.C. Baptists to continue to prayerfully encourage BSC leadership as they equip and support churches and associations to engage areas of lostness outside of the identified eight population areas.

Also, the Religious Liberty resolution requested messengers to join and support pastors in Houston, Texas, and the freedom of all pastors to speak and obey God rather than man.

Messengers passed both resolutions. These resolutions are available online at [BRnow.org](http://BRnow.org).

## Officers

Three officers were elected during the annual meeting: Timmy Blair, president; Cameron McGill, first vice president; and Joel Stephens, second vice president.

Blair, senior pastor of Piney Grove Chapel Baptist Church in Angier, was nominated by Mark Harris, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Charlotte.

"Timmy Blair is a leader, a leader of character and consistency but also courage," Harris said of the candidate in his nomination speech.

Blair has been married to Wendy for 35 years and has two children and two grandchildren. Blair's church has led Little River Baptist Association in baptisms the last few years along with growing in membership and expanding mission giving.

"As a North Carolina Baptist, Timmy was a conserva-

tive when conservative wasn't cool and I'm grateful for that," Harris said.

Aaron Wallace, lead pastor Hephzibah Baptist Church in Wendell, nominated McGill, senior pastor of Dublin First Baptist Church. "He believes that North Carolina Baptists must cooperate together to strengthen and revitalize our existing churches as well as equipping and supporting our new church plants and our global mission partnerships," Wallace said.

"Since becoming pastor ... his church has seen an increase of 400 percent in missions giving," Wallace said.

McGill and his wife, Tiffany, have four children. He has led his church to participate in missions in their community as well as to working with church planters in New York and Moldova.

"He's a man of God with integrity and character," Wallace said.

Rick Speas, senior pastor of Old Town Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, nominated Joel Stephens, senior pastor of Westfield Baptist Church in Westfield.

"He is a servant leader with a Kingdom vision and a man of deep integrity," Speas said of Stephens, who is married to Lisa and is raising four children. "Joel wholeheartedly supports the new strategy and the leadership of this convention."

## Miscellaneous Business

During a miscellaneous business session, Garland Honeycutt, a messenger from Big Rock Creek Baptist Church in Bakersville, asked for a suspension of the rules to allow messengers to consider a resolution on marriage (see page 6). Messengers allowed Honeycutt, who is also director of missions for Avery Baptist Association, to read the resolution.

The resolution – "Resolution affirming God's institution of marriage in North Carolina" – was proposed after the September filing deadline and was created in response to a U.S. District Court ruling in October that overturned the state amendment approved by voters in 2012 affirming marriage as between one man and one woman.

The resolution calls on messengers to pray for the Supreme Court as it will likely hear conflicting cases on the matter.

"Be it further resolved that the messengers encourage and pray for those individuals who are persecuted as they refuse to violate their deeply held biblical convictions on the issue of same-sex marriage," the resolution states. "... and Be it finally resolved that the messengers affirm the biblical teaching that marriage is between one man and one woman."

Jeff Broadwell, pastor of Long Branch Baptist Church in Lumberton and chair of Memorials and Resolutions Committee, said the committee and BSC leaders had reviewed the resolution prior to its proposal at the annual meeting.

Messengers approved the resolution.

## Speakers

On Tuesday, Nov. 11, Jonathan Falwell, senior pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va., delivered the final message of the BSC annual meeting.

Falwell is the son of the late Jerry Falwell, founder of Liberty University and Thomas Road Baptist Church.



Vertical Generation, a youth choir from Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, N.C. (BSC photo by K Brown)

Speaking from Philippians, Falwell challenged churches to make a recommitment to advancing the gospel.

"The only book that's living and powerful is this book that was breathed out from the heart of God – the infallible, inerrant, inspired Word of God," Falwell said. "Until the church of Jesus Christ begins take that seriously once again, we're not going to knock down the gates of hell."

Disunity isn't just a problem for church members, it's a problem for pastors as well, Falwell said. He encouraged pastors to strive for unity with fellow pastors by keeping the big picture of ministry in mind.

"When we preach Jesus crucified, buried and risen again, light will come into a dark world, and the gates of hell will be knocked down," Falwell said. "The church today better get back to doing this now because time is short."

"Let's be the church that knocks down the gates of hell."

## NCBM Report

Groups from North Carolina Baptist Men (NCBM) are involved in no less than 18 different missions ranging from agriculture to aviation to disaster relief.

The group currently has five large feeding units, the largest three of which are capable of providing up to 80,000 meals a day. They were used several times in the past year both in North Carolina and around the country.

"God's able to do greater things than we can think or even imagine," said Richard Brunson, NCBM's executive director. "I imagine a lot. I imagine every Christian seeing themselves as missionaries in their neighborhoods and in their workplace."

"I'm sharing this with you. I imagine God's across more."

## There

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...n, led messengers on the first night of the Baptist State Convention of North

...Imagine North Carolina Baptist churches  
...ing Christ's love in word and in deed.  
...ine North Carolina volunteers being  
...s hands and feet in their community and  
...s our state and nation. God can do much  
...than we can imagine."

## ...me Interpretation

...e Greater Things theme of the 2014 Bap-  
...ate Convention of North Carolina was  
...mply a call to do more. Instead, pastors  
...eters and Noah Crowe encouraged mes-  
...rs to remember the focus of Christian  
...try.

...reater vision, Peters began, must come  
...e greater things. "No ministry will ever  
...n intentional about its mission, no  
...y will remain faithful to its purpose and  
...nomination can remain passionate about  
...nistry if it does not have a high and holy  
...f God," said Peters, senior pastor of  
...ry Baptist in Winston-Salem.  
...eaking from John 14:12 – the verse for  
...ear's theme – Crowe said Christ revealed  
...ern of servanthood a greater picture of  
...elf as Savior and the greater power avail-  
...o all believers.

...e have great preaching in Baptist  
...hes," Crowe said.

...e've got great singing in Baptist  
...hes, great testifying in Baptist churches, but where's the power?  
...es from the Spirit of God. Greater power is not in personalities  
...yles. It's not in good names and the venues. It's not in our good  
...ngs and our big financial pledges. It's found in the Spirit of God,  
...glorifies the Savior." **BR**



Noah Crowe, above, and Rob Peters, below, spoke to messengers about "Greater Things," the theme for this year's annual meeting in Greensboro. (BSC photos by K Brown)



# Pastors

Continued from page 1

He said, "We cannot tolerate doctrinal dilution." Therefore pastors must learn to "flee and follow." Flee those things, he said, that emphasize money and material things, but pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience and gentleness. "Christ is the embodiment, the essence, the epitome of these six graces," Smith proclaimed.

Baptist evangelist Bob Pittman gave the second sermon at the conference. He served as a senior pastor of Baptist churches for 33 years. Preaching from Luke 22:31, he said Jesus warned Peter that Satan desires to "sift you as wheat." "What does the devil want with a man of God?" he asked.

In the process of sifting Christians like wheat, Satan wants to accomplish three things, Pitman said. Satan wants to damage our testimony, to destroy our faith and to derail our purpose.

"Your testimony is a valuable thing. As a pastor your testimony is an essential ingredient in your ministry. ... Without character, without integrity, without a clean testimony, your ministry is tarnished and probably will not last very long," Pittman said.

Greg Heisler, pastor of Mount Vernon Baptist Church in Boone, said, "We are called to preach the revelation of God Himself in Jesus Christ. Our stand is on the Word of God. What I'm trying to do when I'm preaching is I'm trying to show how I'm hearing that text, I'm seeing that text, I'm smelling that text, I'm tasting that text, I'm touching that text. And then I'm ready to preach that text in the power of the Spirit of God."

Each speaker emphasized the need for an unshakable dedication to Christ. "We actually believe that just because we might have won an election that America's going to change," said Don Wilton, pastor of First Baptist in Spartanburg, S.C. "We really have gotten so far away from the holiness and righteousness of God that we really, genuinely believe that the person who sits in the White House is the key to kingdom living in America. Shame on us."

Wilton added that the problem isn't just with those who fill church pews. It can also reside within those who stand in the pulpits.

"People are running off to anything that seems to be presented to them, because they have no anchor," Wilton said. "We've become a nation of preferential treats. We are preaching personal preference and personal conviction, and we have relinquished the mandate for preaching and teaching. We have drifted away from the centrality of preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified."



Don Wilton, left, and Phil Hoskins were among the pastors who preached during the Nov. 9-10 North Carolina Pastors' Conference. (BR photos by K. Allan Blume)



From left to right: Brian Langley, vice president of the North Carolina Pastors' Conference (NCPC); Cameron McGill, 2016 NCPC president; and Dale Robertson, NCPC treasurer. (BR photo by K. Allan Blume)

What happens to a ship when it drifts? It has the potential to run aground."

Tony Merida, associate professor of preaching at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and founding pastor of Imago Dei Church in Raleigh, emphasized that pastors are to preach for the glory of God, not man.

"No preacher ever preaches unnoticed. Unnoticed by people, perhaps. Overlooked for conference speaking engagements, yes. Unnoticed by God, never. We preach in the sight of God, and that ought to be enough," Merida said.

Phil Hoskins, senior pastor of Higher Ground Baptist in Kingsport, Tenn., said in the afternoon session that today's pastors cannot afford to lose their convictions, character or compassion.

"If we do, we might as well turn out the lights, padlock the doors of our churches and put a for sale sign in the yard," Hoskins concluded.

Evangelist Rick Coram concluded the conference by asking attendees if they had lost the power of their convictions. To reclaim it, he added, pastors must recognize the problem, return to the place where power was lost and finally reclaim it.

"We are fueled by the power of the living God," Coram said. "If we don't have power, then we're not having church."

New officers were elected for the 2016 NCPC. Cameron McGill was elected president of the conference. He has pastored Dublin First Baptist Church for 14 years and formerly served as the second vice president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

Also, Brian Langley was elected vice president of the NCPC. Former president of the BSC, C.J. Bordeaux Sr., nominated Langley who serves as pastor of First Baptist Church in Kure Beach.

Dale Robertson, pastor of North Main Baptist Church in Salisbury, was elected as treasurer of the NCPC. This will be Robertson's twenty-third consecutive year serving in this position.

"It Shall Not Return Void" will be the theme for the 2015 Pastors' Conference to be held Nov. 1-2 at the Koury Convention Center. Speakers will include Daniel Akin, D.A. Carson, David Horner, Johnny Hunt, J. Greg Lawson, Gary Jennings, Richard D. Phillips and Alvin Reid.

Micheal Pardue, president of the 2015 NCPC and pastor of First Baptist Church of Icard in Connelly Springs, said, "The speakers have been chosen to appeal to every generation of pastor in our state. ... My hope is that when you leave for the annual session of the BSC and then back into your field of ministry, you will leave refreshed and excited about how the Word has spoken to you through these anointed men of God." **BR**



# Sacred

Continued from page 1

difference this makes firsthand.

Before becoming International Mission Board (IMB) missionaries, the couple from Florida went to the Dominican Republic on their own as self-supported missionaries. They struggled to provide for their family of five, sometimes only having a few plantains from their backyard tree to eat for the day. Now funded through CP and LMCO, the Llambes are able to devote their efforts fulltime to evangelism and church starting.

Missionaries like the Llambes, sent out by and funded through Southern Baptist churches, are partnering with fellow believers from the U.S. to reach people groups around the world with the gospel.

The Llambes have worked with several Florida Baptist churches, connecting them with believers in the Dominican Republic to help them start churches. Also, an Arkansas church team has traveled to Abidjan, Ivory Coast, to work alongside missionaries reach out to people groups in the African city.

A Texas congregation, who partners with missionaries to reach Afro-Ecuadorians and also the Antandroy of Madagascar, is encouraging other African-American Southern Baptist congregations to join them.

Out of the world's population of 7 billion, more than half live among people groups still unreached with the gospel, some in which there is no ongoing sharing of the gospel among them. Through a combined effort, Southern Baptists are sharing the love of Christ with the nations.

In the words of the first SBC president William Bullein Johnson, the Foreign Mission Board (now IMB) was created with the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845 "... for the purpose of organizing an efficient and practical plan, on which the energies of the whole Baptist denomination, throughout America, may be elicited, combined and directed in one sacred effort for sending the word of life to idolatrous lands. ..."

How is Southern Baptist missions funded?

The Cooperative Program helps fund ministries and missions by churches giving through cooperating state conventions. A portion of those funds is then forwarded by the state conventions to the national office of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Slightly more than 50 percent of all Cooperative Program contributions received on a national level are directed to help the work that is taking place through IMB.

LMCO funds more than 50 percent of the work accomplished through IMB. Named for a courageous Southern Baptist missionary who served in China at the turn of the 20th century, this offering is used exclusively to help provide the day-to-day support for missionaries sent around the globe by Southern Baptist churches through IMB.

Approximately 4,800 full-time missionaries (and their 4,000 children) are supported in this way. These missionaries proclaim the gospel, start new indigenous churches through which new believers are baptized, disciple new and



established believers in their faith and provide Bible-centered teaching to current and future church leaders, so that churches are reproducing and making disciples in their own Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth.

At [imb.org/offering](http://imb.org/offering) there are resources

for churches to raise awareness for and to contribute to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions.

The focus scripture for this year is Matthew 28:19-20 and the offering goal is \$175 million. See related videos at [imb.org/lmcovideo](http://imb.org/lmcovideo). **BR**

## Gay marriage, 'faith' spur N.C. judges to resign

By DAVID ROACH | Baptist Press

**W**hen Gayle Myrick received a memo from the North Carolina state government threatening criminal prosecution unless she performed gay wedding ceremonies, she knew she had to resign her job as a magistrate – even though resignation left her unemployed and without retirement benefits at age 64.

"When you're grounded in your faith and you know – especially at my age – what you believe and whom you believe, decisions come rather quickly," Myrick, a former magistrate in Union County near Charlotte, told Baptist Press.

Myrick is one of at least six magistrates in North Carolina who have opted to resign rather than marry homosexual couples following a federal judge's ruling that the state's gay marriage ban is unconstitutional. For at least two of the magistrates – both of whom have ties to Southern Baptist churches – the decision to resign has brought financial hardship. But they said obeying God required leaving their jobs.

"Why can we have a law that's going to prevent any

sect of people from serving in the government?" Myrick said of North Carolina's requirement that state officials perform gay weddings.

Magistrates in North Carolina are judicial officers in each county employed by the state to adjudicate minor criminal and civil matters like issuing warrants, setting bail, accepting guilty pleas and performing marriage ceremonies. The state's 670 magistrates are appointed by Superior Court judges.

On Oct. 14, all North Carolina magistrates received a memo from Pamela Weaver Best of the Administrative Office of the Courts stating that because a federal court legalized homosexual marriage in the state, magistrates were required to perform gay weddings. Those who refused could face criminal prosecution for committing a class 1 misdemeanor, the memo said, which is punishable by up to 120 days in jail.

"If a magistrate refuses to discharge the duties of his or her office, including a refusal to perform a marriage of a same-sex couple, that refusal is grounds for suspension or removal from office, as well as, potential criminal charges," the memo said.

In response to the memo Myrick, who attends

First Baptist Church in Indian Trail, N.C., resigned three months before she would have become eligible to receive retirement benefits from the state. She also forfeited her \$36,000 salary and is now unemployed two weeks before her 65th birthday.

"I haven't had any prospects of a job," Myrick said. "I'm still hoping I'll be able to get something because I do need to work."

In addition to needing the income, Myrick said she viewed her job as an opportunity to communicate love and hope to people in difficult circumstances. But had she known performing gay weddings would become one of her legal duties, she said she "would not have taken the oath" of office.

In Gaston County, also in the Charlotte area, former magistrate William Stevenson shares Myrick's objection to performing gay marriage ceremonies. He shares her experience of financial hardship as well.

A licensed attorney, Stevenson, 43, gave up a \$47,550 salary when he resigned as a magistrate rather than perform gay weddings. To support his two children, he has accepted a temporary job doing administrative work

See Judges page 17



# Missionaries sacrifice to give to annual offering

By **TESS RIVERS** | International Mission Board

**F**ueled by the same passion that led them to invest their lives cross-culturally, a group of International Mission Board (IMB) missionaries far exceeded a challenge to give \$100,000 to international missions.

More than a quarter of a million dollars – \$277,217.92 – was collected at a summer gathering of 240 IMB families serving among American people groups around the world. Of the total, \$125,000 came from outside donations while \$152,217.92 came from IMB missionaries.

The amount, given to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for international missions, is unprecedented, said David Steverson, IMB vice president for finance. He described it as the largest offering ever received from a single gathering of IMB missionaries in the organization's 169-year history.

The gift far exceeded the “God-sized” goal of \$100,000 set by Terry Lassiter, strategy leader for IMB's American peoples affinity group.

Understanding that discretionary income for missionaries is limited, Lassiter knew such a lofty goal might generate some doubt. Reaching the \$100,000 goal meant each family would need to give an average of \$416, nearly 20 percent of one month's base salary for an IMB career couple.

“That way,” Lassiter said, “if (the goal) was met, people would know God moved.”

Although Lassiter expected skepticism, he became concerned the goal would not be met when he received little response to his monthly podcast announcing the goal.

“I started doubting a bit,” Lassiter admitted.

Some of the missionaries under Lassiter's leadership did, too.

“How can a group of ordinary missionaries collect this much money in a time of budget cuts?” some asked. Others applauded Lassiter's vision and believed \$100,000 to be an attainable goal.

A few weeks before the meeting, missionaries began donating, but amounts were small. Elliott Baze,\* IMB director of finance for the Americas, described the giving as “an initial flurry of donations followed by a slow but steady march upward.” Lassiter was getting worried.

Then came the conference – and daily messages by David Platt, who, according to Baze, shared story after story from the Bible of how God accomplished His purposes through ordinary people without much to offer.

“You could feel the energy of the group build on itself,” Baze recalled. “The offering gained momentum as the meeting unfolded.”

That momentum only continued to grow when the group learned that an anonymous donor was willing to match the goal with a \$100,000 gift, if it was reached. Another outside donor committed an additional \$25,000.

Then, Baze said, the group “blew past the goal,” and excitement grew.

To fuel the missionaries' enthusiasm, John Brady, IMB vice president for global strategy, offered to shave his head if the offering reached \$225,000. Steverson followed suit, also offering to shave his head if the offering reached \$250,000.

“I figure my hair is worth a quarter of a million dollars,” Steverson said with a grin.



International Mission Board (IMB) missionary Nancy Shirey passes offering baskets during a July 2014 gathering of IMB missionaries serving American people groups. Visit <http://www.imb.org/main/lottie-moon/default.asp>. (IMB photo by Wilson Hunter)

The missionaries said while the head-shaving stunts were fun and increased excitement, the offering was really about getting the gospel to every language, people, tribe and nation.

At the conference, missionaries had the opportunity to give their money with the same “heartfelt passion” which compelled them to invest their very lives in missions, Baze said.

For Marty Childers, who serves in Mexico, an experience three weeks before the gathering cemented his desire to give 20 percent beyond the amount he initially planned to give.

“I had the privilege of being among a people group of about 100,000 people with less than 75 Christ-followers,” Childers said.

“I met with a group of five of them, and we talked about sharing their faith.”

With tears in his eyes, one of the leaders of the small house group said to Childers, “We want to reach our people, but we don't know how. Can you teach us?”

As Childers gave his offering, he remembered this conversation, realizing his gifts could help send teachers and trainers to the 3,000-plus unengaged, unreached people groups around the world. This firsthand awareness prompted him to give more.

## Reachable goal

Missionaries also saw their opportunity to give as a model of sacrificial giving for another reachable goal: this year's international missions offering.

“If field workers do not give sacrificially, how can we expect our [Southern Baptist Convention] constitu-

ency to do the same?” asked Tim Kunkel, who serves in Paraguay.

IMB's 2014 goal for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering is \$175 million. In 2013, Southern Baptists gave an unprecedented \$154 million, breaking the record for the largest total in the offering's 125-year history. While this was good news for the more than 4,800 IMB missionaries worldwide who depend on the offering to fund their work, an additional \$21 million will still be needed to reach this year's goal.

If the 16 million people purported to make up the Southern Baptist Convention will give just \$10.93 each, the \$175 million goal can easily be reached, Kunkel said. While American families spend about \$750 on Christmas, most Southern Baptist churches base their missions giving goal on an average gift of \$10 per person.

“If we can show that missionaries are leading the way in sacrificial giving, might this not spark a change?” Kunkel asked. “This is what we are hoping for.”

In the final tally, IMB missionaries in the Americas gave \$152,217.92 and anonymous donors gave \$125,000. On average, each IMB family gave more than \$630 – nearly 30 percent of one month's base salary. The total (\$277,219.92) will support five missionaries for a year.

“This tells other pastors, deacons and lay members that we believe in what God has called us to do: It's about taking the Gospel to the lost,” said Eric Reese, who serves in Brazil. “We put our money to the task to demonstrate that we don't just talk, we believe!”

\*Name changed.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Tess Rivers is an IMB writer. Kevin Gill and Erich Bridges contributed to this article.) ■





Jaron Moss uses his past to open doors into the Highlands community in Gaston County. It started with walking and praying for the community. Moss works with The Dream Center in Gaston County in its efforts to reach its community. (Contributed photo)

## From addict to urban missionary

By RICK HOUSTON | Special to the Recorder

**T**he numbers are staggering. According to The Dream Center of Gaston County's website ([dreamcentergastoncounty.com](http://dreamcentergastoncounty.com)), more than 95 percent of students at Rhyne and Woodhill Elementary schools in the Highlands community receive free or reduced lunches. Only about half of those are able to function at an appropriate grade level. Thirty percent of Highlands households live in poverty.

Those are the cold and hard numbers, and the stories of life in Highlands are even more heartbreaking. Young toddlers are left untended.

Drugs and crime seem to be everywhere, and multiple shootings have happened in the last few months.

It's into this kind of environment that urban missionary Jaron Moss and his teams willingly venture as often as possible.

They are there through The Dream Center, a nonprofit effort organized by Bethlehem Baptist Church in Gastonia.

"We started walking in the community, praying for the community, seeing the needs," said Moss, who is 26 and a full-time student at Belmont Abbey College in Belmont.

"As we'd walk around, you'd see people in the streets and on their porch. We'd just go up and talk to them.

"We weren't trying to tell people about the church. We were trying to love the people, and share the hope they

can have in God. We just started loving the people, and through a few months, God started building relationships with people."

Moss' is another in a long line of out-of-the-box ministries at Bethlehem, which hosts five weekend services at three campuses in the area. The Dream Center partners with local businesses every year to provide free services for weddings and proms.

There are support groups for single parents, sports programs, job fairs – name it, and there's a pretty good chance it can be found at Bethlehem, The Dream Center or both.

The key to it all is this: None of the church's efforts are necessarily designed to simply increase numbers, but instead to meet those in the community where they're at, no matter what their circumstances might be. It's about outreach in its simplest, purest form.

"We're just focused on relationships with the people and connecting them with the Word of God, not just in church but in their home," Moss continued.

"My whole life growing up, it was all about you invite people to church and tell the pastor to preach to them and teach them about God. I want these people to

realize that God has equipped them to do that, to share God with their neighbors, friends and family."

A native of nearby Kings Mountain, Moss' backstory is not unlike those that play out every day in Highlands. At 17, he began smoking weed. It wasn't long before he was not only popping pills, but selling drugs as well.

By 19, he was in rehab and charged with armed robbery.

**"We're just focused on relationships with the people and connecting them with the Word of God, not just in church but in the home."**

**– Jaron Moss**

Six months after getting out of rehab, he'd fallen right back into the trap. Life was one long, slippery spiral downward. At one point, he placed a pistol in his mouth ready to pull the trigger.

He didn't and the next day his mother called and invited

him to church.

"At the end of the service, this lady stood up and said, 'God told me that there's a man in here ...' and she began to say every thought that was running through my head," Moss remembered.

"She said, 'You're thinking life's too long.' She kept sharing things about me that she didn't know."

Moss made his way to the front of the church, and his life hasn't been the same since.

"I wanted to sit in that seat, but I

couldn't," Moss said. "I was up in the front before I even knew it, just lifting my hands to God, not saying any complicated prayer, but just saying, 'Help me.' I began to cry, tears [were] running down my face for fifteen minutes.

"I've never experienced the power of God like I did that day, ever. I walked back to my pew shivering. I left that day knowing something was different and changed. I felt as if someone had taken thousand-pound weights off of my shoulders."

In the years since, Moss' life has made a dramatic turnaround from addict to urban missionary, from living solely for that next fix to proposing to girlfriend Anna in a video that's sure to go viral if it hasn't already.

Drugs no longer matter to him. Even golf, a sport he loves, no longer holds quite the same attraction. What his old life does do, however, is give him an opening to serve the people in Highlands.

"People welcome me so easily in this community," Moss concluded. "(His story) opens doors for me, because a lot of these guys struggle with drugs, addiction and depression.

"The life that I lived introduced me to all of those things, so when I go and start talking to them, I'm able to connect with them. God's using my past mistakes for His good now."

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Rick Houston is a freelance writer living in Yadkinville. He has written books on NASCAR and the Space Shuttle program.) ■



# Professor, evangelism chair practices *Everyday Evangelism*

By ROB COLLINGSWORTH | *Southern Baptist TEXAN*

**M**att Queen, assistant professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, was installed in the school's prestigious L.R. Scarborough Chair of Evangelism at the beginning of the fall semester. Queen is the eighth professor to hold the distinguished position but the first among them with an earned doctorate in evangelism.

The history of the Scarborough Chair, as well as Southwestern's legacy of training in evangelism, goes back over a century.

The school's founding president, B.H. Carroll, installed L.R. Scarborough as the first occupant of the "Chair of Fire" in 1908. The nickname stemmed from Carroll's preferred designation for the newly created chair of evangelism, the first of its kind in the world.

In keeping with the wishes of Carroll, the Chair of Fire has been reserved for professors who displayed a particular fervor for evangelism.

"That all the work of this chair may not be mere theory and historical delay," Carroll writes, "the occupant of this chair must himself be a practical field evangelist all the time illustrating, between lecture series, the power of his office in great revival meetings."

Queen's doctorate is in applied theology with a specialization in evangelism. He received this degree and his master of divinity (pastoral track with biblical languages) from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest. The Asheville, N.C., native received his bachelor's degree in religion with a minor in biblical languages from Mars Hill College. He was licensed (1995) and ordained (1999) at Ridgeway Baptist Church in Candler.

He was minister of youth and music at Turkey Creek Baptist Church in Pisgah Forest (1995-1997) and Union Chapel Baptist Church in Zebulon (1997-2002). He then served as pastor of Union Chapel until November 2006 before joining the staff of Friendly Avenue Baptist Church in Greensboro as associate pastor for discipleship and evangelism (2006-2010). He served as a teaching assistant at Mars Hill College and at Southeastern before becoming the Bailey Smith Chair of Evangelism Teaching Fellow (1999-2002) at Southeastern. He was an adjunct instructor of evangelism at Southeastern College (2004-2005), adjunct instructor of discipleship (2010) at Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary in Lynchburg, Va.

In his four years at Southwestern, Queen has proved to be just such an evangelist. However, he says he is fully aware of the weight that accompanies the historic Chair of Fire.

Referring to his new assignment as the "Holy Grail for evangelism professors," Queen described the history of the position first held by Scarborough.

"Scarborough was the first evangelism professor in the world. He was a preacher of the people who passionately shared the gospel and inspired people with his stories of soul-winning. His successor E.D. Head was evangelistic but is primarily remembered for his passion for scholarship."

According to Queen, James Eaves and Malcolm McDow were both "compassionate men who loved souls." However, they each held the chair for only a year or two during a brief period when it rotated among the chair of the seminary's evangelism department.

"C.E. Autrey was thoroughly Baptist, but he had a broader base in his evangelistic leadership among evangelicals because of his association with Billy Graham," Queen explained. "He left Southwestern to lead the



Matt Queen, right, shares the gospel in neighborhoods around Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He was recently installed as the L.R. Scarborough Chair of Evangelism at Southwestern. (*Southern Baptist TEXAN* photo)

evangelism department at the then-Home Mission Board (now the North American Mission Board)."

It was under Roy Fish that the Chair of Fire was officially named for Scarborough. "Roy Fish had a love for studying evangelism historically, and in many ways contributed to an ongoing history of evangelism among Southern Baptists," Queen said. "If Scarborough's evangelistic influence in theological education was that he introduced the study of evangelism in seminaries and divinity schools as the first professor of evangelism, Fish's evangelistic influence is in the students he taught who now serve as professors of evangelism."

Queen pointed out that Southwestern Seminary President Paige Patterson, his immediate predecessor in the Chair of Fire, has championed evangelism in his role as president at three different schools: Criswell College, Southeastern Seminary and Southwestern.

"Exactly like Fish's influence on theological education, Patterson has trained numerous Southern Baptist professors who are evangelistic in their places of service, as well as beyond [Southern Baptist Convention] entities," Queen said. "On a personal note, Paige Patterson has had the most influential impact on me in my practice of personal evangelism. His example, teaching and expectation for faculty to be soul-winners have made me who I am today."

Known by those on campus for his winsome and approachable personality, Queen has continued in the tradition of the previous occupants of the Chair of Fire by displaying evangelistic passion both inside and outside of the classroom. Queen was instrumental in the seminary's "Taking the Hill" initiative, a plan conceived in 2009 by Patterson, the then-occupant of the Chair of Fire. Prioritizing the importance of evangelism both far and near, "Taking the Hill" and its follow-up initiative "No Soul Left Behind" proposed to share the gospel with every household within a one-mile radius of the seminary campus – some 6,700 homes. Thanks largely in part to Queen's leadership and passion, the seminary accomplished this goal by the end of 2012.

The seminary's next evangelism initiative, "Going the

Second Mile," extends that same theme to include every household within a two-mile radius. In addition to his teaching responsibilities, Queen leads groups of students to share the gospel at least once every week in the area immediately surrounding the seminary.

In his newly published book *Everyday Evangelism*, Queen lays out how to establish a culture of evangelism within your church. Groups from Southwestern have also been made available to do evangelism outreach and training at churches across the state of Texas.

Twice in the last year, Queen has led a group of Southwestern students to Bell Shoals Baptist Church in Tampa, Fla. The students trained and led church members to share the gospel personally in the area around the church. Between the two trips, more than 20 individuals expressed faith in Christ for the first time.

"We chose Southwestern because we know that Southwestern has a hot heart to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with people," pastor Stephen Rummage said.

"We know what they're doing in their community around Southwestern Seminary to reach people with the gospel, so we wanted a little bit of that spirit here in our community as we seek to reach the people around us with the gospel."

"I've known Matt Queen for a long time. He was one of my students when I was a seminary professor. I know about his commitment to evangelism and to personal soul-winning, so I really wanted our students here to have an opportunity up close to find out what it's like to be around people like Matt and like the students who are studying with him at Southwestern, who are sharing the gospel diligently, boldly and through the power of the Holy Spirit."

In writing of Scarborough, Carroll penned these words that also describe the most recent occupant of the Chair of Fire: "His office continues each year from January 1 to December 31. He is now on the field. The Lord is blessing him. ... Like John the Baptist, he is both a burning and a shining light – not light without heat as fungus fox fire, not the aurora borealis, brilliant indeed, but melting no icebergs, but light with heat." **BR**



# Our obligation to the nations: gospel & Great Commission

Imagine over 6,000 people groups – spanning billions of individual people – who have yet to even hear that God loves them. Some of them have never even heard the name of Jesus.

Meanwhile, Jesus has given us, as His followers, a clear command: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20, HCSB).

We call this command the “Great Commission” and the gospel the “good news” of what God has done in Christ. We owe this gospel to the world. As Paul said in Romans 1:14, we are “obligated” to tell the nations this good news. Believers this side of heaven owe the gospel to lost men and women this side of hell.

But do we really believe Jesus was serious in His commission to us? And do our actions, our decisions, our use of resources and our lives show that we are serious about getting the gospel to people who have never heard it?

“The gospel is only good news if it gets there in time,” Christian theologian Carl Henry said.

In order to get the gospel to people all over the planet on time, the [International Mission Board (IMB)] is focused on exalting Christ, mobilizing Christians, serving the church and completing the Great Commission.

## Exalting Christ

More than anything else, we want to exalt Jesus Christ in everything we say, think and do. Jesus must be at the center of any mission strategy. After all, the beauty of the Great Commission is that Christ promises to be the One who will accomplish this mission through us. “Remember,” He said, “I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20, HCSB).

We exalt Christ when we trust His Word. God’s Word is the authority for what we believe and how we operate. Our aim in missions is not to come up with plans and ask God to bless them, but to align with the plan He has already promised to bless. That plan is to make disciples and multiply churches in all nations, and we exalt Christ when we obey His plan.

More than we want our own lives, we want the glory of Christ among all nations. We’re captivated by a vision of Him high and lifted up, receiving the praise He is due from all the peoples of the earth. His exaltation is what drives us in our mission.

## Mobilizing Christians

In order to exalt Christ, we must see our lives as uniquely designed and ultimately blessed for this purpose. The reason why we have breath, and the reason why we have the gospel, is to make His grace and His glory known to the ends of the earth. That means that global mission is not a compartmentalized program in the church for a select few who are called to that. Instead, global mission is the purpose for which each one of us was created.

Throughout the history of IMB, 20,000 missionaries have been sent out – and we praise God for that! But we need 20,000 right now. And our task is too great not to

be thinking like that. Such thinking is not idealistic. It’s imperative.

IMB desires to help followers of Christ with different skills and gifts, in different locations, with different jobs, all realizing that we have a role to play in the global mission of God.

## Serving the Church

Biblically, the local church is the agent that God is going to use to accomplish the Great Commission. Therefore, our role at the IMB is to come alongside local churches to equip, encourage and empower local churches to complete this global task. We believe pastors are the

primary global missions strategists – pastors who know they are created for this global mission and who will lead their church for the sake of global missions. IMB exists to help pastors fan a flame for God’s global glory in every local church.

Throughout the New Testament, we see churches sending missionaries, and we want to come alongside churches in order that they might do the same. Then, as churches send missionaries, the IMB exists to help the local church shepherd these brothers and sisters who are serving on the global mission field. We want

to help churches care for their missionaries spiritually, emotionally, relationally and physically.

The force of over 40,000 churches working together specifically to take the gospel to unreached peoples is a powerful picture, to say the least! As churches send and shepherd missionaries to make disciples and multiply churches around the world, we begin to realize God’s plan for making His glory known among the nations.

## Completing the Great Commission

All of the above means that the goal of the IMB is clear: we want to be a part of the accomplishment of the Great Commission. With tens of thousands of churches, we can play a significant part of reaching every single unreached people group with the gospel. I long to see this reality. I live to see this reality. I would love to be part of the generation that ultimately sees all nations reached with the gospel. Yet if I don’t see that day in my lifetime, I want to die trying.

As breathtaking as Southern Baptists mission work has been through the ages, I’m convinced that God has so much more for us. This is a critical time for the SBC and for the IMB. But let’s be clear. We are not fighting for the survival of our convention or our missions agencies. No, we’re fighting for the day when the IMB is needed no more because disciples have been made and churches have been multiplied in every nation.

## Together in praying, giving

During this season of concentrated giving for international missions, a force of nearly 16 million Baptists has the opportunity to petition God with requests related to specific missionaries around the world, and to give to increase that force of missionaries serving in the world.

When you pray for specific missionaries, you are pleading to God for the [lost] people ... they will encounter.

Further, when you give through the Lottie Moon

# Preserve your Christian heritage

Thanksgiving is one of my favorite times of the year. Like you, I enjoy the food and fellowship with family and friends who enrich and bless our lives in so many ways.

In just a few days, we’ll once again gather around the table with those we love to express our thanks and gratitude to God for the abundant blessings that He has bestowed upon us.

As we anticipate and look forward to being with our loved ones again this Thanksgiving, I am reminded of the importance of passing on a godly legacy within our own families.



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

During our recent Annual Meeting a couple of weeks ago in Greensboro, I mentioned that we cannot overlook the mission field in our own homes as we strive to reach and disciple others with the gospel.

Could it be that someone sitting beside you or across from you at the dinner table on Thanksgiving Day is that person in your family who needs to hear the good news of Jesus Christ?

Or perhaps you have been blessed with a godly family heritage because of the influence of a parent, a grandparent, an aunt or an uncle. This Thanksgiving season would be the perfect time to thank God for placing them in your life and thank them for caring about your soul.

I am thankful because, like many of you, I did experience the blessings of being born into a Christian family who took the responsibility of sharing Christ with the next generation seriously.

I would not be where I am today without the godly influence of my parents, my grandparents and my great grandparents. I am sure that many of you have similar testimonies.

Because of this heritage, God has given me a special burden not to break this chain with my own son and his children.

As I shared with you earlier this year, my father went home to be with the Lord over the summer. I am thankful that he is the one who led me to faith in Christ, taught me how to walk with the Lord and instilled in me the importance of a vibrant prayer life. He modeled for me a consistent and faithful love for his family and service to our Savior.

I will certainly miss dad’s presence at the Thanksgiving table this year. But because of his faith in Christ, and the faith that he passed on to me, I can rejoice that I will one day see him again at the ultimate thanksgiving feast in glory, the marriage supper of the Lamb.

So as we gather around our tables with our families this Thanksgiving, let’s be sure to enjoy the love, the laughter and the memories with one another as we give thanks to our great God and glorious Savior. But let’s also do all that we can do in the power of God’s Spirit to make sure that those with us around the table here on earth will also be around the table with us in heaven for all of eternity. **BR**



## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Housing allowance survives at appeals court

(Baptist Press) A federal appeals court has overturned a decision striking down the 60-year-old ministerial housing allowance in an action cheered by Southern Baptist leaders. The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago ruled Nov. 13 that an atheist organization – Freedom from Religion Foundation or FFRF – lacked the legal right – known as “standing” – to challenge the portion of a 1954 law that permits clergy to exclude for federal income tax purposes a portion or all of their gross income as a housing allowance. A three-judge panel did not rule on the allowance’s constitutionality but unanimously rejected a Wisconsin federal judge’s invalidation of the provision last November.

Russell D. Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, affirmed the appeals court decision.

A 2002 estimate offered by then-Rep. Jim Ramstad of Minnesota said the housing allowance would save ministers \$2.3 billion in taxes during the following five years. The case decided Nov. 13 is *FFRF v. Lew*.

The FFRF, which is based in Madison, Wis., sued the IRS regarding the housing allowance. Jacob Lew is secretary of the Department of the Treasury.

### SEBTS launches Raleigh Executive Training

(Southeastern Seminary) Beginning January 2015, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary will launch the Raleigh Executive Training Institute (RETI) to make theological education more accessible to accomplished professionals and active retirees living in Raleigh and surrounding communities.

RETI will be staffed by SEBTS faculty teaching through seven core courses leading to an accredited masters-level certificate in biblical studies and theology. The certificate of biblical studies and theology features foundational courses that are short and manageable to accommodate a busy schedule.

### Southern professors receive endowed chairs

(Southern Seminary) The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary installed seven faculty members to endowed chairs during the fall 2014 semester.

Some of those were: J. Scott Bridger was installed as Bill and Connie Jenkins Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies, the most recent chair in the seminary’s history; Michael S. Wilder as the J.M. Frost Associate Professor of Leadership and Discipleship; and Timothy Paul Jones as C. Edwin Gheens Professor of Christian Family Ministry.

### Parkers establish scholarship at Chowan

(Chowan University) Senior Pastor of Williamston Memorial Baptist Church, Robbie and his wife, Malinda, have established Robbie and Malinda Parker Christian Service Association Endowed Scholarship Fund will help provide financial assistance to worthy and needy students studying ministry at Chowan University. The endowed scholarship fund was initiated by a gift from the Parkers to express their commitment to Christian higher education and the values held by Chowan University, where their son Scott Parker has been employed with the Admissions Office since February of 2002.

Through the Parkers’ leadership, the Chowan Christian Service Association-Williamston Memorial Baptist Church Scholarship has already been supporting ministerial students since 2009. Contact John Tayloe, vice president for development, at [tayloj1@chowan.edu](mailto:tayloj1@chowan.edu) or (252) 398-1232.

## Judges Continued from page 12

for Operation Christmas Child while he searches for long-term employment.

“I’m going on faith,” Stevenson told BP. “This is all a God thing. I could not do this without the Lord. He has been faithful to bless me financially somewhat since this has happened.”

A member of South Point Baptist Church in Belmont, N.C., and a supply preacher in local churches, Stevenson said performing same-sex weddings would violate God’s Word.

Marriage “is a fundamental thing the Lord has set up” in Genesis, Stevenson said. “Marriage is to be between a man and a woman, and one man and one woman. And of course that’s reiterated by the Lord Jesus.”

Had Stevenson remained on the job as a magistrate but refused to perform gay weddings, he could have been disbarred as an attorney and sued under federal law in addition to facing criminal charges. He compared the plight of Christian magistrates in North Carolina with that of Peter and John in Acts 4, where they had to decide between obeying the Jewish authorities and honoring Jesus.

“I believe in the rule of law,” Stevenson said.

“I believe that the Lord has set up the government over us. But at the same

time, there comes a point where one has to choose between following the commands of the Lord and following the commands of the government.”

Stevenson worries about America’s eroding moral standards and urges his fellow citizens to repent of their sins before the nation incurs God’s judgment. He also worries about magistrates who object to gay marriage but feel financially unable to leave their jobs.

“I know there are a lot of magistrates who are struggling deeply about this, who don’t agree with it but are still on the job,” Stevenson said. “I don’t condemn them at all. I pray for them.”

The other four magistrates to resign are John Kallam Jr. in Rockingham County, Gilbert Breedlove in Swain County, Tommy Holland in Graham County and Jeff Powell in Jackson County.

State Senator Phil Berger and other state Senate Republicans have asked the Administrative Office of the Courts to honor the religious freedom of officials who refuse to participate in gay marriage ceremonies because of their belief systems, the *Charlotte Observer* reported. Berger said he will file a bill to protect state officials who refuse to issue marriage licenses to or marry gay couples based on religious objections. **BR**

## 2015 BSC annual meeting, pastors’ conference week early

**N**ext year’s Baptist State Convention of North Carolina’s annual meeting is a week earlier than usual. This means all other meetings related to and scheduled around the annual meeting will need to be adjusted. The annual meeting will be Nov. 2-3 at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro.

The 2015 N.C. Pastors’ Conference is scheduled for Nov. 1-2. The theme for the pastors’ conference has already been chosen: “It Shall Not Return Void.”

Speakers will include Daniel Akin, D.A. Carson, David Horner, Johnny Hunt, J. Greg Lawson, Gary Jennings, Richard D. Phillips and Alvin Reid. Worship will be led by North Greenville University’s Joyful Sound.

Typically the meetings fall the second full week in November around Veteran’s Day, but a scheduling issue at the Koury Convention Center resulted in the date change so the meeting could be accommodated in Greensboro. **BR**

## AROUND THE STATE

West Chowan Baptist Association has called **TERRY STOCKMAN** as director of missions. Stockman previously served at Grandview Baptist Church, Waynesville.

**LEE SOSEBEE RITCHIE** has been called as minister to children and families by Ardmore Baptist Church, Winston-Salem. She previously served at First Baptist Church, Commerce, Ga. She will begin her new position in January.

## Submissions

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



Chowan University President Chris White, left, meets with Robbie and Malinda Parker for the signing of their Christian Service Association scholarship endowment. (Chowan University photo)



November 30

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

December 7

## Ministry in the Face of Mental Illness

**Focal Passage: 2 Corinthians 1:2-7**

Recently the world heard of the death of Robin Williams. One thing that has been revealed is the battle he had with depression. The Psalmist speaks about this valley in Psalm 130:1-8 (HCSB).

We all go through times when we feel sad, down or blue. Solomon spoke of it in Ecclesiastes, and the writer of Hebrews references it in Hebrews 4:16. Depression is a deeper level of emotional turmoil, and has been said to affect one out of five people. This affects the individual, their family, coworkers as well as others who know the person.

Depression can be caused by different factors – stress, fear, loneliness, guilt and anger are to name a few. David spoke of his unconfessed sin as being the basis of his depression in Psalm 38. Elijah on the other hand was depressed following a great spiritual victory (1 Kings 18-19).

Medical factors and abnormalities in the brain's functioning can attribute to this. Understanding all the possible reasons can give us a better understanding of what this disorder is about and how widespread it is. A person needs to

seek medical help when struggling with such disorders. Too often in the church we give the glib “Just give it to Jesus” response without any thought to what may be the underlying cause. Telling a person to snap out of it is not going to help.

From the Bible we find the “HALT” syndrome at Elijah's lowest point. He was hungry – he had stopped eating; angry – actually with God, feeling He was not caring for him; lonely – he left his servant and went out all by himself; and tired – we see him collapse into a deep sleep.

We see that God counteracted every one of these characteristics in Elijah's life. He fed him. He sent an angel to show him he was not alone. The sleep helped to remedy the need for rest. This reminds us of having a real and personal relationship with God. We need to read the Bible and pray every day. Because of his relationship, Elijah could focus upon God and listen to what He had to say. Elijah recognized God's voice and was able to return in a renewed and strengthened personhood.



**THOMAS MARSHALL**  
Spring Hill Baptist  
Church, Wagram

**Focal Passage: Psalm 23:1-6**

Six simple verses, yet there have been many words written about them. Psalm 23 is a short passage. It is not the language of philosophy or theology, not a legal or scientific document; it is just simple and sublime. As has been said, God puts the cookies on the bottom shelf, not just any cookies, but the grandest assortment of delicacies to delight our mouths and fill our hungry souls.

There is no question on who wrote it: David – the shepherd boy turned king. The main discussion is on when he wrote it. Was it when he was the shepherd boy or the king? J. Vernon McGee says David was mature when he penned this. Life had beaten, battered, baffled and bludgeoned him. He was a hardened soldier. He knew songs and shadows. He was tested and tried. He was looking back and reflecting upon how God took care of him, just as he had taken care of the sheep under his care.

## The Shelter of God's Presence

As we begin a study on the shelter of God, it is like a fine diamond. Jewelers speak of the 4 Cs of diamonds: cut, color, clarity and carat weight. We see the presence of God is the basis of the facets of this gem. The cut refers to how perfectly the symmetry and proportions of the diamond capture light and then deliver it to our eyes in the form of sparkle. The facets of salvation, forgiveness, encouragement, peace and protection reflect the very glory of God. In perfect harmony, they shine in a clear and majestic way.

The color of God's shelter is as James taught: “from the Father of lights; with Him there is no variation or shadow” (James 1:17). The clarity of God's provision (Psalm 23:1-3), His protection (verses 4-5), and His presence (verse 6) are all due to His unchanging nature.

Finally, consider that the carat weight of God's shelter is His glory. The Hebrew word *kabod* originally meant “weight” or “heaviness.” This is used to express importance, honor and majesty. When we are in the presence of the glory of God, we become conscious of something greater than ourselves. In the midst of the storm, we can find shelter in the embrace of God.

November 30

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

December 7

## Living Out the Faith

**Focal Passage: Hebrews 13:1-8**

I recently had the opportunity to speak to our students at a weekend student retreat. One of the things I have noticed while being around teenagers is that most have a desire not to stand out. You may have the occasional one that will cut up and act in a way that draws attention to himself. But, on the whole, one of teenagers' greatest fears is to be put on the spot, to stand out and to look different. The reality is, many adults are the same way.

The problem with this mentality for Christians is that God desires for our lives to do just that: to stand out. We are to live to a higher standard, not because we are better than anyone else but because our lives have been transformed. The resurrected Christ is the one who the writer of Hebrews has said is the better High Priest who offered His own life as the better sacrifice for sin. Those realities, by definition, make our lives different. If we fail to live in a way that is different from those around us, our lives fail to give testimony to the life-changing power of the gospel.

Because Christ has transformed us, we are to gather with believers to “*exhort one another to love and good deeds*” (Hebrews 10:24). We are not to seek to live distinctive lives in our own strength, but by faith in God – the kind of faith seen in the “*great cloud of witnesses*” who have gone before us (Hebrews 12:1). In fact, we should live in such a way that other believers around us can see an example of what it means to live a transformed life of faith.

This life will be different in every aspect, as the writer of Hebrews points out in today's passage – in brotherly love, in hospitality, in marriage, in contentment with God's provision, etc. In the midst of a culture that's moving farther and farther from God's design, our lives are to stand out. If we are truly living out our faith in Christ, our lives will look different – showing we live as part of a different kingdom, under the reign of a different king. Living in this way enables us to be the “salt” and “light” God has called us to be.



**RANDY MANN**  
Lead Pastor, Central  
Baptist Church,  
Henderson

**Focal Passage: Esther 3:1-9**

There are daily reports of Christians being persecuted around the world. From name calling and bullying to torturing and beheading, God's people face the anger and hostility of those who would like to remove any who are a living testimony to God. Sometimes the persecution comes simply due to hatred, other times to jealousy, and perhaps, due to fear. The consistent fact, however, is the persecution of God's people at the hands of those who do not know Him or follow His ways.

This is not a new phenomenon. Almost from the time God created a people for Himself when He cut a covenant with Abram, God's people have faced the ire of the world. God's people don't (or at least shouldn't) play by the world's rules. When others bow at the world's altars or at the feet of the world's rulers, the people of God stand, knowing they can only bow at the feet of God who alone is

worthy.

Haman, an Agagite – descendent of the Amalekites – had been given a special position by King Ahasuerus. Most of the people of the kingdom readily bowed before Haman, paying homage to him. Mordecai did not.

We don't know if Mordecai's refusal – owing to his Jewish heritage – was driven more by his disdain for the Amalekites, enemy of the Jews, or by his commitment only to give honor and veneration to the God of Israel. Whatever Mordecai's motive, the end result was the same. Haman burned with anger toward Mordecai to the extent that he desired to do away with Mordecai's people as a whole.

What Haman did not understand was the people he sought to destroy were ultimately not Mordecai's, but God's. And, God would be faithful to keep the covenant He had made.

While God's people had rebelled against Him, resulting in God's punishment of His people at the hands of the Babylonians and Persians, God had neither forgotten them nor forsaken them. Their deliverance would come. Our God is faithful.



# NCBAM, Baptists on Mission help with smoke alarms

**O**n Oct. 4 volunteers canvassed neighborhoods in Sampson County to teach people about fire safety and properly installing fire alarms in homes.

Part of that effort was aided by volunteers through the North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry and N.C.

Baptists on Mission, also known as N.C. Baptist Men.

The Office of State Fire Marshal and Kidde Fire Safety are each providing more than 1300 10-year smoke alarms for the program, which has been named W.A.S.P. for “Working Alarms Save & Protect.”

According to the National Fire Protection Association, three of every five home fire deaths result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms. On August 30, six Garland residents perished in a home fire; investigators later determined that

there were no working smoke alarms in the home.

“Fire is everyone’s fight,” said Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal Wayne Goodwin. “By working together, by pooling our resources, and by reaching out to the most at-risk communities, we can prevent future tragedies.”

Other volunteers were from American Red Cross, the Sampson County Fire Marshal’s Office, Sampson County Fireman’s Association, and Nationwide Insurance Company. **BR**

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## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

### Denomination

The West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists, is seeking a new **Executive Director/Treasurer**. For more information and a job description, go to [www.wvcsb.org](http://www.wvcsb.org). Resumes may be submitted to [wvcsbsearch@mail.com](mailto:wvcsbsearch@mail.com), Search Committee Chairman, Dr. Seth Polk.

### Pastor

**Senior Pastor.** First Baptist Church, Forest City, NC (<http://www.fcjfb.com>), is seeking a full-time Senior Pastor for a 160+ year old church located in the foothills of North Carolina. We are a moderate, traditional Baptist fellowship primarily aligned with CBF but also have SBC and BSCNC ties. Qualifications include a degree from an accredited seminary or divinity school and five to ten years of pastoral experience. Applicants should submit a resume with references to: [jbcforestcity@bellsouth.net](mailto:jbcforestcity@bellsouth.net) or to Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 211 West Main Street, Forest City, NC 28043. Responses are due by December 31.

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

Calvary Baptist Church in Lincolnton, NC, is prayerfully seeking a **senior pastor**. We are a Southern Baptist church with an average attendance of 250 in worship service an average of 165 in Sunday School. Please send resume with cover letter and personal references to Pastor Search Committee, c/o Calvary Baptist Church, 493 Calvary Church Road, Lincolnton, NC 28092. Resumes will be accepted until December 31, 2014.

Gatesville Baptist Church, located in north-eastern North Carolina is seeking a **Pastor**. The position is full time salaried with benefits, including housing. Seminary is preferred. Our church desires a candidate with effective preaching and teaching abilities, strong communication skills, visionary leadership and a passion to be involved with youth outreach and community activities. Please send resumes to [gbc4jc@gmail.com](mailto:gbc4jc@gmail.com).

### Church Staff

**Associate Minister of Youth and Congregational Life.** Roxboro Baptist Church in Roxboro, N.C., is seeking a minister to provide a broad-based program for our youth that would deepen their faith and assist them and their families as they grow. The minister will also serve as part of a ministerial staff team that works together to provide outreach and caregiving ministry for persons in the church and community. A degree from an accredited seminary or divinity school is preferred. Email resume and cover letter to [chawkins@roxborobaptist.org](mailto:chawkins@roxborobaptist.org) by Dec. 31.

The First Baptist Church of Burlington, NC, is seeking a **full-time Associate Pastor** to minister to our children, youth, and their families. First Baptist Church of Burlington is a downtown Baptist church in friendly cooperation with The Southern Baptist Convention and The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. The position description for this opening is available on our website. Applications accepted by mail or email. Salary and benefits for this position commensurate with qualifications of the candidate chosen. Candidates should be graduates of fully accredited colleges/ universities and seminaries/divinity schools. Emails concerning this opening should be submitted to [pastor@firstbaptistburlington.com](mailto:pastor@firstbaptistburlington.com). Mailing address: P.O. Box 2686, Burlington, NC 27216. In order to receive full considerations, applications should be received by December 15, 2014.

**Part-time Music Leader** wanted. Grace Baptist Church in Gastonia is looking for a music leader for blended worship services. A qualified applicant will have a teacher’s heart and be able to collaborate with the pastor to lead a choir, praise band, and congregation in contemporary and traditional worship music. The position will pay \$200/week for approximately 10 hours per week. Please send resumes to Grace Baptist at 2200 Auten Road, Gastonia, NC 28054, or [lois\\_gracebc@carolina.rr.com](mailto:lois_gracebc@carolina.rr.com).

Samaria Baptist Church, Raleigh, seeks **part-time Minister Music, Piano/Organist** to provide choir direction for Sunday morning music, Wednesday night rehearsal and special events. Traditional music with an occasional blend of praise/worship. Prefer 4-year music education degree or 5 years music experience. Send resume by December 15, 2014, Attention HR, Samaria Baptist Church, 3621 Poole Rd., Raleigh, NC 27610.

Enterprise Baptist Church is a conservative, missions-minded congregation located in Littleton, NC. We are currently in search of a **full-time Minister of Children and Youth**. This Minister’s focus will be meeting the spiritual needs of the children and youth served by the Church, from birth through college. The Minister will work with families, Church leaders and volunteers as we seek to help our young people become followers of Christ. Salary is negotiable depending upon qualifications and experience. Please send a letter of interest with a resume to: Enterprise Baptist Church, 404 Enterprise Church Rd., Littleton, NC 27850; (attn: Senior Pastor) or to [pastor.darren@embarqmail.com](mailto:pastor.darren@embarqmail.com).

First Baptist Church of Woodbury, TN, is seeking a **full-time Associate Pastor for Student Ministries and Education**. This position will involve primary responsibility for student ministries from ages 12-25 and education administration for the church. Break down of position will be approximately 60% student ministry, 30% education and outreach, 10% pastoral care. Previous ministry experience, seminary degree, and strong relational skills are required for this position. This church values traditional worship and is affiliated with the SBC. Please submit resumes and cover letter to: First Baptist Church, Personnel Committee, PO Box 218, Woodbury, TN 37190; or send email to [jbcwbry@dtccom.net](mailto:jbcwbry@dtccom.net).

Chestnut Ridge Baptist Church, Laurens, South Carolina, a dynamic and growing congregation, is searching for a **Full-time Associate Pastor and Minister of Students**. Send resume to [alex@chestnutridgechurch.org](mailto:alex@chestnutridgechurch.org).

### Miscellaneous

**Air Force Reserve Chaplain positions** exist at Pope AFB NC, Charleston AFB SC, and other US bases. All positions require recognized denominational endorsement, initial Commissioned Officer Training and Basic Chaplain Course. Must have an M.Div., be under age 40, meet fitness standards, and pass criminal background check. Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) Chaplain positions require flexible 24 days per year, usually Mon-Fri at active duty base chapels. Traditional Reserve (TR) Chaplain positions require 38 days per year, including 2 days each month at a reserve unit and a two-week annual tour. Air Force chaplains provide spiritual care and the opportunity for Airmen, their families, and other authorized personnel to exercise their constitutional right to the free exercise of religion. This is accomplished through religious observances, providing pastoral care, and advising leadership. Salary is based on military pay charts for actual duty time with excellent health insurance, life insurance, and other benefits. Contact Chaplain, Colonel David Sumrall for more info at 478-396-2968 or [david.sumrall@us.af.mil](mailto:david.sumrall@us.af.mil).

**Holy Land Treasures** invites you to Christmas shop for beautiful hand carved olive wood gifts made by Christian artisans in Bethlehem in The Holy Land. Nativity ornaments, nativity sets, crosses, Last Suppers, religious necklaces, and hundreds of other gifts are available. A unique gift from The Holy Land is the perfect Christmas gift to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas. **Shop [www.holylandtreasuresonline.com](http://www.holylandtreasuresonline.com) or call toll free 1-866-416-4659.**

**NCBAM needs grab bars and other fall-prevention devices** funded and installed across the state. Keep aging adults on their feet and in their homes. Call North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry: 877-506-2226.

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

**MOVED?** Don’t forget to change your address with the *Biblical Recorder*. Contact Erin Gandy at (919) 459-5693 or [erin@BRnow.org](mailto:erin@BRnow.org).

### Placing a classified ad in the *Biblical Recorder*

#### Choose one of three avenues:

- Send e-mail to: [alison@BRnow.org](mailto:alison@BRnow.org).
- Submit the information via the *Recorder’s* website at [BRnow.org](http://BRnow.org).
- Send a Fax to (919) 469-1674.

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

Cost for Baptist churches/organizations is \$1.20 per word, number and stand-alone initial (\$1.42 for commercial and non-Baptist entities) with a minimum charge of \$35. Classifieds also are carried online.



# BCH

Continued from page 5

“We seek first to honor God by serving His children. All the children you’ve seen tonight ... have one thing in common: that is trauma. Behind every face there is distress.”

He stressed the need for more financial support than ever. That’s why BCH had 1,328 speaking engagements last year.

He encouraged churches to take a Thanksgiving Offering or to put BCH in the church budget.

One of the featured people during the Thanksgiving Offering emphasis “Redeemed” is an alumnus from Mills Home in Thomasville.

“As a young boy I didn’t have any hope,” said Joe Knight. “My days were filled with fear, hunger and inferiority. My nights were filled with nightmares ... I know and have experienced firsthand what it’s like to go to bed hungry, cold and afraid.”

Knight was less than two years old when his father abandoned his mother and five other children. That led to hopelessness and ultimately to deep depression.

“Some of my earliest memories of my mother is her sitting and crying for hours on end,” Knight said. “By God’s grace and your generosity my family was rescued by the Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina.”

“Hope came in the form of Christian love and care. With plenty of food to eat, nice clean clothes to wear and all the things that any young boy would need we had. Through Christian counseling and love I was led to Christ and I was baptized in Mills Home Baptist Church when I was 11 years old.”

While the Thanksgiving Offering emphasis was Nov. 16-23, churches can donate to BCH at any time or participate in work days or collections of food for the April Roundup.

BCH’s presentation was peppered throughout with music. The Porters, a Southern gospel group, began the presentation while children and adults poured



Sedric (in yellow shirt), with some help, stands on stage with fellow residents of Stegall Home in Marshville. Stegall Home is one of nine homes for special needs adults operated by Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina. While staying at BCH, Sedric has undergone surgery on both legs which has enabled him to walk. He walks about 200 feet a day now with the help of physical therapists and other assistance. (BSC photo by K Brown)

in from the back of the meeting hall with colorful T-shirts and balloons.

The Porters is made up of a husband and wife (Will and Betty) who have been house parents for more than 25 years. The group includes their son, Shawn.

Some of the children sang “Jesus Loves Me,” and Adam Saunders, a house parent for more than 20 years and co-chair of the presentation, sang “When I Think About the Lord” with Roberta Brunck, also a featured alumna for the BCH Thanksgiving Offering. They were joined by Vertical Generation, a youth choir from Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem who provided the main music for the evening session during the BSC annual meeting.

Visit [bchfamily.org](http://bchfamily.org). 

# Nations

Continued from page 16

Christmas Offering for International Missions, you are fueling and sustaining a missions movement with eternal ramifications. This is a mission worth praying for, and this is a mission worth giving to.

So let’s join together to exalt Christ as we work together to complete His Great Commission.

Let’s ask the people around us: Will you join me in this effort to reach the unreached with the gospel, in order that they might hear the gospel, believe it and give God the glory due Him? And let’s

ask ourselves: With the individual gifts God has given me, how can I mobilize more people to be more engaged in praying, giving and going for the sake of global mission?

May God use your church, your life and our partnership together in the gospel to reach the nations in the days ahead for the glory of His great name!

For information about how you can get involved, visit [imb.org/now](http://imb.org/now).

(EDITOR’S NOTE – David Platt serves as IMB president.) 



Recommend individuals to serve on the:  
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[www.ncbaptist.org/recommend](http://www.ncbaptist.org/recommend)

Submissions received after January 31 of each year  
will be held for consideration the following year.



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