



BIBLICAL RECORDER

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Friendly Ave.: 'Nations came to us'

By Marilyn Stewart
Baptist Press

Missions was a way of life at Friendly Avenue Baptist Church of Greensboro, where the service projects list fills a page. Then, a nation showed up at their doorstep.

Refugees from war-torn Burma, known as Myanmar, are being relocated to the Greensboro area. Known as the Karen people, the refugees fled first into Thailand to escape political persecution and a country ravaged by last year's deadly cyclone.

"The nations came to us," said pastor Pat Cronin.

The church's ministry to the Karen began when it "adopted" one family a little over a year ago. Recently, four Karen young adults were baptized. "We never thought we would see this happen," Cronin said, thrilled by the commitments of faith.

Cronin said the Karen church plant is a daily reminder of the ministry of the Cooperative Program (CP) around the world and fits well with the church's mission statement to bring "all people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ."

Resources were in place to begin the growing ministry, thanks in part to the church's commitment to putting love in action through the Cooperative Program.

Ron and Evelyn Hill, church members and retired International Mission



Photo by Kimberly Kosover

REACHING — Friendly Avenue Baptist Church in Greensboro ministers to Burmese Karen refugees — like these Karen children — in their community.

Board missionaries trained in the Thai language, provided a first contact with the group.

They received their linguistic abilities as part of their missionary training provided by CP gifts from the more than 44,000 Southern Baptist congregations.

The Cooperative Program is the way state conventions in the Southern Baptist Convention work together the Acts 1:8 way — supporting local, regional,

national and international missions and ministries.

Fulfilling the Great Commission is why the church supports missions through the Cooperative Program. Currently 15 percent of the church's undesignated offerings are committed to reaching people through the Cooperative Program.

Giving makes sense, Cronin said.

(See Friendly Page 7)

N.C. Baptists to meet in Greensboro

North Carolina Baptists will meet for their 179th annual session Nov. 9-11 at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro, around the theme "e³" — encounter God, engage culture, experience peace.

Messengers will consider a \$34.8 million budget, the smallest since 2000, with a one-half percent increase of Cooperative Program funds being forwarded to ministries of the Southern Baptist Convention.

It will be the first single option giving plan presented since 1990.

Voluminous, if minor, changes to the Baptist State Convention Articles and Bylaws will be considered and new officers will be elected.

Four men have announced their candidacies for office.

They include Ed Yount, pastor of Woodlawn Baptist Church in Conover for president; Mark Harris, pastor of First Baptist Church in Charlotte for first vice president; and both CJ Bordeaux and Ray Davis for second vice president. Bordeaux is pastor of Gorman Baptist Church in Durham and Davis is pastor of Forbush Baptist Church.

Convention leadership expects a crowd similar to 2008, which was about 2,300 messengers and guests. Registration opens at 2 p.m. Nov. 9.

The Pastors Conference is at Lawndale Baptist Church in Greensboro, 3505 Lawndale Dr. It begins at 6 p.m. Sunday, and 9 a.m. Monday.

'It just comes sort of natural.' Red Bank rallies around hurting family

By Rick Houston
Special to the Recorder

Angie Doub pauses; words hard to capture from her jumble of thoughts.

Her husband Reggie's son, Austin, was diagnosed with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD) at age four. Ten years later, Austin is in the eighth grade at Northwest Middle School in Mocksville.

Every step of the way, members of Red Bank Missionary Baptist Church in Germanton have walked alongside the Doub family, which also includes Aus-

tin's sister Casie, a 17-year-old senior at Forsyth Tech Middle College.

This isn't a case where a handful of members threw together a one-time fundraiser and were done with it. At Red Bank, it's much, much more

"This has been a learning event for us, along with our church family. And it has been a church family."

— Angie Doub

than that. Helping Austin has become a way of life for the congregation. In addition to an annual Austin Doub Fun Day fundraiser, members have taken significant steps to make their church building "Austin friendly."

They added a ramp entrance and a lift-chair to the basement, widened hallways, took out steps to classrooms and replaced long pews in back of the

church with shorter ones to accommodate the young man, who is now wheelchair bound.

It is a case study for how a church can rally around a hurting family to ease their pain. To explain the joy of such an all-encompassing church family is hard for Angie to put into words.

"They have just reached out to us and done so much," says Angie, the emotion thick in her voice. "Words can't even express how you feel ... it's just overwhelming to know that these people love us that much, that they have just reached out and said, 'This is our family. We're not going to stop at just praying. We're going to do something.'"

Frankie Poindexter, president of Red Bank's Women on Mission group, took

(See Red Bank Page 11)



Contributed photo

INSPIRING — Austin Doub's struggle with Muscular Dystrophy has inspired his church in Germanton to rally around the Doub family.

Inside

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Donnie Wiltshire takes on special ministry, p. 8-10

Home again, astronaut encourages missions

By Erin Roach
Baptist Press

HOUSTON — Patrick Forrester, the space shuttle astronaut who carried a piece of missions aviation history into space with him on a recent Discovery flight, encourages people to get personally involved in sharing the gospel outside their comfort zones.

"I really encourage everybody that has not done it to go on at least a short-term mission trip, whether it's across town or around the world, because I think it's life-changing to see the need out there and the way that we can impact people," Forrester told Baptist Press.

A deacon at University Baptist Church in Houston, Forrester carried with him a piece of the battery box from martyred missionary pilot Nate Saint's Piper PA-14 airplane when the space shuttle Discovery docked at the international space station in late August.

The plane part was provided by Mission Aviation Fellowship, an organization that transports missionaries, medical personnel, medicines and relief supplies into remote areas. Forrester plans to return the item to the fellowship along with a certificate confirming its presence on Discovery's flight.

"I'm looking forward to an opportunity to go up to Idaho and return it in person and hopefully talk to the employees and their families up there about space flight," he said, referring to the fellowship's headquarters in Nampa, Idaho.

Forrester described the piece of the battery box as roughly four by six inches. Saint was among five missionaries to Ecuador who were murdered on a sandbar in 1956 by a tribe of Waodani Indians.

"We're allowed to fly up to 10 things for organizations in what's called the official flight kit," Forrester said.

"When I was looking at organiza-



Photo courtesy of NASA

Astronaut Patrick Forrester, a mission specialist on a recent Discovery Space Shuttle flight, uses a communication system on the flight deck of the Earth-orbiting shuttle during flight day two activities Aug. 29.

tions that I felt were having an impact in the world and that had an impact on my life, this was just one of the ones that I wanted to honor."

In addition to the plane part, Forrester took a flag honoring a battalion of wounded soldiers from Walter Reed Army Medical Center and a memento from the military honor guard that handled his father's funeral this year.

This was the third space shuttle flight for Forrester, 52, a retired Army colonel and aviator who has been an astronaut since 1996.

He performed spacewalks on the first two missions, in 2001 and 2007, and this time one of his primary roles was to operate the robotic arm that checks for damage on the shuttle.

"Ever since the Columbia accident we do that to make sure there was no damage on launch and make sure there was no damage once we were docked to the space station before we come home," he said.

Forrester described what it's like to have an expanded view of God's creation firsthand.

"It's always a beautiful view that we have when we're up there looking back at earth and looking out toward the stars and moon, out toward the heavens," he said.

"I'm just always amazed at what I see.

"Sometimes people will expect it to be almost a religious experience when you go up there, and I guess knowing God as Creator and the miracles that I see all around me on earth, it's less of that for me and sometimes more what He's taught me just through my experiences of being an astronaut."

Forrester doesn't expect to travel to space again, given that there are only six remaining shuttle missions before the scheduled end of the space shuttle program.

Those six flights have been assigned. With a strong interest in missions,

Forrester has hopes of returning to the mission field on short-term and possibly long-term trips.

"I don't have any mission trips planned right now, mainly because of just returning from this flight. I've had quite a bit of post-flight travel and presentations that we do," he said.

"I look forward to my next mission trip. I've missed it the past two years because of flying in space and training.

"Where it will be, I'm not really sure. I do have a desire to go back to Africa.

"We've been in Uganda a couple of times and South Africa, and I have a feeling it may be that direction," Forrester said.

He has a good friend who worked as a physician for NASA and then became a missionary to Uganda with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. The man, who flies missions daily with Mission Aviation Fellowship, recently transferred to Lesotho, a landlocked country in South Africa.

"I'm hoping to get down there to see him in Lesotho," Forrester said.

As he encourages people to go on at least one mission trip, Forrester said the simple answer for why people must go is that it's the mandate of the Great Commission.

"I think we're all given certain talents and passions and gifts, and it's a matter of finding where those intersect with God's work, which is going on all around us," he said.

"We have to figure out where we're supposed to have an impact on the world."

"Once my eyes were opened to people giving their lives to God's work and how little it takes from us to do some of the same things, I think it's important, and whatever I can do to bring attention to that or support it with my own life and my own resources, that's what I want to do."

(EDITOR'S NOTE — Roach is a staff writer for Baptist Press.)

Most churches holding steady financially

From Religion Press Release Service

INDIANAPOLIS — More than two-thirds of congregations in a new study on congregational finances in the current recession reported that their fundraising receipts increased or remained the same in the first half of 2009 compared to 2008, even as the recession was worsening.

The findings are part of the 2009 Congregational Economic Impact Study, a joint project of the Lake Institute on Faith & Giving at the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University and the Alban Institute, based in the Wash-

ington, DC area. The study was based on more than 1,500 responses, nearly all from the Alban Institute.

Almost 37 percent of congregations reported an increase in fundraising for the first half of 2009 over 2008. Another 34 percent reported that fundraising receipts stayed the same between 2008 and the first half of 2009. Nevertheless, nearly 30 percent of congregations experienced a decrease in giving in 2009. This is 8.1 percentage points more than reported a decline in 2008.

"The recession has affected many congregations throughout the United States," said Una Osili, research di-

rector at the Center on Philanthropy. "One-third of responding congregations reported making budget cuts in 2009 and another quarter kept their operational budget the same, not allowing for any increases in the cost of living."

Just 6.8 percent of congregations reduced the number of full-time staff in response to the recession. Slightly more, 10.7 percent, laid off part-time staff. Nearly 16 percent did not increase staff salaries, while almost 15 percent cut utility costs and 13.6 percent reduced program costs.

Congregations responded to the recession by: feeding the homeless,

providing emergency cash assistance, hosting community gardens, offering support groups and networking events for the unemployed, helping with financial planning, and increasing partnerships with other community groups.

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CP trails 2008 by 5.7 percent

Ten months into the year, North Carolina Baptist church gifts through the Cooperative Program trail the same period last year by \$1.6 million, or 5.7 percent.

Every giving plan and special offering is down, with the exception of gifts to international missions, which are \$1.2 million or 13.2 percent ahead of last year. The important North Carolina Missions Offering, which funds N.C. Baptist Men and significantly contributes to church planting, partnerships and mission camps, trails last year's giving through October by \$181,882 or

11.8 percent. In this final year of multiple giving plans, Plan A trails 2008 by \$404,229 or 2.2 percent; Plan B is down \$260,212 or 11 percent; Plan C is down \$416,613 or 29.6 percent and Plan D is down \$260,083 or 5.2 percent.

Gifts to North American missions are down \$302,147 or 5.1 percent.

The \$34.8 million budget to be presented to messengers at the annual meeting Nov. 9-11 anticipates giving at year 2000 levels.

To see some ways your CP dollars are being invested, see pages 1 and 6-10.

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State execs offer GCR Task Force their perspective

By Mark Kelly
Baptist Press

DALLAS — Executive directors of 22 Baptist state conventions offered their perspective to members of the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force when the task force held its third meeting Oct. 27.

Speaking on behalf of the state executives, David Hankins, executive director of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, told the joint meeting — held in the Grand Hyatt Hotel at the Dallas/Fort Worth airport — that pronouncements about the demise of the Southern Baptist Convention are not only premature but ignore research that indicates just the opposite.

North Carolina Baptist Executive Director-treasurer Milton A. Hollifield Jr., had a previous commitment to the Blue Ridge Baptist Association and did not attend the Dallas meeting.

He remains vitally concerned with the purposes of the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force and is in conversation with task force members individually.

Hankins said, “While none of us are satisfied with the declines in membership, baptisms and missions support, we have had remarkable results and staying power,” noting a 20 percent membership increase since 1979.

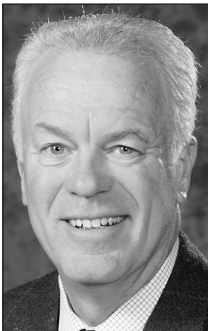
“Compare that to the track record of mainline denominations,” he offered.

“We may not be at the top of our game but we are very much in the game.”

He also underscored that resurgent cooperation could be the key to a Great Commission resurgence.

“We ought to consider it a primary strategy to marshal all the sectors of Southern Baptist leadership (church, association, state, SBC) to work on the Great Commission Resurgence, Hankins said.

“We are grateful that (SBC President) Dr. Hunt’s appointments to this body made room for all stakeholders,” he said, adding, “All of us want success for



Hankins

the Kingdom and the favor of the Lord on Southern Baptist missions.”

Task force chairman Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Baptist Church in Springdale, Ark., said the dialogue with state convention executives was crucial for the committee’s work.

“In a spirit of deep respect, we wanted to hear from the state executive directors and let them speak to us about their own vision for a resurgence of Great Commission passion among Southern Baptists,” Floyd said in a statement released after the meeting adjourned.

“The meeting with the state executives was really important, both for them and for us. We were looking for an honest conversation and a meeting of hearts and minds.

“The state conventions are vital to our total Southern Baptist work, and this dialogue was vital to the work of the task force.”

While much of the public discussion of the task force’s work has focused on ways the SBC might be reorganized, renewed passion for and involvement in the Great Commission mandate to make disciples of all nations won’t come through restructuring, Hankins told Baptist Press in an interview after his presentation.

“Talking about structure isn’t the right pathway to a Great Commission resurgence, and the Great Commission Resurgence paper says it’s not,” Hankins said. “It starts with lordship.

“We just hope we won’t forget those declarations and spend 90 percent of our time on structure when there’s a lot more important issues to the Great Commission that need to be addressed, such as holiness, prayer, sacrifice, generosity, personal growth — those kinds of things.”

When the discussion turns to structure, however, Hankins said the state convention executives wanted to “lay out some parameters ... we think are important.”

Hankins said those parameters consisted of four affirmations:

- The four-part structure of Southern Baptist life — churches, associations, state conventions and national convention — is still a useful structure for accomplishing the Great Commission.
- State conventions are necessary partners if Southern Baptists are serious about a Great Commission resurgence — “instrumental to the process, not detrimental.”
- While “a lot of study needs to be done” regarding the role of the North American Mission Board, state executives believe substantial changes should only be made after a thorough study in which stakeholders like the state conventions have an opportunity to weigh in.
- The Cooperative Program is the vehicle of choice to undergird a Great Commission resurgence among Southern Baptists.

“The state convention executives as a group want to be very enthusiastic about a Great Commission resurgence,” Hankins said.


“We are very desirous of being part of that team, and we would hope we wouldn’t be devalued or dismissed from that team.

“The task force ... affirmed they want us to be part of the team. As I said to them, we have the best opportunity in 30 years to all work together, if we will. That’s what we want to do. Work together and move Southern Baptists forward.”

“We want to value partnership — in reality, in planning, in joint strategies and in attitude. That has to be worked at,” Hankins added.

“It doesn’t mean there can be no serious questions asked, no disagreements, no hours of negotiations. All that is certainly permissible, with the spirit that we are valued partners and all have a stake in this. The thing I see the denominational structure being able to do best on behalf of the churches is motivating and mobilizing. We really do have the power and opportunity to speak to our constituency, to catalyze them, to motivate them and then to mobilize them.”

For the full text of Hankins’ address to the GCRTF, go to www.biblicalrecorder.org and search “Hankins.”



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GCR Task Force leader pokes holes in myths

Baptist Press

DALLAS — Following an Oct. 27 dialogue with 22 executive directors of Southern Baptist state conventions, Great Commission Resurgence Task Force Chairman Ronnie Floyd addressed several issues on which he felt the record needed to be “set straight.”

Floyd, pastor of First Baptist Church in Springdale, Ark., listed those issues in a statement:

- The Great Commission Task Force is not considering any abandonment of the Cooperative Program. “We are asking questions about how the Cooperative Program can remain our central system of missions funding, not whether it will remain so,” Floyd said in the statement. “We were charged to ask the hard and most strategic questions about how Southern Baptists can more faithfully fulfill the Great Commission together — and together means together.”
- The task force is not considering any recommendation that Southern Baptists partner with any para-church or non-Southern Baptist ministry such as the Acts 29 church planting network. “We are thankful for what every Great Commission church, denomination, and ministry is doing for Christ,” Floyd said, “but we are assigned the task of looking at how Southern Baptists — very specifically — can work together.”
- The task force is not trying to determine the work of search committees and trustees currently seeking new lead-

ership for the North American Mission Board, International Mission Board and the SBC Executive Committee. “Given our assignment, we can’t ignore the obvious,” Floyd said. “This is an historic moment for Southern Baptists. We have an assignment focused on the SBC in Orlando. These boards have their own ongoing assignment, leadership, and stewardship. We will do our own work, and pray for others as they do theirs. Will our work as a task force have any effect on these entities? Our determined goal is to do more, not less, for the Great Commission in every area.”

- The task force is not seeking to diminish the work of either state conventions or local Baptist associations. “To the contrary, we want to forge a future that maximizes Southern Baptist work at every level — and change is happening at every level,” Floyd said.
- The task force is not devoting its time or energies to a discussion about specific theological issues discussed within the Southern Baptist Convention. “This is not about Calvinism, anti-Calvinism or any other ‘ism,’” Floyd said. “This is about faithfulness to the Great Commission — period.”
- The task force is not planning to wait until Orlando to release its report and recommendations. “Our avowed intention is to bring as much as we can to the February meeting of the SBC Executive Committee,” Floyd said.

The next meeting of the task force will be Nov. 30-Dec. 1 at the Renaissance Hotel in Atlanta.



Contributed photo

► **Penelope Baptist Church, Hickory**, broke ground Oct. 18 on a new worship center. The event was part of the church's 121st anniversary festivities, which included special music and guests. After lunch 300 members and friends broke ground for a new worship center and heard from pastor David Grinnell. The new building will be placed behind the existing education buildings, where the church's playground is currently located. The sanctuary was lost in a fire Feb. 8. From left: Nolan Bebbler; Kayla Strickland; Aileen Sigmon; Tara Taylor; Wade Sheppard; Jim Wilson; Louie Baker Jr.; Angie Winkler; Tim Fox; Joy Bebbler; Todd Ward, worship leader; Nicholas Wilson, associate pastor; Cynthia Travis, church secretary; Grinnell; and Chris Hyatt, children's ministry director.

Church News



Contributed photo

► **Mars Hill Baptist Church, Hillsborough**, celebrated its 175th anniversary in May. Curtis C. Tyler, left, who led the church for the 150th celebration, was the guest speaker. The church has had 39 pastors. An updated history honored the oldest living church member, Grace Perry (96) and the longest tenured church member, Margaret Walker Phelps (94), who has been a member since 1927.



Contributed photo

► **Adaville Baptist Church, Spindale**, celebrated its 100th anniversary Oct. 11. Previous pastors were invited to share special memories, favorite songs and hymns of the last 100 years were sung, a commemorative DVD was presented, and Pastor Calvin Sayles challenged the congregation to accept the baton of faith, and run faithfully into the second century of the church.



Contributed photo

► **Samaria Baptist Church, Raleigh**, celebrated its 131st homecoming with a "bond burning" ceremony. Stan Whorley, chairman of deacon, burns the final bond mortgage that financed a \$445,000 renovation program for the church before the choir and interim pastor Charles Johnson. The most costly project ever undertaken by the church was paid off three years early.

Obituary

RAY E. FRANKLIN, 70, died Aug. 12 at Carolinas Medical Center-Union in Monroe. He is survived by his wife: Linda M. Franklin; three sons, Ray Franklin Jr. and John Mark Franklin, both of Monroe, and Brian Franklin of Albemarle; one brother, Richard Franklin of Norwood; 14 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Memorials to: Samaritans International.

Staff changes

MARK A. PALMER has been called as pastor for Fellowship Baptist Church, Raleigh. **C. PAUL JONES** had been interim for 18 months.

First Baptist Church, Jamestown, has called **PATRICK DEVANE** as pastor. He was associate pastor to students and families at First Baptist Church, Hopewell, Va.

Around the state

JONATHAN JENKINS has been called as pastor of Bearwallow Baptist Church, Gerton. He was minister of education and youth at West Hendersonville Baptist Church, Hendersonville.

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Ministry day at Reidsville ignites First Baptist

By Norman Jameson
BR Editor

Someone to check their teeth.
Someone to cut their hair.
Almost more than the food boxes and used clothing available to hundreds of families in Reidsville during a September “Faith, Hope and Love” ministry day by First Baptist Church, people sought dental care and a haircut.

Reidsville is in Rockingham County where unemployment reached as high as 14 percent.

First Baptist conducted the ministry day intentionally on the weekend of Sept. 11, giving hope on the anniversary of the day in American life when so much hope collapsed in dust and broken steel girders.

Pastor Bill Duke said a deacon initiated the ministry day, after learning about a similar day conducted by Rich Fork Baptist Church in Thomasville. Other deacons immediately responded positively, although “with some fear and trepidation,” said Duke, pastor at Reidsville four-and -a-half years.

“When they decided to do it, they just trusted the Lord was really in this,” Duke said. “It was a great, great experience, both for the folks who received assistance and for those at church. It has spurred us on to be reminded that when you bless someone else you end up getting blessed yourself.”

Duke said the ministry day prepared people for the revival meeting conducted in mid-October. He was “amazed” at the revival turnout, especially of the elderly.

Each evening began with “Dinner for a Dollar” at 6 p.m., a time when anyone could get a soup and sand-



CUTTING — Many participants at the Faith, Hope and Love ministry day at First Baptist Church, Reidsville, sought a hair cut and dental care.

wich dinner for a dollar and have an hour of fellowship around the table before evening services began. The typical crowd of 125 was three or four times the normal Wednesday crowd, Duke said.

During the ministry day, Duke said people came from all over the county. Most of the 400 boxes of food the church had prepared were received. He said remaining boxes are being delivered to needy families the church learns about.

Christians from other area churches were involved, and the Salvation Army brought its feeding truck to provide a hot dog snack to everyone.

Special offerings in the church covered most of the \$12,000 cost of the food boxes and holding the event.

“I didn’t want us going into this thinking it was

something we were going to do so we could get something back,” Duke said. “Our people demonstrated that ‘I serve you in the name of Jesus’ and we shared our faith and prayed with people.”

The following day four families that had been served attended services to thank the church. One family had been homeless for two years and is just moving into a place that the church is going to help them furnish. The church already is planning to participate in the statewide Operation Inasmuch to be held next April 24 and May 1.

And from the excitement of this project, they are hoping to repeat the event next September and involve 25 to 100 other churches in the county, holding a ministry day simultaneously at sites all over, providing “caring service in the name of Christ.”

“Can you imagine what it would be like if believers came together to do a day of service in the Kingdom of God?” Duke asked.

“God would be honored and people would be touched with the love of Jesus.”

At the “Faith, Hope and Love” Reidsville event, more than 400 individuals, representing twice that many family members, received food, clothing, school supplies, welcome bags, pet food and diapers. Twenty-nine received dental services, including some prescriptions, 97 received haircuts and 18 cars had their fluid levels checked.

And a church was ignited.

“We are seeking new dreams and visions from God,” said Duke.

Proposed Amendments

BSCNC Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws

Motions 2 and 3 covering Articles and Bylaws revisions

Revisions to the Baptist State Convention (BSC) Articles and Bylaws have been printed and explained in the past two issues of the *Biblical Recorder*, as required by the documents governing the BSC to give North Carolina Baptists ample time to read and consider them before voting at the annual meeting Nov. 9-11.

In the Oct. 10 issue some elements of Motion 2 and the wording of Motion 3 were inadvertently omitted. They are printed below in full. The correct and complete version listing the changes and explanations was printed in the Oct. 24 issue and will be included in the special edition of the *Biblical Recorder* that will be distributed to messengers in Greensboro.

Motion 2
The Board of Directors moves that (1) the opening paragraph of the current Article VI.A. of the Articles of Incorporation be deleted in its entirety with the following language substituted in its place; (2) current Article VI.A.1.a. in the Articles of Incorporation be deleted in its entirety with the following language substituted in its place; and (3) the current Article VI.A.2. in the Articles of Incorporation be deleted in its entirety with the following language substituted in its place.

(1) **Article VI.A.**

Current Reading:
A. Those messengers who have been duly elected by cooperating churches, have been duly registered by the Committee on Enrollment, and are in attendance at the annual session. The number and criteria for messengers shall be as follows:

New Reading:
A. Those messengers who have been duly elected by cooperating churches, have been duly registered by the Credentials Subcommittee, and are in attendance at the annual meeting or special meeting of the Convention. The number and criteria for messengers shall be as follows:

(2) Article VI.A.1.a.

Current Reading:
a. On a numerical basis: every cooperating church shall be allowed two (2) messengers and one (1) additional messenger for every one hundred (100) members or major fraction thereof, beyond the first one hundred (100) members; provided that to have more than two (2) messengers, the cooperating church financially supports the Cooperative Program of the Convention by giving at least one percent (1%) of undesignated budget gifts through the Cooperative Program of the Convention; for the purposes of this calculation, funds used as matching funds for the expanded annuity shall not be considered.

New Reading:
a. On a numerical basis: every cooperating church shall be allowed two

(2) messengers and one (1) additional messenger for every one hundred (100) members or fraction thereof, beyond the first one hundred (100) members; provided that to have more than two (2) messengers, the cooperating church financially supports the Cooperative Program of the Convention by giving at least one percent (1%) of undesignated budget gifts through the Cooperative Program of the Convention; for the purposes of this calculation, funds used as matching funds for the expanded annuity shall not be considered.

(3) **Article VI.A.2.**

Current Reading:
2. Messengers shall be resident members of a cooperating church, as defined below.

New Reading:
2. Messengers shall be members of a cooperating church, as defined below.

Amendments — Articles of Incorporation

Motion 3
The Board of Directors moves that the current Article XVI of the Articles of Incorporation be deleted in its entirety and the following language to be substituted in its place as new Article XV of the Articles of Incorporation.

Current Reading — Article XVI.

Article XVI. Amendments

The Articles may be changed or amended on the Tuesday of any annual session of the Convention by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the registered messengers present and voting when the vote is taken, provided that notice of any and all amendments to the Articles shall appear in the **Biblical Recorder** in two (2) separate issues in advance of the meeting of the Convention in which the proposed action is to be taken.

New Reading — Article XV.

Article XV. Amendments

The Articles may be changed or amended at any session during any annual meeting of the Convention other than the first or the last session during the annual meeting or during any special meeting of the Convention by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the registered messengers present and voting when the vote is taken, provided that notice of any and all amendments to the Articles shall appear (a) in the **Biblical Recorder** in at least one (1) issue with a publication date of more than ten (10) days in advance of the meeting of the Convention in which the proposed action is to be taken; and (b) on the Convention’s website beginning at least twenty-one (21) days in advance of the meeting of the Convention in which the proposed action is to be taken and to remain on such website through the conclusion of the meeting of the Convention in which the proposed action is to be taken.

Teenagers Collide with missions in Savannah

By Dianna L. Cagle

BR Assistant Managing Editor

Vicky Cornett already is planning a trip to Albuquerque, N.M., in June 2010.

She hopes to take a group from Dudley Shoals Baptist Church in Granite Falls to Collide, an annual hands-on coed missions opportunity for students sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union (WMU). The first Collide was in 2008 in Hawaii.

Cornett, with six youth and two other adults from Dudley Shoals, joined nearly 170 volunteers from 10 states in Collide in Savannah, Ga., in July.

During the week, students hosted block parties, backyard Bible clubs with churches, and Vacation Bible School at an international church; worked in a pregnancy crisis center, homeless shelters, the Second Harvest Food Bank, the Savannah Baptist Center, and the Savannah Baptist Center Church; and assisted in area schools, prayer walked, fed the homeless, and painted.

Cornett, said the prayer walking experience was a highlight for her group who were participating in Collide for the first time.

"It was a rainy day when we did our prayer walking," said Cornett in a WMU article, "but there was a peacefulness as we walked around our block and read the scriptures that were provided and prayed for the people of Savannah."

"In the midst of the darkness, the presence of the Holy Spirit was felt all around us."

"God had a huge blessing in store for us in Savannah, and we could feel His presence everywhere."

— Mary Caitlin Clark

"It is not only a time to serve others, but it is also a time for groups to become closer in our Lord Jesus Christ."

She said her girls "became closer as a group" on the trip and were able to share a servant heart to those they helped while in Savannah.

"I was so very proud of our girls," said Cornett.



LOADING — Dudley Shoals Baptist Church members Jessi Miller, from left, Kindley Scott, and Kaitlyn Williams volunteer in Savannah, Ga., with Collide.

Cornett asserted that Collide is especially good for groups who may be new to missions work because everything is planned.

"There are many worship opportunities to participate in as a group," she said in the article.

"They were probably one of the hardest working groups I have ever been on a mission trip with."

The trip has triggered ideas for Cornett since the group returned.

"Although we live in a small, rural community, there are shelters and soup kitchens in neighboring towns where we can do the same types of work that we did in Savannah," said Cornett.

"Prayer walking can be done anywhere."

Other North Carolina groups also made the trip to Savannah. Several ladies shared experiences about the co-ed trip on the Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina web site (www.wmunc.org).



wmunc.org):

• Mary Caitlin Clark, a national Acteens panelist and an N.C. Acteens panelist from Galeed Baptist Church in Bladenboro:

"God had a huge blessing in store for us in Savannah, and we could feel His presence everywhere."

"We were able to paint faces and perform puppet shows for the kids in the housing projects and even got to share the gospel."

"It didn't take long for us to realize, however, that no matter how prepared we thought we were, it was very hard to keep the attention of a large group of children, and the best Plan B was to just show them how much we loved them."

"Most people never realize the amount of poverty in America until they experience it themselves."

• Linda Lowery went to Savannah with a group from Beulah Baptist Association: "We opened our hearts to Savannah and saw our own lives changed as a result."

• Ruby Bengé, a Youth on Mission leader from Philadelphia Baptist Church in Stanfield:

"One inspiring thing for me was watching God use the young people and seeing them grow and mature during the week."

Collide will be held June 19–25, 2010, in Albuquerque.

Visit www.wmu.com.



Cooperative Program stories

A legacy spanning generations

Grandfather Mountain forms the horizon at Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Hudson.

The name stirs a sense of legacy.

The century-old church's evangelism and missions education programs have forged a legacy generations deep. God has called from its membership three International Mission Board missionaries and several full-time pastors, youth and music ministers.

"We give through the Cooperative

Program because of missions," pastor John Green said.

"It hasn't always been easy, but we made that commitment a long time ago."

Mt. Zion's total members in 2008 Annual Church Profile, 1,065; baptisms, 11; primary worship service attendance, 300; undesignated receipts, \$393,724; Cooperative Program, \$82,229; CP percent, 20.9; total missions expenditures, \$124,167.

Connected to the world

Pastor Rit Varriale calls it "a beautiful picture of the body of Christ," noting how "God-called and God-equipped" individuals in the church challenged and led fellow members of Elizabeth Baptist Church in Shelby, to strengthen their commitment to reaching people through the Cooperative Program.

Church members now see themselves as part of a larger picture of missions. So strong is the church's commitment to mission service that the work of their Baptist Men's Handy-Man Ministry was featured on a local television station.

"The beauty of the Cooperative Program is that it connects the body of Christ here in Elizabeth with the larger

body of Christ around the world," Varriale said.

Elizabeth Baptist Church's total members in 2008 Annual Church Profile, 849; baptisms, 14; primary worship service attendance, 456; undesignated receipts, \$1,015,996; Cooperative Program, \$170,256; CP percent, 16.8; total missions expenditures, \$314,209.

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Church sees CP as 'tried and true' in missions

By Marilyn Stewart
Baptist Press

GRANITE FALLS — Dudley Shoals Baptist Church goes with the "tried and true." This is true in Sunday School and in its Cooperative Program giving.

Seeing the need to reach the families in two local trailer parks, each a mile from the church in Granite Falls, church members took Sunday School "on the road."

The church built small "children's chapels" in each trailer park and brought Sunday School to the children. On Sundays, adult teachers lead the Bible Study for up to 50 children before bringing them to the main church campus for "big church." The church has baptized 30 children through the outreach.

Using Sunday School as an outreach tool is a time-tested strategy, pastor Ronald Winkler said. "It still works."

Going with what works also is why Dudley Shoals Baptist Church gives 25 percent of its undesignated receipts to missions through the Cooperative Program.

"The Cooperative Program is the lifeblood of our church," Winkler said of the way state conventions in the Southern Baptist Convention work together the Acts 1:8 way — supporting local, regional, national and international missions and ministries.

Winkler credits a strong missions education program as the driving force behind their missions giving and their mission service. The church has an active Woman's Missionary Union as well as Acteens, Royal Ambassadors (RAs) and Girls in Action (GAs) programs.

Winkler also credits the 32-year pastoral leadership of his predecessor — Donald Ingle — for building the church's steady commitment to missions. Winkler stepped into the senior pastor position five years ago after serving as the church's associate pastor.

A decade of children's chapel Sunday School has produced tangible results. The parents of the children are invited to participate and have been touched with the gospel as well, Winkler said.



GIVING — Dudley Shoals Baptist Church's chapel services at local mobile home parks has been a successful way to ministry to the church's community.

A Wednesday evening Bible study also takes place at the children's chapels.

Crime had been a problem in the trailer parks prior to the opening of the children's chapels. The high rate of resident turnover and the number of broken homes in the trailer parks made them an unstable environment.

A drop in crime after the children's program began

prompted the local sheriff's office to thank the church for its contribution in stabilizing the community.

Other Dudley Shoals mission projects include the distribution of Bibles and ministries at a women's shelter and a local prison.

The church's successful children's chapels, local mission projects, national and international mission trips have fueled its passion for missions, Winkler said. Nearly 40 percent of the church budget is dedicated to missions giving and missions service.

"We try always to keep missions before our people," Winkler said. "We are growing up a generation to be involved in missions."

Four young men in the church are preparing for the ministry, three of whom are enrolled at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, where tuition is supported in part by Cooperative Program funds.

Randy Smith, who recently joined the church staff as director of ministries, and his wife Debbie served as career International Mission Board missionaries. Winkler said the church is anticipating Smith's leadership in involving more members in short-term international mission trips.

International mission service projects under consideration by the church are designed to appeal to, and involve, a broad range of membership, including retirees and farmers. Winkler said mission trips help members understand the importance of giving through the Cooperative Program as well as giving them an opportunity to see the work that Cooperative Program dollars accomplish.

"Letting people see the results of what we give is motivating," Winkler said.

The church's many years of commitment to the Cooperative Program have not always been easy.

"In spite of difficulties, we still gave to the Cooperative Program," Winkler said. "Supporting missions is what we are commanded to do."

(EDITOR'S NOTE — Stewart is a freelance writer and member of Edgewater Baptist Church in New Orleans.)

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Friendly Ave: 'Nations came to us' in Greensboro

(Continued from Page 1)

"When you hear the name 'Southern Baptist,' you think missions," Cronin said.

"How can you not tap into the resources that make us effective?" Volunteers greet newcomers at the airport with food and basic necessities and help them settle into their new homes and surroundings.

The Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) and the church's missions education programs provide baby gifts, Christmas gifts and other items.

Proceeds from a church-organized golf tournament help cover the Karen's financial, food and housing needs.

Early 19th century missionary Adoniram Judson served in Burma among the Karen people.

Ethnic cleansings and a decades-long civil war have kept the country in turmoil.

Brian Presson, church planter with the Karen mission, said that Buddhists and Animists — the predominant religions of the Karen — attend services. "Acts of service open hearts," Presson said. "Community draws people."

Presson told of a woman who burst into tears when members greeted her at the airport, amazed that foreigners would care for her.

ESL (English as a Second Language) classes use Sunday School literature to teach the Karen. The church has contact with about 100 Karen. Services average 50.

Presson, with his wife, worked several years with the Karen overseas through another Christian organization.

"We went to the nations and then God brought us back home," Presson said. "Then God brought the nations to us."

Church members experience firsthand the impact of the Cooperative Program through mission trips to places such as the Sudan, Ecuador and Kenya and Vermont.

Youth work with World-Changers, a CP-supported endeavor of the North American Mission Board providing labor for community construction projects.

Cronin credits the church's long history of mission service and giving through the Cooperative Program to a strong WMU and missions education program, and to being grounded on God's Word.

"When you are biblically grounded, you have a Kingdom mindset, not just a local mindset," Cronin said. "You are called to serve and give. Everyone wins."

(EDITOR'S NOTE — Stewart is a writer with the Louisiana Baptist Convention's communications office.)

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Each one a part of the body

Does the proof Jesus gave John mean we've been doing it all wrong?

By Norman Jameson
BR Editor

What if we've gotten it wrong from the start? Donnie Wiltshire, special ministries consultant with the Baptist State Convention, grows quiet near the end of a long interview in his office decorated with stacks of projects in process.



He ministers among exceptional people, those who cling to the margins of a society that feels inconvenienced by their special needs.

Wiltshire leans forward and retells the story of an imprisoned John the Baptist sending two disciples to ask if Jesus is "the One who is to come."

"Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. (Luke 7:22 NIV)

"We lose touch with our Head," Wiltshire whispers, his eyes filling. "Jesus did not build a single thing. We have no idea how many were baptized under His ministry.

"Jesus' response to John's question was to say, tell John the deaf hear, the lame walk, the blind see and



Self-portrait by Donnie Wiltshire

FLYING — Donnie Wiltshire, special ministries consultant with the Baptist State Convention, enjoys being in the cockpit but loves ministering to the lost and needy people of this world.

good news is preached to the poor."

Wiltshire believes beyond budgets, baptisms and buildings, that if Christians became a people concerned with the proof Jesus sent back to John, "there would be such a movement of God among us because we would see people and love people for who they are and see their need for Christ."

Wiltshire, 56, has been passionate about ministry among exceptional people since as a Royal Ambassador at age 13 he fell in love with a beautiful girl who signed the Lord's Prayer at RA camp.

After a career that carried him to New Orleans, Texas and Memphis, for the past 10 years he has worked out that ministry in North Carolina with peo-

ple who are deaf or blind, people with developmental disabilities and those with literacy needs.

People first

When describing his ministry, it is always "people" first: people who are deaf, not "deaf people."

While ministry in this area will never fill vast auditoriums, it is important first because "Jesus cares," Wiltshire said.

Churches across the state have people who need a specific type of ministry, said Wiltshire, who knows of 113 churches with ministry to the deaf; 187 with ministry to people with developmental disabilities and close to 100 churches

(See Each Page 10)

"You can tell the goodness of a culture by how it treats those who are marginalized. The further we push them away the sadder we are as people."

— Donnie Wiltshire

BSC deaf ministry important to those in field

By Norman Jameson
BR Editor

(This interview was conducted via three-way phone/video conference in which the writer talked by phone to a sign language interpreter who was on a video conference call with Daniel Johnson. The writer asked questions, which the interpreter relayed to Johnson and then spoke Johnson's signed answers to the writer. Because American Sign Language is a picture language, word for word interpretation is not possible. — The Editor)

Daniel Johnson is pastor of the Deaf congregation of Forest Hills Baptist Church in Wilson. He was born to international missionaries in Chile and was struck deaf at age 8½ by *otitis media*, a fairly common middle ear infection that today is treated with simple antibiotics. His needs prompted his parents to return to the United States and begin a new ministry.

He attended North Carolina School for the Deaf in Morganton, then a Baptist high school and Gardner-Webb University. He met Donnie Wiltshire, North Carolina Baptists' special ministries consultant while both were stu-



LEADING — Daniel Johnson pastors a deaf congregation at Forest Hills Baptist Church in Wilson.

dents at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Wiltshire was planting and leading a Deaf congregation there. Johnson observed him in that role and saw that he was a "great leader."

Johnson said Wiltshire "knows how to lead his congregation" and is "very fair, tender and understanding."

"I'm not trying to butter him up," Johnson said through the interpreter. "But he was a very truthful person," leading "not like a boss but by example."

"That was one of the biggest impressions left on me, that of a pastor, leader,

shepherd, role model. I apply things in my church I learned from him."

Johnson's degree from Gardner-Webb was in oil science. He earned an MDiv at New Orleans, and a DMin from Samford University's Beeson Divinity School.

What it's like

Johnson does not consider himself different from other people, except for the fact that he cannot hear. He heard as a child, so he knows sounds and can speak so well people sometimes think he reads lips and do not accommodate his deafness.

Growing up he listened to radio and watched television like any "normal" guy.

"Then my normal became different," he said. "Now I can't hear so I have a new normal."

He felt left out around the family dinner table because he could not keep up with multiple speakers. Then his father instituted a "one speaker at a time" policy that changed family dynamics but made Johnson feel more a part.

He still works to educate people about deafness. Some think deaf people cannot do anything, or are fragile because they do not hear. He said he has to continually fight such a "limited

world view."

"Deaf" does not completely define an unhearing person, said Johnson, who warns not to fit all deaf persons into "one size fits all."

His doctoral project involved bringing hearing congregations to deaf worship.

"All were shocked at the differences," he said. Hearing people began to understand why Deaf don't just want to go to a hearing church and have the worship interpreted by sign.

Johnson preaches in sign, the heart language of Deaf. It requires no interpreter and is the native language that any missionary longs to know when working in a different culture.

Wiltshire has been "a lot of help" to Johnson and "other pastors in the state," he said. "He personally guided me regularly when I was trying to figure out what to do. He would sit down with me, counsel and advise, not telling me what to do, but sharing."

Michael C. Blackwell, president of Baptist Children's Homes which offers residential care for developmentally disabled adults, said Wiltshire has been "incredibly supportive" since the first day of that ministry.

(See BSC Page 10)

LifeWay special needs ministry marks 30 years

By **Andrea Higgins**
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — This fall LifeWay Christian Resources celebrates the 30th anniversary of publishing printed Sunday School lessons for special needs learners, resources that were rare prior to the late 1970s.

“The thread of neediness and disabilities runs throughout Scripture,” Gene Nabi said as he reflected on LifeWay’s 30-year-old decision to create resources for the special needs community. Nabi, who is now retired, served as LifeWay’s second special needs ministry consultant. “Parents have a desperate need as to what kind of spiritual nurture can be given to their children.”

Originally spearheaded by Doris Monroe, the special needs ministry area of LifeWay’s church resources division has led the way in publishing leader and learner resources that encourage churches to include everyone in the Great Commission.

LifeWay’s first dated Sunday School materials for the special needs community were released in 1979. The Sunday School Resource Kit for Teaching the Mentally Retarded was intended for use with children.

In the 1980s, however, research revealed most of the learners in special needs classes were adults. In response, the Special Education Resource Kit that LifeWay released in 1989 could be used with adults for the first time. The resources were expanded throughout the 1990s and were renamed Access in 2000.

The curriculum has been adapted as societal needs have changed. Trends in public special education continually influence the teaching strategies incorporated in updated versions of the curriculum. For instance, in the 1990s public schools emphasized mainstreaming special needs students — incorporating them into the larger educational population — and LifeWay responded by including adaptation tips for special needs children within the core children’s Sunday School resources.

LifeWay now encourages a range of options for children with special needs, including learning buddies, separate classes and other options. In 2007, LifeWay launched “Bible Teaching for Kids: Special Buddies,” curriculum geared toward children in first through sixth grade.

“We’ve gone from our first publication, which was



READING TOGETHER — Jason Reynolds, left, listens as Darlene Ponder, a volunteer in special needs ministry at Woodlands Hills Church in Asheville, shares a story with him.

all black and white text, to a multisensory curriculum filled with colorful visuals and hands-on teaching ideas,” said special needs resources editor Ellen Beene, who has been with LifeWay for 24 years.

Before discovering Access, Jo Ann Banks of Asheville, rewrote all of her materials from a regular adult lesson and created images on a flannelgraph for her adult special needs classes.

“Once I found Access, I wasn’t frustrated anymore,” Banks said.

Daphne Lyon of Garner, has a 24-year-old daughter, Kate, with Down syndrome. Lyon attended the special needs track of The Power of the Connected Sunday School Conference (aka Sunday School Week) at LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center near Asheville, in July.

Lyon is a member of Aversboro Road Baptist Church in Garner, which has an active special needs department that offers three classes and provides respite and activities once a month for families of children with special needs. Her church also uses the Access and Special Buddies materials published by LifeWay.

“The materials are so good,” Lyon said.

So good, in fact, Lyon said when her daughter’s Special Olympics softball competition conflicted with

“High Attendance Sunday,” Lyon asked permission to do the lesson onsite during the games. The engaging and adaptable material helped her present the lesson not only to her daughter’s team but also to a team from another town that joined in and actively participated.

“I think we had the highest numbers for high attendance and the highest newcomer numbers,” Lyon said with a smile.

Most programs in the church will accept any volunteer who is willing to serve, but special needs ministry is a bit different.

“Special needs is the one area where churches tend to seek only volunteers who have a specific calling to special needs ministry or who have prior experience,” said Carlton McDaniel, LifeWay’s current special

needs ministry specialist. “In any other area of service, you’re expected to be untrained when you volunteer.”

In the past, few ministry resources were available to prepare people for volunteering among the special needs community. McDaniel said that has changed.

“Today there are multiple resources and training opportunities available for volunteers who want to serve in special needs ministry,” he said. “Churches have access to all the support they need to equip leaders for reaching families with special needs.

“Those old excuses are disappearing.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE — Higgins is a freelance writer for LifeWay who lives in North Carolina.)



FUN — Alex Pott, a resident at a group home in Asheville, runs under the parachute during a game.



Special series

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Visit www.biblicalrecorder.org/resources/bodyparts.aspx for more stories, videos and photos of our BSC servants.

A prom to remember

By **Tim Ellsworth**
Baptist Press

ST. LOUIS — Tim Sitek was as excited as you’d expect any 3-year-old to be about seeing Fredbird, the burly, red St. Louis Cardinals mascot. Fredbird stole the attention at the Pujols Family Foundation’s third annual autumn prom event for teenagers and young adults with Down syndrome in St. Louis.

“Fredbird!” Tim exclaimed to me, pointing toward the dance floor.

“Yeah, pretty cool,” I replied. “Who do you like more, Fredbird or Albert Pujols?”

“Both!” he shot back with a grin.

But though Tim’s responses may have reminded me of those I might have heard from my 3-year-old daughter, he’s not 3. He’s 23. He has Down syndrome. And he was one of the special guests invited by the Pujols Family Foundation to get all dressed up for the formal event in Clayton, Mo.

It’s one of the year’s signature events sponsored by the Pujols Family Foundation, begun by the St. Louis Cardinals first baseman and his wife Deidre in 2005. Albert and Deidre have a daughter with Down syndrome, and they wanted to use their resources to make a difference in the lives of others with the same condition — like Tim.

Tim obviously was thrilled to be there. He was thrilled to meet me. And when he found out we shared the same



first name, it was as if that were the best news he’d heard all year. He opened his mouth wide, smiled from ear to ear and smacked me on the shoulder.

It’s just one of the encounters I’ll remember from my time at the prom. Todd Perry, the foundation’s executive director, was kind enough to invite me and my friend Scott Lamb to join them for the Oct. 23 event.

“I have no idea what to expect, do I?” I asked him a few hours before it began.

“No, you don’t,” Perry said. “It’s going to be wild.”

And he was right. As the young people arrived at the hotel — many of them in limos — they walked into the lobby on a red carpet. A group of volunteers cheered each guest as they entered. Some came with dates. Some came with their parents. Some wore Cardinals hats with their tuxedos. Some gave high-fives to the greeters. And some began dancing before they even got in the door.

They had reason to be overjoyed. Perry said the prom gives young people with Down syndrome a chance to interact with their peers and celebrate who they are — Down syndrome and all.

Their population is a shrinking one, because ours is a society obsessed with perfection and devoid of a healthy appreciation for the beauty of all human life. Conservative estimates indicate that more than 90 percent of unborn children diagnosed with Down syndrome are aborted.

So our culture is deprived of the honesty, the loyalty, the unbridled joy and the unconditional love that so often characterizes those with Down syndrome, those who despite their shortcomings bear the distinct image and imprint of their Creator.

As the party moved to the seventh-floor ballroom, the music blared, but the 400 in attendance didn’t mind. The Pujolses were there, but despite Albert’s status as the best baseball player in the world, Fredbird was by far the more popular attraction. The special guests got busy dancing, and the parents who brought them sat back and watched their children with satisfied smiles.

I told Perry on Friday afternoon that I was expecting to be blessed that night. And I was right.

(EDITOR’S NOTE — Ellsworth is director of news and media relations at Union University in Jackson, Tenn., and edits BP Sports.)

Each one a part of the body

(Continued from Page 8)

and associations with literacy missions. Wiltshire provides training and connection to resources.

We are meeting people at the point of their need and sharing Christ there," he said.

"You can tell the goodness of a culture," he said, "by how it treats those who are marginalized.

"The further we push them away the sadder we are as people. When the 'un-fittest' are a valuable part of who you are as a people, then you are different from the world. That's why I give my life in this area."

Four areas

Wiltshire works with four distinct people group ministries.

• Deaf

He considers Deaf a language cultural group. He works with those who are "culturally deaf" meaning their lives are defined in great part by the fact they do not hear.

Just as in a foreign nation, the gospel must be shared in their "heart language" which is primarily American Sign Language.

This group was born deaf or became deaf very early in life. They often received a deaf school education and marry a deaf person.

Gallaudet University in Washington D.C., estimates that two to four people per thousand in the population are deaf. That would mean 16,000 to 32,000 in North Carolina.

Deaf is not "hearing impaired," which often occurs as people age.

Wiltshire used to wish he was deaf so he fit better into the world for which he is so passionate. Although he is very well accepted in the Deaf world, he is still a hearing person, still separated by his "extra" sense.

• Blind and Visually Impaired

Wiltshire's office provides an audio version of the *Biblical Recorder* free on audio disc, and will provide a player if necessary.

They provide very limited Braille services, and help clients locate Braille resources.

An annual spring retreat draws 30-35 to Caraway Conference Center. Volunteers help participants navigate the strange surroundings.

• Developmental disabilities

"People first" is the byword in the disabled community. "We are not characterized by our disabilities, we are people," Wiltshire said.

"We are people who have a developmental disability of some kind. We need always think of people as being people and not thinking of people being parts, especially defective parts."



BR photo by Norman Jameson

LEARNING —Donnie Wiltshire started learning sign language as a teenager. He has pastored a deaf church and continues to use his ASL (American Sign Language) skills to communicate with people who are deaf.

The increase of diseases like ADD, ADHD and autism are beginning to affect "many, many churches," he said.

Wiltshire will help churches overcome the "attitudinal barriers" that are the primary obstacle to ministry with developmentally disabled persons.

It is not uncommon for parents

whose child suffers from one of these disabilities to be asked not to bring the child to church.

Wiltshire wants to help a church

"think about the ministry opportunities and help them find ways the church can minister to these families."

One helpful way is to develop a buddy system with a volunteer who shadows the disabled person and provides the needed extra care and attention.

Sometimes disruptions come not from a child acting out, but from his or her own sense of frustration or being over stimulated.

Nothing in North Carolina Baptist ministry with developmentally disabled persons resounds like the five "happiness retreats" held annually for persons of all ages and categories of disability.

The talent show portion seldom leaves a dry eye in the house and laughter is the most frequent sound heard all weekend.

Typically 800-900 persons, including campers, staff and chaperones attend.

"All of them can respond to the love of Christ and many can respond to the gospel message by professing faith in Christ and growing in their faith," Wiltshire said.

Without fail, he said, campers teach

leaders "great truths about child-like faith; unconditional love; non-prejudicial acceptance of others no matter what, courage in the face of huge adversity."

Wiltshire's complaint about a little arthritis seems dramatically insignificant when he sees his friend with Down's syndrome, "who has challenges I'll never be able to understand," who is always smiling and ready with a hug.

"We think we are whole," Wiltshire said. "But we are missing some important things."

• Literacy missions

Literacy missions helps people who can speak English but can't read or write it.

It involves tutoring children who struggle in school, and teaches English as a second language.

"These ministries are ways we can meet people at the point of their need,

help them with this serious language challenge and share the love Christ," Wiltshire said.

He emphasized it is very important that churches not "bait and switch" in literacy missions, offering to teach English only as a pretense to draw people to a classroom as a captive audience. Integrity requires they provide the service and establish the relationship.

Last year 525 tutors trained through the North American Mission Board's literacy training system served 1,800 students. Seventy-six of them committed their lives to Christ.

Church based ministries

Wiltshire is a consultant who trains church members for these ministries. As a one-man department he is multiplying himself through the volunteer force resident in every church. It is churches that must see the human need and enlist Wiltshire to help them organize, train and meet the need.

He joined the Baptist State Convention staff in 1999, from First Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn., where he was pastor of the Deaf congregation.

He is a graduate of Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He earned a ThD in church history at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and planted a Deaf congregation in New Orleans which he pastored for 12 years.

He then was pastor to a Deaf congregation in Memphis for almost 10 years before coming to North Carolina.

Wiltshire has been married to Irma for 36 years and they have three children.

One works for the State Board of Missions in Alabama; one is a missionary candidate with the International Mission Board and "the baby" is a student at Gardner-Webb University.

He has had a pilot's license since 1972 and shares ownership of an airplane that on rare occasions he can use in his work to save hours on the road.

Planning ahead for 2010

Blind events

- **Baptist Fellowship Retreat** — April 30-May 2, 2010

Deaf events

- **Deaf Youth Retreat** — May 14-16, 2010
- **Together in Christ Deaf Conference** — May 14-16, 2010
- **Deaf Interpreter's Training Program** — May 14-16, 2010

Developmental Disability Events

- **Western Happiness Retreat** — June 4-6, 2010
- **Happiness Retreats** — July 23 - August 1, 2010

Contact Maria Luoni at (919) 467-5100, ext. 5629, or (800) 395-5102, ext. 5629, or e-mail mluoni@ncbaptist.org.

BSC deaf ministry important to those in field

(Continued from Page 8)

In February, Wiltshire will train Deaf pastors in the Convention's emphasis on discipleship.

Johnson, 49, is a strategic church planter with the North American Mission Board (NAMB), he said.

While he praises God for the "amazing work God is doing in North Carolina," he is a little concerned that NAMB

is less involved in Deaf work as Deaf integrate into society.

In North Carolina, "We're wide open," Johnson said.

There are many Deaf in the state, but the population is scattered, so "we need more outreaches."

He and Wiltshire are "pushing our Deaf to do that. God has to put it on their hearts to get them motivated to go."

The Deaf population as a whole is underemployed. Decent paying work is difficult to find, especially in communications fields.

Those deaf adults who were treated as "handicapped" by parents as children are likely still dependent on those parents, Johnson said.

Johnson met his wife, Stephanie, when she was interpreting for a class at Gardner-Webb. She had just gradu-

ated from UNC Greensboro and North Carolina Deaf missionary Jerry Potter who was teaching at Gardner-Webb, said Johnson should come meet the new interpreter. They have been married almost 28 years and have three children.

"The Deaf in our state cherish Donnie Wiltshire and his ministry is very important to us," Johnson said. "Without his leadership and support we would not have anything."

'It just comes sort of natural'

Red Bank Missionary B.C. rallies around hurting family

(Continued from Page 1)

several seconds to come up with an answer to the question, "What does it say about the church that it would go to such lengths to help one of its own?" Ultimately, she simply said isn't that what a church should do? How can it be that a church wouldn't do such a thing?

"It just comes sort of natural," Poindexter says. "We're just trying to follow what we should do as a church and as a Christian, and that's to help each other. When one of us in trouble, we're kind of all in trouble. We pitch in. Our church is like a family. We're not so big that we don't all know each other. When something happens, here we are."

According to Wikipedia, DMD is a severe form of muscular dystrophy that generally afflicts only males. The most common form of the disease, DMD impacts one in every 3,500 males. The average life expectancy is the mid-30s, although some have lived past the ages of 40 and 50.

As a church, Red Bank has put together several Austin Doub Fun Days to raise funds for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA).

The event has grown from raising \$500-\$600 in its infancy to now more than \$2,000 in its most recent event

held Oct. 18. The event includes a car show, putt-putt golf, yard sale led by the church's youth group, games for children, bingo and silent auction. Expenses are paid by church members, allowing every cent to go to the MDA.

"Austin loves it," says Angie, a third-grade teacher's assistant at Rural Hall Elementary School. "His favorite thing is bingo. It's just overwhelming. He

knows that this is his church family.

"We're just trying to follow what we should do as a church and as a Christian ..."

— Frankie Poindexter

"This has been a learning event for us, along with our church family. And it has been a church

family. It's not like we've been treated any different. (It's like the church says) 'This is our family, and we've got to take care of him.'"

Angie Doub has been a staunch advocate for her son and to find a cure for the disease that afflicts him. That's what mommas do, after all. The things that members of Red Bank have done, that's just what churches do.

"Stress how much we appreciate our church and how much we love our church family," Angie tells a writer. "I don't understand how people can get through things like this without a church family and knowing you're loved that much. We've all been there together and held each other's hands. Words can never express how much this means to us as a family."

The sad part is, even with all of this, there's actually very little light in this city.



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Classified Advertisements

Pastor

First Baptist Church, Maysville, NC, mission-minded, evangelistic, Southern Baptist in growing community seeks **full time pastor**. Attendance-175. Resumes to maysvillefbc@eastnc.twcbc.com or mail to Search Committee, PO Box 208, Maysville, NC 28555.

Pastor. Bethel Baptist Church of Dublin, NC, is seeking a full-time pastor for a conservative, evangelical, Southern Baptist church, with an average attendance of 150 in worship. We are seeking the man that God wants for Bethel. View church web site at: www.bethelinc.net. Send resume and DVD if possible to: Bethel Baptist Church, PO Box 177, Dublin, NC 28332, or you can e-mail the resume to broberts@intrstar.com. Deadline to submit resumes is Nov. 30, 2009.

Flint Hill Baptist Church, a 700+ member, rural church is currently looking for a **full time pastor**. We are located in Boiling Springs, NC, and cooperate with both the SBC and the CBF. We seek a dynamic pastor/teacher/leader with a minimum of 5 years pastoral experience, who is a graduate from a ATS-accredited Southern Baptist seminary. We will be accepting resumes through November 2009. Send resumes to: Flint Hill Baptist Church, Attn: Pastor Search Committee, 2207 Flint Hill Church Road, Shelby, NC 28152.

Pastor. First Baptist Church of Hope Mills, North Carolina, is seeking a full time pastor. We are looking for a strong leader who has passion for children's ministries and missions and will show compassion for our elderly church members. Local residence requested. Please send resumes and references to 4621 Cameron Road, Hope Mills, North Carolina 28348 or e-mail to amclaurin@amerispec.net.

Riley's Creek Baptist Church, Rocky Point, NC, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. We are a rural church, located 20 miles north of Wilmington with an average attendance in two Sunday morning worship services of 180-200 and 100-120 in Wednesday night Bible studies. We are very mission minded with a heart for winning the lost to the Lord. We are seeking a strong preacher of the word of God. Send resumes to Riley's Creek Baptist Church, 19845 NC Hwy 210, Rocky Point, NC 28457, or email to rcbc27@bellsouth.net.

Church Staff

Minister of Youth. New Hope Missionary Baptist Church, Wilson, NC, is seeking a Christ centered, energetic, part time minister of youth who can disciple students and lead a growing youth program. Send resumes to: 5142 NC Highway 58 N. Wilson, NC 27896 or nhmcb@nc.rr.com. For more information go to www.nhmcb.net.

Minister of students. Full time, ministry experience required. Abbotts Creek Missionary Baptist Church is seeking a gifted individual who can challenge young people in their spiritual growth and development. A strong vision for God's work and missions are essential. Bachelor's degree preferred but not required. Email resume to secretary@abbottscreek.org, or write to Abbotts Creek Baptist Church, 2817 Abbotts Creek Church Road, High Point, NC 27265.

Johnston County Baptist church is seeking a **part-time youth minister** with concentration in youth and children's ministry. Some college and/or seminary experience is preferred. Email resumes to baptist-tabern621@bellsouth.net.

West Point Baptist Church is seeking a **part time minister of music**. Our church is a conservative church using a blended style of music. A husband and wife combination where she plays the piano is preferred, but not necessary. The salary would range for \$200-\$250 per week. Please send resume to WPBC, 1100 Pine Street, Kannapolis, N.C. 28081 to the attention of Pastor Blair Bridle.

Minister of Youth. First Baptist Church, Richmond, Va., full-time position. Candidates must hold a bachelor's and master's of divinity degree. In addition, at least five years relevant experience is preferred. Visit www.fbcrichmond.org (Youth Ministry section) for additional details or to send résumé, with cover letter.

Minister of Music. Requires work with adult, youth, children and hand bell choirs. Send resume to Personnel Committee, Moffett Memorial Baptist Church, 1026 North Main St., Danville, VA 24540.

Minister of Youth and Children. Full time position. Experience required. BA degree required. Overseeing approx. 100 students. Strong personal and computer skills. Overseeing a variety of ministries. 2 additional full time staff. Resumes may be sent to: Concord Baptist Church, PO Box 127, Granite Falls, NC 28630. Or e-mail to tomcdonald@charter.net.

YOUTH MINISTER. Ferry Farm Baptist Church is seeking a youth minister to lead our students as they grow spiritually, serve others, and impact the world! Send resume to: Carroll Ann Lewter, c/o Ferry Farm Baptist Church, 1 Westmoreland Drive, Fredericksburg, Virginia 22405.

Miscellaneous

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Cost for Baptist churches and 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 that run in the paper also are carried online.

Tar Heel Voices

Powerful depression series

There are few subjects more vital than those aired by Greg Warner (Depression series, Oct. 24).

One weeps at the tragedy of the Hickory minister who committed suicide. A certain amount of "depression," or "the blues," is normal. Healthy people can work through "blue" days, to a day with more sunshine. It is only when depression becomes chronic that it is dangerous.

Part of the reason for depression, aside from possible genetic reasons, is connected with our society, its lifestyles etc. Many things accepted by today's society were "No-Nos" in an earlier age. I hesitate to say, "a simpler" time, for no age in man's history has been simple. Although many aspects of the Victorian Society were phony, we need desperately to get back to its ideals. The Victorians were not really all that "Victorian."

Everything is possible in the message of our faith and the Christ. Church attendance is at a low. I was told by a Catholic friend that for every convert they get four people leave the church. Our faith needs the same intensity and fervor as exhibited by August Bush as he stands in his fine-paneled office touting the great joy in drinking Budweiser. This is not to say that alcohol is the only problem in our society — there are many. We are awash in materialism; and we worship at the Temple of Sports.

We over-eat, we over-sex and we take long cruises to, somehow, satisfy our deepest longings. They fail to satisfy us. When I think of these fine cruise ships, and places unseen, and Dubai, that mecca in the desert dedicated to Bacchus, I think of the Christ who never got far from the sands of His youth, yet who changed the course of history.

C. Philip Gamble
Charlotte

Depression is me

First hand experience with depression and being a church staff member is my life. (BR, Oct. 24) I still have to take three different medications to help me control my mind and to keep me calm and bearable to my family and life.

On top of this monster called depression I have experienced a stroke, and in the last month a heart attack. But I still go to my church each Sunday and put on the face of "I am glad to be alive" ... while in truth I think daily about death. My conclusion is that depression is an illness and I am under the care of a doctor who gives me 15 minutes about every 6-8 weeks. Tell me to think about my family, who loves me and cares for me, but in truth it is fear of my own pain that is keeping me from this.

When I needed help from church sponsored counseling I was turned away because I could not afford to pay for the service. So I continue to fight my moods and pray sometimes for death to visit as the pain I have physically and emotionally is great. But what do I do?

Name withheld by request

Share mission photos

You can share your digital photos of special church events with www.biblicalrecorder.org readers worldwide by sending them, with a brief description of each, to dianna@biblicalrecorder.org. A couple of hints:

- **Step closer.** It might seem awkward at first, but put yourself into the action and fill the frame with the smiling face or the agony of the guy that just got water ballooned.
- **Change your angle.** Try shooting your pics from above your subject or below.
- **Act natural.** It is an oxymoron yes, but don't settle for lining people up to look at the camera, like a row of cows with their heads hanging over the fence.
- **Hold steady.** Even modern cameras cannot accommodate your hand movement and give you a sharp picture if you do not pause, brace yourself with two hands on the camera and elbows against your chest, and breath and press the shutter button.

You may have taken 100 pictures but you be the first editor and send us your best 10-12. Be sure to identify the event and church. We'll try to use the best one in the paper. Happy hunting. — the Editor

Too much fluff

I have been a Baptist for 74 years and have taught Sunday School for over 60 years. I can speak as a long-time Baptist.

What concerns me are the last two editions of the *Biblical Recorder*. Inside was page after page of "fluffy" writings about by-laws, rules, etc.

I asked myself "What could all of this possibly mean for bringing people to know and love Jesus Christ?" I also pondered who in the world will read all of this. What would Jesus think about all this excess garbage in what is supposed to be an inspirational publication about Him?

I'm afraid He would have said, "I never said these things, I never mentioned petty mounds of rules and bylaws about following Me."

Jesus would have said, "I spoke the Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer. That is all you need for salvation with Me."

Alas, we take up time, effort and interest in things like the many pages of worthless material some Baptists think are important as in the last two editions of the *Recorder*. It makes me question the direction of us Baptists.

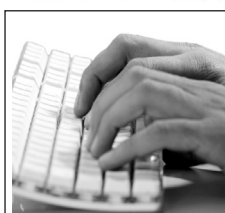
Call me a Fundamentalist. Yes, perhaps I am.

I am getting more and more appalled at the non-sense and worthless things that our denomination is doing in the guise of Christianity. I live by one rule: "What would Jesus do?" He would not do a lot of the worthless things presently done in our Baptist Church.

I am still a Sunday School teacher and choir member of Zion Baptist Church.

Bill Rhymes
Shelby

(EDITOR'S NOTE — Bylaws of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) require that any changes to the Articles and Bylaws that govern the functioning of the BSC be printed in the *Biblical Recorder* at least twice before the annual meeting at which messengers will consider those changes and vote upon them. This is a laudable safeguard and should inspire trust in the process by which this Convention of churches conducts the business that enables them together to care for others, share the gospel and dare to attempt great things for the Kingdom.)



REACT: Tar Heel Voices is your forum

- Letters are limited to 300 words and may be edited for style, length and clarity.
- Name may be withheld only for sufficient reason.
- Letters must be signed and include an address and phone number.
- Only one letter from a writer will be published in a 90-day period.
- Subjects can range from current events, stories appearing in the *Biblical Recorder* (paper or online), local church or associational news, missions endeavors, or opinions on the Convention (Southern Baptist or state).
- **E-mail to** editor@biblicalrecorder.org, or **mail to:** Editor, P.O. Box 18808, Raleigh, NC 27619.

Developing Fully Devoted Followers of Jesus Christ

By Milton A. Hollifield Jr.
BSC Executive Director-Treasurer

During the past three and a half years as I have served as your Executive-Director Treasurer, God consumed my heart with one guiding vision, one heart cry, for our convention: "By God's grace, we will become the strongest force in the history of this convention for reaching people with the message of the gospel."



A sense of urgency exists in reaching the lost for Christ and now is the time, like never before, for us to join together and become a powerful spiritual force to the glory of our Lord. We don't know how much longer we have to accomplish this.

You have heard that 4.9 million residents of North Carolina do not have a relationship with Christ.

Although we do not like to think about it, according to scripture, they are headed to an eternal hell if they do not possess a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

They cannot experience the assurance that their sins are forgiven and it is impossible for them to know the peace which the Holy Spirit imparts to believers.

That 4.9 million is no abstract number. It is a number representing our family members, friends and neighbors.

It represents the people you and I see every day in this state.

These individuals need hope, peace, and purpose in life, but most of all they desperately need a relationship with Jesus.

Our Lord challenged His followers to go and make disciples of all nations, baptize them and teach them to obey all that He commanded. This was not given as an option.

The Great Commission is a mandate each of us must obey.

That's why we are asking North Carolina Baptists during the next three years to intentionally and strategically join hands with many Southern Baptists and do our very best to fulfill our Lord's Great Commission.

In 2010, we will emphasize reaching those around us through intercessory prayer and personal witnessing.

During the second year, we'll focus together on discipleship as we work with new believers and help them to grow into the maturity of Christ.

The third year will concentrate on launching maturing believers into missions.

We will challenge followers of Jesus to move out of their comfort zone and help spread the gospel in this state, across North America and even in other countries through short-term volunteer missions.

It is my prayer that during this multi-year evangelism initiative every resident of North Carolina will hear the message of Jesus, embrace the Christ of the Bible and experience the life-transforming power of Jesus Christ.

You and your church can play a vital role in reaching North Carolina for Christ and helping new believers become fully devoted followers of Christ.

For more information visit www.finditherenc.org or call our Office for Evangelization at (800) 395-5102, ext.5557.

Matthew 28:19-20 — "Go... make disciples... baptizing them... teaching them to observe all things I have commanded..."

find it here
[nc]resources

In the beginning ... has SBC purpose changed?

The viability of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) as a dynamic, growing, focused and effective convention of churches has been a matter of wide and constant debate since this spring; ever since Southeastern Baptist Seminary President Danny Akin floated 12 axioms for a Great Commission Resurgence that became the framework around which SBC President Johnny Hunt named a Great Commission Resurgence Task Force.

That task force, appointed in June, is charged to “bring a report and any recommendations” to the Orlando SBC meeting June 15-16, 2010, “concerning how Southern Baptists can work more faithfully and effectively together in serving Christ through the Great Commission.” That is the wording.

Through the words of advocates and some outspoken task force members, the task force responsibility is being defined practically as to study all aspects of SBC structure and find efficiencies to free more dollars for priority mission, primarily overseas and in America’s major urban centers.

The empowering motion made in June is being defined by the task force.

Are we dying? Statistics would say we are in decline, as are other denominations in this “post denominational” age. This is true despite SBC apologists who cite statistical growth since 1979 and say our numbers are “not as bad” as mainline denominations. When we start to compare our own puny statistics to other’s pitiful numbers to say we are doing well, we should know we are in trouble.

As often happens when people begin to feel discomfort with the way things are, we want to go back to the way things were. We want churches to be the center of community and family life again and for them to give 10 percent of receipts to missions through the Cooperative Program. We want Training Union back and a vibrant Sunday night service. Some want the Convention to return to what they say is the Calvinism of its founders.

The danger in this conversation is to define the Convention’s founding purpose in 1845 by what you want that purpose to be today so you can argue that purpose is what we need to “get back to.”

The most common redefinition trailing in the wake of the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force moving through the water is that the Convention was started to plant churches and to fund international missions. I am in favor of planting churches everywhere we can, especially in America’s urban centers; and carrying the gospel to the nations is a compelling, valid, inspirational Kingdom purpose. Southern Baptists should be and increasingly are all over those goals.

But, according to the SBC Constitution, church planting at home and abroad is not the only or even pre-eminent reason the Convention was formed.

In fact, the SBC Constitution says the Convention was formed to “effect the benevolent intention of our constituents by organizing a plan for eliciting, combining, and directing the energies of the denomination for the propagation of the gospel.”

It is clear from the above statement in our Constitution’s prologue that “missionary societies, churches and other religious bodies of the Baptist denomination” formed the Southern Baptist Convention “for the propagation of the gospel.” What form did they decide those efforts should take?

Article II, revised in 1946 to clarify some arcane language, sets the parameters for the mutual work. It says the Convention is “to provide a general organiza-

tion for Baptists in the United States and its territories for the promotion of Christian missions at home and abroad and any other objects such as Christian education, benevolent enterprises, and social services which it may deem proper and advisable for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God.”

Motivated by the gospel and based on this founding statement, Baptists have built a tremendous system of missionary, benevolent and educational institutions, each to serve a Kingdom purpose deemed by founders to be vitally important. When North Carolina Baptists formed our convention of churches in 1830 – 15 years before the SBC was formed – we had two purposes: to create a school at which to educate ministers and to evangelize the Indians in the western part of the state. We eventually created two schools and rescued and developed five others.

We built one of the finest hospitals in the Southeast; a retirement homes and a statewide system of homes for children.

Compelled by expressed needs of churches, North Carolina Baptists fund a ministry team of consultants to train and lead people to serve in Jesus’ name and to further the Kingdom of God.

There is no question that during our history, “promotion of Christian missions at home and abroad” has pulled the train of Southern Baptist support for all “benevolent enterprises.” Now rhetorical momentum is building that would define “Christian missions at home and abroad”

as church planting and international missions alone, implying that a dollar spent for any other purpose is a dollar denied to Kingdom purposes.

An ugly ancillary to such opinion is that denominational ministers and other staff somehow are leeches sucking the missions blood from the cooperative effort of our churches. Or, that state conventions are a millstone around the neck of missions, hoarding the oxygen “real missions” so desperately needs.

It is valid, vital and timely for the Convention to review its priorities. Any ocean liner crossing the seas conducting its business picks up barnacles that slow it down.

EDITORIAL



Norman Jameson

Stop prioritizing, cut toe nails

With so many problems shouldering each other to the top of the “ultimate concern” speed dial, participants in the Creation Care Conference at Southeastern Seminary Oct. 30-31, asked each other how creation care itself can be a priority among Christians?

Consider the concern menu presented to Christians about which they are urged to take action: evangelism, poverty, education, AIDS, public health, abortion, sex trafficking — and creation care. When asked by a Southeastern student how Christians are to prioritize the needs, philosopher David Cook said the list of concerns is not a “multiple choice” list that a Christian can pick from. All issues that concern humankind become a matter of how we shall live.

Calvin DeWitt, a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, said Americans particularly misuse “priority.”

Prioritizing everything means you only do those things at the top of your list. That means low priority items never get done.

For DeWitt, author of *EarthWise: A Biblical Response to Environmental Issues*, that means his garage never gets organized and the floor of his study remains an integral part of his filing system. It

If barnacles cling to the Southern Baptist ship, we should willingly scrape them off to increase our speed.

But it is unfair to imply that anything we currently do that is not church planting or international missions is a barnacle. And don’t try to say the Convention was formed exclusively or primarily to plant churches.

There is not enough money funding missions overseas. There never has been enough money going overseas.

The Foreign Mission Board reports of 1927-28-29 etc. read as if current International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin wrote them for the upcoming meeting in Orlando.

Missionaries identified, vetted and ready to go, and not enough money to send them. I’m not referring to that historical consistency to say, “Don’t worry about it. It’s always been that way.”

But when a problem is newly discovered by the next generation, with no reference to the past, successful solutions developed in the past might be ignored. The Cooperative Program is a solution to a vexing problem of societal giving that almost drove the SBC to bankruptcy on more than one occasion. The Cooperative Program is not a problem; it is a solution.

To imply that it is broken is to say your car is broken when it coasts to the side of the road and quits. You used to put 10 gallons of fuel into the car for your trip to the beach.

But you needed some gas for the lawnmower, and edger, and to burn the brush pile. And you used some gas money for a sandwich, so you just put six gallons into the car and now you wonder why it won’t carry you to the beach and back.

Denominational leadership cannot harangue individuals to give more or churches to contribute more of the gifts to missions.

Those are heart issues that if resolved would put everything right.

Akin listed as his first axiom toward a Great Commission resurgence that “We must commit ourselves to the total and absolute Lordship of Jesus Christ in every area of our lives. (Col. 3:16-17, 23-24) If we do not do that, there is no call compelling enough to pull Southern Baptists as a convention of churches toward a Great Commission resurgence.

actually meant that he didn’t take time to cut his toe nails until he realized his wife, Ruth, was darning his socks and that his inaction forced her extra labor.


So DeWitt, an avid gardener, purposely picks a low priority item to accomplish every day. That may be weeding, straightening, sorting, reading something for the fun of it, or taking time to cut his toe nails.

“Don’t prioritize,” he said during a panel discussion. “Be whole people, live whole lives.”

Of course, any time you decide to do one thing over another, to determine you will use the next hour to do X instead of Y, you are prioritizing. In the context of his statements though, DeWitt would encourage you not to let the list you create Sunday night dictate your week.

Make room for serendipity and relationship. Even as Jesus embraced the ultimate priority, He was never too busy to engage individuals, whether on the path, the watering hole or the workplace. —NWJ




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www.biblicalrecorder.org

Norman Jameson, Editor
jameson@biblicalrecorder.org

Dianna L. Cagle, Asst. Managing Editor
dianna@biblicalrecorder.org

Editor Emeritus
R.G. Puckett, Editor 1982-1998

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News Briefs

N.C. native takes lead at Montana meeting

BELGRADE, Mont. (BP) — A North Carolina native became president of Montana Southern Baptist Convention (MTSBC).

William Johnson, pastor of Gallatin Valley Baptist Church in Manhattan, Mont., and native of Marion, also



Johnson

received the Montana 2009 Church Planter of the Year — Fisher of Men Award.

“William and Teresa began as our first church planter interns in 2003 and then God broke their hearts over the Manhattan that is in Montana, in the heart of the Gallatin Valley,” said

Dave Howeth, the convention’s church planting team leader. “Today the church has grown to over 100 and they have reproduced by helping to sponsor a new church plant in Townsend.”

A total of 108 messengers from 53 churches registered for the annual meeting; another 57 registered as non-voting guests. The business of the state convention included unanimous passage of the 2010 budget. At \$1,519,212, it is \$22,899 less than the 2008-09 budget. It includes an anticipated \$477,960 in Cooperative Program giving from Montana churches, \$903,252 from the SBC’s North American Mission Board and \$65,000 from LifeWay Christian Resources. The budget also anticipates \$68,000 from the state convention’s six associations to help pay the salaries of area missionaries.

The convention will continue to forward 22 percent of its receipts through the Cooperative Program for national and international missions and ministry. The 2010 budget expenditures also include \$12,000 to Yellowstone Baptist College.

Mo. Baptists give suit discretion to Exec. Bd.

RAYTOWN, Mo. (ABP) — The Missouri Baptist Convention (MBC) broadened authority of its Executive Board to resolve ongoing lawsuits against five formerly related entities at the convention’s 175th annual meeting Oct. 27.

Messengers at First Baptist Church in Raytown, Mo., voted 764-226 to authorize the Executive Board “to make any and all decisions and to take any and all actions with respect to the legal proceedings which, in its sole discretion, are reasonable and prudent, and in the best interests of the convention and our stewardship duties to the past, present and future generations of donors to the Lord’s work” in between annual meetings.

The additional authority extends to ending the lawsuits, if the committee deems such action in the convention’s best interest.

Word&Way, Windermere Baptist Conference Center, the Missouri Baptist Foundation, Missouri Baptist University (MBU) and The Baptist Home changed their charters in 2000 and 2001 to allow each to elect their own trustees. The MBC filed suit against the five in Cole County in August 2002. The MBC filed additional legal action against Windermere in Camden County in 2006.

SBTC meeting buoyed by evangelism

LUBBOCK, Texas (BP) — From start to finish, the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention (SBTC) annual meeting demonstrated the results of inviting people to faith in Christ.

The Oct. 26-27 sessions opened with the testimony of a teenager saved after a friend invited him to an SBTC-sponsored student evangelism conference last summer, and closed with 512 people, from youth to parents, professing faith in Christ and 68 others rededicating their lives stemming from the gospel preaching and feats of strength of the weightlifters group Team Impact.

Lubbock-area pastors and churches joined with the SBTC’s evangelism department to focus the convention meeting on a citywide crusade event on Oct. 27, inviting Southern Baptist Convention President Johnny Hunt to speak in the Lubbock Memorial Civic Center theater while Team Impact amazed some 2,400 teenagers and children in the exhibit hall.

Meeting for the second time in West Texas since the formation of the state convention in 1998, the headcount of 889 messengers and 423 registered guests expanded to nearly 3,700 as local residents responded to the invitations from area Southern Baptists.

The SBTC has grown from the 128 churches that formed the convention in 1998 to a current total of 2,176.

West Texans were elected to every SBTC office.

Southwestern College names new dean

FORT WORTH, Texas (SWBTS) — Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary trustees elected Steven W. Smith as new dean of the College at Southwestern (CSW), effective Jan. 1, 2010.

Smith, who earned his Ph.D. in communications from Regent University in Virginia Beach, Va., in 2003, will also serve as CSW’s first professor of communications.

Smith is the son of evangelist Bailey Smith who was president of the Southern Baptist Convention 1981-82.

Former Okla. pastor gets 10-year sentence

JAY, Okla. (ABP) — A former Southern Baptist pastor in Oklahoma has been sentenced to 10 years in prison after confessing to sexual abuse of a 15-year-old girl who attended his church.

Joshua Spires, 28, now of Odessa, Texas, pleaded guilty Oct. 13 to 10 counts of lewd molestation that occurred while he was senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Jay, Okla.

Delaware County Judge Alicia Littlefield sentenced Spires to a 20-year prison sentence with 10 years suspended on each count to be served concurrently, meaning he would be eligible for parole in 8½ years.

Spires was also fined \$10,000 for victim’s compensation under a 2005 law providing financial assistance to victims who suffer physical or psychological injury as a result of a criminal act.

Media reports said the victim’s family was consulted about the plea agreement.

Former Alabama pastor faces 152 charges

(ABP) A former Alabama Baptist pastor is being held on \$24.2 million bond after his arrest Oct. 21 on 152 counts of possessing child pornography and sexual abuse of young boys.

Ralph Lee Aaron, 54, was fired as pastor of Grace Christian Fellowship, a non-denominational church in Andalusia, Ala. Before coming to the church more than three years ago, Aaron was pastor of Victory Baptist Church in the town of 9,000 in southern Alabama.

According to media reports, Aaron was investigated while at his former church in 2005 for allegedly making a verbal sexual advance to a youngster. No charges were filed, because it was a misdemeanor and the statute of limitations had run out by the time the complaint was filed.

Prosecutors plan to seek multiple life sentences if they get a conviction, according to the Associated Press.

Shea gives prison 100th birthday gift

ANGOLA (BP) — The familiar voice of George Beverly Shea, still rich at 100 years of age, filled the prison chapel with the old redemption story that radically changes lives. Every eye in the 800-seat room at the Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola was on him.

Shea, the musical face of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association for six decades, was at the maximum security

prison to pass along a Rodgers 3 manual draw knob organ he had received in honor of his 100th birthday Feb. 1.

The organ was from the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Franklin Graham presented it to Shea at his 100th birthday party and told him the organ one day would be given to the prison.

“Franklin said the organ would be mine as long as I’m alive,” Shea told the crowd. “But every night, on my pillow, I would think about it.”

Shea told the crowd he decided to go ahead and give the organ to the prison chapel because he didn’t want to miss out on the joy of giving it away.

WMU preps for 2010 Children’s Ministry Day

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (WMU) — On Feb. 20, 2010, church groups and families from around the country will collectively put faith into action through the third annual Children’s Ministry Day sponsored by national WMU.

Each year, Children’s Ministry Day seeks to help children grow in Christ and serve others as Christ did. “We want children to know that even at their young age, they can make a difference by sharing God’s love,” said Mitzi Eaker, children’s ministry consultant for national WMU.

Last year’s Children’s Ministry Day engaged more than 20,000 children and leaders. The theme for Children’s Ministry Day 2010 is Home Team.

Promotional materials are available at visit www.wmustore.com, or call customer service at (800) 968-7301.

Mississippi Baptist Minister Hosts

Hawaii

**Join Other Southern Baptists and Rev. Billy Williams
On His Sixth YMT Baptist Vacation Package!**

Departs April 19, 2010 from \$1528*

Fly to Honolulu for five nights in Waikiki, three nights on Kauai, two nights on Maui, one night in Hilo and three nights in Kona, on the “big island” of Hawaii. Devotions will be available some days on tour, for those in the group who wish to participate. Sightseeing on every island includes: a Honolulu city tour with Punchbowl Crater and Pearl Harbor cruise to the Arizona Memorial; Kauai’s Wailua riverboat cruise; Lao Valley excursion & the old whaling capital of Lahaina on Maui; and on the Big-Island-of-Hawaii, a Hilo orchid garden, Rainbow Falls, Black Sand Beaches, Volcanoes National Park and more! **YMT** specializes in Hawaii and has had its own office in Honolulu since 1967. Prices are so affordable because travelers buy wholesale, directly from the actual Hawaiian tour operator. Rev. Williams is semi-retired and has been serving for 49 years as a Baptist minister, 23 years of which he was pastor of the First Baptist Church in Gautier, Mississippi. Currently he attends and is active in Broadmoor Baptist Church in Madison, Mississippi. Friends and family are welcome! One does not have to be Baptist to join this group. Flights are available from throughout the United States. *Price, per pers., dbl. occ., includes taxes, inter-island flights, hotels, baggage handling, and escorted sightseeing on every island. Airfare is extra; call for prices.

**For brochure, information, reservations,
and letter from Pastor Williams, call 7 days a week:**

**YMT Vacations
1-800-736-7300**

Lesson for November 15

Formations

Lesson for November 22

The Advocate

Focal Passage: 1 Kings 1:11-31

In the first two lessons, Bathsheba plays a secondary role in the awkward beginning of her relationship with King David. In today's lesson, she becomes the central actor as she is called upon to plead the case of Solomon before the king. Today's scripture easily divides itself into four dialogues: Nathan's alarming conversation with Bathsheba (v. 11-14); Bathsheba's dialogue with King David (v. 15-21); Nathan's warning to the king (v. 22-27); and the final conversation when the king summons Bathsheba (v. 28-31). Nathan senses the danger in the public activities of Adonijah (1:5-10). In a gathering of notables — military and religious — Adonijah, David's eldest son, proclaims himself the future king (v. 5-9). Not everyone is invited to Adonijah's pre-coronational ceremony. The first uninvited guest is the prophet Nathan (correctly viewed as the greatest threat to Adonijah's claim to the throne). The last *uninvited* guest is "Solomon his brother," the rival to the throne (v. 10). Adonijah declares, "I will be king" (v. 5). The danger is real, and the *uninvited* need an advocate before the king or their lives may be forfeited in a future kingdom of Adonijah (v. 10). The prophet Nathan asks Bathsheba to be an advocate for her son Solomon. She is to remind King David of his oath affirming Solomon as the next king (v. 13). This she does, successfully advocating for Solomon.

Scripture contains many examples of advocacy. Rebekah becomes an advocate for the younger of her twin sons, Jacob, squeamish of an uncertain future under Esau (Gen. 27:5). Naomi becomes a behind-the-scenes advocate for Ruth, guiding her toward a successful marriage to Boaz (Ruth 3:1ff). Advocacy in a political situation is especially hazardous. Queen Esther is called upon to lay her life on the line for the Jews in exile (Esther 4). The absence of advocates can create panic. Tamar's lack of an advocate leads her to "prostitute herself" and trick her father-in-law Judah so that she might have a child and a future (Gen. 38). The widow in Jesus' parable cries out daily for the judge to protect her (Luke 18:1-8). Job's hope of an advocate or "redeemer" before God finds prophetic fulfillment in Jesus Christ as our advocate before God (1 John 2:1). Ray Shelton, retired missionary to Uruguay of the International Mission Board (and my father-in-law) became an advocate for the housing needs of Hispanic migrants in Georgia. The king's mother in Proverbs 31 instructs: *"Open your mouth for the mute for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously defend the rights of the poor and needy."* (v. 8-9, ESV) Is God calling you to be an advocate?



Victor Lyons
Academic Dean,
Foothills Christian College,
Wilkesboro;
Pastor, Union Cross Baptist Church, Elkin

The Intercessor?

Focal Passage: 1 Kings 2:13-25

This lesson is a cautionary warning to advocacy and gives balance to last Sunday's lesson. There is a time to be an advocate and there is a time to refuse the inappropriate request for advocacy. Bathsheba has a difficult time distinguishing between appropriate and inappropriate advocacy. Today's passage easily divides into three parts: (1) the dialogue between Adonijah and Bathsheba (v. 13-18); (2) the dialogue between Bathsheba and King Solomon (v. 24); and (3) the death edict for Adonijah (v. 25) which is later followed by the banishment of the priest Abiathar (v. 27) and the death of the general Joab (v. 34). The end of chapter 2 states it succinctly: "So the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon" (v. 46). Adonijah makes a new move against Solomon but only after the death of King David (2:10-13). Tragically a time of mourning becomes a time for posturing and maneuvering for power, a time of raw politics. Adonijah recruits Bathsheba as his advocate or intercessor before King Solomon. In last week's lesson, Nathan had recruited Bathsheba as an advocate. Adonijah's request, however, does not come from God. Adonijah is the "son of Haggith" while Bathsheba is the "mother of Solomon."

There is some sensitivity to the fact here are two women who were part of King David's harem. Bathsheba's opening query, "Is this a friendly visit?" (v. 13, CEV) underlies the feeling of uneasiness about Adonijah's presence. However, his words that affirm the Lord's involvement in Solomon becoming king persuade Bathsheba that he has changed. Adonijah even calls Solomon "my brother" (v. 15). He requests that Abishag be given to him (a consolation prize for his loss of the kingdom even though "all Israel" had expected he to be king?). The language is one of property exchanging hands. Bathsheba naively sees no threat in Adonijah's words and approaches her son, King Solomon, with the request. He shows her great deference and public respect. He rises to greet her, bows to her, orders that a seat be brought, and has her seated on his right (v. 19). That she commands his love and respect is beyond dispute. She does, indeed, have enormous influence over her son. She asks permission to make a request, and using Adonijah's words, she concludes, "Do not refuse me" (v. 16, 20). King Solomon responds with the words of a loving son, calling Bathsheba "my mother" and promising, "I will not refuse you" (v. 20). However, Bathsheba's request infuriates Solomon as he realizes that his mother does not understand the possible consequences of her request. Both Adonijah as well as any male child born of the union could lay claim to the throne.

Lesson for November 15

Bible Studies for Life

Lesson for November 22

Treat Everyone Equally

Focal Passage: James 2:1-13

Jewish theologian Martin Buber wrote a book of autobiographical fragments entitled *Meetings*. In this collection of brief memories/meditations, he shares about his early childhood, and especially about the complete disappearance of his mother when around three years of age. Without a word one morning she was gone. Nothing was ever said by his father or his grandparents with whom he was sent to live the remainder of his childhood. This "unspoken" experience followed him the rest of his life. As a result, he created a word which he defined as "mismeeting" or "miscounter:" the failure of a real meeting between individuals. For Buber, the most important reality of living was what he called "meeting." In another book, he says, "all real living is meeting." He writes, *"When I meet a man, I am not concerned about his opinions. I am concerned about the man."* That is, what is important is the manner in which we meet others; the quality of each relationship. In his own words *"I think no human being can give more than this: making life possible for the other, if only for a moment."* A glaring problem had beset this community of faith: partiality. In Buber's words, they had failed to meet, engage the other whom they have encountered, making true life possible (if only for a moment). Instead, they had

focused their attention on the glamorous externals of worldly success rather than the internal simplicities of the heart and had neglected right actions and substituted spiritually right words. The term that is used in the text "partiality or favoritism" actually means "to judge in respect to the outward circumstances of men/women and not to their intrinsic merits, and so preferring as more worthy, one who is rich high-born, or powerful, to another who is destitute of such gifts." Thus, the gold-fingered man in brilliant clothing is embraced and honored while the shabby-clothed one is relegated to a place out of the way in the back or subjected to serving as footstools. They had forgotten a very important principle: a rule of the kingdom: *"You shall love your neighbor as yourself!"* That is, you are to love the other — **any other** irrespective of race, circumstances or religion with whom we live or whom we chance to meet. James implies that they thought that they were pretty good people. They obeyed the laws of God and because of certain who had joined their group they were reaping great financial benefits. But James points out that actually by disregarding the kingdom law of love they had broken all the laws. Partiality bears only death and judgement. And what profit or advantage is that? (James 2:14).



John Pond
Director of Missions, West Chowan Baptist Association

Watch Your Language

Focal Passage: James 3:1-18

"Words! Words! Words! I'm so sick of words! I get words all day through..." Perhaps you recognize the words above as lyrics from the musical "My Fair Lady" from a scene in which Eliza explodes in anger over all the pretty words that have been spoken to her with little action. In today's lesson James writes in a similar vein. He deals with the issue of words and how they are used. He warns those who answer the call to teaching — "Be careful what you say and be careful to do what you say." In Ecclesiasticus 14:1 we read, "Blessed is the man who has not offended with his tongue." Our words can build up or tear down another in an instant. Sometimes our words can convey a positive reality, but the tone sets a completely opposite reality. Sometimes language can appear innocent, yet be destructive in its use. In Rwanda there are three tribes: Tutsi, Hutu and Twa (or pigmy). In the language of Rwanda there are numerous classes of nouns. Within these classes there is a human class, numerous thing classes, place classes, and inanimate object classes. Sadly because the Twa are disliked by the Tutsi and Hutu people,

much of the terminology used to refer to them is found in the thing and inanimate class, rather than human class of nouns. Also, in the past much evangelism done by the various Christian denominations in Rwanda neglected the Twa people because they were seen not as people, but things! James writes, "With the tongue we praise our Lord, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be!" (3:9-10). How often have we heard or maybe said, after a holy time of worship, that the service was too long, or a testimony was too emotional, or the music was not to our liking, or "I didn't get anything out of today's service!" Decisions were made and God's Spirit blessed but there always seems to be someone quick to dampen or kill what blessed others. Oh, the fiery and strong power of our tongues! What does it require in order to speak with self-control and purity? James responds, "Wisdom which is not from below — earthy, unspiritual and demonic, but heavenly (from the breath of God) which is pure enough to approach God, in right relationship with God and men, sweetly reasonable, responsively submissive, merciful and fruitful (bearing fruit from mercy reflective of the Lord's heart), unwavering in mind, and truly genuine." Of such comes a harvest of righteousness and not empty kernels of deedless words.



Larry lost all hope when he lost his family because of his addictions; he found renewed hope in the support and encouragement at a new church that meets in a shopping center near his home.



Alejandro, a lonely newcomer to our country, discovered new friends and a new faith in a nearby church start, where his native language was spoken.



Cassandra, leaving her non-Christian religion behind, found new meaning for her life as she came to know Christ through the ministry of a new church.

Celebrate...

the work of God through Southern Baptists across North America.

New churches are being started. Lives are being changed.

In 2008 close to 1,600 Southern Baptist churches, representing more than 20 nationalities, were started. God used each of these church starts to change lives.

The Church Planting Group at NAMB believes that North America is an ever-changing, diverse mission field. New churches are desperately needed to reach the multiple unreached people groups and places that make up this diverse mission field. Planting new churches is one of the most effective evangelistic tools we have to reach North America for Christ.

**Celebrate! God is at work through Southern Baptists.
Starting churches. Transforming lives.**

Cultivate...

a commitment to God's passion for starting a new church.

Will you join your fellow North Carolina Baptists in this God-ordained task of starting churches? Will you let God use you to start a church, change a life?

North Carolina still has four and a half *million* lost/unreached people. That is more than half the population of our state! These individuals are your neighbors, your friends, your co-workers. To reach these unreached people, North Carolina Baptists need new churches!

"New churches can reach these lost North Carolinians for Christ. Every North Carolina Baptist can ask, 'What is my part in church planting? How am I to be involved in church planting?'"

— Mark Gray, Team Leader, Church Planting Team,
Baptist State Convention of North Carolina

Here is what you can do:

- Pray for God to send church planters to North Carolina.
- Become a partner in helping start a church.
- Give, either through the Cooperative Program, North Carolina Missions Offering or directly to a church plant.

Tell us about your church-starting commitment!

Fill out our church planting questionnaire at: www.trackingchurchplantingnc.org/ncsurvey.asp

Or, call North Carolina Baptists' Church Planting Team today, 1 800-395-5102, ext. 5548.

**Commit! Join your fellow North Carolina Baptists.
Let God use you to start a church, change a life.**



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