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Triad churches tackle economic challenge

Rich Fork shows 'Hope Lives'

By Norman Jameson BR Editor

ith Davidson County unemployment above 12 percent it seems every week another member of Rich Fork Baptist Church in Thomasville tells pastor Michael Bowers that he or she has lost a job.

The steady drip of bad news erodes hope like a leaky faucet rots floors.

To provide spiritual encouragement with practical help Rich Fork organized a "Hope Lives" event March 28 that saw 1,000 unemployed people or family members come to the church before noon for food boxes, clothes, encouragement and practical help from area colleges and social services agencies.

No registration was required because organizer Todd Shore said unemployed people are tired of standing in line and filling out forms.

That awareness gleaned from his own unemployment is why Bowers asked Shore to organize the event.

So many unemployed Rich Fork members and others volunteered that

(See Rich Page 10)

<image>

HELPING – Nancy Snider, center, holds her son, Matthew, while Amanda Kessler gives him a haircut at Rich Fork Baptist Church's "Hope Lives" event March 28.

Site offers economic ministry ideas

From staff reports

A new web site run by N.C. Baptist Men provides resources to help churches minister during the current economic crisis.

The site at *http://emt.ncbaptist.org* offers information that Baptist Men

tions and communities.

The site is meant to help church members become aware of the needs and provide practical tools to help meet them.

N.C. Baptist Men Executive Director Richard Brunson said early response to the web site has been

Faith Baptist 'Feeds the Need'

By Lisa Russell Motley

Special to the Recorder

People of Faith Baptist Church in Trinity took seriously Jesus' challenge to Peter, "If you love me, feed my sheep."

Based on that premise members of

the flock" in their community near High Point.

Prompted during a summer camp at Fort Caswell Baptist Assembly last summer, Faith Baptist Church member Jeff Foster organized Faith and nine other churches for a community event March 28 to raise awareness,

leaders hope will help churches meet the needs of people in their congregapositive.

(See Site Page 11)

the small Randolph County Baptist church organized an event to "feed

(See Faith Page 10)

Board to consider David Horton as Fruitland president

By Norman Jameson and Steve DeVane

BR Staff

avid Horton, pastor of Jamestown's Gate City Baptist Church the past 16 years, will be recommended to the Baptist State Convention Board of Directors as the eighth president of Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute when the board next meets May 19.

Horton, 48, was unanimously

selected April 3 from among four finalists interviewed by the Fruitland

search committee, chaired by Fruitland board chair George Cagle.

During the interviews, Horton "came to the top," Cagle said.

"He just did the best job answering the questions, and he's a great guy," said Cagle, who described Horton as "outgoing, energetic and personable."

Horton

"You need all that to put Fruitland out to the public," he said.



Horton graduated from UNC-Greensboro with a degree in psychology in 1987. He had attended Gardner-Webb University, but moved closer to home when his father died in 1980 to help his mother and two siblings.

It was "five years and three children later" before he was able to return to school.

He earned his master of divinity degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1992. Horton is a native of Hillsville, Va., 21 miles north of Mt. Airy. Born in the mountains, he's returning to the mountains, he said.

(See Board Page 11)



Author impacts Campbell students, p. 2 Baptist Men crowd finds 'Power of One,' p. 3 WMU-NC stresses call to love, p. 8

Carthage church ministers after shooting, p. 14

"I wake up every

morning and I

write today."

- Cecil Murphey

Prolific author impacts Campbell students

By Amanda Johnson

Special to the Recorder

ven the seemingly insignificant can become significant. Prolific author Cecil Murphey shared that belief with Campbell University students during a worship service in March.

"You're insignificant," an energetic Murphey told a crowd of nearly 600 undergraduate students. "No one knows who you are, but someone can come along and let you know you can do it."

Author of 112 books including 90 Minutes in Heaven with Don Piper, Murphey's role as a ghost writer has helped others share their inspiring tales, some of which he relayed to the audience.

"God gave him this moment," said Murphey about Piper. "And because of this moment, this man can be used by God."

Piper "died" after a car accident in 1984 and came back to life after spending 90 minutes in heaven, according to Murphey's account.

Piper's story intrigued junior English major Michael Tyndall, who played guitar and sang before Murphey took the stage.

"You don't really hear stories like



SIGNING – Cecil Murphey, who has written more than 100 books, recently visited Campbell University students.

that today," said Tyndall. "It reminds you of the miracles in the Bible."

Murphey used characters from the Bible to illustrate the importance of unsung heroes.

"Does anybody know the boy's name who gave Jesus his lunch?"

Murphey asked. "That's funny. Me neither," he said after a long pause, adding that no one knows the name of the boy whose offer of five loaves and two fish is told in John 6. The boy remains anonymous, despite the fact Jesus used his gift to miraculously feed over 5,000 people.

Murphey also humorously discussed how seemingly insignificant

experiences can significantly change a life. As a child, an episode with his Sunday School teacher scared Murphey away from church for years.

"One time my Sunday School teacher said, 'God

has his hands on you,"" said Murphey, vigorously imitating how his teacher shook him. "I said, 'No, you have your hands on me!""

Years later, Murphey learned the impact of this teacher on his life. At a reunion she told him she knew God had something special for him.

"What you don't know," she said, "is I have prayed for you every day since you came into my Sunday School class."

Terry Tucker, administrative assistant in the office of the campus minister and a religion major, felt Murphey's personal story "gives hope for students because it shows the

importance of prayer."

Murphey maintained his animated demeanor during a question-and-answer session later that evening where he discussed many aspects of his writing career. Murphey has worked with the likes of renowned surgeon Ben Carson and evangelist Franklin Graham. However, his most intriguing story wasn't about a famous per-

son, but an elderly death row inmate who admitted to murdering someone with rat poisoning. think, wow, I get to

"She had a conversion experience while she was awaiting trial," said Murphey, who spent six weeks with her prior to her execution.

He was almost a priest and psychiatrist in the situation, listening to her deepest confessions. "She told me she was ready to die in peace," he said.

Murphey said he really gets to know his subjects through simple conversation, but maintains his true passion is still writing and he spends six days a week fulfilling his passion.

"I wake up every morning and I think, wow, I get to write today," he said.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Johnson is a rising senior and journalism student at Campbell University.)

Churches' efforts prepare Children's Home cottage

By J. Blake Ragsdale

BCH Communications Associate

n the past months, church teams transported trailers filled with tools and supplies used to refurbish a Baptist Children's Homes (BCH) residential cottage. But the most important resources these individuals brought were themselves.

Groups of North Carolina Baptists donated their time, resources and individual skills to transform Mills Home's Bright-Brown Cottage in Thomasville. The cottage is being revitalized for boys who will participate in BCH's transitional living service, a newer aspect of BCH's residential care that provides specialized aid to older residents preparing for life as independent adults.

Churches including Bay Leaf Baptist Church in Raleigh, Pleasant Garden Baptist Church in Pleasant Garden, and Scotts Hill Baptist Church in Wilmington all stepped up to help. "Bay Leaf, Scotts Hill, and Pleasant Garden are three of our most strategic and influential North Carolina Baptist churches," says BCH president Michael C. Blackwell. "Having them work in unison at Bright-Brown Cottage has been inspirational to all of us at Baptist Children's Homes." Scotts Hill Baptist Church is involved in missions work within their community and beyond. A strong partnership with Baptist Children's Homes grew from the church's desire to develop a closer relationship with the 124-year-old institution. "We became closer through BCH's 'Food Roundup' last year, and decided we wanted to do even more," said Jimmie Suggs, Scotts Hill's pastor of administration and evangelism. "There was a need with Bright-Brown Cottage, and our church felt we had the gifts and skills to make



PAINTING – Pleasant Garden Baptist Church pastor Mike Barrett adds a new coat of paint to a wall.

the commitment."

The church sent four volunteer teams to Mills Home throughout a five-week period. The groups installed laminate flooring, painted bathroom cabinets, and completed additional painting jobs. Other churches picked up where they left off.

"We have a wonderful group of men known as the 'Bay Leaf Builders' who helped repair windows and doors, replaced glass, and did a whole lot of painting," said Bay Leaf Baptist Church business manager Will Warren. "It's really a witnessing tool for some of these men. They witness through their actions." The men stayed for an entire week sleeping in the cottage they helped refurbish. Throughout their stay, they spent time with residents sharing an occasional meal in their cottages and learning about the children they were there to help.



CUTTING – Members of Bay Leaf Baptist Church in Raleigh lend their skills to help revitalize Mills Home's Bright-Brown Cottage in Thomasville. Bay Leaf is one of several church groups volunteering their time and resources.

said. The church also assists and ministers at BCH's Oak Ranch in Sanford. "It's important to help them with their transition to life through a Christ-centered ministry, and that's what we love about it."

Volunteers are preparing the 576-acre property for the ministry. 'It just shows what can happen when ministers and laity commit their resources of labor and prayer to make better the lives of children," Blackwell said. And while churches' efforts help meet specific needs for BCH, Suggs believes the work is equally important for the churches. "We have a biblical mandate to care for the orphans and the defenseless," he said. "We are talking about a segment of society that must have intervention by the church. Scotts Hill sees BCH's mission as an extension of the work of the church. It's critical for all churches to carry out the mandate. One church can't do it by itself. BCH is a place for us to help and support the ministry so we can be obedient to God's word and the mission He has mandated." If your church would like to help Baptist Children's Homes, contact Brenda Gray at (800) 476-3669, ext. 1230, or at bbgray@bchfamily.org.

"You always get more than you give," Warren said. "You always walk away more blessed."

Pleasant Garden Baptist Church pastor Mike Barrett and men from his church helped revitalize Mills Home's Huffman Cottage, a transitional living cottage for girls, last year. Assisting at Bright-Brown and its transitional living service for boys was a natural follow-up choice.

"It gives these boys a safe place where they are loved and mentored for their next step in life," Barrett

Through transitional living, BCH teaches residents necessary life skills including managing bills, maintaining a budget, and determining appropriate living arrangements.

"When children leave our care, if they do not have strong family support, and many do not, they can have a difficult time on their own," Blackwell said. "We're helping teach them how to handle their new adult responsibilities before leaving BCH so they may achieve success once they have exited our care."

Bright-Brown will open its doors soon. With work at the cottage winding down, churches are already focusing on upcoming projects. Teams from Pleasant Garden, Scotts Hill and Bay Leaf will soon head to Camp Duncan, BCH's forthcoming girls wilderness camp in Aberdeen.

Baptist Men's crowd finds 'Power of One'

By Norman Jameson BR Editor

ore than 2,000 people flooded the 35th annual North Carolina Baptist Missions Conference in Charlotte March 20-21 to learn the power inherent in their individual lives.

"The Power of One" conference at Hickory Grove Baptist Church featured dozens of breakout sessions at which leaders of North Carolina Baptist Men's (NCBM) various ministries explained how the practical application of human touch during times of need can lead people to trust Christ.

Leaders of several international partnerships told about their challenges and how Baptist Men are helping to meet them.

Terry Rae, whose "Africa for Christ" efforts through the South African Baptist Mission has started more than 1,000 churches, brought two messages on the "power of one" to make a difference. Preaching from Ezekiel 22 he said the Church today is similar to that in the prophet's day when God was looking for someone to "stand in the gap" before Him on behalf of the land.

In America, Rae said, there is a

violent crime every 30 seconds, a rape every 15 minutes and a murder every 90 minutes - and it is worse in South Africa. The four bad characteristics God accused the Israelites of having are as true today, he said.

Rae said the church had become "dross," or the waste left over after refining precious metals; the people had become "dry," with "thunder from the pulpit but no shower of blessing from the Lord;" the church had become "desecrated" with no sense of the "divine;" and it had become "deceitful."

Rae told of watching in a South African game reserve a lion crouched in the tall grass while a wildebeest approached. He watched for more than 90 minutes anticipating a dramatic kill until the wildebeest spooked and ran. The long moments seemed like an instant because he was anticipating something dramatic.

"When did you last anticipate meeting God in church?" he asked.

Cheryl Allen, founder of Door of Hope that rescues babies through an anonymous door in the church wall, said her life was changed by a photograph of a discarded baby. Since her life change, more than 800 babies have been saved, including Georgina Smith, today a teenager who was



SPEAKERS – Cheryl Allen, left, reported on the Door of Hope ministry that saves babies in South Africa who otherwise would be abandoned on a garbage heap. Terry Rae told dramatic stories of how the "power of one" changed entire villages.

present to introduce Allen.

Georgina represents "all babies, their pain and potential," Allen said. It is a harsh world in which every 50 seconds a child is orphaned by AIDS and every three seconds a child dies.

Biju Thomas, founder of Transformation India Movement (TIM), detailed the progress of planting churches in villages where Christians have dug a deep water well. N.C. Baptist

Men has partnered with TIM the past two years and helped to find sponsors to adopt more than 50 villages and dig wells in more than 150 others.

'So many villages have heard the name of Jesus for the first time because of the bore wells," Thomas said.

He told of village fights over wells

(See Baptist Page 7)

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Exhibit offers meaningful experience

From staff reports

Two years ago, a "World Vision Experience" at a youth ministers' conference had a profound impact on Jeni Martin.

"When I came through, I said, 'Why is this for pastors? This is where our people should be," said Martin, who is now associate pastor of missions at First Baptist Church in Asheboro.

That desire will come to fruition May 3-10 as the church hosts the 3,000-square-foot "World Vision Experience: AIDS" in its Christian life center.

Martin said people who go through the interactive exhibit, which is called "Step into Africa," get an MP3 player that invites them to assume the life of an African child.

"I can tell you all about the little girl I was and her life," Martin said. required. They can be found at www. worldvisionexperience.org. Martin said the N.C. Zoo and

The event is free, but tickets are

the Randolph County Hospital are co-sponsoring the exhibit. Hospital workers will give AIDS screenings.

Those going through the experience will be given information about sponsoring a child in Kasitu, Uganda through World Vision.

Martin said she hopes Randolph County churches will develop a relationship with the Ugandan village.

Plans include annual trips to Kasitu by church and local community leaders. The N.C. Zoo already does work in Uganda, she said.

"The long-term goal is to create this sister relationship," Martin said.

More information about the exhibit can be found at www.worldvisionexperience.org/randolphcounty.



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➤ Sandy Run Baptist Association recently held a Bible Drill. Champions from Florence Baptist Church, Forest City, include, front row, left to right: Emily Elgin, David Hunt and Conrad Ruff. Back row, left to right: Tyler Bridges, John Bennett, Matt Bennett and Henry Elmore. The Bible Drillers, the Florence Baptist Church team, will represent the association at the N.C. Baptist Bible Drill. Charles Cobb is interim director at the association. Bobby Gantt is pastor at Florence.



➤ Lewisville Baptist Church, Lewisville, recently had a deacon's appreciation day at the church, giving plaques to those who've served more than 40 years. From left: Les Puryear, pastor; Al Garrison, 50 year deacon; Grace Conrad for her husband, Nick Conrad, more than 40 year deacon; Clarence White, more than 40 year deacon; and Raymond Hawkins, more than 40 year deacon. Not pictured: Leonard Hall, 50 year deacon.



Churches partner to help kids, reach community

By Steve DeVane

BR Managing Editor

A Baptist church in Thomasville held an "educational summit" March 28 to help local students finish the school year strong.

About 50 children and 150 of their family members attended the event at Greenwood Baptist Church. The congregation partnered with First Missionary Baptist Church, a black congregation about a mile from Greenwood.

Mike Ferguson, the pastor at Greenwood, said the summit was successful.

"It was a really good day," he said. "I was thankful for the way things turned out."

Teachers tutored students to help them prepare for end-of-grade tests. Other teachers met with parents to tell them how to help their children get ready for the tests.

"The main thrust was to help them finish the year strong," Ferguson said. "We invited them to show we care."

Representatives from local schools and community colleges talked with high school students about requirements for graduation and for attending college. Exhibit booths focused on areas such as job training and teen pregnancy awareness.

White, black and Hispanic children attended the summit, according to Ferguson. Translators were there to help the Hispanic children.

"We tried to reach out to different groups," he said.

Ferguson said he was pleased with the partnership with First Missionary Baptist Church.

"It's really neat how the Lord worked it all out," he said. "It's good for our church to be stretched and know we're not the only believers in the area."

Ferguson said the churches might work together on other projects. A similar event might be held just before the next school year starts, he said.

"We both have the same desire to reach our community," he said.

Opportunity Corner

Baptist Men announces disaster relief training

North Carolina Baptist Men (NCBM) announces a series of disaster training opportunities throughout North Carolina.

• May 1-2 – Region 5 –Guilford County

• May 29-30 – Region 7 – Caldwell County

• June 12-13 – Region 9 – Henderson County

Specific locations will be announced to registrants the week before the event.

The short time frame for informa-

N.C. Campers on Mission plan rallies

The North Carolina Campers on Mission (NCCOM) State Spring Rally will be held April 16-19 at Denton Farm Park near Denton.

Pre-rally activities are planned for Thursday with the rally officially underway on Friday and ending after lunch on Sunday.

Another State Rally will occur in

tion simulates emergency response.

In 2008, more than 1,400 people were trained and prepared for service in disaster relief through these weekend seminars. Volunteers receive basic training in mass feeding, recovery, emergency childcare, water purification, chaplaincy or shower/ laundry set up. Volunteers also learn the history, policies, procedures and technical training for the area they choose.

Visit *www.baptistsonmission.org* for more information.

a work week at Camp Cale beginning June 1.

Central Area — Aug. 6-9 at Hagan-Stone Park in Pleasant Garden (near Greensboro).

For registration call Ed Parks at (252) 977-7357 or Pete Butler at (252) 972-7828.

To learn more about NCCOM,

➤ First Baptist Church, Dublin, AWANA "Trek" club sponsored a "March Madness" basketball tournament March 14 to support missions. The youth boys played the men while the youth girls played the ladies. Other served as cheerleaders, worked concessions or officiated the game. About 350 spectators contributed more than \$1,000 to support AWANA clubs the church sponsors in India & Indonesia. Cameron L. McGill is pastor.

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September.

Each of the three NCCOM areas conducts an annual rally:

Western Area — May 14-17 at Ridgecrest followed by a work week May 18-21, also at Ridgecrest. Eastern Area — May 29-31 at Camp Cale near Hertford followed by



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Lending a Hand at Woodland Hills church

By Douglas Baker

BSC Communications

SHEVILLE – At first glance Pat Hand seems nothing like the itinerant evangelist he once was some 30 years ago. Walk into his office and you immediately get the feeling that this is no ordinary pastor.

From the African carvings on his floor to the pictures on his wall, this is a man who has been around the world and served in some of the most oppressive places on earth. When listening to this 54-year-old man, there is a sense that he has passed through many iterations of ministry and begins, in his words, "his last pastorate" with a certain sense of determination to finish well.

Many unexpected tributaries jut across the landscape of his life. From Canada to upstate New York, he has served churches separated from "Southern" religion with its accompanying stereotypes (both good and bad) of life in America's southeast. He comes to Woodland Hills from Istrouma Baptist Church, a large Southern Baptist church in Baton Rouge, La., whose most famous pastor, Forrest Pollock, died in an airplane crash last year in North Carolina. When he first arrived in Asheville late last summer as the official candidate for the office of Woodland Hills' senior pastor he immediately felt that "God had been strategically preparing this church for a bold leap forward — something which I sensed throughout the entire process with the search team," Hand said.

"There was never any doubt in my mind that this church had made some critical decisions which placed it on a track to impact those outside its four walls, and I was quickly drawn to such a ministry."

Normally such changes do not come easily to congregations in what Hand terms "a standard Southern Baptist church." When pressed about his standardization of Southern Baptists, he is somewhat open about the fact that so many SBC churches seem to exist to reach other Baptists or run programs able to serve people like them through a certain conforming of outward forms into a "be like me pattern."

In the 120 days he has served as Woodland Hills' pastor, worship attendance has increased by over 100 and the church has already established a second worship service to accommodate new guests who arrive every week.

"Many of the young families who are new to our church are the children of Southern Baptists who left church after they left high school never wanting to return," he said. Those children are now young adults with their own children and they begrudgingly "want to give church a second chance."

Yet, Hand is noticing a clear pattern as he talks with this group of visitors: they want nothing to do with the worship services and ministry programs of

> GARDNER-WEBB UNIVERSITY PASTORS' SCHOOL May 25-27, 2009

their past. "Many feel as if what they grew up with made it easy to hide and masquerade real life issues," he said.

In contrast, Hand is always quick to remind this generation of church drop-outs that what they left as teenagers can all too easily be replicated in their own lives if they aren't careful.

"The same legalism and phoniness so many of them remember can become their own experience if they aren't becoming better disciples of Jesus Christ," Hand says. Here is where "we have missed it. Never are we instructed in the New Testament to simply preach for decisions or to make converts. We are called to make disciples and that is a very messy process — one I'm not quite sure most of us are willing to embrace."

Hand sees a tension in Scripture — a radical obedience to Jesus that requires people to be holy even as God is holy and a compelling openness and willingness to intentionally be among lost people as an act of love to God for their souls and their eternal destiny.

"Unfortunately," Hand says, "it takes time to get to know people and build relationships. And honestly, we just are a bit too good to be around people who are lost, who aren't like us, who might offend us, who might cause us to be uncomfortable simply because in many ways we have abandoned the way Jesus evangelized." As a pastor, he is learning to "enjoy people who are still trapped in sin." Jesus made quite a statement when he "was publicly seen

eating with sinners, and we must imitate Jesus." Hand is quick to state, however, that engagement with the culture never allows the Christian to simply be with lost people without calling them to repentance at some point just as Jesus did.

"Perhaps not immediately, but over time we must share the gospel with them," he said.

When Hand speaks of the gospel he quickly sweeps through the entire Bible highlighting the acts of God planned from "before the foundation of the world which were done at precisely the right time by the right man — the God/man — so that a real relationship with God could be restored to sinners." Hands sees the ongoing ministry of the

gospel advancing through God's greatest evangelistic tool — the church.

"When my wife and I were praying about where God would send us, we knew we wanted a church that was ready to move forward in a serious way to reach lost people and we only looked at churches with an elder system of church government," he said. This would come as a shock to many Southern Baptists who view elders as a rare (even unbiblical) form of church government. He embraces the elder model because "there is safety among other counselors and men of God who are capable of bringing wisdom and insight into areas where I am not gifted or seeing things clearly." As for the city of Asheville with its high concentration of homosexuals, Wiccans and urbanites who have little regard for the church, Hand "loves the community because it is a mission field filled with people who care very little about Jesus or the gospel." Of course, many could find it difficult to minister here. "If all I want to do is tell homosexual jokes and speak of environmentalists as some sort of crazy people, then it is obvious that I do not love these people enough to care about how to reach out to them and seek to understand what is motivating them to sinfully act in the way they do," he says. "I must biblically speak to their condition from a posture of humility as I



LEADING — Pat Hand, pastor of Woodland Hills Baptist Church, said they recently added another service to accommodate more people.

too am a sinner in need of Jesus." Hand's challenge is just where to begin in a city filled with so many lost people.

For him, it starts by thinking like a missionary in his community. While attending a recent training session at the International Learning Center of the International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in Richmond, Va., Hand observed that the young people in their 20's and 30's who were training to go to countries across the world were "accommodating their dress and lifestyle to that of the people they were serving." Hand wants that same missiological principle to be employed in Asheville at Woodland Hills. "Why don't we think like those missionaries do?" he asks. "We should work to engage our culture with the

"We are called to make disciples and that is a very messy process — one I'm not quite sure most of us are willing to embrace." — Pat Hand gospel and not ask them to conform to us in ways which would cloud the gospel."

Woodland Hills is a church changing almost daily, Hand says. There was a time not long ago

when many thought the congregation was trapped in a death spiral certain to end up on the ash heap of Southern Baptist history. It seemed as though it could not break free of the inertia of nostalgia and resisted the necessary changes which had to take place in order to reach the lost in Asheville. Yet the church has undergone radical changes and is now on a path toward what Hand hopes will be a trajectory of growth. While shedding some of the most visible Southern Baptist identifiers, Hand is adamant the church remains a cooperating congregation in the "network of churches who cooperate together to actually do missions."

Not shy about stating what to him is "obvious about the Southern Baptist Convention" he is, nevertheless, hopeful that the denomination can passionately re-invent itself "before it is too late." He believes there is a short window of opportunity for something radical to take place in the SBC "before the apex of Cooperative Program giving is reached, followed by a steep and dramatic downturn in the denomination's engine because younger pastors are not giving to the Cooperative Program.' Hand is not sure Southern Baptists can recover if local churches do not reassert themselves as the primary agent of evangelism and discipleship. For him, church is not an event. He often reminds the congregation that they must not merely "do" church but they must "be" the church. "Without apology, we must recommit ourselves to a conservative theology with a progressive methodology that is able to connect with the lost people in our communities." Absent that, Hand says, "we cannot expect the SBC or evangelicalism as we know it to last long beyond our lifetime." "The gospel must anchor this ministry, and I am hopeful that soon we can work to plant other churches to reach this city for Christ. I want this church to be known as a place where the gospel is real, the Bible is preached and disciples are made.'

Key Program Personalities

ROBERT D. DALE is Special Assistant to the Executive Director for Leadership Development of the Virginia Baptist Mission Board and Leadership Coach. Dr. Dale is the author of "Seeds for the Future" and over twenty other books on congregational leadership. He also served as Professor of Pastoral Leadership and Church Ministries at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

ROBERT W. CANOY is the Dean of the School of Divinity at Gardner-Webb University. An accomplished academician, he has also served at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Dr. Canoy is also a veteran pastor serving churches in Kentucky, Iowa, Missouri, Maryland, and most recently First Baptist Church of Shelby, North Carolina.

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For more information contact John Bridges, Director of Church Relations at Gardner-Webb University, at 704.406.3008 or jfbridges@gardner-webb.edu.

CBF-NC embraces evangelism at meeting

By Steve DeVane BR Managing Editor

FAYETTEVILLE — The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina (CBF-NC) focused on evangelism March 20-21 at its annual General Assembly.

The meeting at Snyder Memorial Baptist Church in Fayetteville included an evangelism track of breakout sessions, testimonies and sermons stressing the need to tell people about Jesus. More than 1,100 people registered for the weekend meeting.

Fred Craddock, who was called one of the country's best preachers by Newsweek magazine, was keynote speaker. The meeting's theme was "Use Words if Necessary: Embracing Authentic Evangelism."

Craddock preached at both worship services and answered questions during a dialogue session the first afternoon. His sermons and responses stressed the importance of telling people about Jesus.

"Faith comes by hearing, but how can they hear unless someone is saying something?" he said.

Christians who say they just witness with their lives are copping out, Craddock said. Many Christians think that it's enough to just "walk the walk," he said.

"There's only one problem with that — it's not the truth," he said. "Somebody has to talk the talk."

Craddock talked about Jesus' words in Matthew 12, which says that by words people are justified and by words people are condemned.

"In my experience, there is nothing more powerful than the right word at



DIALOGUE — Fred Craddock, right, the Bandy Distinguised Professor of Preaching and New Testament Emeritus at Emory University's Candler School of Theology, makes a point duirng the "Elevating Preaching Conference" March 20, part of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina General Assembly at Snyder Memorial Baptist Church in Fayetteville. Charles Bugg, left, moderated the session.

the right time from the right person," Craddock said.

Talking about something important is hard, he said.

"Nervousness is the way the body honors the seriousness of what you're doing," he said.

Craddock said Christians have gotten scared of using the word evangelism because of charlatans who are "always boiling water but never making any soup."

"So we've avoided the word and also the activity," he said.

In a breakout session, Rendell Hipps, minister of education and discipleship at First Baptist Church in Hickory, suggested that instead of tossing out the word, churches should work to reclaim it. Hipps and Todd Blake, pastor of Mount Pisgah Baptist Church in Fayetteville, led a workshop on "Nurturing the Conversation of Evangelism in Your Church: a Local Church Discernment Process."

Hipps and Blake are both members of CBF-NC's Evangelism Task Force. The task force is an outgrowth of CBF-NC's 2007 Strategic Plan, which listed evangelism as a common concern or need among CBF-NC churches.

The plan called for the formation of a group "to explore evangelism needs, to develop a healthy philosophy/theology for evangelism; to develop a strategy for congregational evangelism; and to explore the relationship between being a missional church and evangelism."

Hipps and Blake presented a "coaching approach" to helping churches with evangelism that doesn't tell them how to do it, but helps them "ask the right questions." They said outreach must be about spiritual formation as well as evangelism or "it won't work."

Also during its General Assembly, CBF-NC adopted a 2009-10 budget of \$1.19 million, an 8.87 percent increase over the previous year. The organization also expects to receive another \$1.6 million through its Mission Resource Plan to be passed on to N.C. Baptist agencies and institutions and other Baptist groups.

Most CBF-NC related churches also support the work of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina through the Cooperative Program.

CBF-NC Executive Coordinator Larry Hovis said in his report that CBF-NC has experienced doubledigit financial growth over the last five years, but he remains concerned about whether the group will have resources to meet ministry expectations.

"There is a limited amount of growth we can expect from church budgets, so we must explore alternative avenues for resources," Hovis said.

CBF-NC also took up an offering for Living Faith Ministry in Lebanon at the meeting. More than \$7,000 was contributed, which is \$2,000 more than the offering at any previous CBF-NC meeting.

Proper question not 'ordination' but 'calling'

By Steve DeVane BR Managing Editor

MOUNT OLIVE — Asking whether women should be ordained to the ministry is the wrong question, according to Baptist professor Curtis Freeman.

"The question is, 'Who is being gifted in the church?" said Freeman, professor of historical theology and director of the Baptist House of Studies at Duke Divinity School. "Where are those gifts being displayed?"

Freeman was guest lecturer at Mount Olive College's Vivian B. Harrison Memorial Lecture March 10 with the theme, "And Your Daughters Shall Prophecy: Women's Voices in the Church." in pamphlets, which were cheaply reproduced and available to a wide audience.

"The pamphlet was like the 17th century Internet," Freeman said.

Historical records indicate that the women influenced early English General and Particular Baptists, according to Freeman.

"Through their writings they surely attained an even wider audience," he said.

"Yet there was also a tension between the prophetic voices of these women, the gathered churches and the wider society that eventually re-



"It's not about women in ministry," he said. "It's first about this principle of calling."

The second conviction of Watts Street church was what Freeman called "openness to more light from the Word." For many the issue of women in ministry is settled, one way or the other. But others remain searching and open.

"It's a sense that our understanding is growing," he said.

Freeman said Watts Street was also committed to stand together with others under the rule of Christ. An ordination council from the local as-

He also preached during the school's chapel service that day.

Freeman said ordination doesn't give one the gift of preaching. Ordination is instead the church recognizing that gift, he said.

"The point is the church doesn't really call people into ministry," he said. "We help people discern God's call on their life."

The lectures included an overview of four 17th century Baptist women who wrote about their spiritual experiences. They were among nine known Baptists and 38 others who wrote in that period.

In all, about 300 prophetesses were active in England between 1640 and 1660, Freeman said.

The four Baptist women wrote at least 748 pages of material, many

fused to swallow their prophetic pill."

Freeman said that revolutionary forces in England at the time had destabilized power and forces that "long had kept women in their place."

"The social spaces that opened up enabled women not just to think freely but to speak their minds freely," he said.

"Yet as the Baptist movement became organized and institutionalized many of the more egalitarian expressions of the early days dissipated."

These and other women who spoke out were on the fringes of the early Baptist churches, Freeman said.

"Maybe these women standing on the edge see something those of us at the center of the church can't see," he said.

Freeman said women have found a space to share their voices during other periods of social upheaval, such as the American Revolution, the western frontier and the Equal EXPLAINING — Curtis Freeman talks after his lecture at Mount Olive College. Freeman is professor of historical theology and director of the Baptist House of Studies at Duke Divinity School.

Rights Amendment issue. He asked if churches could find a way to create such a space without waiting for culture to create it.

Freeman used the story of the first woman ordained by a Southern Baptist church to suggest three essential elements of discernment used by the church.

Addie Davis was ordained by Watts Street Baptist Church in Durham on Aug. 9, 1964.

The church was "committed to the practice of calling out the called," Freeman said. Such a call includes both inward discernment and outward confirmation, he said. sociation examined Davis.

"Because a local congregation stands under the immediate rule of Christ, it has the power to call its own ministers, celebrate the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and administer the keys of church discipline," he said. "Yet no congregation is independent. It is interdependent with those who 'walk by the same rule.""

Freeman said this is a "hard word," since all Baptists don't agree.

"Sometimes I'd like it to be me and Jesus, but in the end I don't think that's the way it is," he said.

The challenge of standing together will take patience and humility, Freeman said.

"It is the vector of the Baptist vision that suggests that we find our way together," he said.

"Ultimately, it is not a matter of gender or ordination, but of spiritual discernment."

Baptist Men's crowd finds 'Power of One'

(*Continued from Page 3*)

and of 70 percent of government sponsored wells no longer functioning in his adopted state of Bihar.

"Indians are extremely happy that Christians have come to help them," he said.

His hope is that the wells "are a place where people find Jesus in a way they never expected."

Ukraine ministry

Pastor Janos, speaking through an interpreter, said the involvement of N.C. Baptists with gypsy ministry in the Ukraine is opening many doors because locals "don't understand why Americans come to help gypsies."

People who are "just wondering what is going on here" see the "hand of God" and feel "the grace of God" through the ministry.

For the first time, "the city is paying attention to us, a cast out and rejected nation," Janos said of his gypsy people. He said he has been invited to lunch with the city's mayor, an "impossible" idea until recently when no government official would be disposed to meet with a gypsy.

He told of gypsy Christians "kneeling in the mud together and we were rejoicing" at the developments in their city of Munkacs. "God gave us not only grace, but favor," he said.

The central element of the Ukrainian project is a large, square brick building that previous Russian occupiers used as a KGB listening station. It is being converted into a community center with many features, including housing, food and clothing distribution, tutoring and facilities for a church.

Learning 'how to'

Participants streamed to "How To" missions action conferences in the morning and afternoon of the second day. They included sessions on each of the N.C. Baptist Men partnerships and ministries, such as handyman, agricultural, disaster relief, aviation, medical/dental and others.

Chuck Register, Baptist State Convention executive leader for church planting and missions development, led a session for churches looking for a way to meet rising economic needs in their communities and among their congregations. People who could not crowd into the room stood in the hallways at both doors.

"Helping people who are experiencing economic pain is not an option for the church," said Register, who last year was pastor of First Baptist Church, Gulfport, Miss., whose facility and city was decimated by Hurricane Katrina. "It is a direct command from the lips of Jesus. The church cannot ignore the second commandment, '...love your



TRANSLATING — Gypsy pastors are turning an abandoned KGB listening post in the Ukraine into an area wide ministry center with the help of North Carolina Baptists. At right, Pastor Janos talks abou the doors that are opening in the Ukraine because of N.C. Baptists' work with gypsies. Janos spoke through an interpreter, left.

neighbor as yourself.""

Register discussed a new economic ministry website launched and being developed by N.C. Baptist Men in partnership with the BSC to help churches and individuals with answers and practical ministry plans (See story, page 1). The site is designed, he said, "to provide North Carolina Baptists with a biblical foundation for economic ministry through the four-week sermon and Bible studies series and an electronic network for the sharing of practical 'how to ministries' with churches all across the world wide web."

Jimmy Joseph, chaplain at Pender Correctional Institution, provided some practical perspectives for those who would heed Jesus' admonition to visit prisoners. There are two ways to approach the same idea, he said, and both are not correct.

It would be counterproductive to declare on a visit that "all Muslims are going to hell," he said. Instead, a Christian who says, "Faith in Jesus is necessary for salvation," is giving appropriate witness and will find a much more receptive audience. "Den't be afraid to tastify to your faith " he said

"Don't be afraid to testify to your faith," he said

to those who would visit. "You're a religious volunteer. That's what we expect. But do it in a positive manner."

Lew Witherspoon said outdoor ministry in the local church is trying to reach two kinds of men: the "marginal man" who shows up on some Sundays, and the non-believer.

"If you try to get this guy to church on Sunday morning, good luck," said Witherspoon. "Let's go to him, get him in his territory and seek him that way."

That means outdoor ministry is more than an annual wild game dinner, Witherspoon said. Active Christians who enjoy hunting, fishing, boating, biking and four-wheeling need to consciously schedule and conduct events to which they can invite and embrace non-Christian friends.

Bill Martin, leading a handyman ministry session, said the power of one conference theme is demonstrated in "one bush hog, one chain saw, one deck built."

"If we're ever going to change this world, we've got to work with each other," he said.

Church musician, Reynolds, dies

Americans open to outreach from churches, individuals

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Despite worries among evangelicals that can believers should learn from this research is that many of your

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) William J. Reynolds, church musician, composer, arranger, editor, hymnologist and distinguished professor emeritus of church music at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, died March 28. He was 88. Born April 2, 1920, in Atlantic, Iowa, Reynolds was the nephew of I.E. Reynolds, a pioneer in gospel music at Southwestern Seminary for 30 years. I.E. Reynolds established systematic training of church musicians at the seminary in 1915 and William J. Reynolds followed in his uncle's footsteps. Among Reynolds' hundreds of compositions and arrangements, most Southern Baptists would be familiar with "Share His Love" and "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus." "Dr. Reynolds has the wonderful reputation of being a complete and multifaceted church musician," said Stephen P. Johnson, dean of the School of Church Music at Southwestern. "As composer, conductor, hymnologist, author, director of the church music department at the Baptist Sunday School Board (now

LifeWay Christian Resources) and teacher, he encouraged generations of church musicians in their creation and performance of quality church music. Because of his love for all aspects of church music in many styles, he was a beloved colleague of church musicians ranging from smaller rural churches to large congregations in the United States and beyond. His contribution to church music throughout the Southern Baptist Convention was scholarly, practical, inspiring and enduring." Reynolds composed more than 700 choral anthems, hymn tunes, children's songs and other types of songs. From 1946 to 1955, Reynolds was minister of music and youth at First Baptist Church of Ardmore, Okla., and later was minister of music at First Baptist Church of Oklahoma City. For 25 years he served with the church music department of the Sunday School Board [now LifeWay Christian Resources]. In 1980, he was appointed to the faculty of Southwestern Seminary as professor of church music, serving there until his retirement in 1998.

Americans are set against attending church, most people would attend if invited in the right manner.

A recent study by the North American Mission Board (NAMB) and LifeWay Research found that 67 percent of Americans say a personal invitation from a family member would be effective in getting them to visit a church. A personal invitation from a friend or neighbor would effectively reach 63 percent.

"We want to help Christians discover what approaches work best in today's culture," said Ken Weathersby, senior strategist for evangelization at the NAMB. "It's not about changing the gospel, but determining how best to share it."

Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) are willing to receive information about a local congregation or faith community from a family member, and 56 percent are willing to receive such information from a friend or neighbor.

"The primary lesson North Ameri-

unchurched friends are ready for an invitation to conversation," said Ed Stetzer, director of LifeWay Research. "Unbelievers next door still need a simple, personal invitation to talk, to be in community and to church."

The survey, commissioned by NAMB and conducted by LifeWay Research, may be the largest survey ever conducted on Americans' receptivity to different methods of church invitations. LifeWay Research surveyed more than 15,000 adults in December 2008 using a random, demographically balanced, stratified sample of Americans. NAMB commissioned the research as one of the steps to prepare for "God's Plan for Sharing," its national evangelism initiative that will launch in 2010.

Out of 13 approaches tested, personal invitations from family members or friends is the only method that a majority of Americans say would effectively draw them to church.

Called to Love

WMU-NC stresses theme at meeting

By Dianna L. Cagle *BR Assistant Managing Editor*

IDGECREST — "WMU has brought the house down," Ruby Fulbright quipped March 20 during the first session of the annual meeting of the Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina (WMU-NC).

Actually, the outside ceiling covering the porch of the registration building at LifeWay's Ridgecrest Conference Center collapsed a little more than two hours earlier.

Some 925 ladies attended many breakout sessions to learn about missions near and far and tips for doing WMU better for various age groups.

"It's about loving Him and loving them," said Haven Parrott, featured speaker. Each of the sessions for Missions Extravaganza focused on the "Called to Love" theme based on Matt. 22:37-39.

Parrott, discipleship and outreach coordinator for First Baptist Church in Kannapolis, said "real life begins with Christ" and warned about the "fiercest enemy" — religion.

"It is in the relationship to Him that we begin to resemble Him," said Parrott, who led sessions over the weekend. "We sometimes live as if God had given us a great command and a great idea," with the great command being to love God and the great idea being to love others.

But both are commands, Parrott said, and both involve death.

"Death to our convenience, comfort, claim on our time, money and ... death to purposelessness, selfishness," she said.

In spite of the fun and learning that took place, Parrott reminded participants that "God has not saved us for conference Christianity. He has saved us for confrontational Christianity."

More work is ahead for the ladies. The reason for the retreat is to advance, said Parrott, using military terminology to explain.

"There is work left to do," she said, encouraging them to exhibit tough love in their relationships, a love that is not about how they feel. The love they need is:

- Regardless love
- Relentless love
- Redemptive love

WMU-NC status

WMU-NC ended 2008 in good financial shape despite not meeting its \$1.2 million Heck-Jones Of-



REVVING — Missions Extravaganza participants get revved up March 21 with a biker pastor. Mike and Charlene Beasley, of Freedom Biker Church in Angier, shared with the ladies during the session, as well as leading individual breakouts about how to minister to motorcyclists. View photo gallery online.



SPEAKING — Haven Parrott, from left, Ruby Fulbright and Rosalie Hunt address women at the 118th annual meeting of the Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina (WMU-NC). Parrott, featured speaker, touched on the "Call to Love" theme during several sessions over the weekend. Fulbright, center, executive director/treasurer of WMU-NC, gives her report to delegates. Hunt, right, portrayed Ann Judson, March 20 and shared the idea of being a living sacrifice.

Union of North Carolina did not receive the North Carolina Missions Offering (NCMO)," said Beth Beam, who represented the finance committee.

The BSC removed WMU-NC from its NCMO offering in 2008 when the relationship between the two organizations officially changed.

Beam said WMU-NC needs \$110,000 monthly to meet its budget.

The 2009 budget of \$1.3 million includes new ministries including poverty initiatives, Summerfest, family missions and military ministry.

The new officers for 2009: Delores Thomas, president; Tana Hartsell, first vice president; Chris Harker, vice president of development; Tammi Ward, recording secretary; and Beth McDonald, assistant recording secretary. Harker's position was a new addition to the bylaws. Instead of a second vice president, which was standard before, WMU-NC added the vice president of development to have someone who can help raise money. The new position will not be in line for the presidency and is not limited by term. tionship to the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC).

The Articles of Incorporation:

- change age of voting delegates from 16 to 18;
- remove a requirement that delegates have to
- be from BSC churches;

• change address of headquarters to current location;

• correct legal name in document from North Carolina Woman's Missionary Union to Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina to maintain consistency throughout the documents.

Case said if you participate in a WMU group, you're a WMU member but to be a voting delegate you have to be registered at the meeting and be 18 or older.

fering goal in 2008.

WMU-NC finished 2008 with a \$71,557 net loss based solely on 2008 income, but had funds to make up the difference.

"We are encouraged about how we ended the 2008 year considering that the Woman's Missionary

Article changes

Two listening sessions allowed delegates to learn about changes to the WMU-NC's articles of incorporation and bylaws that were voted on March 21.

Wendy Case, part of the WMU-NC executive board, said making the changes was a four-year process mainly cleaning up wording and making sure policy is in sync with bylaws.

Some of the changes were necessitated by a change in rela-

The first change in the bylaws adds a membership definition, which was required by the national WMU.

"We made a change in our relationship," Case said. "We wanted to continue indicating a partnership with the Baptist State Convention."

The BSC balked in 2006 when WMU-NC proposed a change in the term describing the relationship between the two entities as "partners."

Now the wording reads "laborers together in Christian work with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina ..."

"We haven't changed the work," Case said. "Co-laborers is our national watchword. We didn't change our mission. We didn't change our relationship."

The number of at-large members to the Executive Board (30) increased as did the number allowed to be elected each year (10).

Case said the reason is that members of the nominating committee now are part of the board. Because of the relationship change, BSC staff

(See Called Page 16)



SINGING — Sheryl Boyd, from left, Lamona Lawrence, Mary Ellen Bowman and Susan Tacker make up One Accord, a group from Arkansas who led music during Missions Extravaganza.

Youth minister channels 'Force' to win audience

By Rick Houston

Special to the Recorder

ntil meeting Mike Johnson, youth minister at Antioch Baptist Church in Taylorsville, you just thought you liked Star Wars.

You might recognize Darth Vader as one of the most iconic bad guys in the history of film, but Johnson is Darth Vader. Really.

A member of the Carolina Garrison of the 501st Legion, a world-wide Star Wars costuming group, Johnson has made at least 50 public appearances in full Vader regalia.

He dons the famous mask and helmet, and the cape, armor and light saber. Johnson has also rigged his iPod to loop Vader's infamous raspy breathing sound effect. It's an outfit meticulously researched from head to toe.

It's also an outfit that has helped him connect with the kids in his church, as well as those he visits during appearances with the Carolina Garrison.

"We make hospital visitations, and I get to see kids' faces light up as Darth Vader comes into the room," Johnson says. "It seems as though they're not sick any more, in a way. They get to see their favorite Star Wars character come in and call them by name.

"For me to be Darth Vader for a child who has cancer or who is terminally ill in the hospital, in a way, that's me leaving God's fingerprints on the world because I'm able to bring joy to somebody's life for a moment in time."

Johnson is also a big fan of Tranformers, the toys that change from various types of vehicles into robots through a series of moves only a kid - or a kid at heart - could manage. He also likes comic books and anything else, he says, that's "geeky."



And don't think for a second that the young people at Antioch don't notice.

"A lot of the time, I consider myself being a big kid who just went to school to be a youth minister," Johnson says with a laugh.

"With the children, I don't so much use the symbolism within Star Wars because it's harder for them to grasp. But with the youth,

I can use that kind of thing. They can grasp those concepts a little easier."

Reaction from fellow staff and members at Antioch

has been very positive. Then again, who's going to mess with Darth Vader?

"I've had a lot of closet Star Wars fans come out," Johnson says, again with an infectious chuckle. "Until they were able to see me as Darth Vader at one of our trunk-or-treats,



OUTREACH – Mike Johnson uses his love of all things Star Wars in ministry efforts. Johnson, seen left and above dressed as Darth Vader, uses his costume to bring joy to people through Halloween events as well as marching in parades and visiting hospitals. He looped his iPod to mimic Vader's breathing sound effect.

that's when they began talking to me about Star Wars."

More than once, Johnson has used illustrations from the Star Wars universe in lessons.

Remember the scene from The Empire Strikes Back where Luke fails to lift his X-Wing fighter out of the swamp, and Yoda responds that it's because he doesn't believe? The 27-

year-old Johnson "It has become a strong tool says it's a perfect metaphor for Philippians 4:13, where Paul writes, "I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens

me" (Holman CSB).

Then there was the time he used a Transformer in a lesson. He went through all the steps, changing the toy from a vehicle to a robot. It looked complicated, sure, but with practice, it becomes easier.

His point was this: To some, living

as a Christian may seem difficult. But with practice ... sure enough ... it becomes easier.

"It has become a strong tool for me to use within ministry, to connect with kids," says Johnson, who made his first Vader public appearance in May 2005.

"I think a lot of times that's kind of where youth ministry lacks. We can teach God's word and relate that to them, but sometimes we forget that we need to connect with our kids, too.

"I always think it's cool to be able to connect with kids, and be able to get on their level. I think that's when true ministry starts, whenever we begin to show kids that we love them and care enough about them (to become) involved in their world ... that we can get down on their level and be personal with them. And being personal with them, we're able to show them a God who is personal, too."

(EDITOR'S NOTE - Houston is awriter in Yadkinville.)

N.C. Acteen selected for WMU's national panel

Staff and wire reports

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. - National Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) has selected Mary Caitlin Clark of Galeed Baptist Church in Bladenboro as one of six teens to serve on the 2009 National Acteens Panel.

Acteens is the WMU missions organization for teenage girls in grades 7–12.



Clark was chosen for



for me to use within minis-

try, to connect with kids."

- Mike Johnson

Last year she went to Pennsylvania to help with Camp Angel Tree, a camp for children of prisoners. Clark shared her testimony March 22 at the

118th annual meeting of the Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina.

"Acteens has enabled me to serve God," she said. She shared her experience of helping provide wells to an African village and her life in school.

"Every day in public school listening to profanity, witnessing illegal and immoral activity," Clark said she finds it a tough environment but her friends in Acteens have supported her.

her outstanding leadership and strong missions involvement.

The WMU Foundation also awarded her a \$1,000 scholarship from the Jessica Powell Loftis Endowment for Acteens. WMU leaders said Clark actively seeks to share the love of Christ

in word and deed. She participates in missions projects and trips and leads conferences at Acteens retreats.

"I feel that God has blessed me with a missions heart and a burden for other people," Clark said. "Missions has helped me realize that not everyone has it as good as some people, and we have to help each other and show the love of Christ in our own actions."

Clark said people usually will listen to someone who has helped them.

"It amazes me how God can work through things as simple as cleaning a yard or singing songs with elderly people and how he uses individuals, like me, to make a difference in someone's life," said

LEADING – Mary Caitlin Clark shares her testimony March 22 at the WMU-NC's Missions Extravaganza.

Clark, who is a junior at West Bladen High School and is part of an interpretive movement group called Hands of Praise.

She's planned and hosted a WorldCrafts party to showcase pieces from all over the world and participated in a county-wide revival. She's taken part in Operation Inasmuch and loves WorldChangers. WorldChangers provided Clark with her first opportunity to go on a mission trip.

She grew up in GAs and says she was saved at an early age. Around the age of 10, Clark said she rededicated her life to the Lord.

She encouraged the ladies to share their Godgiven spiritual gifts to help others.

North Carolina has had a representative on the national panel for several years.

Members of the Acteens panel will be featured during the WMU Missions Celebration and Annual Meeting in Louisville, Ky., June 21–22, prior to the Southern Baptist Convention.

They will also have the opportunity to interact

"It amazes me how God can work through things as simple as cleaning a yard or singing songs with elderly people and how he uses individuals, like me, to make a difference ..."

- Mary Caitlin Clark

with missionaries and national leaders involved in missions; and may be requested to speak to church, associational, and/or state Acteens and WMU groups.

They will serve from Feb.1 to Dec. 31. Throughout the year, they will write articles for The

Mag, the missions magazine for Acteens, and for the Acteens web site, www.acteens.com. In addition, they will work together as a focus group to help shape the future of Acteens.

(Continued from Page 1)

Shore said the event was a success before the doors opened "because the church family came together so well."

When the doors opened, volunteers directed traffic in the parking lot, held umbrellas over strangers and carried them to the church on golf carts.

Church members earlier had provided 550 boxes of food, each packed with ingredients to feed a family of four for a week.

The gymnasium was filled with clothes including items suitable for a job applicant to wear to an interview.

Downstairs people sat patiently for 90 minutes to get a free haircut, manicure or even a shoulder massage. This human touch often was the most valuable contribution to lives lived on the edge of despair.

Jennifer Shore, Todd's wife, roamed the halls with a sympathetic ear and a quickly dwindling stack of \$10 gift cards as coordinator of WOW. Her job was to find and encourage the people whose personal stories made the listener say, "Wow."

• One woman hadn't eaten meat in six weeks. A gift card got her some food at the grocery store.

• Another hadn't afforded a haircut in 15 years.

• One woman whose birthday it was, said no one had told her happy birthday or given her a present in 10 years.

• One extended family of 16 was being evicted when their landlord sold the house. They needed everything.

• A woman who had been hospitalized and not expected to recover, came out of the hospital six weeks later to discover her son had sold everything she had, including her house.

• A grandmother is raising four grandchildren by herself.

• An unemployed father of three cannot cope so his wife is keeping the family together.

Everyone found that hope lives through the grace of God and by Christians being the hands of God.

Social services like the YMCA, Employment Security Commission, Family Services of Davidson County, Habitat for Humanity, JobLink and High Point University and Davidson County Community College were set up and staffed to help.

Interpreters helped overcome language barriers. "This is not going to be a onetime thing," Shore said.



ASKING — Doug Lowe, Lee Hedrick, Raul Villatore and Ivan Crissman man the information and registration desk at Rich Fork Baptist Church for the church's "Hope Lives" event.



TREATING — *Linda Stevens stops for a manicure during the "Hope Lives" event March 28.*

He said other churches already were asking for his notes and graphics.

Emily Chilton, a church member and cosmetology student at DCCC, was among seven who had each given 15 haircuts by noon.

She just wanted to do, "anything I can do to help. I love to see a smile on their faces. It's more a blessing to us than to them."

Chris Spanburg, who has her own salon, gave her Saturday to cutting hair for free "to help my community. It's kind of the Christian thing to do, isn't it?"

Nancy Snider held her son Matthew tightly for a haircut he did not enjoy.

Her husband, a machinist, lost three jobs last year. In each case, he was the last one hired, so the first one let go.



CUTTING – Chris Spanburg gets ready to trim Wes Cooper's hair.

"The Lord is good," said a positive Snider, a member of New Hope Baptist Church in Salisbury. "That's the only way we can make it, is through things like this (Hope Lives). He looks after our every need."

Bowers said he was surprised by the variety of need presented by the crowd.

He was proud of his 350 volunteers who were "off the charts" he said.

One of them, Liz Cranford, said, "Our church will never be the same after today."

Bowers said he hopes his members "eyes will be open to what's around them," because of the event.

"The recession has been positive in that it has shown us what we need to be doing, what the church was called to do," he said. "This is it. It's right here in front of them."

Faith Baptist 'Feeds the Need'

(*Continued from Page 1*)

donations and funds for local helping organizations. He also wanted to present the gospel to those who would attend.

"The genesis of it was to get the people of the Archdale-Trinity area to hear the gospel; and for us to withelp; that perhaps a year ago would not have needed to ask for help. These people need to know that the community cares," said church member Kitty Ivey.

Other churches that partnered with Faith Baptist included Archdale Friends Meeting, Archdale United Methodist, Dry Ponds Baptist, Hopewell United Methodist, Memorial United Methodist, New Covenant Church of God, Poplar Ridge Friends Meeting, Southgate Baptist and Trindale Community Church. "We are a Baptist church, but we wanted to extend our hand across the street to other fellow Christians. We wanted to break down the barriers between different churches and band together to fulfill our main objective, which is the Great Commission," explained Foster. "My hope is that this isn't just a one time thing. We hope we can come together throughout the year and win souls for Christ." Throughout the month of March, the 10 churches collected clothing and nonperishable food items to donate to Community Outreach of Archdale-Trinity (COAT), a nonprofit organization that assists families in need. Faith Baptist has also partnered with an International Missions Project called One Million Can. Much like



ness to others and meet their needs, whatever that might be — whether it was physical, material, or spiritual," Foster said. Hence, the title "Feed the Need" was born for this event Foster called a "practical application of the gospel."

The day-long event held under cloudy skies and in frequent drizzle began with a blood drive at 10 a.m. Shirley Davis, team supervisor for the American Red Cross, stated volunteers surpassed her goal to collect 30 pints of blood by giving 48.

The MOFIA (Men of Faith in Action) kept the grill hot and prepared countless hot dogs and bratwursts, as the M & M Sisters (Ministry and Missions) collected clothing donations. The church youth group, led by Paul Welborn, attached a label detailing the plan of salvation to every non-perishable food item that was donated.

"With the economy the way it is right now, there are people that need

WORKING — Kristan Fulmer, left, and Carmen Daniels apply stickers with a gospel message to non-perishable food items at Faith Baptist Church. The items will be distributed throughout the community to those in need.

the goal of Feed the Need, their web site states, "Collectively we are a force for good . . . moving together we can make a huge difference in the lives of people around the globe."

The weather may have been wet and dreary, that didn't dampen the spirits of those in attendance at Feed the Need.

Even though the car wash was put on hold, the evening culminated with a concert by Christian singer Ashley Seagle.

Other groups were The Morning and the FBC (Faith Baptist Church) Band. Welborn concluded the day with a message of hope.

"Feed the Need was not a Christian pep-rally," Welborn said. "But today was about fulfilling people's needs. We started with the physical and ended with the spiritual."

Board to consider David Horton as Fruitland president

(*Continued from Page 1*)

Horton also has been pastor of Three Forks Baptist in Taylorsville; Welcome Baptist in Mt. Airy; and Reed Island Springs Baptist in Meadows of Dan, Va.

Pending approval by the BSC board, Horton anticipates starting at Fruitland June 1.

Fruitland has been a ministry of the Baptist State Convention (BSC) since 1946. It is an agency of the BSC and its board is accountable to the BSC Board of Directors.

Horton said Fruitland has effectively trained ministers of the gospel since its founding.

"The Fruitland slogan says, 'Where preaching is our passion,"" Horton said.

"Those at Fruitland realize it's not just preaching, it's expositional preaching they are talking about."

He loves the practical approach to ministry for which Fruitland

is noted. "The things you learn in class that morning you can put into practice that afternoon at the church," he said.

Perry Brindley, pastor of Mount Zion Baptist Church in Canton, is president of the Fruitland alumni association. While he said he can speak only for himself, he said, "Knowing and trusting that God has answered our prayers in giving guidance and leadership to the search team, we're fully supportive of

Mathis

name to the board."

If elected, Horton would succeed Kenneth Ridings, who retired Jan. 1, after a 40-year association with the

> school, including the last 12 as president.

Greg Mathis, pastor of Mud Creek Baptist Church in Hendersonville, former Baptist State Convention president and professor of evangelism at Fruitland for 24 years, has been Fruitland's interim president since January.

Fruitland traces its heritage to 1899, when area Baptists started a Christian high school

to serve local and boarding students. A partnership with the Southern Baptist Convention's Home Mission Board (now North American Mission Board) was later formed and Fruitland Institute continued to offer a Christian secondary education until it closed in 1936. The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina later bought the property and used it as a conference center during the summer months for several years.

In 1946, BSC leaders invited J.C. Canipe, pastor of First Baptist Church in Boone who had been teaching local pastors with little formal training, to move his classes to the Fruitland campus.

Canipe served as the first president of Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute until his retirement in 1960.

Other presidents of the school include Fritz Hemphill, Gary Harthcock, Alex Booth, Mack Roberts and Randy Kilby.

Site offers economic ministry ideas, place for prayer requests

(Continued from Page 1)

Baptist Men leaders are encouraging churches to spend a month focusing on the economic crisis and on ways to respond.

The web site offers a biblical foundations page with a four-part sermon and Sunday School series to provide a scriptural foundation for ministering to people in crisis.

"You can't study about it and not see that God wants us to do something about it," Brunson said.

A ministry opportunities page offers practical ideas to minister to people in financial crisis.

The page will include success stories from N.C. Baptist churches, many of them featured in the Biblical Recorder.

their decision to bring David Horton's

"Maybe something there will give them ideas of things they can be doing," Brunson said.

The site also has a place for church leaders to share what's working in their congregations.

Brunson said those projects will be added to the list of practical ideas.

A separate area lists and takes prayer requests.

"There will be people who come to the web site who have people they want to pray for," Brunson said.

Arkansas River Ministry reaches 20,000 professions

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP) - The Southern Baptist Mississippi River Ministry (MRM) has reached a new milestone: More than 20,000 people have made professions of faith in Christ since the outreach began in 1992.

MRM is a partnership between eight state conventions (Arkansas, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi and Tennessee), the North American Mission Board and Woman's Missionary Union.

In addition to 20,000-plus decisions for Christ, the Mississippi River Ministry has drawn the efforts of more than 100,000 volunteers.

It began after the U.S. government-sponsored Delta Commission conducted a study of poverty along the lower Mississippi River.

Using data from the study, Southern Baptists began meeting together to explore ways to address some of the many needs.

"The Mississippi River Ministry calls attention to this great mission field along the lower Mississippi River, where mission volunteers have been serving since MRM began," said Diana Lewis, Arkansas Baptist State Convention mission ministries team member, who coordinates Arkansas MRM efforts.

Pastor

Gap Creek Missionary Baptist Church, a conservative member of the Cumberland Gap Baptist Association in Claiborne County, Tenn., is accepting applications for a full-time pastor. Experience is preferred. Gap Creek has an active membership of over 300 and is growing. If possible, send a CD or DVD of your sermon along with a resume. Send resume to: Gap Creek Baptist Church, Attn. Troy Poore, P.O. Box 177, Arthur, TN 37707. You may send your resume by e-mail to troypoore@ hotmail.com.

Pastor. Small Southern Baptist resort community accepting resumes until 4/30/09. Min requirements: Bible school graduate between the ages 30-50 w/at least 5 yrs pastoral experience. Send resume with DVD to Surf City Baptist Church, PO Box 2607, Surf City, NC 28445.

Classified Advertisements

Youth Minister. Bethlehem Baptist Church of Knightdale seeks youth pastor for this growing community located in greater Raleigh, NC, area. This position is part-time but could be bundled with a part-time Family Life Center activities director for the right individual. Applicant must be effective ministering, mentoring and discipling young people and love sharing Jesus with all. Requirements include four year college degree and 2 years of experience in youth work. Divinity degree and ordination preferred. This individual will lead youth Bible studies, youth activities on Sunday and Wednesday nights, develop missions and outreach programs, and lead the Youth Council planning efforts. The youth minister is required to have a presence at church worship and other events to establish a connection with the youth and their families. Send resumes to Youth Minister Search Committee at Bethlehem Baptist Church. 8400 Poole Road, Knightdale, NC 27545 or email

Minister of Children and Families. A growing church of approximately 1,250 members, affiliated with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the Southern Baptist Convention, is seeking a minister of children and families. Preferably he or she should be a graduate of a properly accredited seminary or divinity school with a minimum of two years experience. This minister should feel called of God to fulfill the biblical model of ministry through service in proclamation, teaching, pastoral care and administration Please send a resume to First Baptist Church, Attn: Minister of Children Search Committee 815 Davie Ave Statesville, NC 28677. Please visit our website at statesvillefbc.org.

Associate/Youth Pastor. Bear Creek Baptist Church in Mocksville, NC, is seeking a full time associate/youth pastor. Church attendance averages 150 for Sunday service. Please send resumes to: Pastor Search Committee 492 Bear Creek Church Road Mocksville NC 27028

Part-time Worship Leader Needed. Responsibilities include working with choir, praise team and leading worship during the service. Send résumés to HollyHunter Baptist Church, 4316 Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road, Charlotte, NC 28216, Attn: Personnel Search Committee or fax to 704-399-8252. You may also e-mail your résumé to hollyhunterch@bellsouth.net. Call with any questions at 704-399-3316.

Miscellaneous

READY FOR THE NEXT STEP? Have you started a degree and need to take your next step? Foothills Christian Bible College is just around the corner! For those of you who have already taken classes but need to finish up this is your opportunity Foothills Christian Bible College is offering 100 full tuition grants for the fall of 2009. So hurry and fill out an application! Check us out online at www.foothillsbiblecollege.org. Or call us at 336-667-6145.



Church Staff

Seeking Music Worship Leader. First Baptist Church of Locust is searching for a part-time music worship leader. Send resume to Personnel Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 159, Locust, NC 28097.

Azalea Baptist Church in Norfolk, Virginia, a moderate church affiliated with the BGAV and the CBF, seeks a full time Director of Christian Ministries to develop, implement, and oversee educational programs. For a detailed job description send resume including work history and official school transcripts to: Azalea Baptist Church, Search Committee, 3314 E. Little Creek Road, Norfolk, Virginia 23518; Attn. J. Francis.

Minister of Music and Senior Adults. FBC, Smithfield, NC. A vibrant and growing church with an average weekly attendance of 475. The church offers both a blended and traditional service weekly. Interested persons should be a graduate of a four year accredited college or university with a degree in music. Applicants should have experience in a variety of church music. Church desires an individual who works well with all ages and education levels. Send resumes to Personnel Committee, 202 S. 4th St., Smithfield, NC 27577. Resumes will be accepted through June 30 2009

them to *troyearly@nc.rr.com*.

Part-time Youth/Children's Minister. Providence Baptist Church, Gaffney, SC. For job description and to submit resume, visit www.pbcgaffney.com. Deadline to submit resume 4/30/09.

How to place a classified ad in the *Biblical Recorder*

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- · Send e-mail to: joellen@biblicalrecorder.org
- · Submit the information via the Recorder's web site at www.biblicalrecorder.org
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Cost for Baptist churches and organizations is \$1.20 per word, number and standalone 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.

Part-time Youth Minister. Winterville Baptist Church, Winterville, NC, affiliated with NCBSC, SBC, CBF, seeks servant-minded, growing Christian to lead ministry with grades 6-12 with an emphasis on spiritual formation/discipleship. Send resume to Youth Search, PO Box 1669, Winterville, NC 28590.

Marshall Baptist Church, Thomson, GA, is seeking a full time music/youth director for blended worship services Send resume to: Marshall Baptist Church, 436 Marshall Church Rd., Thomson, GA 30824, or johnprater@marshallchurch.org.

Village Baptist Church Administrator. Serves as chief operating officer for all associated ministry activities of VBC. Oversees all daily business. financial, facility aspects. Provides first-line supervision of support staff, Village Christian Academy superintendent and Village Davcare director. Must have a Christian belief in Jesus Christ as personal savior. Bachelor's degree required. Master's degree in business or related preferred Compensation and benefits commensurate with qualifications and experience. Send resumes to Personnel Committee, PO Box 53573, Fayetteville NC 28306, or perssearch@village.org.

Needed — Pianist. Ebenezer Baptist Church, South Mills, NC; telephone: 252-232-2369; 757-287-5999

Gatlinburg or Pigeon Forge this spring? Stav in a beautiful home for the price of a hotel room. Two/three large bedrooms, hot tubs, easy access. Christian-owned, non-smoking, no pets. Visit www. SmokiesRentDirect.com. Stay 3+ nights and get 10% Biblical Recorder discount. For details, contact Angie@SmokiesRentDirect.com.

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Church retreat property for sale on Lake Russell. SC. Eleven acres with brick building on 900' of lake boundary Remote secluded location \$238,000. Additional acreage available. S. Huston, 803-917-9665.

Pews for sale. Price is negotiable. Please call Tim at 704-519-7484.

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Tar Heel Voices

Blackaby prophetic on prayer

I especially appreciated Norman Jameson's interview (March 28) with Richard Blackaby from the prayer conference at Biltmore Baptist Church. I am glad to know there are conservative speakers yet among us who are not afraid to be prophetic and affirm such sound doctrine concerning the "highly reported efforts" by many conservatives who want Baptists to run public schools, while often not managing their own store at home.

Dr. Blackaby, a highly respected conservative Baptist leader, put his finger on the "sore spot" when he downgraded the effort of many to "put prayer back in the public schools." When was it ever officially included in public school curriculum policies? We Baptists must do a better job in our homes and churches, before we parade our frustrations with the public schools that were never meant to be "prayer centers" for public citizens of far different persuasions on religion and theology.

My wife and I lived in three different "church/state" countries in Europe, and we saw firsthand the folly of that arrangement, going all the way back to the time Rome took over the church! This false union denies the church its holy calling, and nullifies much the state can do by being a civil partner in the well being of all its citizens.

I am proud to call myself a Baptist after the model of all our former *Biblical Recorder* editors that I knew, especially J. Marse Grant, Gene Puckett and our present editor, Norman Jameson.

These called men of God have set a high and holy standard of ethics and truth-telling that many of us Baptist preachers, as well as lay Christians, could benefit from in following their principles of fairness and prophetic witness.

> Ray W. Benfield SBC Missionary Emeritus Winston-Salem

What is purpose of paper?

What is the purpose of this paper? To promote women in ministry? To call those of us who believe that homosexuality is an abomination, homophobes who do not love people? To insinuate that we are chauvinists if we think what the WMU did was wrong by pulling out of the BSCNC? To praise the CBF or this nonsense that Jimmy Carter has started? Or is it another place to spout the liberal propaganda of people like Ray Crawford (letter March 28)? Just what is the purpose of this paper?

I'll tell you what this paper is doing; it is giving the impression that Southern Baptists are a group of compromising liberals. And that is why I am leading my congregation out of the SBC. We do not want to be a part of this. And by the way, you can keep your paper. Bryan Ezell

Rutherfordton

Finding the perfect pastor

Churches want a perfect pastor who has a doctorate, 20 years' experience as pastor and six as youth minister; a son age 10 and a daughter age eight and a wife who stays home; who preaches like Joel Osteen, and sings like Bill Gaither and is 33 years old. The sad truth is many pastors are forced out or seek a change after age 50 and don't fit those qualifications. Southern Baptist churches are in some ways age discriminators. Good men who have given their lives in the Lord's service are simply passed over. Experience and wisdom are discounted while youthfulness becomes the prime criteria. Congregations fear an older pastor will not be "youth" friendly. Anyone over 40 is suspect and one of the first questions for an older pastor is, "How do you view the youth program of the church?" The question is never, "How well do you relate to children?" It almost seems churches are obsessed with youth ministry. Years ago these older men were young with little or no experience. Most had a wife and small children and lived hand-to-mouth when called to a small church. They struggled and many were either fired or forced out. Still, they were called of God and soldiered on. The average Southern Baptist church has fewer than 100 in a worship service and many, many pastors with seminary degrees earn little better than minimum wage. Parsonages are counted in their "package" but there is no equity in a parsonage.

Before a church forces a pastor out they should know he does not qualify for unemployment benefits. If there is no severance pay, he and his family are left destitute. That is cruel even by secular standards.

Before your church decides to change for a younger man, consider what you are about to do to that older man.

> Perry Comer Wingate

Does God curse non-tithers?

The March 28 article, "Non-tithers risk God's wrath, Rodgers says," raises many concerns for me. In it Bob Rodgers espouses the idea that if one does not tithe, he or she will go unprotected by God; in other words, "cursed."

He refers to the prophet Malachi to make his point. I would suggest that he check Micah 6:8 in which God requires His people "to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with" Him. This seems to me a more graceful presentation of what is expected by God.

Does tithing protect a person from tragedy? If that is Rodgers' belief, then I have personal questions for his consideration. I tithe. Why did that not keep my son from dying at age 48 last June, or help me avoid a car wreck in November which caused my wife (who also tithes) a damaged sternum, or keep someone from stealing her purse on Christmas Eve?

We've had a terrible year. We tithe. So?

Another perspective: I would wonder if any gay or lesbian church member who tithes is safe from God's curse. Since many Southern Baptists believe God does curse homosexuals, I suspect this conclusion would cause a stir among these Baptists.

Can Rodgers' contention be found in the New Testament among Jesus' beliefs? I find nothing to suggest that Jesus would be so condemning. It seems to me that Christ's approach was to forgive thieves, those caught committing adultery and probably even non-tithers.

Gene Ryder Winston-Salem

People should listen to God about female pastors

In response to the (guest column) by David Julen (BR, March 14), I would like to say I was raised in a Methodist church. When I married my husband in 1970 we began going to his church, which is Southern Baptist. We raised our two children in the church and now their families also go there. This I thank God for, that it was His will that they have been able to be that close to us.

It would be very hard for me, as it would for a lot of you, to have a woman as my pastor, but I know that His ways are mysterious and are not my ways.

We have to tread very lightly on this subject. As we all see in the Bible God has used women all throughout it to accomplish His purposes. If and when the time comes for us to face this, and for some I'm sure the time is now, then we have to yield to God's will. We have to pray and listen, then act on what He is telling us.

We have to ask ourselves have we grown so pompous and full of ourselves we don't hear Him? I for one do not want to go against any one of God's chosen, and sorrowfully feel His wrath. Let's not miss out on God's plan because we don't believe it's right. Let's listen.

The Passover and the Death of Jesus: An Easter Message

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

> remember an occasion when I presented the story of the vicarious and sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross to a group of people.

A theologically educated man in the group approached me

and directly challenged my comments by saying "God did not have to get his pound of flesh by punishing Jesus on the cross for our sins."

Although this argument is not new, in our present day culture that promotes the spiritual goodness of man and a



goodness of man and a works based salvation, the doctrine of the penal substitution of Jesus Christ continues to be attacked.

Caricatured as barbaric and unjust the biblical concept of Jesus standing in the place of sinners as their substitute and bearing the wrath of God on their behalf is absurd to many people.

Yet, to fully understand the Bible is to find its comprehensive narrative presenting a growing portrait which points to Calvary's cross as the apex of human history.

Calvary's shadows form in the wake of the Passover when a lamb was slaughtered and its blood sprinkled over the doorpost of each Israelite home as protection from God's death angel.

This commemorative meal was a one-toone correspondence between the life of the family's first-born son and the life of the lamb who was slain that he (the son) might live.

This act of salvation as depicted in Exodus 12:1-28 is but a foreshadowing of the Lord Jesus Christ who appeared as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world.

It was not until Jesus presided over the Passover meal with His disciples that the full meaning and impact of the cross was revealed.

In the upper room Jesus explained that His death would be the fulfillment of what God the Father had begun centuries earlier on the first Passover.

Jesus took the bread, broke it and told them that it represented His body crushed for them. Likewise, the cup was offered as the "blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many" (Mark 14:24). The body and blood of the lamb slain as a substitute for Israel long ago was now fully realized in the body and blood of Jesus Christ as He gave His life as a sacrifice for all who would believe. The message of Easter is the reality of the cross and the resurrection as full redemption for all who would trust in the merits of Jesus and not their own. The meaning of the cross is clear: the just for the unjust; the righteous One in the place of sinners; the suffering of Jesus for the salvation of the world. Worship and praise God for the death of Christ on the cross and celebrate His triumphant resurrection! Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many (Mark 14:22-24).

Betty Jo Waters Hubert



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Band redeems airport delay

embers of the new Christian band 'Rubies and Embers" took advantage of a big flight delay in Raleigh recently. According to Danny Musten, proud father of band member Laura Musten, the band was returning to Nashville via the Raleigh airport after leading worship at the first Embrace women's ministry event, a motherdaughter retreat at Fort Caswell. Initially informed of a two-and-a-half hour flight delay, it stretched another three hours.

Instead of flopping down on the airport furniture and fuming, the young ladies broke out their instruments and started playing. Before long many of the upset, anxious passengers who also were enduring the unanticipated delay then people from the entire terminal began gathering around the trio and encouraging them to play more.

One lady asked them to open an instrument

case so she could plant a little thank you gift. Others followed suit.

Band members Melissa Hill and Abby Hinton were

Spokeⁿ

singing with Laura some of the worship tunes they had written when one of the waiting passengers asked if he could play along. He picked up the mandolin and Laura said, "his playing was insane." She later learned he was Craig Duncan, author of one of her fiddle books and a professional player from Nashville.

Just as much a thrill for her was Duncan saying, "I loved your playing, thanks for letting me jam with you!"

Danny Musten, a Baptist sound and video professional in Raleigh, said the band could have sold all their CDs at the mini-concert, but of course, they were packed in their luggage on its way to Nashville. With just one CD in hand, fellow passengers passed it around and copied it to their laptops.

The band ended up giving that one CD to a Southwest Airlines representative who ended up being their flight attendant. As the flight was about to take off, six hours after scheduled, all of a sudden "Come Among Us" one of the band's most worshipful and peaceful tunes, sounded over the plane's speakers.

Laura described it to her dad as, "like crazy. It was like a lullaby and everyone got quiet and it was like inviting the Lord to come among us and to dwell among us as we took off."

As they were tearing up, passengers wrote their mailing addresses on bits of paper to hand to the girls, wanting them to mail the music.

The flight attendant told them, "I think a lot of people needed to hear what you girls were singing about. Thank you. It seems like it's from God."

Persons of faith more likely to cling through suffering

y sister is a nurse in a large veteran's hospital and sees incidents of cancer too numerous to count. It is a dreaded disease because it appears

in so many varieties, it is so often deadly, and its treatment is insufferable.

Among cancer patients my nurse sister observes higher anxiety among those newly diagnosed, than among those for whom it has recurred after several years in remission.

It is as if they knew it was coming back and the anxiety of waiting for that news is finally over and they can deal with it

head on—either fighting it further or accepting the inevitable and deciding how best to invest the earth days that remain.

I am grateful at Easter not just for faith in the risen Jesus, but also for faith's assurance that death has neither sting, nor victory.

So a story by G. Jeffrey MacDonald, published by Religion News Service in March, surprised me.

It seems the more religious a person is, the more likely he or she will cling to life until the last agonizing breath, sparing no expense, personal suffering or exhaustion by caregivers.

I say surprising because, while life is wonderful, since I became a Christian as an adult I've believed the Christian songs and sermons I heard that said we are just passing through; we are strangers in this land and are not to make it our home.

I wrestle with the notion, as did the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Philippians 1:20-26, that "to live is Christ and to die is gain." It seems Paul was torn

between the fruitful labor of his work in the vineyard of souls on earth; and his desire "to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far."

He was glad to hang around, if that's what God wanted, because he knew the Philippians needed his encouragement.

MacDonald quotes Kevin Brumett, 31, fighting lung cancer that spread to his brain. "God is giving me the strength to fight this as hard and as long as I possibly can," Brumett said.

New research suggests that cancer fighters like Brumett may be more likely to exacerbate their own suffering in the final days of life and to leave behind caregivers who have a hard time adjusting to bereavement, MacDonald wrote.

aggressive treatments," said Dr. Andrea Phelps, lead author of a study by Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston.

She gave a few reasons why she thinks religious cancer patients commonly opt for aggressive care in their final days. Among the possibilities:

• faith leads to optimism, even when a prognosis is bleak;

• faith gives purpose to suffering, and in turn helps patients muster stamina for invasive treatments:

• beliefs about sanctity of life may give rise to a quest to prolong life at almost any cost.

Phelps said she and her colleagues were concerned "because aggressive care, at least among cancer patients, is a difficult and burdensome treatment that medically doesn't usually provide a whole lot of benefit."

World walking, cross carrying evangelist Arthur Blessitt estimated that Jesus walked 3,125 miles during his public ministry. Jesus knew that every step brought him closer to the cross, yet He never flinched.

On trial He absorbed the lies and accusations silently, except to affirm the high priest's question/statement asking Jesus to declare whether or not "you are the Messiah, the Son of God." (Matt. 26:63)

Jesus saw the cross. He knew the pain to come. But He saw beyond the cross and simply shed this life when His mission was accomplished.

Of course there is no direct parallel between a terminally ill Christian accepting that fate and living fully in his or her remaining days, and Jesus embracing His death on the cross. But consider that the destination is the same — life beyond the cross, through the passage of death.

How is that so? Because Jesus carved the pathway for us, not only to the cross, for that alone would be without value and leave us hopeless. But He broke through the ceiling of death and opened the heavens

to our own rising souls. That is the celebration of Easter, the celebration of life. Victory over death.

We can walk toward that future day by day confident that for a Christian life is defined far more fully than "one more breath."

And death is far less frightening than to merit

the marshaled resources of medical machinery and miserable months in the face of inevitable outcomes.

Have you had this conversation with your spouse or caregiver?

What heroic measures do you want them to undertake to keep your body present on this side of the veil? What level of suffering are you willing to endure to delay your welcome home?

Tad Woodhull, 75, has had two bouts of cancer



Jesus saw the cross.

He knew the pain to

come. But He saw

beyond the cross and

simply shed this life

when His mission was

accomplished.

EDITORIAL

What a sweet testimony and demonstration of 1 Peter 3:15, being always prepared to give a reason for the hope that is within you. - NWJ (EDITOR'S NOTE – Click Spoke'n on www. biblicalrecorder.org for links to the music and other sites.)

MacDonald said a recent study in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that religious patients "were three times more likely to opt for mechanical ventilation and other intensive procedures in their last week of life."

Because religious patients trust in God's sovereignty and an afterlife, "one might expect them to be more accepting of death and let nature take its course at the end of life, rather than pursuing very and watched his brother endure a "miserable" final six month fight.

"I would go with faith rather than put myself and my family through a version of hell," says Woodhull. In a late stage and bleak situation, he said he'd decline invasive medical options and instead trust God with his soul.

You alone can make those decisions for yourself. Do it while you are able.



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Carthage church, pastor minister after shooting

By Steve DeVane BR Managing Editor

ARTHAGE — First Baptist Church in Carthage designed its fellowship hall to be used in a disaster, but church leaders expected it would be a hurricane or a flood, not a mass shooting in the town of about 2,000 people.

Carthage officials used the fellowship hall March 29 to talk to about 300 people who had relatives at Pinelake Health and Rehabilitation Center, where a gunman killed eight and wounded two others.

Robert Stewart faces eight counts of first-degree murder and one count of felonious assault on a police officer.

Thomas Herndon, pastor at First Baptist Church and a chaplain for the town's police department, said N.C. Rep. Jamie Boles came in the back of the church just as the 11 a.m. worship service was ending.



Boles, who also is the area's medical examiner and owns a local funeral home, told Herndon that the town needed a place to talk to the relatives, who were then in the parking lot of the Courthouse nearby.

"When I went outside it was just people everywhere," Herndon said.

Herndon

Church members made tea and coffee for the relatives, who had little information about the shooting.

"The whole place was in turmoil," Herndon said. Herndon led a prayer, and "people just calmed

down after that," he said. County officials read a list of names and asked

those related to them to step outside. "Those were the ones who were either killed or wounded," Herndon said.

Those relatives were taken to separate rooms in another building, where they received counseling.

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PRESS CONFERENCE – Chris McKenzie, Carthage police chief, talks with the media March 30, the day after the nursing home shooting. McKenzie said the community will rely on faith during this tough time.

Herndon said church members felt God's hand guiding them as they ministered to the relatives.

"We were able to share our faith and help them with their needs," he said.

Herndon said he first heard about the shooting from a church member who is a resident at Pinelake. She called the church at about 9:55 a.m. and told Herndon there was shooting at the facility.

Herndon went and told the resident's husband who was about to go to the center when his wife called back and asked him not to go. Herndon let the man talk to his wife.

"She was naturally quite disturbed and upset about what was going on," Herndon said.

In the worship service, Herndon announced that there had been a shooting but he didn't have details.

He preached from Matt. 12:9-14, which tells about how the Pharisees plotted to kill Jesus. The sermon was titled, "The Beginning of Hostility."

At the end of the service, church members prayed for those involved in the shooting.

Herndon said Chris McKenzie, the town's police chief, is a "well respected, fine Christian man" and "under a tremendous amount of pressure."

McKenzie's parents, Tommy and Worthy McKenzie, are active members at the church.

At a press conference the day after the shooting, the police chief said the Carthage community has strong faith.

"Faith will get this community through this," he said. "I believe that."

McKenzie said Cpl. Justin Garner, the officer who stopped the shooting when he shot Stewart, was the only one on duty that morning. Garner was shot in the leg. The number of officers on duty is based on the call volumes at those times, he said.

"I've mentioned many times we're faith-based," he said. "Everybody's in church."

News Briefs

N.C. Business Court moves to Campbell Law

Campbell University's Norman Adrian Wiggins School of Law announced March 27 that in conjunction with its fall 2009 move to downtown Raleigh, the school will become home to the North Carolina Business Court - Raleigh division. The move will make Campbell Law School one of only a handful of the nation's law schools to house a working court within its facilities.

The court is a specialized forum of the North Carolina State Courts' trial division. Cases involving complex and significant issues of corporate and commercial law in the state are assigned by the Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court to a special superior court judge who oversees resolution of all matters in the case. 'The addition of the N.C. Business Court to Campbell Law's new location in downtown Raleigh is tremendous," said Melissa Essary, Campbell Law School dean. "It gives our students the invaluable opportunity to utilize an on-site learning laboratory in which to observe attorneys in action as they argue their cases."

year-old conference center located near Santa Fe, N.M.

"There have been some rumors and erroneous reports out there that Glorieta is closing," said Hill, LifeWay's executive director of conference centers. "We are making changes that adjust the way we operate Glorieta, but nothing about our ministry or the mission will change."

Court will not rehear Mo. convention suit

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (ABP) - AMissouri appeals panel announced March 31 that it will not re-hear the Missouri Baptist Convention's (MBC) argument against Windermere Baptist Conference Center. Convention officials had hoped for an opportunity to argue that a threejudge panel erred in a Feb. 3 decision. The appeals court had upheld a lower court's ruling that Windermere trustees had acted legally in 2001 when they changed the agency's articles of incorporation, removing the convention's control over board appointees. In their February ruling, the appellate judges agreed with Cole County Circuit Court Judge Richard Callahan, who ruled that the MBC is not a member of Windermere's corporation and that no contract exists. The MBC may directly petition the Missouri Supreme Court to hear the case, but must do so by April 15. Hearing dates have not yet been set in Cole County in the cases pending against the other four Missouri Baptist institutions for whom the Windermere decision will be a precedent.

CP gifts hold steady through first quarter

From staff reports

Cooperative Program (CP) gifts from North Carolina Baptist churches through the first quarter of 2009 are slightly ahead of the same period for 2008. Total mission gifts, including special offerings, are up almost \$600,000.

The budget figures were released as significant economic distress continues to hit North Carolina, which has the fourth highest unemployment rate in the nation.

ing to a single giving plan in 2010, is up 5.4 percent to \$5.2 million. Plan A is 67 percent of the total.

Hollifield noted the "marked increase" in Plan A and said, "There is no question that many churches have already begun shifting to Plan A following the Convention's decision to return to a single giving plan for 2010. Gifts to special offerings are so seasonal that it is hard to draw valid conclusions at this point in the

> year; but with total mission receipts up almost \$600,000 versus last year, I am enthusiastic

Glorieta starts new operational model

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP) - Cue the PA system: "LifeWay Glorieta Conference Center is not closing."

That's the message Byron Hill wants to plainly communicate in the midst of coming changes at the 56-

'Cooperative Program giving by our churches seems to have found its footing," said **Baptist State Convention**

(BSC) Executive Director-treasurer Milton A. Hollifield, Jr.

According to information compiled by BSC Comptroller Robert Simons, undesignated CP giving through March 31 was \$ 7.7 million, up \$46,418 or 0.6 percent over the first quarter of 2008.

Giving is 15 percent behind the \$9.1 million budget for this period adopted in 2007, but the BSC is operating on a reduced internal budget based on 2008 actual gifts that is keeping operations in the black.

"I am confident that our staff will manage expenditures to keep us there for the remainder of 2009," Hollifield said.

Giving Plan A, the largest of the four giving plans that will continue to be used through 2009 before revert-

about the future and both grateful and humbled by **COOPERATIVE PROGRAM** the sacrifices being made for the kingdom in such difficult economic times."

> Plan B is down 2.9 percent to \$613,121. Plan C is down 14.4 percent to \$312,215.

> Plan D, which for several years had shown significant growth, is down 5 percent to \$1.3 million.

It is likely that some Plan D money has moved to Plan A, in anticipation of reversion to a single giving plan.

Special offerings are not faring as well, with the exception of the Lottie Moon Offering for International Missions, which is up \$653,339 or 8.3 percent to \$8.5 million.

Annie Armstrong Offering for North American Missions is down 9.2 percent to \$441,041 to date.

The North Carolina Missions Offering is down 10.8 percent to \$211,888.

Rejoice in Hope

in the air.

Focal Passage: 1 Cor. 15:42-58

She lay propped up in bed.

The family had gathered,

filling the room and spilling

out into the hall. Death was

She had attended our

church years ago, a young

Now the kids were grown

with children of their own.

She lived with a daughter and

mother with children in tow.



Lesson for April 19

Formations

Lesson for April 26

Contemplate Mystery

Focal Passage: 1 Cor. 15:20-41

"Watch out for people who think they know it all," my mother used to say. "Most of the time, they don't."

I was barely in school. We sat at the dinner table, or on the living room floor during a long, lazy summer afternoon. One of us would ask a question - something about science, or arithmetic, or history, but often about religion.

My questions, obviously, were a child's: "If heaven is up, which way is it for the people in China?"

Mom's questions were harder: "If God knows everything before it happens, does that mean it has to happen?"

Mom would do her best to explain difficult ideas in words that a child could understand. We'd discuss it upside down and all around until neither had more to say. Then, almost every time, she would sign off with the warning about know-it-alls. It was her way of saying some things just can't be explained, at least not completely.

Paul was doing his best to explain difficult ideas in words even grownups found hard to understand.

"Resurrection? What resurrection (v. 21)? She's just as dead now as she was last week. Paul, how do you know?"

"As in Adam all die (v. 22)?" What's that about? Is sin inherited, like blue eyes or flat feet? How do you know that?"

"God will destroy 'every ruler and authority and power' (vv. 24-28)? Evil and corruption and oppression? Even death? Come on, Paul, get real. Read the papers!"

"And what's this business about heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, and sun and moon and stars, and seeds dying in the ground (vv. 35-41)? Somehow that's all supposed to explain something? Paul, how do you know? How do you know for sure?"

Finally Paul came right out and admitted it: "Look! It's a mystery" (v. 51). Some things can't be reasoned out by logic or explained by the natural order of cause and effect. Some things you just can't know by the normal ways of knowing. Some things you can only know by faith.

"But if you want proof," Paul said, "think about this (vv. 30-32): Why do I put myself in danger all the time? Why did I fight wild animals at Ephesus, if my hope were only for this life, and on this earth? But ... the resurrection!"

A minister friend was in the hospital, seriously ill. In recent years his family had suffered tragedy after tragedy, and now this. "How do you manage to keep going?" I asked. "I couldn't," he said, "except for

one thing: the resurrection!"

Anybody can be a know-it-all, with an answer for everything. Betting your life is another thing altogether.



Ed Beddingfield Pastor, First Baptist Church, Fayetteville

went to her church, at least whenever she was able. She had sent word for me to come and pray for her one

last time. I asked, "Are you afraid?"

"Why should I be? God has never let me down before, and I don't expect Him to start now."

Frederick Buechner wrote a book he called Wishful Thinking. Hope might be called wishful living.

Hope is not some pitiful benign whining in the dark: "Well, maybe, if only, I guess so, I surely hope so ..."

Hope is not some superstitious incantation: "OK, if I believe with all my heart, and shut my eyes real tight, and clap three times ...'

Hope is looking directly into the face of the worst the world can throw at you, and still believing that God cares for you and will provide for you, and then living like it.

I once heard Samuel Proctor, pastor emeritus of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, preach a sermon entitled "Living in the Subjunctive Mood" — as if. That's hope.

Hope looks up at a cloudless sky, prays for rain, and then goes to the shed and gets the hoe and heads to the vegetable garden — as if.

Hope hears the dreaded diagnosis, "cancer," and the almost equally dreaded prescription, "radiation, followed by chemotherapy," and on the way home from the doctor's office stops at the travel agent's to book a flight to Houston in October for the birth of the new granddaughter — as if.

Hope dares to believe that we are all created equal and are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights, and to prove it marches over the crest of the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Ala., into the teeth of the police dogs - as if.

Hope stands in a pew on Easter Sunday morning, singing boldly, "Where, O Death, is now thy sting? Where thy victory, O Grave?" The next week that same hope stares misty-eyed at an open grave as the preacher declares, as boldly as possible, given the circumstances, "Look! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed" - as if (vv. 55, 51).

Paul concludes this wonderful chapter (v. 58), "Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain" — as if. That's hope.

Lesson for April 26

Lesson for April 19

Bible Studies for Life

Jesus' Followers: Witnesses or Wishful Thinkers?

Focal passage: Acts 1:4-8; 2:1-4, 12-16

If there is one thing that our house rarely has in abundance it is silence. My lovely wife Shelley has blessed me with three wonderful children (ages eight, five and two). In addition we have two dogs — one moose and one miniature breed - as well as five fish. The fish do not seem to add much noise, but we had a previous problem with one that ate everything else we put in the tank with it. There are constant sounds filling the air with the familiar auditory pleasures of life. Quite often these sounds may seem to be nothing more than noise, while at other times they are a joyous melody. It is in those moments that I am able to hear within the hoopla a distinct message and interpret what is underneath; below the "noise" there is love. And in love we find meaning. In the opening chapter of Acts we see the beginning of the early church, but it is not fully born. It was awaiting something, and Christ appeared to this group of believers that had clung together following the crucifixion. He shared that they were to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, a baptism far greater than that of water. With this they would become witnesses to all the world. Note that the Greek word for witness and martyr are the same. This draws attention to the fact that sometimes our loyalty to Christ demands more than we are aware will be required. This little group, led by the disciples, were to be empowered by the Holy Spirit, and it came upon them as a "rushing wind" and they were suddenly filled with "tongues of

fire" (Acts 2:3). The amazing event in this miracle is that each person

began to speak a different tongue, or language, and they went out among the many Jews that were in Jerusalem for the Festival of the Weeks, also known as Pentecost. This was celebrated seven weeks after Passover and was a time to give thanksgiving for the grain harvest. It was one of three major festivals and was a required time of celebrations. It expected that Jewish males would come to the Temple. Jerusalem was filled with people.

The many people present were mystified; some in a sense of

Jesus the Savior: Accept or Reject?

Focal passage: Acts 2:22-24, 32-41



John Byrd Pastor, First Baptist Church, Sylva

before me and I heard the words, "Yes daddy, if you get me a small dog I won't be afraid." Famous last words! These words were spoken by our oldest child, our eight-year-old daughter Kenley. She has been uneasy around dogs since birth, and we had already tried to help her through this with one dog. This was a big mis-

I still remember the dis-

take. We added a Bouvier (Ranger) to the family in June 2008 he is now saddled and ridden by our two younger boys. So it was from this discussion we added a Miniature Schnauzer named Deacon. Her acceptance of him lasted exactly one day.

following the miracle at Pentecost, and speaking to the large crowd. Many had seen the miracles and signs performed by Christ, yet they still would not believe. Instead they delivered Christ over to be nailed to a cross by "godless men and put Him to death" (2:23). In Peter's words he is exposing the people to the fact that they, and we, are responsible for our own actions.

In verses 32-36 Peter shares with those gathered concerning Christ being exalted to the right hand of God the Father, and emphasizes that the Holy Spirit has been poured out through Jesus Christ and none other. It is Christ that sits in heaven, not their ancestor David Though he may have been great, Christ is the Messiah for whom they waited. He references Psalm 110 to share that Christ is the Lord in this passage of scripture, and He now sits in the seat of honor. "How terrible then was the act of His crucifixion," Peter emphasizes (v. 36). Upon hearing all of this, one translation states, "... they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brethren, what shall we do?" Peter does not miss a beat and he responds in a fashion that gives each of us the words to use, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins." Peter continues to tell them that this gift is in essence for all people. And with this nearly 3,000 were added and the church was beginning an amazing journey! What fears today might keep someone from joining this continued journey with Christ?

awe, while others mocked the believers as they shared the gospel of Jesus Christ. As it was true for these first Christians, it is true for witnesses today. Our faith is not validated by the response of those listening; it is made real by that which we experience through Jesus Christ and His teachings in the Scriptures.

Some of those present even stated that the Christians were drunk, but Peter rose boldly and spoke in defense of the believers. He spoke boldly without hesitation with the possibility of a large crowd turning against him. I find his words humorous in stating it is too early in the morning to be drunk, but he was direct and to the point. His words exemplify what I see as the greatest miracle of Pentecost concerning the gospel, making things plain, clear, and easily understood so everyone can know what it is all about.

Dear Lord make it so today.

Acceptance and rejection create a fine line in our lives, and fears are hard to overcome. It is not something that can be forced upon a person. I know this full well, for no matter what my five-year-old John Isaac might say, I now am the proud owner of two dogs because of my bright ideas about overcoming fears. Our fears are strong and can cause us to react in various ways, even in harmful ways. They can cause us not just to make our own lives difficult but to possibly harm others. Our Savior faced the ultimate sacrifice of His life through God's plan, and the fears of those who would not accept why He had come.

As we continue to look at the Book of Acts we see Peter sharing a sermon

Called to Love: WMU-NC stresses idea at meeting

(Continued from Page 8)

members are eligible to serve on the WMU-NC Executive Board.

Case said WMU-NC will still complete an annual report but is no longer required to send it to the BSC.

The report will be available upon request.

During the March 21 business session, no opposition was voiced to any of the changes or items up for approval.

Fulbright, in her report to the delegates, said WMU-NC started 158

new organizations in 79 churches and that all events were well attended. "Every element

16

of involvement ...

every event held reflects people and relationships," Fulbright said.

"At the very core of Christian faith is relationships. Building relationships is how Jesus did ministry."

Fulbright recognized the deaf women who were joining the Missions

89 new missionaries to serve overseas

By Emilee Brandon Baptist Press

AYLORS, S.C. - "We do not have lofty goals of world success," missionary Christine Moffett said. "Our desire is simply to live through Christ and to proclaim His message of grace and salvation."

Moffett, a South Carolina native,

was among 89 new missionaries appointed by the International Mission Board (IMB) during a March 18 service at Taylors First Baptist Church in South Carolina, bringing the current missionary count to

5,569. The new appointees will serve throughout the world, joining missionaries in all of the board's current 11 regions of service. The March appointment service would have been the IMB's fourth-largest group of appointees had 14 more approved missionaries been able to participate. The 14 are delayed because their stateside houses have not sold yet.

Extravaganza for the 25th year. She also praised her staff for their

unique gifts. "I'm really blessed to be their leader," she said.

Outgoing President Sandra James called her five terms in office challeng-

ing and frustrating and "much more." "So much more because of people

like you," James said. "We were not only seeking God's will but we were discovering new op-

portunities and new doors." Incoming president Thomas encour-

aged the ladies toward a missional mindset.

"At the very core of Christian faith is relationships." - Ruby Fulbright

"It's not just enough to go around the world. You need to go next door," said

Thomas, a member of Deep Springs Baptist Church in Peachland.

An offering taken during the meeting raised more than \$9,500 for the Heck-Jones offering, which provides WMU-NC operating funds. This year's offering goal is \$1.3 million.



I. Woodbridge R. Woodbridge

ment. They have two children, ages 3 and 8.

He previously was on staff at Crestview Baptist Church in Shelby and was an educator. Most recently, Deanna was working at a Shelby jeweler.

Appointed as strategy coordinator to Middle America & Caribbean, Jaime and Myrna Pagan have three children, ages 4 to 12.

"You folks are going to go through the fire again and again and again. But you can be certain your Lord will show up and see you through." — Jerry Rankin

Myrna has been a teacher, assistant principal and principal in the Raleigh area. Jaime was an environmental engineer in Durham. They are members of Apex Baptist Church in Apex. Officials said other N.C. mis-

sionaries were appointed but names were not available because of security



LEADERS – Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina approved new officers, from left: Beth McDonald, assistant recording secretary; Tammi Ward, recording secretary; Chris Harker, vice president of development; Tana Hartsell, vice president; and Delores Thomas, president. Officers begin service in May.



J. McSwain

dwelling presence of Jesus Christ onto the mission field, he said. No believer is limited to his or her own strength and ability to handle difficulties.

D. McSwain

"You folks are going to go through the fire again and again and again,"

M. Pagan



J. Pagan

Rankin said.

"But you can be certain your Lord will show up and see you through."

 $(EDITO\hat{R}'S NOTE - Brandon is a$ writer with the International Mission Board.)



Moffett will be serving with her husband Andrew in Argentina.

Three couples with N.C. ties also were appointed.

Russell and Ingrid Woodbridge will be serving in church and leadership development in Central and Eastern Europe. Woodbridge was assistant professor of theology at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest and also was missions pastor at The Summit Church in Durham. The Woodbridges have four children, ages 6 and 12.

Jeremy and Deanna McSwain, both Shelby natives, have also been appointed to Central and Eastern Europe but in community outreach/developconcerns.

Spiritual provisions

God wants to "turn the hearts of people to what only Jesus can provide," IMB President Jerry Rankin said in addressing the new missionaries.

Speaking from Colossians 1, Rankin encouraged each person to use the Apostle Paul's prayer for spiritual provisions as an example – pray to be filled with the knowledge of God's will, to always walk in a manner worthy of the Lord and to be strengthened by His power and presence.

Being a missionary is not just a job, Rankin reminded, but rather a witness for Jesus Christ, a representative for Him in a lost world.

The most effective witness of Christians is the way they live their lives. Believers need to "demonstrate peace in the midst of adversity, joy in all circumstances," Rankin said.

Each new missionary carries the in-

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