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They teach spiritual truths, too

Teaching financial principles impacts more than pocketbooks

By Steve DeVane
BR Managing Editor

Churches that teach biblical principles about money help more than just their members' pocketbooks.

"It's a good tool to bring people closer to God," said Jessica Garner, a volunteer instructor for Crown Financial Ministries and financial training coordinator at her church, Arran Lake Baptist Church in Fayetteville.

Garner said the 10-week course that she has taught four times at her church changes lives, because "it lets people realize God does want them to be out of debt."

The course teaches people

to rely on God, to realize, "it's a lot easier to let God have it all and roll with it," she said.

Changes among those taking the course are "pretty dramatic," Garner said. Some people started tithing.

Others decided to put their house on the market or sell their vehicles.

"It changes a person to realize that God does own everything," Garner said.

Pedro Rosario, Eastern North Carolina area director for Crown, said Crown studies have shown that giving in-

creases by 70 percent among those who take the course.

"The benefit to the church is the fact that (church members) are out of debt," he said.

Rosario said the 10-week course is

intense. Gar-

ner said par-

ticipants must

agree to meet

for two hours

each week.

Those who take

the course often

become lifelong

friends, she

said.

Garner

encourages

churches to teach financial stewardship.

Such efforts can be a

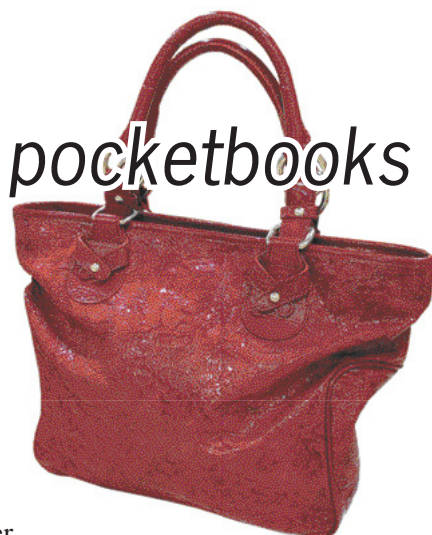
The course teaches people to rely on God, to realize, "It's a lot easier to let God have it all and roll with it."

— Jessica Garner

springboard to help communities by teaching financial principles to church neighbors and by getting church members into a financial position where they can help meet community needs.

Garner became a financial instructor after her church taught a course on finding a ministry in which to be involved. Later when the church was raising money for Vacation Bible School she didn't have money to donate.

She talked to church staff, found out about Crown, and learned Crown had a partnership with the Southern Baptist Convention. Garner became a certified trainer and more than 40 registered



for her first class offering.

"It was a much larger turnout than we expected," Garner said.

Since groups need to stay small for greatest effectiveness, most people were put on a waiting list. After four classes, there's still some on the list, Garner said.

"It's more than I can keep up with, to tell the truth," she said.

Cooperative Program ends 2008 down 4.8 percent

By Norman Jameson
BR Editor

Mission gifts from North Carolina Baptist churches through the Cooperative Program were down 4.8 percent from 2007, according to final figures from the Baptist State Convention (BSC).

This marks the second consecutive year and fourth year of the past six that one year's gifts were lower than the previous year. The 2008 gifts missed the budget by 11.5 percent, or \$4.5 million, which has prompted internal budget adjustments for 2009.

The \$34.49 million given in 2008 was \$1.7 million lower than in 2007 and actually \$1.1 million lower than gifts in 2002.

Despite the shortfalls, John Butler, BSC executive leader for business services, said the Convention finished operations in the black. Convention, board and board group operations comprise just \$14.5 million of a \$39 million budget, so the Convention does not suffer the full brunt of a shortfall.

BSC agencies and institutions and the national mission partners, whose Cooperative Program income is based on a percentage of receipts at the Convention office, share the pain. The \$39.3 million budget adopted in 2007 for 2009 still includes \$3.4 million for the colleges, which are in the second year of their decreasing income from Cooperative Program, which they gave up in exchange for the ability to name their own trustees. Baptist Retirement Homes receives nothing.

In a press release, Milton A. Hollifield Jr., BSC executive director-treasurer, expressed gratitude "to North Carolina Baptist churches who have continued to support Cooperative Program missions

(See Cooperative Page 6)



BR photo by Norman Jameson

TOOLS — Jimmy Lawrence, First Baptist Church, Mayodan, demonstrates proper tools and safety tips for wading into a muddy house at a disaster relief training event in March 2008. The North Carolina Baptist Men (NCBM) offer regional training in March, April, May and June in Regions 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9. For more about upcoming training opportunities, visit NCBM's web site: www.ncmissions.org. NCBM, along with other Baptist State Convention agencies, institutions and national mission partners, are partially supported by Cooperative Program gifts.

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Gardner-Webb loses another faculty member to death

By BR staff and agency writers

BOILING SPRINGS — Funeral services for Dan Goodman, professor at Gardner-Webb University's (GWU) School of Divinity, were held Jan. 15, at Boiling Springs Baptist Church.

Goodman, 40, died unexpectedly Jan. 13, according to school officials. He was professor and Bob D. Shepherd Chair of New Testament Interpretation.

The cause of death was not immediately available.

Gifts will go toward college scholarships for Goodman's surviving sons, age 11 and 15. He is also survived by his wife.

"The Gardner-Webb University family has been profoundly saddened by the loss of Dr. Dan Goodman," said Frank Bonner, Gardner-Webb president since 2005. "He was loved and admired by students, faculty, staff and all who knew him.

"Dr. Goodman was all that a university family could wish or hope for — a great teacher, an outstanding

scholar and a wonderful colleague."

Goodman is the fourth staff or faculty member at Gardner-Webb to die in the past 30 months, three of them unexpectedly.



Goodman

Sid Haton, director of athletic bands and instructor in music, died on campus Sept. 18, 2008.

In June 2006 Vice President for Development David Boan was killed in a car accident and Bruce Rabon, assistant vice president for development, died from cancer.

Goodman joined the faculty of the divinity school in the fall of 2003 as associate professor of New Testament. Prior to coming to North Carolina, he was associate professor of New Testament Studies at Palm Beach Atlantic University, where he was twice named Professor of the Year. In 2004, Goodman was one of only 10 theological school professors nationwide to be awarded the Theological Scholars Grant (by the Association of Theological Schools and the Lilly Foundation) for his project on the history of Baptist-Jewish relations.

Deadline near for preaching contest

From contributed reports

Sermons that emphasize Baptist heritage and principles are eligible for the Baptist History and Heritage Society's eighth annual Baptist Heritage Preaching Contest.

The contest is held in cooperation with the H. Franklin Paschall Chair of Biblical Studies and Preaching at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn. The deadline for submitting entries is Feb. 15.

Anyone who is currently preaching in some capacity is eligible. Winners will be announced by April 1.

The first-place winner will be invited to attend the Baptist History and Heritage Society's annual meeting to deliver the sermon. The meeting will be in Huntsville, Ala., June 4-6, 2009.

The winner will also receive a \$400 first prize.

The sermon should be 2,500 words or less.

All entries should be mailed to: Pam Durso, Baptist History and Heritage Society, 3001 Mercer University Drive, Atlanta, GA 30341.

For more information, go to www.baptisthistory.org/preachingcontest.htm.

Oscar Romo, ethnic ministry pioneer, dies

By Mickey Noah
Baptist Press

CUMMING, Ga. — Oscar I. Romo, a pioneer in ethnic evangelism and church planting for the Home Mission Board (now the North American Mission Board), died Jan. 16, of pneumonia related to Parkinson's disease.

A memorial service for Romo, who was two weeks shy of his 80th birthday, was held at John's Creek Baptist Church in Alpharetta, Ga., Jan. 19.

Two years ago, during the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in San Antonio, Romo was honored by Hispanic Southern Baptists for his nearly 50 years of strategy development and work with ethnic groups, dating back to his first pastorate in 1948 until his retirement from the mission board in 1995.

Bob Sena, a church planting coordinator for NAMB, knew Romo for nearly 40 years.

"I first met him on a sidewalk at Wayland Baptist University in Plainview, Texas, in the 1960s," Sena said. "At that moment, I noticed something unique about this man. He was my mentor. God used him as a human instrument to open every door, directly

or indirectly, of every ministry I've ever been involved in."

Sena said while Romo was proud to be Hispanic, he was committed to the Great Commission of reaching all people groups, not only Hispanics, and thus had a global impact. Al-



Romo

though people groups are integral facets of NAMB and the International Mission Board strategy today, Sena said Romo was on the leading edge.

"Oscar would say to me, 'Bob, don't forget ... while you are Hispanic, think beyond yourself. We must reach all people because they all need the gospel,'" Sena said.

Sena said only a few hours following the announcement of Romo's death, he and other NAMB colleagues received e-mails from the leadership of the Cuban Baptist Convention, expressing condolences and reminding them of the significant impact Romo had on Baptist leadership and ministries in Cuba.

In lieu of flowers the family has requested that donations be made to the Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary's Contextual Leadership Development Center in Mill Valley, Calif.

(EDITOR'S NOTE — Noah is a writer for the North American Mission Board.)

Convocation for a New Baptist Century Monday, February 9, 2009

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2:30 pm *The New Baptist Century in Historical Context**

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4:15 pm *Christian Higher Education in a New Baptist Century**

Panel Discussion with Presidents of NC Baptist Colleges; Moderator Wayne Wike, Executive Assistant to the President, Wingate University and former President, Council on Christian Higher Education, Baptist State Convention of NC

5:30 pm *Dinner* (\$10, registration required*)

7:00 pm *Evening Plenary Session and Worship**

Address - Larry Hovis, CBFNC Executive Coordinator
Sermon - Mike Queen, Pastor, FBC, Wilmington
Music - NC Baptist college choral groups

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Here is something you'll find only at the *Biblical Recorder* online:

www.biblicalrecorder.org.

'Twilight' ignites values conversations in family

Jennifer Shore is a young, working mother with children approaching their teen years like a lion



"approaches" a fleeing antelope. You can read her approach to the wildly popular teenage book series and movie "Twilight" online at www.biblicalrecorder.com/post/2009/01/16/Twilight-or-not-to-Twilight.aspx.

Shore says reading what her daughter is reading and seeing the movie together has prompted many conversations that lead to sharing values. Read Shore and the other Biblical Recorder bloggers at www.biblicalrecorder.org.

Be sure to visit the photo gallery where churches can share their photos from mission trips, special events and conferences.

Gambia sentences missionaries to hard labor

By Mark Kelly
Baptist Press

BANJUL, Gambia — A British missionary couple in Gambia has been sentenced to a year in prison at hard labor for sending e-mails critical of Gambian dictator Yahya Jammeh.

David Fulton, 60, and his wife, Fiona, 47, pled guilty to the charges after their arrest in late November because their lawyer told them it might result in a lighter sentence, but a judge gave them the maximum sentence, saying he intended to send a message to those who “spread hatred against the government.” In addition to the prison sentences, the couple was fined the equivalent of about \$9,500 each.

The couple apparently sent e-mails to friends and church contacts in Britain that not only discussed their ministry but also described the state of affairs in Gambia and called Jammeh “a madman,” according to a report by *The Times* newspaper of London. A Gambian person in England connected to the Fulton’s home church sent copies of the e-mails to

Gambian authorities. Jammeh has ruled Gambia since he led a coup in 1994. The country has been criticized for human rights abuses and press censorship, and Jammeh has been ridiculed for claiming to have discovered a banana-based cure for AIDS, according to the British newspaper *The Independent*.

The Fultons have lived in Gambia for 10 years, according to International Christian Concern (ICC), a human rights organization that helps persecuted Christians around the world. Mr. Fulton conducted evangelistic efforts in villages accessible only by boat and served as a chaplain with the Gambian army. Mrs. Fulton trained prison chaplains, cared for terminally ill people and visited hospitalized women.

The Fultons have been held in the notorious Mile Two prison since they were sentenced Dec. 30, according to *The Independent*. Gambian authorities have denied them visitors since their incarceration, in spite of the fact that they both have health problems, according to ICC.

Individuals who want to intercede with Gambian authorities on the Fultons’ behalf may contact the country’s embassy in the United States by calling (202) 785-1399 or e-mailing info@gambiaembassy.us.

Annie Armstrong gifts top \$58 million in 2008

By Baptist Press

TALLADEGA, Ala. — Southern Baptists contributed more than \$58 million to the annual Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American missions in 2008 — 98 percent of the 2007 total, according to North American Mission Board (NAMB) President Geoff Hammond.

“It’s been a tough year,” Hammond told Woman’s Missionary Union (WMU) leaders meeting in Talladega, Ala., where he made the announcement.

“We were raising Annie Armstrong funds in the middle of \$4-a-gallon gasoline prices,” Hammond said. “To raise \$58 million in a recession was a miracle, and we praise God for that.”

North Carolina Baptists contributed \$6.06 million to the offering, down \$418,000 from 2007, according to Baptist State Convention Comptroller Robert Simons.

Presenting a large thank you board signed by NAMB staff, trustees and missionaries, Hammond expressed a special thank you to WMU, which promotes the offering nationally.

“We don’t do it on our own, and we can’t do it without you,” Hammond said. “Thank you for what you have done.”

Wanda Lee, executive director of WMU based in Birmingham, Ala., called the Annie Armstrong results

“significant because they show what the partnership between WMU and NAMB can do in a difficult year.”

“I pray in 2009 all of our cooperative efforts will continue to bring in the resources that our missionaries need to reach the United States and Canada for Christ,” Lee said. “We pledge to do our part, although we’re having significant changes in our own budgets.”

The 2009 goal for the Annie Armstrong offering is \$65 million. This year’s Week of Prayer is March 1-8. Its theme will be “Live with Urgency: Sowing Together for Harvest.”

The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering accounts for 46 percent of NAMB’s budget. The other key channel of funding is Southern

Baptists’ Cooperative Program by which churches’ gifts support state, national and international missions and ministries. The national missions offering was estab-

lished in 1895 by Woman’s Missionary Union to support Southern Baptist Convention missionaries in the United States. In 1934, the offering was named in honor of Annie Armstrong, WMU’s founder and tireless champion of missions.

Offering materials were sent to churches in December. For quick service, call (866) 407-6262. Posters, prayer guides and offering envelopes are distributed by state WMU offices. Churches should contact WMU-NC directly to order.



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Obituaries

DANIEL C. "NEIL" CRAIG, 87, died Jan. 16 in Patrick Springs, Va. He was 87. A Virginia native, Craig was a World War II veteran and a graduate of Bluefield College and Southeastern Seminary. Most of his pastorates were in Virginia, but he also was pastor of Mt. Harmony Baptist Church, Roxboro.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, the former Dorothy Bryant; two daughters; two brothers; and four sisters.

ROWELL LANE, 98, died Dec. 7, 2008.

Educated at Sunshine High School and Gardner Webb University, Lane earned degrees from Wake Forest University and Southeastern Seminary.

He was an active-duty officer in the United States Army Air Corps during World War II and later retired a Lieutenant Colonel from the United States Air Force Reserve.

He was in a variety of secondary education posts.

He pastored Rose Bay, Swan Quarter; Middleburg

and Raleigh Road (Henderson) Baptist churches. He retired as

pastor emeritus from Raleigh Road. He served as grand chaplain and worthy grand patron of the Grand Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star of North Carolina.

He is survived by his wife of 67 years, Hazel Asby Lane; sons, Robert Harold Lane of Houston, Texas, and James Branch Lane of Portland, Ore.; sister, Ruth Bost of Greensboro; brothers, Daniel Lane of Chesapeake, Va., and David Lane of Greensboro; six grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

Around the state

Church News



► **Jack Franks**, left, a new church planter in Greenville, leads the **Village Church at Greenville** members to distribute toys to 118 families in Greenville. This distribution is part of the Toy Store ministry of the South Roanoke Baptist Association. Terri Wiggins of the Piney Grove Church in Williamston heads up the ministry that provided toys for more than 700 children in the area served by SRBA churches in 2008. The toys are distributed in seven cities. Franks is funded by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

► **Conway Baptist Church, Conway**, Woman's Missionary Union ladies helped with the toy store in Ahoskie in December. From left: Josephine Ricks, Shelby Ricks, Linda Knight, Mary Vann, Beverly Burgess, Wanda Taylor, Anne White, Pearl Brown, Sandra Vann, and Peggy Davis. The church also recently held a spaghetti lunch and cookie decorating party for the children in the "Pathfinder" ministry.



Contributed photo

Send news about your church

The *Biblical Recorder* is pleased to print significant news from the churches.

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For e-mail submissions, send announcements and digital pictures as an attachment to dianna@biblicalrecorder.org. Or, send paper copy to *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 18808, Raleigh, NC 27619.



Mathis interim president at Fruitland Baptist

By Staff and agency writers

Former Baptist State Convention (BSC) president Greg Mathis has been named interim president of Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute.

The appointment was announced Jan. 13 by Milton A. Hollifield, BSC executive director-treasurer. The Fruitland Board of Directors unanimously affirmed the decision, he said.

Mathis, pastor of Mud Creek Baptist Church in Hendersonville and professor of evangelism for 24 years at Fruitland, will direct the school's day-to-day operations until a new president is named. Mathis said he will remain pastor at Mud Creek, which is about 10 miles from the Fruitland campus.

He said he is not a candidate for the presidency at Fruitland.

"I fully know my long-term calling is at Mud Creek Baptist Church," he said. Mathis was awarded the J.C. Canipe Teaching Award at Fruitland in 1997. He served two terms as president of the BSC and as president of the North Carolina Baptist

Pastor's Conference. Mathis has also served on the BSC Board of Directors, executive committee and budget committee. He also served on the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee and resolutions committee.



Mathis

Mathis complimented Kenneth Ridings, who retired Jan. 1 as Fruitland's president. Mathis is also Ridings' pastor.

"This appointment is both an honor and an obligation for me," Mathis said.

"I approach this task as a sacred trust to all North Carolina Baptists as well as all others who pray for this institution. It is my prayer that during these months of transition this campus will be known for an education that is on fire for Jesus Christ and points others to the gospel path of salvation."

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Greensboro church uses rainy day fund to help others

By Steve DeVane
BR Managing Editor

It's not unusual for a church to dip into its reserves to meet needs when giving drops. It is unusual for a church to use "rainy day" funds to meet the needs of community service groups not even affiliated with the church. First Baptist Church in Greensboro voted Jan. 14 to give \$15,000 each to the local Salvation Army and the Greensboro Urban Ministry, according to pastor Ken Massey. The vote was unanimous after the church's deacon chairman and the chairman of the finance committee presented "heartfelt rationale" of why the church should donate the money, Massey said. The chairmen told church members that other people needed help and the congregation had more than most. They said Christians are called to live by faith and not sight, according to

Massey. "We believe God will provide for us," he said. Massey said the church had money in reserve as a rainy day fund for potential tough times. "I really expected in the conversation more concern since we're behind in giving about 9 percent," he said. "I really expected more concern that we might need it down the road." Instead, the discussion was positive and centered on the needs of others, Massey said. "For me, it was just a wonderful reminder that when times are difficult Christians can be at their best," he said. First Baptist members realized many in Greensboro have been negatively impacted by the economic downturn. "I hope the church modeled what we ask our church members to do — that is give beyond their fears," he

said. "It's easy to want to hold onto it in case things get worse, because they might." Massey said he thinks the church's decision was the result of two recent events. In the fall, the church hosted an economic summit with local experts and ministry leaders. During the meeting, the head of the local Urban Ministry told the congregation that about 3,000 school children in Guilford County are homeless, Massey said. The gathering prompted church members to think about how they could help. The church has also been in a "visioning process," according to Massey. The effort revealed that church members want to minister to local people impacted by the eco-

conomic crisis. Some church members are already ministering in various ways, Massey said. But until the church can organize its own practical ministries, church members decided that those already ministering could use money the church had in its reserves. Massey said the two groups will likely use the money to restock their food supply, to serve food to people and to provide financial assistance. "They both do great work," he said. Massey said he enjoyed telling leaders of the two organizations about the church's decision. Both had read about it in a local newspaper column. "That was a lot of fun," he said. "That's a great feeling."

"For me, it was just a wonderful reminder that when times are difficult Christians can be at their best."
— Ken Massey

Intentional evangelism alters church's culture

By Erin Roach
Baptist Press

FLOWERY BRANCH, Ga. — An initiative to baptize "100 Souls in 100 Days" has spawned an atmosphere of evangelism at Blackshear Place Baptist Church that has become the Atlanta-area congregation's new culture. Lives have been changed, including a couple who had been addicted to methamphetamine and were searching for hope. Stumbling upon the sprawling church in Flowery Branch, Ga., they heard the gospel message and prayed to receive Christ. "God radically changed their

lives," Jason Nave, a missions pastor at Blackshear Place, told Baptist Press. "Only God could do something like that. It was really cool to watch them be transformed and to continue to see them grow." And there was an elderly couple who had been married 50 years. They came forward one Sunday to rededicate their lives, and after talking with a deacon they realized they didn't have a salvation story. They had attended church over the years but had never received Christ as Savior. "They both came to faith in Christ and were baptized that night," Nave said. "I had the opportunity to baptize both of them. There are so many stories like that."

The stories began accumulating in 2006 when the church's pastor, Jeff Crook, realized that in the midst of \$17 million construction project, the congregation needed an emphasis that would keep them from turning inward while their building was in disarray. Crook launched 100 Souls in 100 Days that summer, challenging the congregation to share the gospel with people they encountered outside the church, motivated by a goal to see at least 100 people commit to follow Jesus in believer's baptism. On Day 100, the church baptized 126 people. Blackshear Place, with 2,800 in average attendance on Sundays, repeated the evangelism emphasis last year and saw 191 people baptized within 100 days. The church celebrated the culmination by baptiz-

ing the remaining new believers in nearby Lake Lanier during an evening worship service, just like they did after the end of the first emphasis two years earlier.



During the 100-day emphasis, the church scheduled one night each month and heard a short presentation on how to witness using the EvangeCube or other evangelism tool.

"The way that we set this thing up and the reason we say anybody can do this is because whether your goal is 100 or 10 in 100 days, the main thing that we focused on is equipping our people to share their faith and to create an atmosphere of evangelism in the church," Nave said. "It's kind of an electrifying thing when people see other people coming to Christ." During the 100-day emphasis, the church scheduled one night each month between July

and September when its members gathered for a meal and then heard a short presentation on how to witness using the EvangeCube, the Romans Road or other evangelistic tool. Then people divided into teams and went out into their rapidly growing community. The church also began offering in-depth classes on evangelism for those who wanted to learn more. "It just creates an atmosphere where people are doing what Jesus said to do by fulfilling the Great Commission," Nave said. "That brings a blessing to your life when you're obedient in that regard. It seems like our people just really caught on fire and just began to tell people and began to bring people."

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Working or retired, Simpson keeps on preaching

By Norman Jameson
BR Editor

Marvin Simpson moved to North Carolina to retire midway between the Northeast where his children are, and Georgia, where his wife's children and her mother lived.

Instead of a rocking chair life, Simpson has been serving at least one church, and most often two, the entire time.

At age 80, Simpson finally relinquished his part-time role as minister of senior adults at First Baptist Church, Mebane.

Now, he is "just" full-time pastor at Kerr's Chapel Baptist Church, on the southern edge of Caswell County, north of Elon. Simpson came to Graham in 1994, a year after he married Mary, a Georgia widow who had once been a member of a church he pastored in New York, before he was pastor there.

Tears still come

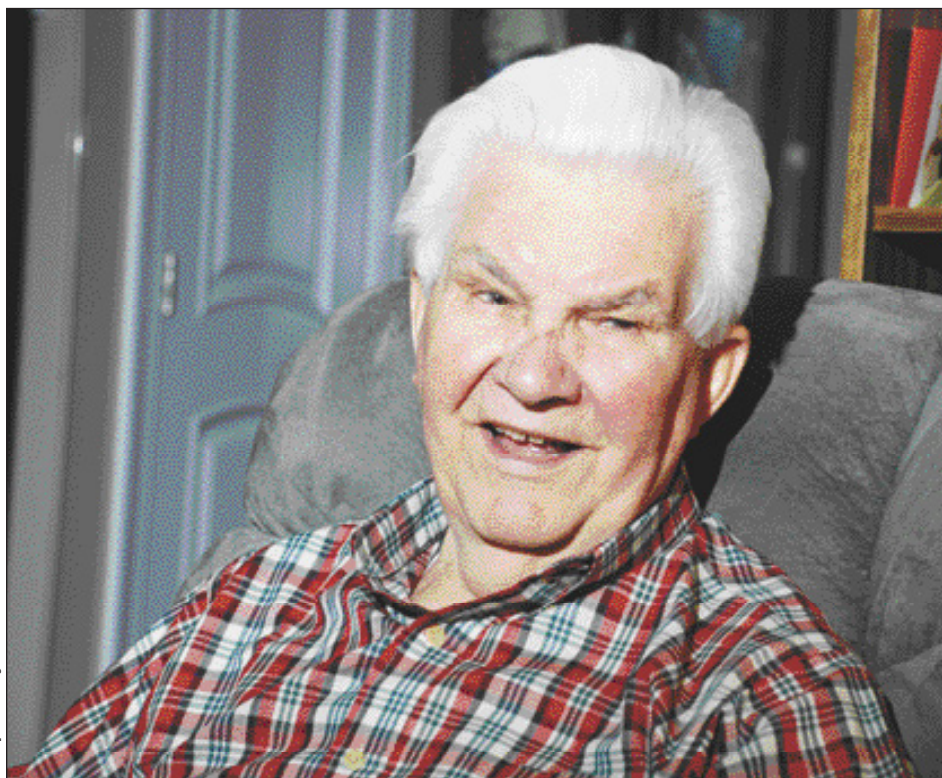
Early in his career Simpson managed sales for a dairy before responding to a call to vocational ministry. He wrestled against his image of impoverished pastors, "living hand to mouth, with holes in their shoes." He still tears up remembering the day when it became crystal clear for him.

Simpson, the 13th of 14 children, told his brother that day, "I don't know where I'll be next year at this time, but I'll be in ministry."

At age 32 with four children, and experience as a lay preacher, Simpson investigated enrolling at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Four professors there each encouraged him to return home and begin to pastor.

Arriving home, he learned that Frostburg Baptist Church where he had "just spoken a few Sundays," had called him as its pastor while he was gone. It was 1960 and a half century of ministry was just beginning.

Simpson was appointed a Home Mission Board (now North American Mission Board) pioneer missionary pastor at Champlain Valley Baptist Church in Plattsburg, N.Y. for 4-5 years. Little did he know his future



BR photo by Norman Jameson

VOCATION — Marvin Simpson, 80, pastor of Kerr's Chapel Baptist Church in Elon, has been a pastor for almost 50 years.

wife had just moved from there to Omaha with her military husband.

Later, after both Marvin and Mary had lost their spouses, they married and spent their first winter in Maryland. It snowed, sleeted or had freezing rain 17 times that winter.

"I would probably have left him that first winter," said the sweet Georgia native. "But I couldn't get out of Maryland because the weather was too bad!"

He followed a fairly common trail of pastorates that took him to Ellicott City, close to Baltimore, then Grace Baptist, then to First Baptist Church in Waldorf, Md., and for the first time, now with five children, he could buy a house.

"I didn't know Waldorf was in the bad shape it was, or I probably wouldn't have had the courage to go," Simpson said. "I've always been a church leader who could work through problems with people, and lead them to come together. I probably learned it in the dairy."

Simpson preached a lot about love and forgiveness and in about 18 months the church began to grow, he said.

The daughter of a leading deacon in the church eventually married Simpson's son, Bob, who is now editor of the Maryland Baptist newspaper.

Simpson retired in 1990 so he could care for his wife Ruth, who had been diagnosed with cancer in 1987 and would die in 1991.

Ruth and Marvin had always planned to do special ministries when they got older. For the most part, the churches he led were missions or "in trouble" when he started.

While Simpson does not see himself "as a great orator" God has used his abilities to "work with people, to stand up to and to face issues."

Eventually mutual friends introduced Mary and Marvin and they moved to Graham in April 1994. "My mood was to fill pulpits here and yonder," he said. "That's all I humanly wanted to do."

He did an interim at Beulah Baptist on Hwy. 158 for 10 months and then was glad to take a breath. Before he

could exhale Kerr's Chapel asked him to preach on Mother's Day, then again on Father's Day. He's been there ever since 1997, first as interim briefly, then as full-time pastor.

Second job

When Simpson and Mary moved to Graham, they joined First Baptist Church, Mebane, and as members immediately found a place to serve. Pastor Terry Farmer told Simpson the church had 65 homebound members and Simpson and Mary set out to visit them and keep them connected with the church and with Farmer.

"He and his wife were fabulous," said Farmer, who enjoyed their ministry for about seven years. When Simpson thought he might need to give up his role at First Baptist after he became pastor at Kerr's Chapel, Farmer told him it might be a tradition in Baptist life to serve one church at a time, "but I'm not hung up on that."

Radiation treatments last summer sapped his once abundant energy but he feels it coming back, Simpson said.

He loves Kerr's Chapel and appreciates the members' pride in their facilities, and their willingness to take the lead in programs.

"They are a lovely people and fun to be around," Simpson said. "They take care of us in the most beautiful manner, no doubt about it. They're an easy bunch to work with."

Kerr's Chapel runs about 100 in worship in a rural area with little residential growth. Once

predominantly farm country, today many workers commute to Burlington and Greensboro.

When Simpson volunteered to step aside for a younger pastor, they told him, "If you can't get to the pulpit, we'll build a ramp and push you up there."

"This is the most loving and easy church to work with that I've ever been a part of," said Simpson. It is also his longest pastorate. It's no wonder he feels if God gives him good health and energy to age 99, he could keep on preaching.

"I've always been a church leader who could work through problems with people, and lead them to come together."
— Marvin Simpson

Cooperative Program ends 2008 down 4.8 percent

(Continued from Page 1)

through the BSC even when many local church budgets are running at deficit levels."

He anticipates operating "at reduced levels of income for several months before we see the economy significantly improve. We will adapt, adjust and function with the resources that God provides through the churches of this great Convention. We remain grateful for the work of our churches and their ongoing investment in the work of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina."

The 2009 budget retains the four North Carolina Cooperative Program giving plans, which will be reduced to one for the 2010 budget, following action of Convention messengers in November.

In 2008 Plan A, the original plan through which 65 percent of income is received, was down 3.77 percent, to \$22.3 million.

Plan B, which emphasizes North Carolina theological education and special missions, and forwards only 10 percent to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), rather than the 33.5 percent of Plan A, was up 2.8 percent to \$2.8 million.

Plan C, which also favors theological education and special missions in North Carolina, forwards nothing to the SBC and sends 10 percent to the national Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, was down 11.9 percent to \$1.7 million.

Plan D, which forwards 33.5 percent to the SBC, devotes just 50 percent, rather than 66.5 percent to the work of the Baptist State Convention, and gives an additional five percent to Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute, was up 4 percent to \$6 million.

The 33.5 percent forwarded to the SBC in plans A and D increases to 34 percent in the 2009 budget.

Special offerings took a hit in 2008, as well. After a record setting year in 2007, special offerings for national and international missions plunged in North Carolina. The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for international missions was down 15.6 percent to \$12.8 million. The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for national missions was down 6.5 percent to \$6.1 million. The North Carolina Missions Offering was down 11.7 percent, to \$2,004,499. That offering did meet its goal of \$2 million, a goal reduced from the previous year's \$2.5 million when Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina was removed as a recipient.

North Carolina Baptist Men is the largest recipient of NCMO funds, at \$793,000. Director Richard Brunson said the offering makes possible ministry efforts such as disaster relief, partnerships and the medical-dental bus.

"We're real grateful that churches gave and we were able to reach the goal," he said.



BR photo by Norman Jameson

KEEPING DRY — A key in roofing is keeping wind from infiltrating emergency plastic roofing. North Carolina Baptist Men receive Cooperative Program dollars and train volunteers to do disaster recovery, like this training event in March 2008.

Mars Hill event mixes new event, old message

From contributed reports

Mars Hill College is hosting an event in February that organizers are calling a new way to reach a new generation with an old and unchanging story.

The school will be hosting Ignite '09 at 6:30 p.m. on Feb. 27 and 28 at Moore Auditorium on Mars Hill's campus. It's the school's second year hosting the Christian revival service designed specifically for young people.

"It's a Jesus thing, it's not a denomination thing," said Gordon Benton, director of church and community relations at Mars Hill and one of the primary coordinators for Ignite.

Benton said churches cooperating to plan and coordinate the event cover four counties in western North Carolina, and include Baptist, Pentecostal, Methodist, Presbyterian and nondenominational churches.

Christian musical artists Carl Cartee and Leap of Faith will perform again this year.

Also part of the musical portion of the service will be performances by



Contributed photo

IGNITING — Christian musical artists Carl and Heather Cartee perform at Ignite 08 at Mars Hill College.

"3-D," a quartet of dancers specializing in worship through creative movement. The evangelist will be Clayton King.

"People from a more traditional background may be uncomfortable at first with the Ignite approach," Benton said. "But when you hear the

lyrics of the music, when you feel the spirit of the worship and when you hear Clayton King preach, you know that this event is definitely about raising up the Christ of the Bible. And He said if He were raised up, he would draw all men to Himself."

Planners of Ignite 09 at Mars

What do you think about Ignite?

Are you a youth leader and you've seen how Ignite has made a difference in your youth? Are you a young person who has attended Ignite and seen the Holy Spirit working in your life or your friends?

Tell the *Biblical Recorder* what Ignite has meant to your spiritual walk or share changes you've seen in another person.

What other tools or events do you use to make a difference in your personal walk with Jesus?

E-mail dianna@biblicalrecorder.org or mail *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 18808, Raleigh, NC 27619-8808.

Hill College plan to have a series of prayer services leading up to the event. Christian counselors are needed for both services. For more information contact Benton at (828) 689-1276.

Burma clamps down on Christians

By Sarah Page

Baptist Press

DUBLIN — Burmese authorities have increased restrictions on Christian activity in the capital city of Rangoon and surrounding areas, including the closure of several churches, Compass Direct News reported Jan. 21.

Orders issued on Jan. 5 already had forced many Christians meeting in residential homes or apartments to cease gathering for worship.

The following week, officials ordered several major Rangoon churches, including Wather Hope Church, Emmanuel Church and the Assemblies of God Church, to cease holding services.

Authorities also continued enforcing the Jan. 5 ban on meetings held in unauthorized facilities.

A military dictatorship has ruled Burma since 1962.

Following the takeover, the government renamed Burma as the Union of Myanmar and the capital city as Yangon, but many news agencies and government bodies continue to use the original names.

Burmese authorities stopped issuing permits for land purchase or the construction of new churches in the late 1990s, leading many Burmese Christians to conduct services in rented apartments or office buildings, according to the Burmese news agency Mizzima.

The Kyauktada Township Peace and Development Council on Jan. 5 invited pastors from more than 100 Rangoon churches to a meeting where they were told to sign documents pledging to cease operation of their churches.

About 50 pastors attended, Mizzima reported.

The documents threatened punishment, including potential jail terms and the sealing of church facilities, for pastors who refused to obey the

closure orders.

Another local online news source, the Democratic Voice of Burma, claimed officials from the Ministry of Religious Affairs had summoned the owners of buildings where churches met and ordered them not to rent their properties to religious groups.

Some local Christians and international observers say the crackdown is related to Christian involvement in relief efforts for the victims of Cyclone Nargis, which hit Burma in May 2008.

Despite widespread devastation and loss of life, Burma's reclusive government initially banned foreign aid but finally accepted it on condition that Burmese officials would distribute it. Christians, however, had responded immediately to the crisis, gathering relief supplies and transporting them to the Irrawaddy Delta region.

Police or army officials stopped some groups but many were allowed to proceed. At least one such group told Compass that officials likely feared the conversion of Buddhists who accepted aid from Christians.

Burma's military junta promotes Buddhism at the expense of other minority religions, according to Hudson Institute's 2008 Religious Freedom in the World analysis.

The country's population is 82 percent Buddhist, 9 percent Christian and 4 percent Muslim, with traditional ethnic, Chinese and Hindu religions accounting for the rest. Burma ranks high on lists of religious and human rights violators at several watch organizations, including the U.S. State Department, Human Rights Watch, Freedom House and Open Doors.

(EDITOR'S NOTE — Page writes for *Compass Direct News*, which based in Santa Ana, Calif., and provides reports on Christians worldwide who are persecuted for their faith. The article is used by permission.)



BR photo by Norman Jameson

➤ **First Baptist Church, High Point**, pastor Tim Cannon, left, honored Woodroe Haywood on Jan. 25 for his 50 years of service as the church's treasurer. Dorothy Haywood, right, accompanies her husband, 96. See more on blog *Spoke'n* at www.biblicalrecorder.org. See page 4 for more church news.

Seminarians reach inmates through sports

"SAN RAFAEL, Calif. — Walking into the yard at San Quentin, you know you're an outsider," said Bryan Brown, a student at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary who leads the seminary's San Quentin Sports Ministry.

"Once you start to play the game, you completely forget you're in a prison and playing with inmates."

"It's like walking into a huge middle school playground," said fellow Golden Gate student Sean Donohue, founder of the San Quentin All Stars, a basketball team composed of 12-15 inmates. "There are guys everywhere — jogging, playing baseball, basketball, working out, playing cards, talking — everywhere," he said.

Those in the yard are surrounded by 40-foot-high brick walls. Guards are not noticeable; Donohue estimated there are probably two guards for the 1,000 inmates in the yard. In addition, there are manned guard towers.

In 2003 Donohue was approached by a local pastor about forming a

prison basketball team. He held tryouts. Forty inmates tried out and 15 made the team. They practiced on Tuesdays, with games on Saturdays against other San Quentin teams.

"After a year, even though I had moved to a town farther away, I wanted to keep my relationship with these guys," Donohue said. "We would pray together, have powerful conversations and I really put myself out there."

Donohue recruited guys from the seminary plus a few friends to play against the All Stars inmate team. Five years later the outreach has added flag football and softball.

Serving at the prison has been rewarding for the seminarians as well as the inmates. "I saw a flyer about a prison ministry," said Miguel Rodriguez, a master of arts student who has been involved since spring 2006. "At first it was intimidating and a little scary, but the inmates were welcoming, and we could tell God was doing something."

Southern Baptists: Active in protecting life

By Roger S. (Sing) Oldham
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — During the early days of the so-called “culture war” between proponents of life and promoters of death, those who argue for elective abortions accused those who defended the right to life of only caring for the infant in the womb. For centuries Baptists around the world have been caring for children of every age, and Southern Baptists are part of this caring tradition. What follows is a “Top Ten” list of ways Southern Baptists invest themselves in life.

1) For years, Southern Baptists have used the power of relentless influence to encourage elected officials to defend and promote life. Richard Land and the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission have taken the initiative in keeping this topic ever before us. Though some have grown weary in defense of life, the ERLC has not wavered from its support of life from conception to natural death. It has not stood alone. Across the nation, millions of individual Baptists consistently vote their convictions and advocate for life in the congressional districts in which they live.

2) The North American Mission Board provides ministry support for local churches that have pregnancy care centers as part of their ministries. Many other Southern Baptist churches are not financially strong enough to maintain their own centers, so they solicit support from likeminded believers from many denominations in thousands of cities and towns to provide centers of hope in their local communities.

3) Many of our state conventions maintain children’s homes for children who need a safe haven. While the age of the “orphanage” is largely a thing of the past, many children are “orphans” by divorce, dysfunction or despair. Baptists have stepped forward to provide ministries for children of every age, from preschoolers to college-bound young adults. These ministries offer residential care, promote adoption and work to place children in loving foster-care environments.

4) In his 1991 volume *Acts of Compassion*, Princeton sociologist Robert Wuthnow chronicled the phenomenon of the millions of Americans who choose helping careers as a vocation. His subtitle is intriguing: “Caring for Others and Helping Ourselves.” His basic premise dovetails with a statement we frequently hear — “when I helped that family, I received more of a blessing than I gave.” Tens of thousands of Southern Baptists find tremendous fulfillment through their work in community-based programs that promote children’s health such as WIC, Healthy Start and Head Start. Others work with the government through children’s services or the juvenile justice system. Still others work with independent and faith-based adoption agencies.

5) Southern Baptists directly impact and influence children through public and private education in our nation’s school systems. Our educators strive to radiate the joy of the Lord and the fruit of the Spirit on a daily basis in some of the most difficult surroundings imaginable. Given the strictures against actively testifying of the grace and goodness

of the Lord Jesus Christ, these educators nevertheless daily demonstrate life-changing compassion.

6) Hundreds of Southern Baptist churches provide church-based education services for families, including affordable day-care programs, mother’s day out programs and Christian schools. Many of these employees work at great financial sacrifice, performing these acts of service as investments of love and worship as they actively seek to influence the next generation for Christ.

7) One of the greatest evangelistic tools ever promoted by Southern Baptists is Vacation Bible School. VBS could not exist were it not for the willing volunteers who prepare lessons, teach crafts, provide refreshments, drive buses and vans, ferry neighbor’s children, lead worship and organize recreational activities. To look at a VBS volunteer is to see what an individual who values the life of each child looks like.

8) Nursery care in the church setting is perhaps the most unsung ministry a local church offers. Most churches would come to a screeching halt if nursery volunteers rose up and said, “I will no longer serve.”

9) It has been said that the greatest gift a parent can give a child is to provide a stable home environment. It has never ceased to amaze me how some homes are “kids magnets.” What a wonderful blessing to be the home where your children’s friends want to congregate. Parents who intentionally create this kind of home environment demonstrate the love of Christ and their desire to protect children throughout life.

10) Very few churches do not have an active age-graded ministry of some kind. In the small church, the youth and children’s ministries may overlap and be led by volunteers. In larger churches, ministers with specialized training in preschool, childhood, middle school and high school ministries provide oversight and guidance. But, even here, the ministries would end overnight if thousands of volunteers did not make the ministries a priority of their time and commitment.

I could go on. Simply put, Southern Baptists are involved in the lives of children throughout their childhood, adolescence and young adulthood. Churches, ministers and members alike care for children. They rejoice over the strong and successful. They receive the fallen, seeking to restore them with gentleness and love. The convention partners with states, associations and local churches to provide resources to protect the innocent from sexual molestation and abuse.

On this 36th anniversary of the infamous Roe v. Wade decision by the Supreme Court (Jan. 22), let us recommit ourselves to promote life, protect the innocent and unborn and provide ministries and services that will give each child the best possible opportunities to see Christ, hear Christ and receive Christ. The ethic of life is, ultimately, about more than mere biology. Jesus put it this way: “I am come to give them life; and to give it more abundantly.”

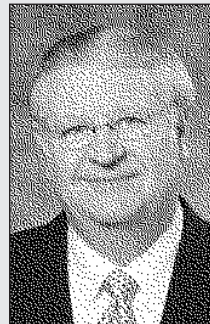
(EDITOR’S NOTE — Roger S. (Sing) Oldham is vice president for convention relations with the SBC Executive Committee. This article first appeared in the Executive Committee’s journal, *SBC LIFE*.)

The North American Mission Board provides ministry support for local churches that have pregnancy care centers as part of their ministries.

Church planting and evangelism

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

Virtually every great evangelistic challenge in the Bible calls believers to plant churches — not simply to share the faith. The Great Commission itself is not simply a call to “make disciples” but also to “baptize.” In the New Testament, baptism was only to be administered to those individuals who personally professed faith in Jesus Christ. Their baptism represented a personal association with the risen Christ which was followed by their incorporation into a visible worshiping community with clear boundaries (Acts 2:41-47).



Much evangelism in our day works to help the sinner see his/her need for Christ but has little regard for the church. This is not New Testament evangelism. When a person is changed by the power of the Holy Spirit through the gospel, new followers of Jesus Christ are to find their new life with others along the journey toward heaven. Since the 1980’s missiologists have called on North American Christians to embrace the most effective evangelistic methodology known in scripture — church planting.

The Apostle Paul had a very simple missionary strategy. He deliberately studied the culture of and placed himself in the largest cities of his region (Acts 16:9,12) and planted churches in each city (Titus 1:5). With this task completed, he would move on to a new field of service and work his same plan to permanently influence the cities and culture of his day through intentional church planting.

The International Mission Board of the SBC follows a similar practice in countries around the world as missionaries plant new churches to evangelize and disciple people in building up the body of Christ. This same practice is imperative for doing missions successfully in North Carolina. Church planting is missions!

Research reveals that in 1820 there was a church for every 875 Americans. In the year of our nation’s founding (1776), 17 percent of the U.S. population were members of churches. By 1916, that percentage rose to almost 53 percent. Why? Existing congregations worked to establish churches in almost every location and would not substitute outreach programs, para-church ministries, church consultation, or even city-wide crusades for the continual birth of healthy and vibrant local congregations.

While other methods of evangelism and missions contribute to the overall health of the Body of Christ, there is no substitute for the biblical imperative to understand and embrace God’s plan for evangelism and missions through His church.

North Carolina has more than 8 million people and is growing rapidly. If there was a church for every 1,000 people, that would mean that 8,000 churches would be needed to reach our population for Christ. The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina has almost 4,000 churches with many of them declining — some rapidly. We stand in great need to embrace this missionary strategy for our state with the great promise of the Lord Jesus Christ that through the faithful preaching of the gospel of the kingdom of God, the church of Jesus Christ would grow to encompass more and more people who need to be rescued from the darkness of sin.

As we begin this new year together, let us pray toward the passion of our God for His church and offer our lives toward reaching every person in North Carolina with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Matt. 16:18.

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Complacency kills, Moore tells trustees

When Jerry Moore was growing up in Bonham, Texas, any hour he wasn't playing football with his buddies was an hour wasted.

He couldn't wait until the games were under Friday night lights with uniforms and bands. His first high school team lost all 10 games and a new coach came the next year, a man who had finished on the short end of the score only twice his entire high school and college career.

More than a football coach, the man taught Jerry in Sunday School and enforced the idea that "losing is not the biggest tragedy for us. Quitting is the biggest tragedy for us."

Moore is the nationally famous coach of the Appalachian State football team, who in January was selected for induction into the North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame.

He is joined in that new class of inductees by five others, including North Carolina women's basketball head coach Sylvia Hatchell, a member of Cresset Baptist Church in Durham.

Moore is also a devoted member of Mount Vernon Baptist Church in Boone. His

Appalachian teams won the national championship in their division in 2005, 2006 and 2007.

Moore spoke to nine new trustees of Baptist institutions and agencies being oriented to their responsibilities Jan. 16, along with 31 others supporting the event at Caraway Conference Center.

After such a high profile run, Moore said the biggest challenge confronting his team and coaches is overcoming complacency. Coaches were aware of the danger, anticipated it, fought it and "still it creeps in," Moore said.

It is not difficult to transfer that image to the church. When a church starts to make a difference, to impact its community for Christ and every program works and members are on fire, Satan will take a perch on their shoulders and urge them to relax, as Moore said happened to his 2008 team.

Moore made an interesting observation about the potential effect of electronic games on athletes' mental strength, as opposed to board games of his youth. Once a game of checkers begins, players must find a way to win, or they lose. They cannot simply hit "restart" if they find themselves in a bad spot.

Moore thinks a "restart" mentality keeps players who are struggling in a tough game from digging in and finding a deeper resource. Victory comes from within, he said. Defeat finds its seed in the same place.

Moore says his football program is "not a Sunday School class," but is adamant that "we will honor God in everything we do."

He willingly puts his faith on the line by praying that each football season "will be a disaster, if our team is not centered on God." That's a risky, brazen, bold and transparent prayer of commitment. But it fits completely with his philosophy of "turning out leaders, kids that can handle adversity."

"That's what it's all about," he said.



Like your checkbook, SBC annual lists priorities

Church giving to missions through the Cooperative Program (CP) is a concern, not only to the mission, ministry and program recipients of such funds, but also to every church that contributes a dollar to CP. Churches, just as individuals, want to be good stewards of everything with which they are entrusted.

Churches that send Cooperative Program dollars to the Baptist State Convention trust that those dollars are being used effectively and judiciously. That trust is merited.

A primary responsibility of elected leadership in the Convention is to direct administration of the approximately \$34 million in CP that comes in from North Carolina's 4,000 churches (or at least the average 3,200 churches that contribute something). So, it is reasonable to expect the churches of those leaders to support the Cooperative Program. That is why CP support has become an issue in recent elections at the national level, and to some extent, the state level.

A Cooperative Program study committee appointed by the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee reported that one reason for a declining level of CP support among Southern Baptist churches, is the consistent election as president of men whose churches demonstrate little support of CP, as a percentage of their church's undesignated offerings.

Frank Page's election in 2006 over more widely known candidates is attributed in large part to his church's strong CP support. That support should be demonstrated by North Carolina leaders as well, and the *Recorder* has reported before that elected leaders in several significant positions were in churches that bypassed the Baptist State Convention with significant mission dollars, forwarding them directly to the Southern Baptist Convention instead.

Such direction and use of mission funds is the prerogative of every autonomous church. And every church that gives outside of itself for any mission cause is to be commended for giving because there is increasing tendency to keep dollars close to home, rather than investing in the people of "Samaria and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8) But it is fair to say that persons in elected leadership at the BSC should encourage their churches to give through the BSC.

The SBC does not count as Cooperative Program funds that arrive outside of the state convention channel because those funds do not follow the process established in 1925 when the Cooperative Program missions funding mechanism began. They are distributed nationally, however, according to that year's Cooperative Program allocations.

Each year when the Southern Baptist Convention's annual comes out, I peruse the list of churches that contributed money directly to the SBC. I know from conversations with pastors of several of these churches that such funds would typically pass through the Baptist State Convention instead if the church and/or pastor were not at odds with the "di-

rection" of the Convention.

In all cases of those I talked with — although that is not to assume it is universally true — the pastor led his church to redirect all or a portion of its mission giving because the Convention was not conservative enough, and/or he felt a larger percentage of mission gifts should be going to the North American and International mission boards.

The North Carolina list has remained fairly consistent in the number of churches bypassing the state convention. The 2007 SBC annual reports that 83 North Carolina Baptist churches sent \$1.3 million directly to the SBC "for the support of Southern Baptist Convention programs 2005-2006."

Only Texas with 158 has more churches than North Carolina bypassing their state convention to send money directly to the SBC, including \$328,000 from First Baptist Church, Euless, once the pastorate of strong CP supporter Jimmy Draper, who retired in February 2006 after 15 years as president of Life-Way Christian Resources.

It is important to note the lag time of reporting due to varying fiscal year schedules because as you go to page 137 of the 2007 annual you will see some churches listed which no longer send money directly to the SBC. I'm pleased to report that the churches of a former BSC budget committee chair and a former nominating committee chair no longer appear on this list. While the churches of a former BSC president and two current board members remain on the 2007 list, they have said they no longer make such contributions. The pastor of the largest contributor listed also has publicly stated his church now sends all of its CP dollars through the BSC.

Full disclosure here: the churches of two *Recorder* board members appear on the list.

Those pastors I've talked with who felt the direction of the Convention was not in harmony with their own priorities now sense the Convention shifting toward a more conservative mindset, and they feel more comfortable in redirecting those mission funds through the Convention.

Will the new, single giving plan adopted for 2010 make a difference to churches currently bypassing the BSC with their mission giving? Will the \$1.7 million from moderate Plan C churches disappear?

Interestingly, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina, accused of draining CP funds with its own mission budget, has a 2008-2009 budget of \$1.1 million, less than the \$1.3 million that self identified conservative churches sent to the SBC in the latest report.

Given the 2009 distribution of CP funds 66 percent to the BSC and 34 percent to the SBC, the BSC would have realized \$832,000 more for ministry in North Carolina had all the money listed on page 137 come through the Convention.

It is perfectly conceivable that your church may prefer those mission funds bypass the BSC, in favor of national and international missions. You may believe "the mission field" lies outside of North Carolina.

Consider a common estimate that one half the population of North Carolina is unsaved. A quick search of population data bases shows that one half of North Carolina's population is larger than the total population of 27 other states and of at least 75 nations.

Does that not verify North Carolina as a mission field worthy of your missions investment?

EDITORIAL



Norman Jameson


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News Briefs

Church, toothpaste garner same loyalty from Protestants

PHOENIX (ABP) — Protestants in the United States are about as loyal to their brand of toothpaste as to their denomination, according to one research firm.

A new poll by Ellison Research asked churchgoers who attend worship services at least once a month the denomination of the church they most often attend. Instead of broad terms like Baptist or Methodist, the survey asked for specific denominational brands, like “Southern Baptist” or “Free Will Baptist.” Researchers then asked respondents what role that denomination would play if they had to find a new church.

Just 16 percent of Protestants surveyed said they are exclusively loyal to one denomination, while half (51 percent) preferred one denomination but would be open to another. By comparison, 22 percent of Protestants said they would use only one brand of toothpaste and 42 percent indicated a preference for one brand while being open to others.

Graham grandson tapped as successor to D. James Kennedy

(RNS) A grandson of Billy Graham has been nominated to succeed the late D. James Kennedy as pastor of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

A pastoral search committee on Jan. 18 gave the congregation its recommendation of Tullian Tchividjian, pastor of nearby New City Church, as Coral Ridge’s next senior pastor.

Tchividjian, the son of Gigi Graham, the evangelist’s eldest daughter, seems ready to consider the position as long as he can bring his current church members with him.

“Because he is committed to his congregation at New City Church, he has requested, and the (pulpit nominating committee) has agreed, to consider

merging the two churches,” the Coral Ridge search committee announced on the church’s web site.

The search committee considered more than 150 candidates to succeed Kennedy, who died in 2007 at the age of 76.

Three charged in black church fire in Springfield, Mass.

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (RNS) — Three men arrested in an arson that destroyed a predominantly black church just hours after Barack Obama’s election were acting in anger over the election of a black man as president, according to a federal prosecutor.

The three men appeared in U.S. District Court Jan. 16, charged with violation of civil rights by means of conspiracy to “injure, oppress, threaten and intimidate the parishioners of the Macedonia Church of God in Christ, a predominantly African-American congregational church,” according to the criminal complaint.

The men are being held without bail pending a hearing before U.S. Magistrate Judge Kenneth P. Neiman.

The three charged are Benjamin F. Haskell, 22; Michael F. Jacques, 24; and Thomas A. Gleason Jr., 21, all of Springfield. All are white, and no pleas were entered. The crime carries a penalty of 10 years imprisonment.

Former youth worker pleads guilty to molestation charge

LAKELAND, Fla. (ABP) — A former volunteer youth worker at a Florida Southern Baptist megachurch pleaded guilty Jan. 21 to molesting three boys, putting his fate in the hands of a judge instead of a jury.

Marshal Seymour, 41, pleaded guilty and no contest to five felony charges. A sentencing hearing is scheduled March 12, where he could receive up to 65 years in prison, according to the *Lakeland*,

Fla., *Ledger*.

Seymour was arrested in November 2007 on charges he molested three teenage boys he met through First Baptist Church at the Mall in Lakeland. At the time Senior Pastor Jay Dennis called the scandal a “Category 5 storm” for the 8,000-member congregation.

Group launches new Prop 8 drive

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (BP) — If a new group has its way, Californians may decide in the midst of the 2010 mid-term elections — President Obama’s first major ballot test as chief executive — whether to legalize “gay marriage” once again.

The group, known as “Yes! On Equality,” is hoping to collect enough signatures to place a proposed constitutional amendment on the ballot that would remove Proposition 8 — which passed in November and defines marriage as between one man and one woman — from the state constitution. The group, though, would halt its effort if the California Supreme Court this year strikes Prop 8 from the constitution.

Southern Seminary eliminates 35 positions

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, in response to the national economic downturn, has reduced its administrative staff by 35 positions: 20 full-time and 15 part-time, effective Jan. 30.

Each person will receive a severance package, including placement assistance, according to a Jan. 15 news release from the seminary. No faculty members were included in the staffing reductions.

The workforce reduction, combined with budget cuts made in December, are to close a projected \$3.2 million shortfall in the seminary’s \$30 million budget, the news release said.



Classified Advertisements

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.

Senior Pastor Position. Central Baptist Church of Norfolk, Va., seeks a senior pastor who is called by the Holy Spirit to shepherd its congregation and lead its ministries. This pastor must embody the beliefs that our primary source of guidance and unity is in Jesus Christ, our Savior of surpassing love and grace, that the scriptures represent the inerrant and inspired word of God, and that it is the duty and privilege of all believers and the church to endeavor to make disciples of all nations, from the local community to every corner of the world. The pastor should be an ordained and well-experienced minister in the Southern Baptist Convention, however, the church will consider an ordained Independent Baptist minister; in either event, he must ascribe to the tenets of the Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention of 1963. The minimum required education is a bachelor’s and seminary degrees, however, the church will favorably consider advanced biblical degrees, such as a Master’s of Divinity and/or Doctorate of Ministry. For more information, including how to apply for the position, please visit www.cbcnorfolk.org.

Pastor. Tolarsville Baptist Church, a rural Southern Baptist church located outside of St. Pauls, N.C., is seeking a pastor. We are looking for an active, mission-minded man of God, able to relate to all ages, to lead God’s people. Strong Bible knowledge and application in preaching and Bible study a must. Accredited seminary graduate a plus. We are a congregation averaging approximately 80 for worship service. We support the BSCNC. We are a loving, prayerful body of believers, with emphasis on Christian fellowship. Please send resume and tape or cd to: Pastor Search Committee, Tolarsville Baptist Church, PO Box 558, St. Pauls, N.C. E-mail tbc_search@yahoo.com.

First Baptist Church of Yadkinville, North Carolina, is prayerfully seeking a **full-time pastor**. We seek a graduate of a seminary or divinity school with successful experience as a pastor. Strong preaching and people skills desired. We adhere to the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message and ordain men and women deacons. We are celebrating our 150th anniversary. Average worship attendance is approximately 100. Please send resume with sermon (DVD, CD or VHS) to: Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 1334, Yadkinville, NC 27055.

Church Staff

Minister of Worship. First Baptist Church of Gibsonville, N.C., is seeking a part-time minister of music and worship. Responsibilities include leading a blended worship service, directing choir and band. Please send resume to 221 Piedmont Ave., Gibsonville, NC 27249 or e-mail to fbcgib01@triad.rr.com.

Part-Time Worship Leader Needed. Responsibilities include working with choir, praise team and leading worship during the service. Send resumes 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 resume to hollyhunterch@bellsouth.net. Call with any questions at (704) 399-3316.

Minister of Youth. Bethany Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, N.C., is seeking a part-time minister of youth who will be responsible for leading and coordinating student ministries in collaboration with a youth ministry team. Mail resumes to: Bethany Baptist Church, 600 Old Hollow Road, Winston-Salem, NC 27105 in care of Don Harvey, or e-mail at dharvey@triadbiz.rr.com.

Minister of Music and Children. Trinity Baptist Church of Trinity, North Carolina, a medium-sized church with average attendance of 200, is seeking a full-time minister of music and children. This person will be responsible for leading the music in blended worship services and directing multiple choirs. This person will also be responsible for planning and coordinating activities leading to spiritual growth for children from pre-school to 5th grade and their families. A bachelor degree is preferred. Submit a cover letter, resume and DVD’s (if available) to: The Personnel Ministry, Trinity Baptist Church, PO Box 9, Trinity, NC 27370 or tbcpersonnel@yahoo.com.

Associate Pastor for Worship and Music. First Baptist Church, Ashboro, N.C., is seeking an associate pastor for worship and music. Requirements: minimum of a bachelor’s degree in music, seminary a plus, 3-5 years experience. For further details check the church web site at www.fbcasheboro.com. Submit resume to: First Baptist Church, 133 N. Church St., Asheboro NC 27203, Attn: R.M. Stratton, Chairman of the Music Search Committee or to rstratton@triad.rr.com.

Associate Pastor/Youth Minister. Wilkies Grove Baptist Church, a traditional SBC church in rural eastern Burke County with an average attendance of 270 is seeking an experienced full-time associate pastor/youth minister. College degree preferred and seminary a plus. Send resume to: Wilkies Grove Baptist Church, 5780 Wilkies Grove Church Rd., Hickory, NC 28602 Attention: Search Committee.

Yates Baptist Church, 2819 Chapel Hill Road, Durham, NC 27707 is looking for a **Minister, Students and Recreation** to lead the development and implementation of ministry programs that reach students in grades 6-12, college students and church-wide program of recreation. Two years of experience working in youth ministry, preferably as a member of a church staff, is preferred. Please mail resume or forward to info@yateschurch.org.

First Baptist Church of Sevierville, Tenn., is seeking to fill the position of **Executive Associate Pastor**. Send resumes to: Executive Associate Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 317 Parkway, Sevierville, TN 37862. A ministry description for this position can be requested by visiting our web site at fbcsev.org.

Minister of Youth. Clarksville Baptist Church is seeking a part-time minister of youth. We are a growing church in southern Virginia affiliated with the BGAV and CBF. We are looking for a minister who is interested in building relationships with students and their families and has a desire to help others encounter the living God. Please send a resume with a cover letter to: Youth Minister Search Committee PO Box 126 Clarksville VA 23927.

Music Minister. Concord Baptist Church in Granite Falls is looking for a full time minister of music. Education experience is desired. The church has blended services. Attendance over 300 that also supports a full-time minister of students. Submit resume to Search Committee, Concord Baptist Church, PO Box 127, Granite Falls, NC 28630.

Miscellaneous

Bus For Sale. 36-seat 1993 Eldorado with lavatory, wheel-chair lift. Excellent condition. 18,000 miles; maintenance records available. \$20,000. Call (336) 759-0195 or e-mail mma48@bellsouth.net.

Share the Biblical Recorder — FREE. Order a three-month free subscription for your family and friends. Contact Amie Moore at (919) 847-2127 or amie@biblicalrecorder.org to make arrangements. Encourage others to be more informed about N.C. Baptist life and missions.

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Choose one of three avenues:

- Send e-mail to: joellen@biblicalrecorder.org
- Submit the information via the Recorder’s web site at www.biblicalrecorder.org
- Send a Fax to (919) 847-6939

For more information, call the office at (919) 847-2127.

Cost for Baptist churches and organizations is \$1.20 per word, number and stand-alone initial (\$1.42 for commercial and non-Baptist entities) with a minimum charge of \$35. Ads will also be displayed on the Recorder’s web site.



Lesson for Feb. 8

Formations

Lesson for Feb. 15

When All Seems Lost

Focal Passage: Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14

The focal passage of scripture for this lesson is a letter, written by Jeremiah to a group of people who were being “carried away in captivity” from Jerusalem. The King, Nebuchadnezzar, has had the elders, priests, and prophets all carried away into captivity. Now the working title of the lesson is when all “seems” lost. I am not sure about you, but for me, once the carrying away begins it isn’t a “seems” situation any more. Nope, at that point we have crossed over to the “all is actually lost” arena.

The word of the Lord, as delivered by the prophet is almost a “don’t panic” message. God insists that the children of Israel build houses, take wives, beget sons, and seek the peace of the city they are being carried to. I expect this message wasn’t met with a hearty “you betcha.” If I had been among them, I’d have been screaming that it was *exactly* the time to panic.

All seems lost? No all is lost, and the word of the Lord is “don’t panic.” Recent days and times from financial markets to the housing situation show an “all is lost” state of affairs. We don’t want people to tell us not to panic; we want them to

give us a reason we shouldn’t. In the matters of finances and housing, that isn’t happening. In fact we are being told the worst may be yet to come. All is not only lost, but some of what might have come to us eventually is now being lost too.

But with God, it is never quite this way.

You see what we must realize is the fallacy in my earlier presumption, that there comes a point at which we cross over from all seeming to be lost, to where all actually is. With God all is never lost. With God there is always hope.

I will let you find me, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations ... and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

— Jeremiah 29:14

In verse 14 of the focal passage, God’s words are words of that hope. I will gather you back together, I will bring you from the far place, I will be found by you . . . not I might, not I could, but I will: A definitive statement from which we must take hope. Even when all seems lost, it isn’t. Even when all feels lost it cannot be, not with God.

When all seems lost we must only remember to turn to the God of hope, with whom all is never lost.



Shane Nixon
Director of Development/
Church Relations,
Baptist Retirement
Homes of North Carolina

When Doing Right Brings Hardship

Focal Passage: 2 Corinthians 4:7-18

She had a flat tire. I realize you are going to ask if I really call that hardship. Well, not exactly and certainly not in comparison to the “real” hardships so many go through, especially in these days and times. But my friend was on her way to serve a meal at the local soup kitchen and homeless shelter when her left front tire blew out. Fortunately, there was not an accident, she was not hurt, and her car was not damaged beyond the tire, so again, I concede that calling this “hardship” is a bit of a stretch. She did have to get out of her car and change the tire before

continuing on to do the service she felt called to. And so you can understand, if my friend, or someone in her shoes, would want to turn her face skyward and ask a question; “A flat tire on my way to serve at the homeless shelter?”

If the age old question is why bad things happen to good people, then the follow up question has to be what happens when doing the right things doesn’t

have the proper effect. And of course, immediately we see an issue. Whose perspective are we using when measuring what is “proper” or right?

In the focal passage, the very first verse puts that into context for us. Our treasure, the scripture says, is in “earthen vessels.” The Apostle Paul, writing here to the church at Corinth, makes a clear distinction between the human and the Divine, between the temporary and the eternal. Paul suggests that when viewed in this context, our “afflictions” are light, and last for only a moment. Interestingly, never is there even a hint that hardships won’t come, but rather that when looked at through the lens of God’s eye (as best we can anyway) we will see them differently.

My friend continued on her way that night, she changed the tire, and got to the shelter before her food was even cold. She met me and a few others from our Sunday School class, and we served many. She was a little

We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair...

— 2 Corinthians 4:8

late, and I think the grease and dust on her face wasn’t exactly a look she was going for. But standing there, serving those less fortunate, all of a sudden, her perspective changed. She was grateful instead of angry. She saw the affliction of a flat tire for what it was, temporary. And she knew that her service was of much more importance.

Lesson for Feb. 8

Bible Studies for Life

Lesson for Feb. 15

Pray Persistently

Focal Passage: Matthew 15:21-28; Luke 18:1-8

Concerning prayer, Kierkegaard tells the following story:

An ancient pagan, who in pagandom was renowned and praised for his wisdom, sailed on the same ship with a wicked man. When the ship was in distress the wicked man lifted up his voice in prayer, but the wise man said to him: “Keep quiet, my friend; if heaven discovers that you are on board, the ship will go under.”

French philosopher/theologian Jacques Ellul once wrote, “Faith is not a place of refuge for passive souls; it implies the will to change the world.” Faith lives in the language world of risks and courage. It is best seen in our individual prayer expressions.

We pray prayers of burdened requests and impassioned pleas. Our prayers are in effect longings for divine activity and alteration in those events that appear hopeless and pointless (whether it be illness, economic instability or guidance). Enveloped by a sense of abandonment we pray for intervention and respite.

Sadly, our prayers can become self-contained rather than kingdom-focused.

Today’s lesson examines the faith and persistence of two women. One is described as a “Canaanite,” and the other a Jewish widow. The Canaanite woman came from a

culture renowned for its wickedness and depravity. She was not a Jew or proselyte of the Jewish faith, yet she recognized who Jesus was. With the little light she may have possessed, she exercised “great faith.” Against all odds, she persisted courageously and humbly, reverently and respectfully seeking a miracle from God. She wanted her world (and that of her sick daughter) changed, even if all that remained were the leftover crumbs of the gospel — that was more than enough!

The second woman was a widow seeking redemption and vindication (over a legal matter) from a very unsavory judge. Poor and defenseless, her only

He then told them a parable on the need for them to pray always and not become discouraged

— Luke 18:1

resource was uncommon persistence. She would not give up, regardless of the cost of time and energy. Her persistence was as intense as a “punch in the face” (the judge feared that she would exhaust or give him a black eye if he did not respond to her). Of such is the kingdom of God, for “it is necessary always to pray and not to lose heart.”

“But when the Son of Man comes will he find faith on earth?” That is, when he comes will he find a people risking all for the sake of the kingdom, trusting the Lord’s answer knowing it means courageous change and not passive refuge?



John Pond
Director of Missions,
Chowan Baptist
Association

Pray in Jesus’ Name

Focal Passage: John 14:12-14; 15:14-16; 16:23-26

What’s in a name? I am named after my father and our son, Marcus, is named after my wife’s great-great grandfather who fought in the Civil War and was a member of one of local churches in the 1850’s. In Rwanda and Burundi (as well as other African nations) when an individual becomes a Christian, he or she receives a new name signifying the new birth they have experienced.

Names are more than identifying labels we place upon one another. They serve as a part of “who we are” — our personality marker. It implies an individual authority, character, rank, majesty, power, excellence and attributes. According to Hans Bietenhard, “The name carries will and power.”

Knowing His name is important. The Lord promises to respond when He is properly called upon. His very name is a gift of revelation and not an instrument of incantation (Bietenhard). Use of His name implies faith in Him and His power; it is a pledge of His saving presence and denotes His glory.

In the gospels, the name of Jesus denotes His divine purpose and mission. He is Immanuel — “God with us.” His name, Jesus, means “Yahweh is salvation, or Savior.” According to Bietenhard, to pray in His name

(according to His will, on His commission, and with invocation of His name) is to believe that Jesus has come from the Father and that the Father hears each prayer for His sake. To pray in Jesus’ name is to become an active part of His mission.

To pray in Jesus’ name is to experience two important truths: first, it is to recognize that Jesus is present among the pray-ers. The works that He has done will be done and greater works still by those who abide in Him. Praying in His name recognizes His continuing presence among believers. Secondly, praying in His name recognizes that Jesus continues to powerfully intercede for those who pray. Jesus is in the Father and the Father is in Him; Jesus is returning to the Father (John 14:12; 16:5) and now “anything you ask from the Father He will grant in my name” (16:23).

I was returning from teaching in Brazil and wanted to change my plane seat. When I spoke with the clerk I did not receive much help. But when I asked to check the status of my “Sky miles,” the clerk suddenly treated me differently — I was a part of the family and now better seating miraculously appeared. It was only when I asked in the name of that particular airline that I was empowered to enjoy and receive special attention.

When we pray in the name of Jesus, according to His will and His commission, we can expect an answer. As Barclay writes, “The prayer which can stand the test ... in the end says, thy will be done, is always answered.”

Material shows how to SPLASH people with God’s love

By Mark Kelly
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The joy of a baby in the bathtub, happily splashing water on everyone within range, inspired a new approach to helping Christians share their faith.

“SPLASH” — Show People Love And Share Him — is a six-week study of the life and ministry of Jesus that focuses on how Christ helped people experience God’s love in the ordinary circumstances of everyday life, explained Ken Hemphill, coauthor, with his wife Paula, of the material.

“I never really intended to write the book,” said Hemphill, national strategist for the Southern Baptist Convention’s Empowering Kingdom Growth initiative.

“I was bathing my grandbaby one day and, by the time I finished, I was wetter than she was. I walked away from that event and the Holy Spirit stopped me and said, ‘That’s what evangelism ought to look like. You get around Christians who love Me, then you get splashed with living water.’”

Published in December 2007, the material is in its third printing. Leaders of a Southern Baptist association in southwest Missouri believe SPLASH has the potential to mobilize the vast majority of church members who currently don’t talk to their friends, neighbors and co-workers about Jesus.

“This is a huge need for us,” said Jim Wells, director of missions for the Tri-County Baptist Association in Nixa, Mo.

“It’s really caught on and our people have caught a vision for what it can mean.”

Wells invited Hemphill to conduct a SPLASH training for 64 congregations in the association after a strategic planning process with the North American Mission Board found Tri-County pastors believed evangelism was the No. 1 need in their churches. A Sunday night rally this past November drew 360



“... the Holy Spirit stopped me and said, ‘That’s what evangelism ought to look like. You get around Christians who love Me, then you get splashed with living water.’” — Ken Hemphill

pastors and church members.

“It was a great success,” said Wells, who also serves as the Southern Baptist Convention’s registration secretary. “It’s the biggest thing we have ever done in our association’s 30-year history. Right after the event, I began hearing about churches already starting the process.”

The SPLASH concept is “a simple, natural process for living out the Kingdom life of impacting people in your SPLASH zones — circles of influence — with the Living Water,” said Kenneth Priest, an associate in the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention’s church ministries department.

“The focus is to be prepared to simply share your story of life in Christ with the people around you.”

SPLASH isn’t intended to replace more structured evangelism approaches like FAITH and Evangelism Explosion, Hemphill said.

“In the Book of Acts, we see two different approaches to evangelism,” Hemphill said.

“One is strategic, where they went from house to house, and the other is spontaneous, as they took ad-

vantage of every occasion. I suggest that the church needs both.

“I tell people they can use strategic approaches, month after month, year after year, and there’s still going to be a certain percentage of your people who will not get involved,” Hemphill added. “This is trying to get that other 95 percent engaged in a means of reaching their neighbor, their colleague at work, their boss.”

Contrasted with strategic approaches like FAITH, SPLASH encourages Christians to be a lot more spontaneous, Hemphill said.

“For example, let’s say I’m on a treadmill today, working out, and the guy beside me says, ‘Man, this stock market has really got me worried,’” Hemphill said.

“Instead of ignoring that, you might want to say something like, ‘Well, you know, honestly I’ve looked at that myself and wondered whether I’m going to be able to retire anytime soon, but you know the other day when I was in my quiet time, the Lord brought to my mind the Bible verse that says, ‘Be anxious for nothing but in everything with prayer and supplication ...’ and it really made a difference.’”

While many Christians talk readily about Jesus in their “holy huddles,” they don’t often mention Him in conversations with unsaved friends, Hemphill said.

“The whole concept is to start talking to our neighbors about Jesus as if He were your best friend,” Hemphill said.

“That’s just natural. It’s not something artificial I have to dredge up. It’s just that my response to virtually anything is Jesus.

“The key is to keep telling your daily story, what God is doing in your life today, to unsaved friends in the power of the Holy Spirit, and link it to the Word of God.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE — Kelly is an assistant editor with Baptist Press. For more information about SPLASH, visit splashinfo.com.)



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