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BIBLICAL RECORDER

March 21, 2020 • VOLUME 186 NO. 6 • News Journal of North Carolina Baptists • BRnow.org



BSC's Davis resigns to join FaithHealthNC

BSC Communications

Brian K. Davis, associate executive director-treasurer of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), has announced his resignation effective Tues., March 31, 2020, to pursue new ministry opportunities in Baptist life.

On Wed., April 1, Davis will begin his new role in the FaithHealth division of Wake Forest Baptist Health (WFBH). Davis' new responsibilities will include serving as the liaison between WFBH and the BSC's board of directors, committee on

nominations and budget committee.

In addition, Davis will lead efforts to expand partnerships with churches and associations in the fulfillment of the FaithHealthNC strategies of WFBH.

"My time with the convention has provided numerous opportunities to grow as a leader and as a servant of our Lord Jesus



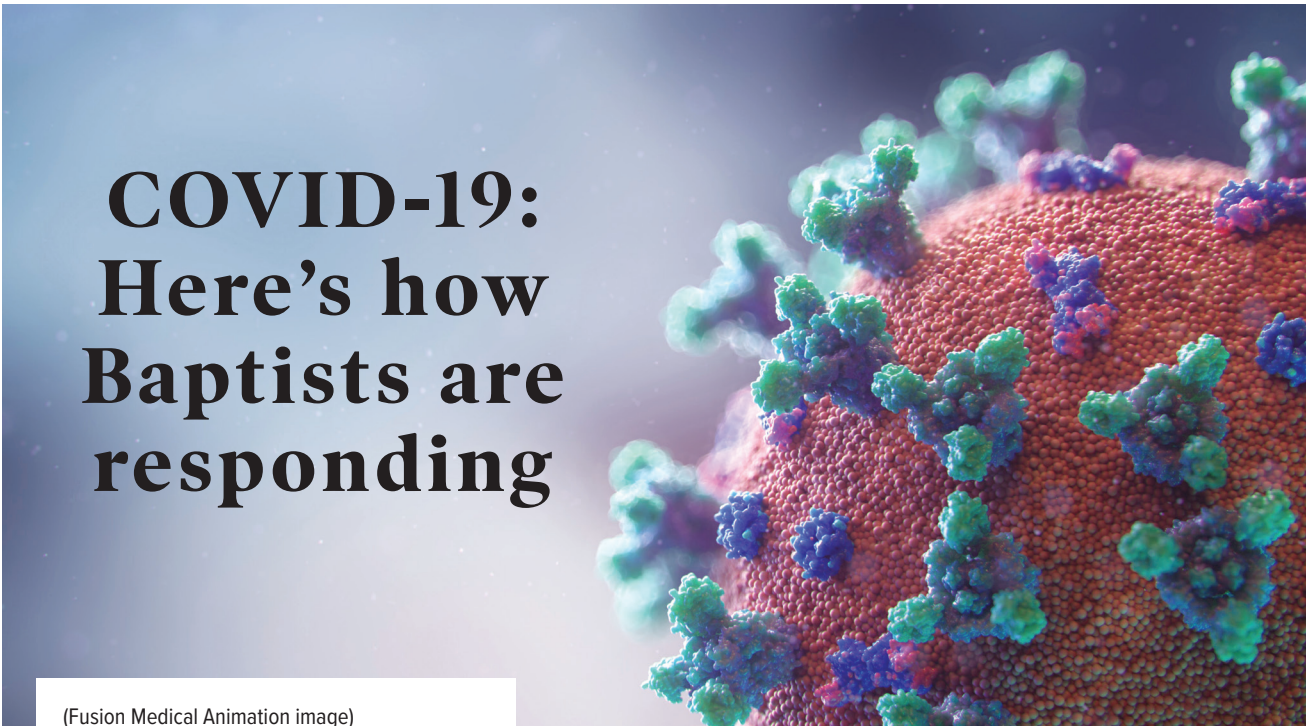
BRIAN DAVIS

Christ," Davis said.

"The challenges I have faced and the issues I have been engaged in resolving have both stretched me and rewarded me with wisdom and maturity. I believe, and have been affirmed by so many in Baptist life, that my time in leadership has been positive for the convention."

Davis began his tenure with the BSC in August 2006 at age 36 as executive leader of the administration and convention relations group.

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COVID-19: Here's how Baptists are responding

(Fusion Medical Animation image)

Biblical Recorder

Southern Baptist churches in North Carolina, along with state and national ministries, are taking precautionary measures to blunt the impact of a new coronavirus known as COVID-19.

The disease, which is named for its crownlike spikes, was first detected in Wuhan, China. The World Health Organization (WHO) has classified the virus as a pandemic, meaning it is a global threat. There are more than 164,000 confirmed cases worldwide that have resulted in nearly 6,500 deaths, according to the latest WHO reports.

U.S. President Donald Trump declared the out-

break a national emergency on March 13. The first confirmed cases of the new coronavirus in the U.S. were detected Jan. 14, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The total number of confirmed cases in the U.S. had risen to nearly 4,000 by March 16, resulting in 66 deaths.

At least 15 people have tested positive in the state, according to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. That number is expected to rise.

In most cases, infected individuals present mild to moderate symptoms including fever, cough and shortness of breath. The elderly and those with ongoing health issues face much higher risks. Medical

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New health screening mobile unit hits the road

By DIANNA L. CAGLE | BR Assistant Editor

The addition of a new health screening bus in February upgrades the service already provided by North Carolina Baptists on Mission, also known as N.C. Baptist Men (NCBM).

"It was all God," said Crystal Horton, NCBM health screening coordinator, who credits the Goodwill Foundation, along with several other anonymous donors.

Problems with the previous bus caused the ministry to close several clinics early.

"It was definitely hindering the functionality of the clinic," said Horton, who has been in this ministry position for about five years.

"For us, we're trying to help Christians get personally involved in missions, and there are lots of medical and dental professionals along with volunteers who have gifts that are greatly needed

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Unprecedented times call for unprecedented faith, action & prayer

Over the course of recent days, the coronavirus is responsible for some significant changes in much of our world. News reports have changed by the hour, and sometimes by the minute as major events have been canceled and states of emergency declared.

Churches have wrestled with decisions about whether or not to cancel services.

Daily routines for many people have been impacted by the coronavirus in one way or another.

Only our God knows what the future holds for us in these unprecedented and uncertain times.

Christ followers are reminded in 2 Timothy 1:7 that “*God has not given*

us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind” (NKJV). This is a call to remember that we are to live by confident faith in God instead of fear during these times of uncertainty.

Along with other organizations, the executive leadership of Baptist State Convention of North Carolina recognized the wisdom of making some significant decisions for the safety of our staff, their family members and many others.

By necessity, we have canceled some upcoming events and continue to evaluate others. We also made a decision to close the state convention office building in Cary to the general public through the end

of March even though your convention staff will maintain their regular work schedules during this time.

A few staff will work in their assigned office, while others will be able to work remotely.

I assure North Carolina Baptists that whether we are working in the Baptist Building, a remote location or from home, we are available and equipped to respond to your phone calls and emails.

Use the regular phone numbers, email addresses or convention website to contact any staff member. Our web address is ncbaptist.org.


Let's pray that our God would stem the rapid spread of the coronavirus. Pray for those who have been impacted by it. Pray for wis-

IN FOCUS
A WORD FROM OUR LEADER

dom for our state, local, national and global leaders.

May we also remember to love others and extend grace to them. Reach out to help meet a need in someone's life as you demonstrate Christ's power working through you.

Pray for those in your sphere of influence who need to experience a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ and discover the eternal hope that only He can provide.

Look for opportunities to spread the love of Christ and share the gospel with others in the days ahead. 



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive
director-treasurer

N.C. Baptists have a bright future

I helped start The Young Pastors Network in 2017 as an effort to involve younger North Carolina pastors in the great work of Southern Baptists on a state and national level.

The network has benefited from the support of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, convention leaders like executive director-treasurer Milton Hollifield and many Southern Baptist entities.

As we have gathered with young pastors for several years now, I have remained fully confident that God is at work.

Here's why I believe N.C. Baptists are poised to lead the way among Southern Baptists as we make disciples of all nations.

The vision Hollifield laid out many years ago is focused on the Great Commission: “By God's grace, the Baptist State Convention of North

Carolina will become the strongest force in the history of this convention for reaching people with the message of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

The great churches in our state are doing incredible work impacting lostness through disciple-making. The more involved I am in the work of the state convention, the more I believe our future is as bright as

ever.

Since 1845, the agenda of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has been simple, to combine the efforts of autonomous churches for “one

sacred effort,” the propagation of the gospel. This is why I love our family of Southern Baptists. We have always been mission-minded.

The Cooperative Program was created in 1925 to provide an efficient way for Baptist churches to pool their resources together for funding missions around the world.

Recently, our SBC Executive Com-

mittee President Ronnie Floyd laid out his “Vision 2025,” a rallying cry for us to reimagine a new future together of reaching the world for Jesus Christ.

Imagine the worldwide impact if we could increase the number of full-time, fully funded missionaries through the International Mission Board. Consider the impact of

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MATT CAPPS
Guest Column

CORRECTION

An incorrect web address was shared in the Disciple-Making Conference story in the March 7 issue of the *Biblical Recorder*. The correct address is disciplemakingconference.com. The date for next year's conference is set: Feb. 23, 2021. It will be at Friendly Avenue Baptist Church in Greensboro and feature Vance Pitman, senior pastor of Hope Church in Las Vegas.



**BIBLICAL
RECORDER**

(ISSN 0279-8182)

Volume 186 No. 6

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• Individual subscriptions, \$19.99 (one year) or \$2 per month

• Group (5+) \$14.99

• Bulk (10+) \$12.99

• Digital rates: \$7.99 (one year).

Payable in advance. N.C. sales tax will be added.

Publication

Published biweekly on Saturdays with the exception of no issue at the end of December, by the Biblical Recorder, 205 Convention Drive, Cary, NC 27511, as authorized by the Baptist State Convention in annual session at Winston-Salem, November 21-23, 1939. Periodicals postage paid at Raleigh, NC 27676.

Postmaster

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

What Job teaches us about perseverance

Perhaps the oldest book in the Bible tells the story of a man who is one of the most famous examples of perseverance in history. Job had every reason to quit on life, on himself, and even on God, but he persevered. Even 3,500 years after this man lived, his story is still worth reading and hearing.

He was coasting down the highway of life with nothing but blue sky and bright sunshine in front of him until he rounded a curve and ran head on into the destruction of his wealth, the death of his children, and the disease that would wrack his body. Not only was he tempted to quit, but even his closest friends and his own wife told him to quit.

Life is like that for all of us sooner or later. You round a curve in your life, and all of a sudden you see a sign. But it won't say "stop"; it will say "QUIT!" You will be broadsided by events you never anticipated and you will be tempted to quit, or you will be discouraged because of something somebody said and you will be tempted to quit, or you will fail where you thought you were going to succeed and you will be tempted to quit. You may be thinking of doing that right now.

Consider: you will never read biographies of great quitters. You will never see a long line of followers behind great quitters. No man in the Bible, outside of Jesus Christ Himself, suffered more than Job. It would even be fair to say that outside of Jesus, no man suffered more unjustly and more un-

fairly than Job. Job did not bring any of his troubles on himself.

If Job had responded the way the most people do, this book would have never been written and Job's name would have never been known. Thankfully he persevered and we learn from this man some lessons that remind us that tough times never last, but tough people do, if we remember them and apply them.

1. We will face problems that will make us want to quit.

Job asked the most natural questions: "Why?" and "Why me?" and "How do I get out of this mess?" But the question we should be asking in the midst of our trials is, "What should I get out of this?" Life's difficulties are not meant to defeat you, depress you, or even discourage you; they are meant to develop you. Problems are not tools to tear you down; they are tests to build you up.

2. We will hear people tell us to quit.

Job has been bathed in an ocean of defeat, devastation, death, disease, and depression. Then came a wave of discouragement, which Job didn't see coming. It is one thing to be tempted to quit, to give in, give out, and give up. It is another thing to be told to do it by the people closest to you especially when it is your own wife!

But Job continued to do the right thing by not responding in the wrong way. Later, he will confront God, but he will never curse God. He will reason

with God, but he will never reject God. He will stand up to God, but he will never walk away from God. He knows there is only one voice to listen to and it is to the God who will never quit on you, and you should never quit on Him.

3. We must have the perspective that ensures we don't quit.

Job looks like he is on his last leg, as if he has no fight left. You couldn't really blame him if he decided to throw in the towel. Most people would have, and a lot of people do. But Job quit looking down. He started looking up, and that made all the difference.

Job didn't wallow in self-pity. He didn't walk away from God but went to God in worship. No blame, no bitterness, no whining, no cursing, no "How dare you do this to me knowing what an upright man I've been." He gives God what God always deserves in good times and bad: worship. Job's entire world had walked out on him, but he would not walk out on God. No victory has ever been won by going backward! Keep moving forward with your eyes on the One who will never quit on you, and the victory will be yours.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – James Merritt is a pastor, author, past president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and host of the Touching Lives television program. Excerpted with permission from *Character Still Counts* by James Merritt, published by Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, Oregon, 97408. Copyright 2020, James Merritt; www.harvesthousepublishers.com.)



JAMES MERRITT
Guest Column

Ravi Zacharias reveals cancer diagnosis

Biblical Recorder

Well-known Christian apologist Ravi Zacharias announced March 12 that he has been diagnosed with a type of cancer called sarcoma. Doctors discovered the malignant tumor on Zacharias's lower back during a reconstructive surgery, he said in a statement.

"We are trusting the Lord in this, and we believe we have already seen evidence of His hand," Zacharias said.

Zacharias said he will not resume his travel schedule, which had already been suspended due to his back surgery, "at least until the summer." Staff members from Ravi Zacharias International Ministries have been filling in for him at recent speaking engagements. They will continue to do so during his "extended time off the road."

He said treatment for the tumor will begin in four to five weeks, once he has time to heal from the surgery.

"We received literally thousands of messages from people all over the world saying you were praying. I have every belief God directed and prompted my surgeon to his discovery of this tumor," he said. "Margie and I and our family are so grateful for your continued prayers for the journey that lies ahead."

Zacharias is the founder and president of Ravi Zacharias International Ministries. He has authored more than 20 books and spoken around the world for more than four decades on the Christian faith.

Akin addresses 'false claims' during Q&A at FBC Hendersonville

By TIMOTHY BAME | Special to the *Biblical Recorder*

During a special service March 4 at First Baptist Church in Hendersonville, N.C., Danny Akin told attendees about new developments underway at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) and addressed rumors of an alleged leftward shift in the school's doctrinal commitments. Akin, who serves as president of the seminary, also preached a sermon during the Wednesday night gathering.

Steve Scoggins, president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and pastor of First Baptist Hendersonville, told the *Biblical Recorder* that online "rumors and false statements" about SEBTS have heightened tensions among N.C. Baptists. Scoggins said attendees who participated in the Q&A session with Akin came away "certain that things are strong and conservative in the Southern Baptist Convention and in our seminaries."

Akin addressed specific accusations related to Biblical interpretation, the ordination of women and abortion. He emphasized that SEBTS remains committed to the doctrine of inerrancy, a conservative belief that scripture does not contain errors.

"At Southeastern, without any apology, we affirm four confessions of faith," Akin said, "the *Baptist Faith and Message 2000*, the *Abstract of Principles*, the *Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*, and the *Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*."

Greear joins Islamic leader to discuss religious freedom, civility

By SETH BROWN | BR Executive Editor

More than 1,000 attendees gathered for an event March 5 at North Carolina State University (NCSU) in Raleigh, N.C., to hear J.D. Greear and Omar Suleiman discuss current issues facing American culture related to Christianity and Islam.

Greear serves as pastor of The Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham and president of the Southern Baptist Convention. Suleiman is a professor at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, and founder of the Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research.

The event, “Hope in the Current Age: A Conversation on Christianity and Islam,” was sponsored by a coalition of faith-based organizations, including The Veritas Forum and Neighborly Faith, along with NCSU’s Muslim Student Association (MSA), CRU and Intervarsity groups.

Greear and Suleiman covered topics such as religious freedom, civility amid religious differences and how to convey a message of hope in the current age. “We need to be able to not only get along with, but to cherish, stand alongside and even fight for people that believe different things than we do,” Greear said.

Suleiman said politics and social media encourage people to “retreat to our echo chambers.”

“It’s a lot harder to hate and stigmatize somebody when you’re looking people in the face that you call friends,” said Greear.

“It is very easy to succumb to analysis paralysis right now,” Suleiman said. “We have an information overload. We’re exposed to conflict, not in a way that causes us to expand our empathy, but usually causes us to become completely numb to everything.”

Talk of civility and compassion appeared to resonate with the crowd, as attendees nodded in agreement. Three Muslim students were murdered in nearby Chapel Hill almost five years ago. One of the victims was a student at NCSU. The killing sparked debate about anti-Muslim bigotry as prosecutors argued the shooter was a fueled by hate.

Suleiman talked about hopelessness and expressed concern for the coming months in U.S. politics.

“Things get really bad for Muslims in election years,” he said, lamenting that “cheap talking points are used



Omar Suleiman, left, and J.D. Greear, center, have a conversation about Christianity and Islam at North Carolina State University. (BR photo by Seth Brown)

against our community.”

Greear described how recent cultural trends related to abortion and sex, along with the “forced acceptance of new cultural norms,” had left many Christians fearful.

Greear said a “posture of fear” may lead some Christians to look upon outsiders with suspicion and “rationalize the faults” of politicians offering political protection to the Christian community.

Suleiman said religious leaders should work together on issues like religious freedom and the sanctity of life.

“Muslims are often excluded from discussions of religious freedom,” he said. “Some people have even tried to undermine Islam’s claim to religious freedom by claiming it’s not really a religion, it’s a political ideology.”

“If the religious voice can coalesce and demonstrate the consistency that politicians never do, then I think we can usher in some of that hope the American public is looking for,” Suleiman said.

On the topic of political engagement, Greear said Christians believe the problem of evil resides primarily in individuals, not in politics, economics or education.

“That requires a different solution,” he said. Christians believe “God can change the heart through the cross and the resurrection.”

Both speakers affirmed their respective beliefs, even acknowledging their theological opposition to one another, yet expressed a desire to be good neighbors across religious lines.

Kevin Singer, co-founder of Neighborly Faith, offered each speaker an opportunity to address the other’s religious community.

Greear referenced his time spent as a missionary in a Muslim-majority region and said, “We love you. We think you belong in this society, and we want to stand beside you to be your friends.”

“We want you to be patient with us and help us learn what it looks like to look at life through your eyes,” said Greear. “Most of us have never had the experience of being in a place where we weren’t in the majority, and that’s a difficult transition for us to make.”

Greear also emphasized that Christians “really do believe what the Bible teaches about Jesus” and said they would love the chance to share their faith.

Suleiman expressed gratitude for Greear’s “love and conviction,” and said “that love is reciprocated.”

“Thank you for coming here,” Suleiman told attendees. “I know that for a lot of you, especially with the amount of hatred, bigotry, xenophobia and fear that’s paralyzing out there, it might be difficult for you sometimes to sit next to a Muslim and to learn about a different worldview, a differ-

ent life, a different faith. Thank you for being bold enough to come here.”


Attendees were asked to participate in online surveys before and after the event. Prior to the discussion, 64% of Christian respondents said they had somewhat positive or very positive attitudes toward Islam and 91% said they were interested in friendship with Muslims. Likewise, 77% of Muslim respondents said they had somewhat positive or very positive attitudes toward Christianity and 85% said they were interested in friendship with Christians.

After the event, 76% of Christian respondents said their attitude toward Islam was more positive than before and 83% said they were more interested in friendships with Muslims. Similarly, 66% of Muslims said their attitude toward Christianity was more positive than before and 65% said they were more interested in friendships with Christians.

Zero respondents who identified with either faith group said they felt less positive about the other group or less interested in friendships across religious lines.

Singer told the *Biblical Recorder* the survey results were encouraging. “It shows the power of one conversation,” he said. “Christians are finding the theological space to entertain these friendships, knowing they can do so with conviction.”

MSA President Mohsen Zakaib said he was encouraged by responses to the event. The desired outcome was to “instill hope into the communities of the two largest religions on Earth,” according to Zakaib.

“It will push us to work together for the good of humanity despite disagreements on core religious and spiritual issues,” he said. 



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COVID

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researchers are working to develop a vaccine for COVID-19, according to news reports. No vaccine is available at this time.

The outbreak prompted a wave of event cancelations and scheduling changes across Baptist life.

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary announced March 12 that classes were cancelled March 16-20, and all coursework would move online beginning March 23. Dorms were vacated by March 16 and will remain closed indefinitely. All on-campus events through March 31 were also canceled.

The remaining five Southern Baptist seminaries have taken similar action to move classes online.

The International Mission Board (IMB) created a task force to advise its 3,700 field personnel and additional volunteer teams. The IMB recommended that churches postpone international mission trips through April 30. The IMB's task force plans to reassess the situation on April 15 and extend the recommendation if needed.

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina announced its facilities will be closed to the public for the remainder of March, beginning March 17.

The convention said it will continue to operate with limited staff on-site and has advised staff members to work remotely if possible.

Convention leaders are assessing all convention-sponsored events, conferences and other gatherings scheduled through the end of April to determine the best course of action. Any changes or cancelations will be communicated to event registrants.

North Carolina Baptists on Mission (also known as N.C. Baptist Men, NCBM) advised its volunteers in high-risk groups not to participate in mission projects or events. NCBM has canceled its annual missions

conference, which was scheduled for March 27-28 at Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem.

NCBM leaders are developing plans to assist those impacted by the outbreak. They are in ongoing conversations with public officials and ministry leaders on the local, state and national levels in an effort to coordinate disaster relief efforts. More information will be available at baptistsonmission.org/coronavirus.

On March 14, N.C. Governor Roy Cooper issued an executive order to cancel all public gatherings of more than 100 until further notice, including sporting events and worship services.

The state's mandate could impact approximately 35% of N.C. Baptist churches, according to data from the Annual Church Profile. A day later the CDC issued a nationwide recommendation to cancel or postpone in-person events of more than 50 people for eight weeks.

Churches across the state are responding in various ways to the outbreak, with some opting to cancel gatherings entirely for the coming weeks, broadcast services online or take practical steps to increase sanitation and social distancing.

"The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina encourages local churches to continue to use wisdom and discernment to help prevent the spread of the virus, while also looking for opportunities to engage the community with the gospel of Jesus Christ during these days of uncertainty," the convention said in a press release.

"Above all, pray that God would stem the spread of the virus, for those impacted, and wisdom for health and government officials who are making decisions on how to deal with the situation."

SBC Executive Committee President Ronnie Floyd urged churches

to dedicate Sun., March 15 as a day of prayer. Leaders from all national Southern Baptist entities, including SBC President J.D. Greear – a group known as the Great Commission Council – joined Floyd in the call to prayer.

LifeWay Christian Resources released free training materials to help churches respond to the COVID-19 outbreak and other pandemics.

"Pastors are asking questions about how their churches should react to

the coronavirus," said Todd Adkins, director of LifeWay Leadership. "We wanted to provide them with training videos and checklists that are immediately applicable for their congregations."

The bundle of resources can be downloaded at ministrygrid.com/coronavirus.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Visit BRnow.org and follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to keep track of the latest developments.)

Akin

Continued from page 3

Akin went on to say that all faculty members are not only expected to teach in accordance with these doctrines, but they must also believe them personally.

Akin denied allegations of any movement at SEBTS to promote female pastors. "Southeastern loves for women to come and study with us," he said. "We believe God made men and women as equal image bearers of God, so men and women are completely and essentially equal in their standing before God, but God in His providence gives us different functions and assignments."

Akin affirmed a conservative view known as complementarianism, which holds that leadership roles in the church and home are designated for men. He said in the "rare cases" that female students express a desire to become a pastor, they are encouraged to pursue other ministry opportunities.

Finally, Akin talked about his decision to hire Karen Swallow Prior, an English professor currently teaching at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va. Prior has faced criticism for an article she wrote in 2015 that discouraged "inflammatory rhetoric" in discussions about abortion. Some critics used the article to call into question

her pro-life commitments.

Akin said Prior's comments had been intentionally taken out of context by many of her critics. "People who do things like that are liars," he said.

Akin highlighted Prior's conservative record on abortion, including five arrests for protesting at abortion clinics. He also noted her current faculty position at Liberty, which Akin said, "isn't exactly a bastion of liberalism."

The Q&A time also gave Akin the opportunity to highlight Southeastern's advancements. Over the past seven years, the proportion of ethnic minority students has increased from 5% to 18%. Akin said the push for more diversity is part of an effort to "build a seminary on earth that looks like the church in heaven."

Akin's evening at First Baptist Hendersonville closed with a sermon from Revelation 5. He said that while non-Christians often believe mankind is destined to destroy itself, Christians can sum up the future with the simple Sunday School song: "He's got the whole world in His hands."

Akin drew from the passage to say "Jesus is worthy" because: "He is the Lord of History," "He is the Lord of Victory," and "He is the Lord of Glory."

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Health

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by hurting people,” said Richard Brunson, NCBM executive director, in an interview with the *Biblical Recorder*. “This is another way to minister in Jesus’ name; if you look at the miracles Jesus did, the majority involved ministering to people’s physical illnesses and hurts. What a great way we have to help churches meet needs in Jesus’ name in their community.”

The new Winnebago mobile unit, designed by Dan Matthews at Capital City Customs in Raleigh, offers a new reliability not available with the older 2004 model acquired in 2015.

First clinic

The health screening mobile unit’s first clinic was in February.

“The first outing was great,” said Horton, who previously worked as a surgical nurse and on clinical cancer research trials.

Barton College in Wilson sent nursing students to aid at registration, take vital signs and do finger sticks.

The students get credit for community volunteer service, Horton said. It’s also a good opportunity to share with them early in their medical career the opportunities available through NCBM – disaster relief; medical reserve corps; and medical and dental buses.

The new unit optimizes space, including putting a scale in one of the seats to weigh patients when getting their vitals and basic information. It has a diesel engine, air brakes and solar panels to charge the batteries.

“We are very proud of the unit and of the job Matthews did,” said Horton, who first encountered NCBM through a medical mission trip to Haiti in 2010.

The updates allow for better flow when patients come through, Horton said. The depth of the exam gives foresight into the next 10 years of a patient’s life. Finding issues and making even small changes can alleviate symptoms that could cause greater stress on one’s body.

Still in use

Once removed from service, the retired dental units have been used by Truett Baptist Association as a stationary ministry.

The previous medical unit was purchased used. NCBM renovated it, but there was still a lot to learn. Horton’s direction of the ministry the first



JULIE DOLINGER

three years led to the current design of the new unit.

“Reliability is a lot of it,” Brunson said. “That unit was an old unit. We bought it used so we could learn how to set up and run a clinic. If we had built, we wouldn’t have built it the same way.”

Brunson said NCBM has tried to think through each of the units it renovates and creates. As with feeding units, the type of food served and the way the food is cooked has changed over the years.

“If we take care of it well, we should get 15 to 20 years out of a unit,” said Brunson.

North Carolina has two mobile dental units currently in service.

Each of those units, as well as the new health screening bus, are already booked for this year and have already started booking dates into 2021. Most of the clinics are on the weekend because of the availability of dental and healthcare professionals, who generally work during the week.

Added staff

Julie Dolinger joined the NCBM as medical/dental ministry coordinator in July 2018.

“The opportunity to take the dental trucks to churches and communities and meet that physical need of my tooth is killing me, but let’s also talk about how much Jesus loves you and the opportunity for them not only to hear but to see it in action,” said Dolinger, “so that is the most amazing part of this job.”

Dolinger, who is an X-ray technician, tries to always go to first-time clinics to be “extra support and encouragement.”



Crystal Horton, health screening coordinator for Baptists on Mission, says the new health screening unit offers much-needed services to people across the state. (BSC photo by K Brown)

She worked in the imaging field for 18 years. She started as a dental volunteer and hosted her first clinic in 2012.

“I knew the truck,” she said. “I knew the supplies.”

Horton, who is a fellow church member at Clearview Church in Henderson, let Dolinger know of the opening. When Dolinger came on board, a new dental unit arrived the next day (July 10, 2018).

“It is still a lot of learning,” she said. “I never thought I would know so much about diesel engines.”

She has worked to make the dental units’ organization as similar as possible so frequent volunteers know where items are.

In 2019, between the two dental and one health screening unit, volunteers saw more than 3,000 patients. There were 15 professions of faith.

Dolinger said an eight-hour clinic can average seeing between 20-25 patients, depending on the needs.

A deposit of \$200 will hold the day. From that, NCBM subtracts 65 cents per mile, a generator charge, per patient charge and NCBM invoices the clinic host for any costs over that amount.

“It’s a ministry,” she stressed. “It’s not a money-making thing, and it’s never intended to be that way.”

Dolinger said churches of any size may host a clinic.

“This is a great local mission trip for your church,” she said. “They can visit with patients, make lunch or provide child care. Your parking lot becomes the mission field.”


Both Dolinger and Horton said the units are usually part of a half-day or whole-day of events sponsored by a church or association. They both work to develop relationships with colleges who offer medical/dental degrees so they can build up a broader volunteer base for the future.

The dental units have been used on an annual basis at the North Carolina State Fair, Western State Fair and both the Cabarrus and Cumberland county fairs.

Drivers are also volunteers and are encouraged to be a team of two people. Set up of each unit takes about an hour. Units can be booked for one day, a week or up to 10 days at fairs.

Each September is the North Carolina Missions Offering (NCMO) emphasis. The NCMO funds each of the units’ operating expenses, including supplies, offsetting some clinic fees and maintenance.

Visit baptistsonmission.org.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Former dental ministry coordinator Joanne Honeycutt provided some background information for this story.) 

“For us, we’re trying to help Christians get personally involved in missions, and there are lots of medical and dental professionals along with volunteers who have gifts that are greatly needed by hurting people”

– Richard Brunson, Baptists on Mission

Trudy Cathy White tells story of mother's faith, values

Biblical Recorder

A new book by entrepreneur Trudy Cathy White explores the life of her mother, Jeannette McNeil Cathy, whose husband founded Chick-fil-A in 1946.

A Quiet Strength: The Life and Legacy of Jeannette M. Cathy was released March 10 and tells the story of a woman whose values and faith helped build Chick-fil-A, White told Maina Mwaura, special to the *Biblical Recorder*, in a video interview.

Cathy's mind was set on making the most of every opportunity and valuing people, White said about her mother. She spoke about Cathy working with one of Chick-fil-A's first employees, an African American man named Eddie White. When asked about their unlikely friendship during an era of legal segregation, White said Cathy knew him as an equal.

"It was this attitude she had that everybody is special," White said.

Cathy attended seminary at a time when few women did. White said when her mother, who never knew her absent biological father, became a believer, she cherished her relationship with her heavenly Father and desired to "grow in that walk with her Lord."

She couldn't afford tuition, but a group of women from her church collected enough funds for her to take classes at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. She graduated from Tift College in Forsyth, Ga., with a double major in history and religion. Cathy carried what she learned into her marriage and family, White said.

"She was a student of God's word and applied that word to her life ... so much of these biblical principles that she knew and studied so well, she talked with my dad about it, they wanted to make

sure that was a part of what the business was like."

White and her siblings were never sheltered from the challenges of running a business. She recalled how difficult conversations often came up and "very naturally our family would get up from the table, we'd go sit in the den, and Mom would open the Bible. ...

"We realized that the challenges that my dad had, my mother always was a positive support behind those and always bathed whatever we were facing in prayer."

When asked about what she learned about her mother in the process of writing, White said she knew and watched her faith, but realized its depth and passion while reading Cathy's own writing.

"I got to flip through papers where I saw that she had written down so many things and discussions that she had had written out to her Lord, and I thought, 'Wow, what a great woman of faith.'"

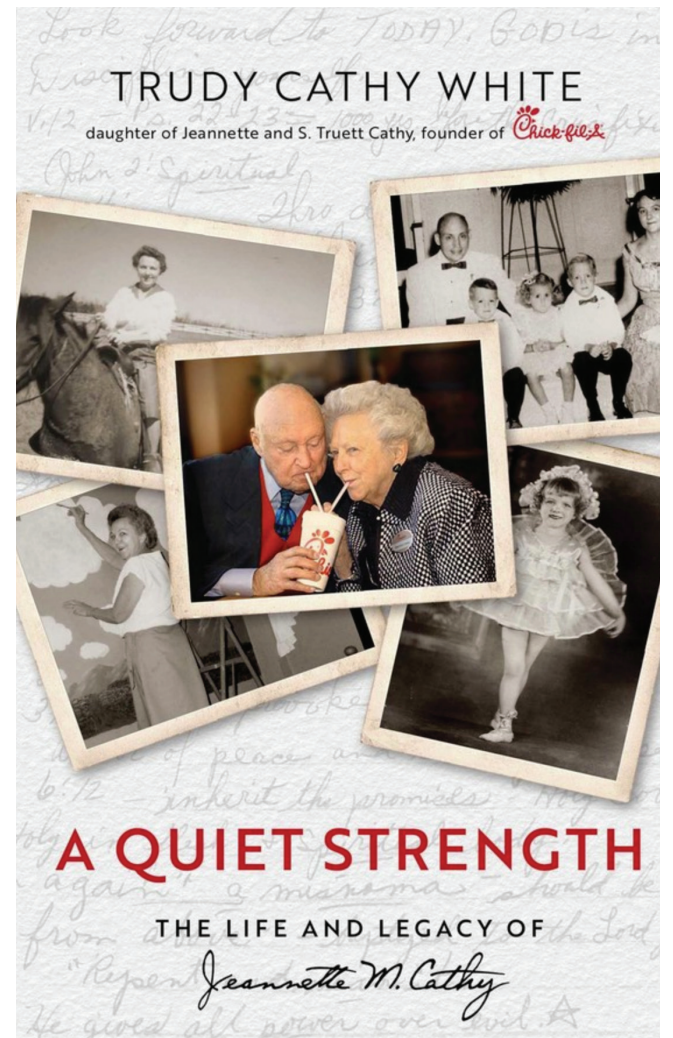
Cathy taught her that a relationship with Jesus "is an active trust."

"Mom had so much strength, but that strength didn't come from her trying to rustle it up, but it came from her walk with the Lord."

White said she was amazed at how much her mother "influenced the outcome of this business because she had such a strong foundation of her walk with the heavenly Father."

Cathy's "remarkable" life continues to influence how her three children make decisions today, White said about her family.

"We are all united when it comes to the fact that we are followers of Jesus Christ, and we really, really want to glorify God in all that we're doing. We're gonna make some mistakes along the way. ... My mother certainly wasn't a perfect person, but she certainly worked hard to try to make sure that she was doing what God wanted her to do, that she



was being obedient to Him."

(EDITOR'S NOTE – This story is adapted from Maina Mwaura's interview – youtube.com/watch?v=OGPKfJlZ6p0 – with Trudy Cathy White. Mwaura is a freelance journalist based in Atlanta, Ga.)

Faw to nominate Benfield for 2022 N.C. Pastors' Conference president

By DIANNA L. CAGLE | BR Assistant Editor

Scott Faw plans to nominate Stoney Benfield for North Carolina Pastors' Conference (NCPC) president for 2022.

"Stoney is a great leader here in North Carolina, and he is leading Prospect well," said Faw, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Salisbury, in an email to the *Biblical Recorder*.

Faw pointed to Benfield's record as senior pastor of Prospect Baptist Church (PBC) in Albemarle.

"Since arriving in May 2005, the attendance has grown from approximately 85 in worship to today around 725 on Sunday morning," Faw said. "While that is a wonderful move of God, it is equally impressive that on

Sunday evening, he has 500 in attendance on Sunday nights and 425 in attendance on Wednesday nights."

His capabilities at Prospect, where he has served since 2005, will provide NCPC with the same caliber of leadership in planning for the NCPC in 2022.

The NCPC elects its officers two years in advance in order to help with planning for the event, which is spread across two days in November prior to the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's (BSC) annual meeting, which is Nov. 9-10 this year. The nomination will be made during this year's conference Nov. 8-9 in Greensboro.

Benfield, an N.C. native, was raised in a Southern Baptist church and

saved at Tri-City Baptist Church (TCBC) in Conover, N.C., in 1993.

"God miraculously changed my life by giving me the life of Jesus Christ in salvation," Benfield told the *Recorder*.

Benfield said God called him to serve in ministry in 1996. He was TCBC's associate pastor for seven years before moving to PBC.

He and his wife, Missy, have six children.

"During these 15 years, we have seen hundreds come to know Jesus Christ," he said.

"With all the growth, we have had two major building projects to construct enough space for worship, education and ministries for the entire family. We are currently in a \$4.25

See Benfield page 8



STONEY BENFIELD

Greear names chair, vice chair for 2020 Committee on Committees

By AMY WHITFIELD | Baptist Press

Meredith Cook has been named chair of the 2020 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Committee on Committees, SBC President J.D. Greear announced March 11.

Greear also announced his appointment of Marty Jacumin, pastor of Bay Leaf Baptist Church in Raleigh, N.C., as vice chair.

The Committee on Committees will assemble in Orlando, Fla., just prior to the SBC's June 9-10 annual meeting sessions to nominate members of the Committee on Nominations who, in turn, will nominate trustees for the boards of SBC entities in 2021.

Greear, pastor of The Summit Church in the Raleigh-Durham, N.C., area, told Baptist Press (BP), "I have been aware of Meredith Cook's great leadership for many years."

Cook lives in Houston with her husband Keelan, who serves on staff with the Houston Baptist Association.

They are members of Neartown Church, a Southern Baptists of Texas Convention (SBTC) church plant.

"It is a joy to see Meredith Cook appointed chair of the Committee on Committees for the Southern Baptist Convention," noted Jim Richards, executive director of the SBTC.

"... Our prayers and support are extended to her as she takes on her historic assignment."

Cook holds a Master of Divinity in Missiology from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) and serves as an editor and writer for multiple missions and ministry organizations.

"I'm honored to serve our convention as chair of the Committee on Committees this year," Cook said.

"It is a task I take seriously, and I prayerfully look forward to working with Dr. Greear, Marty

Jacumin, and the rest of the committee.

"Please pray for us as we prepare for the upcoming convention, that we would honor the Lord and keep the gospel above all as we serve."

Jacumin has served as pastor of Bay Leaf Baptist Church since 2007.

He earned his master of divinity and doctor of philosophy degrees from SEBTS, where he also serves as an adjunct preaching professor.

He previously served in Baptist life as a trustee at SEBTS as well as on the Board of Directors of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC). In 2010, Jacumin was president of that convention's Pastors' Conference.

Milton Hollifield, executive director-treasurer of North Carolina Baptists, told BP that Marty Jacumin is a highly respected pastor from a flagship church in the BSC.

"He has served very well not only in many of our state convention boards and committees, but also in national positions within the SBC," Hollifield said. "I give my full recommendation to

Marty serving in this capacity."

Jacumin said his experience as a seminary trustee helped him to understand the importance of the role of the Committee on Committees.

"I'm honored to serve my Southern Baptist family in this position," he said.

Greear praised both Committee on Committees leaders for their many years of service to Southern Baptists.

"Since a young age, Meredith Cook has served Southern Baptists faithfully, has strong ties to associational life, and has been a part of different church plants. This, along with Marty

Jacumin's great experience and steadfast commitment to God's Word and His people, will bring great leadership of the Committee on Committees to keep the gospel above all," Greear said.

Greear plans to announce the remainder of his appointments to the Committee on Committees in the coming weeks. SBC Bylaw 19 calls for providing notice to Southern Baptists of the appointees at least 45 days in advance of each year's annual meeting. 



MEREDITH COOK



MARTY JACUMIN


Benfield Continued from page 7

million renovation to provide the needed space to continue to grow and reach people with the gospel of Jesus Christ."

The growth over the last 15 years has been a work of God, Benfield said. "It is my conviction that preaching the Word is paramount, and I preach Sunday morning, Sunday night and Wednesday night," he said. "The Bible teaches that *'faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God!'* (Romans 10:17)."

PBC is a part of the Stanly-Montgomery Baptist Association. In 2019, the church gave \$13,000 to the association and \$40,000 to the Cooperative Program, according to the BSC's and association's

financial records. "My vision for the 2022 Pastors' Conference is to provide an exciting conference for pastors and messengers with dynamic worship and preaching of the Word for the purpose of believing God for a real revival in the heart of the pastors and churches," Benfield said. "I believe revival is the only answer to our declining denomination. Our pastors must get back to Acts 6:4, *'but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word!'*"

Information about this year's NCPC is unavailable at this time, but the BSC annual meeting website is live and will be the source for updated information. Visit ncannualmeeting.com. 

Future Continued from page 2

adding thousands of new churches to the Southern Baptist family. Now, ask yourself how you and your church will play a part.

It is the local church that raises up new missionaries to go to the field. New pastors come directly from our local congregations as they are called out to lead existing churches, revitalize dying churches and plant new churches. By God's grace, I believe we can make this happen.

If we proclaim the gospel faithfully, make disciples who make disciples and sacrificially give and cooperate to make this happen – we can trust God for the fruit.

There are three reasons why I believe North Carolina can lead in these efforts.

1. We have some of the most faithful churches in the nation – both in number and giving.

2. We have two great institutions

on our soil aimed at developing leaders for the pastorate, mission field and Christian work: Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and Fruitland Bible Baptist Bible College.


3. North Carolina is stacked with faithful pastors who preach God's word, love the local church and invest their resources and talent in missions efforts around the world.

To adapt the words of Adrian Rogers, we ought to work together

to make disciples of all nations as if Jesus died yesterday, rose this morning and is coming back this afternoon.

As we look to the future, let's commit to pray for one another. Let's cooperate to do more together.

And finally, let's make the Great Commission our top priority.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Matt Capps is senior pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Apex, N.C.) 

Committee on Resolutions named for 2020 SBC

Baptist Press

Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) President J.D. Greear has announced the members of the 2020 Committee on Resolutions for the June 9-10 SBC annual meeting in Orlando.

“I believe our 2020 Resolutions Committee reflects the various interests and concerns of Southern Baptists,” Greear, pastor of The Summit Church in the Raleigh-Durham, N.C., area, said.

“They were chosen because they love Southern Baptists, are committed to sound doctrine, and demonstrate a desire for the gospel to be above all. Each unequivocally affirms historic Baptist doctrine, including the inerrancy of God’s Word, the exclusivity of Christ, and faithful complementarian convictions. I believe they will lead us toward unity and forward progress in the Great Commission.”

Ed Stetzer was named as the committee’s chairman Feb. 11.

Stetzer is a professor at Wheaton College, where he also serves as executive director of the Billy Graham Center and dean of the School of Missions, Ministry, and Leadership. He has also served as interim teaching pastor of the Moody Church for most of his tenure in the Chicago area, maintaining his home church membership at Grace Church in Hendersonville, Tenn.

Stetzer plans to join Highpoint

Church, a congregation he helped affiliate with the Southern Baptist Convention last year, when the new Moody Church pastor starts later this summer.

Greear also named Angela Suh Um as vice chair of the committee. Um is founder and chief consultant at Boston Academic Group and serves as young adult director at Antioch Baptist Church in Cambridge, Mass.

“I am humbled and hopeful to be asked to serve as vice chair of the 2020 Resolutions Committee,” Um said. “To see greater diversity embraced at every level, in every way, is encouraging and strengthening for the entire SBC family, as we seek God’s will and work together to represent His truth and love, in an increasingly chaotic and uncertain world. I’m looking forward to getting to know and working with all the Committee members in the days ahead, prayerfully leaning on God’s mercy to guide us at every step.”

Greear appointed the committee in keeping with the provision in SBC Bylaw 20 that its members be named at least 75 days prior to the start of the annual meeting.

The other committee members, in alphabetical order, are:

- Bruce Ashford, professor of theology and culture, dean of faculty

and provost at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary; elder at The Summit Church, Durham, N.C.

- Bart Barber, pastor of First Baptist Church, Farmersville, Texas.

- Alex Cosio, senior pastor of New Horizons Fellowship, Woodstock, Ga.

- Robyn Hari, director and managing principle, Diversified Trust Company; member of Clearview Baptist Church, Franklin, Tenn.

- Andrew Hunt, senior pastor of New Life Community Church, Indianapolis.

- Brooke Medina, director of communications for

Civitas Institute and on the board of directors for ReCity Network in Durham, N.C.; member of The Summit Church, Durham, N.C.

- Katie McCoy, assistant professor of theology in women’s studies, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; member of First Baptist Church of Arlington, Texas.

- Jared Wellman, pastor of Tate Springs Baptist Church, Arlington, Texas.

The committee’s composition, according to Bylaw 20, must include at least two members who served the previous year, with Um and Wellman meeting this requirement.

Bylaw 20 also stipulates that the committee include at least three SBC Executive Committee members. This year they are Hari, Hunt and Well-

man.


The procedure for submitting resolutions is as follows according to Bylaw 20:

- Proposed resolutions may be submitted as early as April 15 but no later than 15 days prior to the SBC annual meeting, giving the Resolutions Committee a two-week period in which to consider submissions. The committee also may propose resolutions for consideration during its deliberations. Resolutions may not be submitted during the annual meeting.

- Proposed resolutions must be accompanied by a letter from a church qualified to send a messenger to the SBC annual meeting certifying that the individual submitting the resolution is a member in good standing.

- Proposed resolutions preferably should be submitted by email or mailed to the Committee on Resolutions in care of the SBC Executive Committee, 901 Commerce St., Nashville, TN 37203. The drafts must be typewritten, titled, dated and include complete contact information for the person and his or her church.

- No person will be allowed to submit more than three resolutions per year.

- If a properly submitted resolution is not forwarded by the Committee on Resolutions to the SBC annual meeting, a two-thirds vote of messengers would be required to bring the proposed resolution to the convention floor. 



ED STETZER

California convention to end its news publication

Biblical Recorder

The California Southern Baptist Convention (CSBC) plans to shutter its monthly news publication, the *California Southern Baptist*, following the release of the April 2020 issue.

Editor Terry Barone said the decision included

financial and strategic considerations. Barone also leads the CSBC communications team.

“With discontinuing publication of the newspaper, we have the opportunity to use many different types of emerging technologies to better tell the stories of how God is working among California Southern Baptists,” Barone said in a news release.


Print circulation had declined to around 4,600,

according to the CSBC, while advertising revenue was “relatively” stable. The newspaper started in 1940 and peaked at nearly 30,000 subscribers in the late 1970s.

The convention plans to continue publishing news and information on its website, csbc.com/news, and begin developing a “primary channel” for that content going forward.

The news outlet’s managing editor position is being eliminated as of March 31, which is held by longtime CSBC employee Holly Smith.

CSBC Executive Director Bill Agee said the decision “wasn’t made lightly” and characterized the change as part of a broader strategy for the state convention.

“Discontinuing the paper is part of the ‘systems’ change(s) that still need to take place in order to make CSBC a viable and vital organization to its churches and its mission of empowering the vision of churches to reach the lost in their communities,” he said. 

GuideStone’s Ministers’ Tax Guide available

GuideStone Financial Resources

GuideStone® has released its most popular annual publication, the 2020 Ministers’ Tax Guide for 2019 Returns, available now

for GuideStone participants at GuideStone.org/TaxGuide.

Visit GuideStone.org/TaxGuide or call 1-888-98-GUIDE (1-888-984-8433) (printed copies are limited). 

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Sanctified

March 29

Focal Passages: 1 Corinthians 6:9-20

You may recall the episodes of “Mr. Rogers Neighborhood” where we would get to go behind the scenes and see how things were made. I specifically remember the virtual tour of the crayon factory. First, the pools of colorful wax would be poured into a crayon-shaped mold to harden. Then, the figures would be wrapped up and transformed into the finished product. What a neat process to watch!

In this session we will discuss the process by which God makes us holy like Himself: sanctification.

First Corinthians 6 gives us three implications of holiness. The first implication is that we are set apart from our former way of living.

Paul reminds the believers in Corinth of how they used to live. He also reminds them they had been

washed clean by Christ, meaning that they were no longer to partake in their old patterns.

The second implication of holiness is that we are made one with Christ. The ultimate implication of holiness is to bring glory to God.

We cannot be holy on our own.

Clearly, Paul is not writing to a group of perfect people. The process of sanctification can only be accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit.

We do have a role to play in our sanctification: resist temptation and posture ourselves before God so we can receive His help to live lives that are pleasing to Him. Yet, we can rest in knowing that it is God’s desire to make us more like Jesus ... and He will!



ANTENESHIA SANDERS
member, The Summit
Church, Durham

Eternal Life

April 5

Focal Passages: Revelation 21:1-8; 22:1-5

Death doesn’t have the best reputation. It is also not the most pleasant topic to bring up in casual conversation. We might say that we are “scared to death” or “bored to death,” but other than that, we keep the casket talk to a minimum. And understandably so. But what if death is one of the most hopeful things we have in this life as Christians?

The last book of the Bible reveals God’s plan to us regarding eternity. We see a new city come down from heaven. God and man dwell together and heaven and earth merge into one brand new Kingdom.

The new heavens and the new earth will be a place where we will

no longer experience sadness, or sickness or pain.

There will be no threat or curse of sin any longer.

All of those things will be over. We get to this perfect place by faith. Those of us who have trusted in Christ get to enjoy Him forever. This is called eternal life.

Scripture is not unclear, however, about the fate of those who don’t put their faith in Christ.

Immoral people (like the ones mentioned in chapter 21) will not get to live in the new city. Those who refuse Christ’s lordship are thrown into a lake of fire to face judgment. This is a second and eternal death.

Our faith in Christ is what helps us endure to the end. Remaining faithful to Christ until He comes is also a requirement for eternal life. For the believer, death is not the end, life is!

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

At Peace

March 29

Focal passage: Romans 5:1-11

I recently ran across a blog post about “15 things you can start doing today to bring inner peace into your life.” As you can imagine, what followed was a list of list of tasks like: set limits, slow down, disconnect, escape, breathe (that’s kind of important!), do one thing at a time and unclutter your world.

While none of these ideas are bad in and of themselves, there are a couple of issues with the idea that the items on this list will bring someone true inner peace.

First, they all depend on the efforts of the person, and they offer a temporary fix at best.

In Romans 5, Paul points us to the reality of a true peace, a peace that is found only through our justification as we accept the truth of the gospel message.

This peace that Paul teaches about is one of rest and tranquility. It is an assurance of our salvation through Christ. It is a lack of fear for the worldly issues we face and a contentment in our present circumstances.

Peace with God comes with hope, the ability to rejoice in our sufferings, the experience of God’s love and the gift of the Holy Spirit’s presence.

Peace is available because we are justified through Jesus’s sacrificial death in our place. His death reconciled us with God when we accept the gospel. Reconciliation means we are no longer enemies with God. We are saved from His wrath and we have ultimate peace.

His peace doesn’t rely on our efforts, and it is eternal.



WOODY WALLS
pastoral intern, Beach Road
Baptist Church, Southport

Focal passage: Romans 6:1-14

Without a doubt, my favorite church service to attend with my church family is our baptism service. When you walk in the sanctuary there is an excitement that permeates the building, an anticipation that is palpable and a joy that is overwhelming. We celebrate baptisms. I mean, we really celebrate. Shouts of joy, hand clapping, high fives are all the norm. So why do we celebrate so visibly? One word: freedom.

Baptism in and of itself does nothing for a person’s salvation, but what a picture it is of the new freedom the Christ follower has in Jesus!

Baptism is a clear picture of the teaching we see from Paul in Romans

Free

April 5

6. As followers of Christ we identify with Christ’s death, understanding that His death frees the believer from our slavery to sin. Going under the water is a picture of our death to our old self. Just like Jesus did not remain dead, we don’t either!

As we see someone come up out of the water, we are reminded that Jesus was resurrected and is alive. We share that same life eternally through Him. Our pastor will often use the phrase, “raised to walk in newness of life” as he lifts someone from the water. What a great reminder that our new life is one in which we walk in the righteousness God grants us.

Left to our sin we are faced with death, but praise God that He doesn’t leave us there when we profess Jesus! We have freedom, and that freedom unchains us from our old self and puts us on the path to eternal life. That’s something worth celebrating.

Davis

Continued from page 1

He is believed to be the youngest executive leader ever employed by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. When he joined the state convention, Davis also filled the role of executive director of the Council on Christian Higher Education. Throughout his tenure, Davis has served as the primary liaison with the various institutions and agencies affiliated with the BSC.

In 2013, as part of an organizational restructuring related to the adoption of the state convention's strategy titled, "Impacting Lostness Through Disciple-making," the executive committee approved a recommendation from BSC Executive Director-Treasurer Milton A. Hollifield Jr., to change Davis' title to associate executive director-treasurer. Even with the title change, Davis continued providing executive-level leadership to BSC staff members assigned to the Communications Team, Information Technology & Information Services Team, the Office of Prayer, the Strategic Focus Team, N.C. Baptists on Mission, and Fruitland Baptist Bible College.

Davis played a vital role in the development and implementation of the BSC strategy focused on disciple-making. He coordinated the formal five-year evaluation of the strategy that took place in 2019 and has led state convention staff through an ongoing process of self-evaluation for greater effectiveness in fulfilling the strategy.

Convention staff have benefitted from Davis' efforts to build new systems for staff annual reviews,

staff development and the facilitation of an organizational culture of collaboration built upon trust, value and respect.

"Brian Davis has been an invaluable employee in his work with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina," Hollifield said. "He will be greatly missed by everyone who had the opportunity to work closely with him. He has always done excellent work in his assigned roles of leadership with our staff, our convention committees, our board of directors, and as the staff liaison with our convention institutions and agencies. Brian is a gifted and skillful leader who is blessed with abilities that allow him to communicate with ease and effectiveness.

"Brian is a man of intellect, honesty and strong conviction. His statesman leadership in North Carolina Baptist life has been an invaluable resource and asset to North Carolina Baptist churches and local Baptist associations. Like the rest of our staff, I will miss the opportunity to work with Brian on a daily basis, but I celebrate with him the new opportunities he will have in this significant role of leadership with Wake Forest Baptist Health."


Church and associational leaders grew to depend on Davis for counsel and coaching for many administrative matters. Davis assisted in developing policies and procedures, and he also provided guidance related to organizational governing documents.

He was often called upon to help church leaders troubleshoot various issues, and he enjoyed helping

churches through challenging circumstances. "Brian Davis has served the Lord faithfully and passionately, and North Carolina Baptists are indebted for his service to the kingdom through the ministries of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina," said Melanie Wallace, who currently serves as president of the BSC's board of directors. "While I am sad to hear of Brian's resignation, I feel sure that his impact on this convention will be felt for many years."

Prior to joining the convention staff in 2006, Davis pastored churches in Statesville, East Flat Rock, Black Mountain and Hendersonville. Before answering a call to the ministry, Davis served as a public school teacher in Henderson County.

Davis holds a bachelor's degree from North Carolina State University, a master of divinity from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and a doctor of ministry from Erskine Theological Seminary. He has also served as an adjunct professor at Fruitland Baptist Bible College.

"I have never left a place of ministry under difficult circumstances, only when the ministry was healthy," Davis said. "It is because the convention enjoys a stable, healthy and strong position that I have great peace about my upcoming departure. I am convinced that the convention staff is more effective, the board and convention committees are more focused, and relationships across the convention are stronger now than when I began my service in 2006." 

CLASSIFIEDS

Denominational

The Brunswick Baptist Association seeks a **part-time Administrative Assistant**. Approximately 20 hours per week. Requirements include being bondable, MS Office, QuickBooks, website & Facebook administration; OneNote preferred, financial reporting & analysis skills, professional communication. Please send all résumés and inquiries to brunsbaptist@atmc.net.

Pastor

First Baptist Church of China Grove, North Carolina, a Southern Baptist church with conservative values, is seeking a **full-time Senior Pastor**. With the local mission field being the 4,000 residents of China Grove, we are seeking a pastor to help disciple us in preparation for impacting our community. For additional information and to submit a résumé, please visit <https://www.chinagrovefbc.com/job-opportunities>.

Highland Baptist Church of Hickory, NC (member of Southern Baptist Convention), is accepting résumés for a **full-time Senior Pastor** position. HBC has a rich, more than one hundred year history in teaching and preaching God's Word, and taking the Word to the lost of our community. We adhere to the 2000 Southern Baptist Faith and Message. We seek a candidate who is gifted in preaching God's Word, teaching, discipling, with a Shepherd's heart for reaching the lost. Minimum master's degree required. Résumés will be received but not reviewed until April 2020. Our website is hbchickory.org. Interested candidates should send résumé and cover letter to highlandbaptiststaff@gmail.com.

Church Staff

Flat Rock Baptist Church, Louisburg, NC, is seeking a **part-time Minister of Youth and Children**. This position requires a minimum of 15 hours a week. Must provide strong Christian leadership while leading our children and youth to come to know Christ. Email your résumé to frbcoffice@embarqmail.com.

Bethlehem Baptist Church of Knightdale, NC, seeking **Director of Children's Ministry** willing to make a long-term commitment to help grow and develop this ministry. This is a part-time, non-ordained salaried position of approx. 25 hours per week. Send résumés to directorsearch@bethlehemknightdale.com or by mail to Director of Children's Minister Search Committee, Bethlehem Baptist Church, 8400 Poole Road, Knightdale, NC 27545. View job description at <https://bethlehemknightdale.com/job-openings/>.

Miscellaneous

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IMB, NAMB name Bryant Wright as Send Relief president

International Mission Board & North American Mission Board

The International Mission Board (IMB) and the North American Mission Board (NAMB) announced Bryant Wright as the new president of Send Relief on March 2. Wright was the founding pastor of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga., where he served for 38 years.

“In today’s culture, compassion ministry is a wonderful way to win the right to be heard, not just with people you’re ministering to who are in great need, but with those who see Christians respond to needs in a compassionate way,” Wright said. “Send Relief allows us to have a positive witness on behalf of the whole convention.”

The announcement comes two weeks after NAMB and the IMB announced plans to collaborate on national and international compassion ministry under the banner of Send Relief.

“Paul (Chitwood, IMB president) had the idea to pursue Bryant for this role, and I am so grateful,” said NAMB president Kevin Ezell. “Bryant dedicated much of his life to Johnson Ferry and built a congregation that is passionate about spreading the gospel to the ends of the earth and about compassion ministry. Their church makes an impact in Atlanta and around the world, and I am so excited that he is going to be stepping into this role.”

As the president of Send Relief, Wright will report both to Ezell and IMB president Paul Chit-

wood to oversee and coordinate their joint efforts in compassion ministry.

“Bryant Wright is a model Great Commission leader. As a pastor whom God used to grow a megachurch, twice-elected Southern Baptist Convention president and a man with the nations on his heart, Bryant will be a strong voice to champion the compassion ministry of Southern Baptists’ two mission boards,” Chitwood said. “He has been heavily involved in that work, both with NAMB and IMB, for many years. I look forward to seeing how God will use him to lead Southern Baptists to continue to help the hurting and share hope with the lost.”

Wright described the impact of the collaboration between IMB and NAMB to provide a single avenue for Southern Baptists to serve through compassion ministry. “To have the IMB and NAMB joining together to make it so much easier to know where to go, who to call when crisis needs come up – it’s really helpful,” Wright said. “I’m thankful for both Paul and Kevin joining together and for reaching out to me with this opportunity to continue on in ministry for years to come.”


Wright is the founder and chairman of Right from the Heart Ministries, a media ministry designed to share the message of Jesus Christ outside the walls of the church that he started in 1992. He retired from his role of senior pastor of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church on Dec. 15, 2019. The church



Bryant Wright, seen here with his wife Anne, announced Feb. 28 that he will be president of Send Relief. (NAMB photo by Daniel Delgado)

grew to over 7,300 members under his leadership.

Typically, when a tenured pastor retires from Johnson Ferry, the church takes a love offering for the pastor and his family. Wright announced his retirement in November 2018. In June 2019, he and his wife suggested to church elders that they forego receiving a love offering on their behalf and instead promote an offering for Great Commission causes. The church held a special one-day missions offering on Nov. 3, 2019, and raised \$5.1 million, which was divided between the IMB, NAMB and the church’s ministry budget.

Wright and his wife, Anne, live in Marietta, Ga., and have three grown sons and seven grandchildren. 

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