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candidate
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BSC opens online registration for annual meeting

BSC Communications

Messengers and visitors who plan to attend the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's (BSC) annual meeting this November must follow a new registration process this year.

Registration for messengers and visitors will take place through a new online process for 2020 as part of several new protocols being implemented for this year's meeting.

Churches with an email address on file with the convention should have received detailed registration instructions by email on Oct. 1. A letter with the same instructions was also being mailed to all cooperating N.C. Baptist churches who are eligible to register messengers. Visit [ncannualmeeting.org/register](#).

This year's annual meeting will be held Nov. 10, at First Baptist Church of Charlotte from 1-5 p.m., following a vote by BSC's board of directors to change the location of the annual meeting.

The BSC's bylaws authorize the board of directors to change the time or place of the annual meeting or cancel the meeting in the event of "emergency or unusual circumstances." The meeting had previously been scheduled for Monday and Tuesday, Nov. 9-10, at the Joseph S. Koury Convention Center in Greensboro.

This year's abbreviated, one-day meeting will include times of worship, preaching, ministry reports, business sessions, as well as a special recognition for BSC Executive Director-Treasurer

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BCH helps couple adopt brothers



BCH Communications

Janina DeHart woke suddenly. The dream that jogged her from her night's sleep gripped her heart.

"I dreamed that we adopted two boys," Janina shares. "The dream was our celebration party welcoming them to our family."

Janina and her husband, Mark, were medically unable to have children. They had discussed the idea of adoption before, but it never went further than conversation. The couple believed that Janina's dream wasn't simply coincidence – it was providence.

"I knew by putting our faith in God that He was going to open doors, and of course, He did," Mark divulges.

As "preachers' kids," Mark and Janina are familiar with Baptist Children's Homes' (BCH) ministry that provides compassionate cottage homes to boys and girls at the organization's statewide locations. However, they did not realize BCH now offered Family Foster Care where couples can be trained and licensed by the ministry to be a foster family.

When Janina learned this information from a co-worker, they set up a meeting with BCH staff and began the process to fulfill their dream.

The DeHarts weren't the only ones with a dream. Brothers Nathen and Tylor, who were previously homeless and living in a tent with their mother, longed for a family. They had been removed from their mother's custody and came to

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EDT search team still seeks input

By SETH BROWN | BR Executive Editor

The deadline for recommending candidates to be the state convention's next leader has passed, but search committee chairman Noah Crowe continues to seek input from North Carolina Baptists.

Crowe, who serves as interim pastor at

Peachtree Memorial Baptist Church in Murphy, said the search team's meeting on Sept. 28 centered on defining the qualifications they are seeking among candidates to be the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's (BSC) executive director-treasurer.

The meeting occurred in conjunction with

See Search page 8

Important information about this year's annual meeting

BSC Communications

Hopefully by now you have heard the news that the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's (BSC) board of directors voted to hold a one-day, abbreviated annual meeting this year, which will be held Tues., Nov. 10, from 1-5 p.m. at First Baptist Church of Charlotte.

According to convention bylaws, the board of directors is the only entity that is authorized to change the time or location of the annual meeting, and the board approved the change during a meeting held Sept. 28.

The annual meeting had previously been scheduled for Monday and Tuesday, Nov. 9-10, in Greensboro.

This year's annual meeting will include familiar items like worship, preaching, ministry reports and business sessions, but it will also be unlike any other annual meeting that we've had in recent memory. In light of that, I wanted take the opportunity to share some important information about the meeting with North Carolina Baptists.

One significant change is that registration for messengers and visitors will take place online this year. Churches that have an email address on file

with the convention should have received registration instructions via email on Oct. 1. A letter outlining the registration process has also been mailed to every N.C. Baptist church. Registration details are also available on the annual meeting website at ncannualmeeting.org/register.



MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.
BSC executive
director-treasurer

We are also asking everyone who plans to attend – both messengers and visitors – to please register online in advance to help us gauge what attendance figures might look like. Doing so will help us adhere to social distancing and other health and safety protocols that will be in effect.

As part of the registration process, we are also asking that individuals select a specific time to check-in on the day of the meeting to avoid overcrowding. On-site check-in will be available from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

As part of the enhanced health and safety measures, temperature checks will be conducted as people enter the facility, and face coverings will also be required.

We realize that some people might not feel comfortable attending the meeting. For those who don't feel comfortable, the meeting will be broadcast on the internet through a livestream of the event. For those tuning in online, convention bylaws do not

IN FOCUS


A WORD FROM OUR LEADER

permit electronic voting on business matters, but you will still be able to follow all of the proceedings as they happen.

This year's meeting will not include an exhibit area, nor will there be any ancillary meetings that are normally held in conjunction with the meeting. We will, however, provide a series of prerecorded virtual breakout sessions that offer practical training and equipping in a variety of ministry areas. The sessions will be made available for viewing online beginning at 9 a.m. on Monday, Nov. 9, the day prior to the meeting. To learn more about these breakout session offerings, visit ncannualmeeting.org/breakouts.

Given the events of 2020, this year's annual meeting theme of "God's Great Hope" is especially fitting this year.

For the most up-to-date information, schedule, and other resources and materials related to this year's meeting, visit ncannualmeeting.org.

"Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer" – Romans 12:12 (ESV). 

6 ways to manage our election anxiety

The Summit Church

"It's the most important election of our lifetime," again. It will be every four years for the rest of our lives. Even if redundant, it's true. Because it's true, it's weighty. That is only one factor that adds to the angst many of us feel heading into this election.

There is also the reality that neither candidate holds the moral character for a Christian to feel good about voting for them. This is an election where the vast majority of the country is voting "against the other guy." That creates a conflict of conscience which (rightly) unsettles the

emotions of many Christians.

Finally, there is the social dimension of the election. As both sides more aggressively vilify the other, conversations about politics become increasingly precarious. In most settings there is a "clear right answer" (again, because "How could you be for the other guy when...?"), so honest dialogue runs the risk of being ostracized.

So far, we've outlined how (a) the weight of the choice, (b) the bad options to choose from, and (c) the



BRAD HAMBRICK
Guest Column

social implications for talking about the choices all combine to make this a stressful election season. It's too important not to vote. Both options have major defects.

You risk isolation and ridicule if you talk about it. That's an awful situation to be in. But it's the situation we're all in.

The point of this reflection is on how to manage the anxiety emanating from the election.

We've defined our context, now let's look at six ways to mitigate the degree of emotional disruption we

experience over the next month.

First, recognize that God has navigated his people through many terrible political leaders. Read the Old Testament. God was faithful and active during the reign of many morally defective leaders with bad political agendas. In both the Old and New Testament (Proverbs 21:1 and 1 Timothy 2:2), the Bible indicates the quality of political leaders are not a hindrance to God achieving His purposes. Politics are important, but not ultimate.

This lessens, but does not eliminate, the anxiety we feel. In that sense, it is like gauging our level of

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An update on the 2020 Mother's Day Offering

Wake Forest Baptist Health

Thank you, North Carolina Baptists, for your continued support of the annual Mother's Day Offering benefiting patients of Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center. Each year, this offering provides financial support to individuals who stand on the brink of financial ruin due to their medical bills.

COVID-19 prevented many churches from gathering in person in May 2020, so their traditional promotion of the Mother's Day Offering was hampered. In light of these challenges, I am most thankful for those congregations that made the extra effort to promote and receive this offering this year.

Ordinarily, we provide a report regarding the offering to the Convention Relations Committee and the Board of Directors during the September meeting of the board. However, the board conducted a shortened meeting in September, understandably so.

Due to COVID-19, therefore, this report was neither provided to the committee nor the board. In addition, a fuller report is usually provided to the messengers during the annual meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC), but that report has also been removed from the agenda

for the upcoming meeting in Charlotte.

Therefore, we appreciate the *Biblical Recorder* allowing me to share this brief update.

To date, the 2020 Mother's Day Offering has received just over \$42,000. This total includes those gifts sent from churches through the BSC and those that send their gifts directly to the hospital. In recent years, the offering totaled closer to \$500,000 at this time of year.



BRIAN DAVIS
Guest Column

We understand that the pandemic has impacted not only the ability of churches to receive an offering of this nature, but that the pandemic has also prevented church members from supporting this offering due to their loss of income. With so many individuals enduring loss of work, furloughs and even complete loss of jobs during the pandemic, we anticipate an increased number of patients will stand in need of the financial assistance

that the Mother's Day Offering provides.

The ability to relieve a portion of the financial burden from patients benefits them on several levels. First, the ability to pay the final portion of what appeared at first to be an insurmountable medical bill provides the patient the ability to then purchase much needed medications, food, and pay other basic bills that are essential to their well being.


Second, the emotional and mental stress that is

relieved by the Mother's Day Offering reduces anxiety and that in itself has proven critical to aid in the continual healing that follows hospitalization.

Third, and most importantly, the communication that my office has with patients that benefit from the Mother's Day Offering stresses that compassionate and caring followers of Jesus Christ want recipients to know that God has seen their need and met it through the generous gifts of His people. Year after year, we hear from recipients whose medical crisis has caused them to question if God is aware, or even cares, about their plight; but your gifts have communicated clearly that He is and He does.

We remind North Carolina Baptists that churches are free to make contributions to the Mother's Day Offering at any time during the year. If your congregation was unable to receive the offering in May 2020, we are glad to help you do so at any other time; please don't hesitate to contact me if I can provide information about the offering, as well as promotional materials. I can be reached at: briandavi@wakehealth.edu or by calling (336) 413-9297.

Thank you for your continued support of the Mother's Day Offering.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Brian Davis serves as liaison between the Faith Health division of Wake Forest Baptist Health and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.) 

Board approves annual meeting change, budget recommendation

By CHAD AUSTIN | BSC Communications

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's (BSC) 2020 annual meeting will be held Tues., Nov. 10, from 1-5 p.m. at First Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C., following a vote of the convention's board of directors.

The board voted unanimously to change the time and place of this year's annual meeting during an abbreviated meeting held Sept. 28 at Caraway Conference Center near Asheboro. The state convention's bylaws authorize the board to change the time or place of the annual meeting or cancel the meeting in the event of "emergency or unusual circumstances."

The board also approved a recommended Cooperative Program (CP) budget for 2021 totaling \$27 million that will now go before messengers at the annual meeting for consideration.

The change to the annual meeting was brought to the board based on a recommendation from the convention's executive committee to hold a one-day meeting that will include

times of worship, preaching, ministry reports and business sessions. The program will also include a special recognition for Executive Director-Treasurer Milton A. Hollifield Jr., who is retiring Feb. 28, 2021.

Convention officials said the meeting will follow social distancing protocols, and registration for messengers and guests will take place online.

Information regarding annual meeting logistics and registration will be made available at ncannualmeeting.org.

The annual meeting had previously been scheduled for Nov. 9-10, at the Joseph S. Koury Convention Center in Greensboro. Faced with uncertainties related to statewide executive orders limiting attendance at indoor gatherings due to COVID-19, state convention leaders canceled its contract with the Koury Center in early August and began exploring alternative options. The BSC incurred no penalties for canceling the contract.

Budget approved

The board also gave unanimous approval to a recommended 2021 CP

budget totaling \$27 million, which represents a \$3.5 million reduction from the current budget. The board also approved a "challenge budget" for 2021, which would allocate 50% of any funds received in excess of \$27 million to the Southern Baptist Convention and 50% to BSC ministry groups.

The board also approved a \$2.1 million goal for the 2021 North Carolina Missions Offering (NCMO), with no change in allocations.

The overall budget, challenge budget, and NCMO offering goal and allocations had previously been endorsed by the convention's executive committee. The measures will now go before messengers at this year's annual meeting for consideration.

Financial update

John Butler, BSC executive leader for business services, said the state convention's budget picture had improved slightly during the summer.

Through the end of August, the convention has received more than \$17.7 million in CP gifts, Butler said. While that figure is still about 13.5% below budget and down about 6.9%

year-over-year, CP giving was up a bit over the past two months.

At the end of June, total gifts were about 15.8% behind budget and down about 7.8% year-over-year, respectively.

"We thought we would be down a bit over the summer, but we are pleased with where we are," Butler said, adding that the convention continues to operate in the black.

Other business

In other business, the board elected new officers, approved three appointees to Fruitland Baptist Bible College's board of directors, recognized outgoing board members for their service and heard a variety of ministry updates. Board committees also elected new chairpersons.

New officers elected

Matt Capps, senior pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Apex, was elected as the board president for 2021. Capps currently serves as the board vice president. (See story, page 9.)

See Board page 9

Ronnie Parrott named as candidate for BSC president

Biblical Recorder

Ronnie Parrott, pastor of Christ Community Church in Huntersville, N.C., will be nominated for president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) at this year's annual meeting. The event is scheduled for Nov. 10 at First Baptist Church in Charlotte.

Robert Welch, pastor of First Baptist Church in Charlotte, told the *Biblical Recorder* that he intends to make the nomination. When asked why he believes Parrott is a good candidate, Welch emphasized Parrott's pastoral leadership, focus on church planting and revitalization, and doctrinal commitments to scripture, missions and evangelism.

"Ronnie is a proven visionary leader and pastor leading a growing church in a growing city to reach people with the gospel of Jesus Christ," Welch said. "He has led Christ Community to become a dynamic, diverse, vibrantly growing, and multi-generational church that is making an impact throughout the city of Charlotte."

Parrott became the lead pastor at Christ Community in 2016. Since that

time, Welch said church attendance grew 110%, 123 people were baptized and the church "aggressively" increased its Cooperative Program giving.

The state convention's financial records indicate that Christ Community's Cooperative Program giving increased from approximately \$2,700 in the 2016 fiscal year to more than \$25,000 in 2020.

The church gave more than \$70,000 to other missions causes over the past year, including the International Mission Board's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, according to Parrott.

"Throughout his ministry Ronnie has consistently demonstrated a passion for the local church and believes the church is God's 'Plan A.' His presidency would focus on uniting our convention around seeing churches revitalized and new churches planted across our state. I believe that Dr. Parrott's passion to see smaller churches thrive is exactly what we need in the days going forward," said Welch.

"Ronnie believes in the Southern Baptist Convention.

"For the past three years Dr. Parrott has led the Young Pastors Network,



Ronnie Parrott, seen here with his family, will be nominated for Baptist State Convention of North Carolina president at its annual meeting. Parrott is pastor of Christ Community Church in Huntersville. (Contributed photo)

a group of over 100 North Carolina Baptist pastors committed to the inerrancy, supremacy, and sufficiency of the Bible and evangelizing the lost in our state."

Parrott and his wife, Marci, have six children.

He is a three-time graduate of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., receiving a bachelor's degree in family ministry, master of divinity in evangelism, missions and church growth, and a doctorate in executive leadership.

In 2018 he was elected as president of the 2020 North Carolina Pastors' Conference, but the event was canceled earlier this year due to concerns about COVID-19.

"I love the gospel," Parrott told the *Recorder*.

"It's the message that transforms the lives of sinners. I have a heart for church revitalization and church planting.

"I want to champion local church pastors as evangelists in their communities to see thousands of North Carolinians hear the gospel and have the opportunity to be saved."

Visit christcommunity.com. 

IMB trustees appoint 80 new missionaries, approve 2020-21 budget

By **LESLIE PEACOCK CALDWELL** | IMB

International Mission Board (IMB) trustees unanimously approved the appointment of 80 full-time, fully funded personnel and approved a balanced budget for 2020-21 of \$255.3 million during their Sept. 29-30 meeting.

The budget reflects a 4.5% reduction from the 2019-20 budget of \$267.4 million. But IMB President Paul Chitwood credited Southern Baptists' faithful giving for the IMB's successful navigation of the economic downturn resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"How has the IMB survived, and why do I think we are beginning to thrive, even in the midst of a pandemic?" Chitwood asked. "Because Southern Baptists have not stopped believing in nor lost sight of the vision God has given us of a vast multitude from every nation, all tribes, peoples and languages standing before the throne and before the Lamb. IMB is more focused on that vision than perhaps at any time in our recent history."

The new missionaries will be sent to eight of IMB's nine global affinities. A virtual Sending Celebration in November will publicly recognize the

new field personnel and their appointments.

This was the second trustee meeting of 2020 held virtually, due to continued caution surrounding the spread of COVID-19. January's meeting was held in person in Riverside, Calif.

The plenary session on Sept. 30 included greetings from Ray Gentry, president and CEO of the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders, who expressed his commitment to partnership with IMB.

During the meeting, trustees approved a balanced budget of \$255.3 million. Due to the cancellation of the 2020 Southern Baptist Convention, no new trustees were approved. IMB's trustee board will remain the same for the coming year.

Another recommendation unanimously approved was a resolution of appreciation for three missionaries who died this year in active service.

In his plenary address, Chitwood listed challenges that the IMB has faced in its 175-year history and remarked that COVID-19 certainly wasn't the first unforeseen circumstance the IMB has endured.

Chitwood reported that he remains optimistic about IMB's future because of several factors, including the quality of the team at IMB's home

office in Richmond, nearly 1,000 candidates who are in the application process to be missionaries, and the ways current missionaries are embracing initiatives "designed to equip and empower them to make contact and build relationships with all 47,000 Southern Baptist churches over the next two years."


"Many of our missionaries have worked hard to stay connected with churches, but IMB has not effectively trained and equipped them, and there are literally thousands upon thousands of our churches that never hear from our missionaries," Chitwood said.

"We have worked across the organization to create a connecting strategy to remedy that."

Chitwood shared some updates:

- IMB's Send Relief partnership with the North American Mission Board is up and running as the avenue for Southern Baptists to meet needs at home and around the world.

- An online Sending Celebration has been planned in partnership with the Alabama Baptist Convention for Nov. 18, at 7:30 p.m. EST, to be streamed on IMB's Facebook and Vimeo pages.

- IMB trustees currently plan to conduct their February 2021 board meeting in person. 

Ezell to Asian American Collective: ‘Look for churches you can come alongside’

By LIZ TABLAZON | BR Assistant Editor

The Southern Baptist Convention’s (SBC) Asian American Collective met again online Sept. 30 to hear from Kevin Ezell, president of the North American Mission Board (NAMB), about the challenges and triumphs in church planting.

Ezell spoke of a basic requirement in church planting: evangelism. He added that most church plants that have seen continual growth began with a heart to reach the lost and a vision of reproducing, even starting “with someone they know they’re going to send out.”

One way NAMB supports church plants is through a strategy that prioritizes making an impact on a city over growing attendance numbers, Ezell said.

“It may not be that everybody comes through my doors or sits in my pews ... but I want to be a catalyst to see God do something in my city.”

Ezell gave an example of an Asian church planter, who was fluent in Spanish and felt called to serve a predominantly Hispanic community in Los Angeles, now seeing fruit in the ministry.

Ezell encouraged pastors and leaders to look past what they may see as limited potential in others and be “very slow to look at your people and

say, ‘He can never’ or ‘God would never’ ... you never, never know.”

When asked about NAMB’s replant and revitalization initiatives, Ezell mentioned that there are millions of dollars worth of church facilities that are no longer used and become available every year, both in and outside the SBC.

NAMB treats and funds replants outside of the southern United States as new church plants through the Send Network.

Ezell asked participants to use networks like the Asian American Collective to help connect churches that may be interested or in need of replant or revitalization efforts. While NAMB has the resources to help, they aren’t always aware of all the churches that need it, and many aren’t open to the options of replanting or revitalization “until they can’t pay the light bill, until they’re desperate.”

He encouraged second generation and Asian American congregations to consider “adopting” or “fostering” dormant churches. Growth comes more from seeking coaching and mentorship among leaders than raising funds for facility upgrades, he said.

“Look for churches you can come alongside ... put your arm around them and help walk them to where they need to be.”

Generational tension

A.J. Camota, pastor of International Christian Fellowship in Suffern, N.Y., brought up the tension within mono-ethnic immigrant churches when it comes to reaching people of different cultures. Camota has seen in many Asian American churches a good desire from immigrant leaders to grow multiculturally but an expectation to retain second and third generation members.

Ezell, who earlier noted the diversity in age groups present on the Zoom call, encouraged leaders across generations to collaborate in finding strategies that would best reach their communities. Admitting that he spoke more from observation than experience, he instead asked to hear about what second generation leaders have seen and experienced themselves.


“Because particularly next-gen Asian Americans are so culturally adaptive, they [immigrant leaders] put a lot of hope in them making that bridge for them, but what we find is that not every next-gen member ... is called to stay in the church that they’re growing up in,” Camota said.

Camota tied his experiences to what Ezell had stressed about churches’ roles in engaging their cities.

“We’ve seen how a lot of immigrant churches start with people coming from further away in order to meet with like people,” Camota said. “If we can see a transition from that to something incarnationally local – I think we’ve seen some successes with that.”

“Once a church is established as an immigrant church, sometimes it takes more work and momentum to show a town that they’re not just that.”

Ezell reminded participants that they all can get involved with church planting in different ways. He encouraged them to pray for church planters, adopt a plant, participate in church plants’ outreach activities or mission trips, help provide resources, and to pursue mentorship through opportunities like the newly launched Next Step Leader, which helps pastors increase “leadership capacity for greater evangelistic impact.”

“It’s not about money,” he said. “It’s about helping your church get a heart and a vision for something outside of themselves.” 

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ncbam.org

The North Carolina Baptist Minister’s Wives plans its meeting Nov. 7. With the theme “Assembly Required,” the At the Well team will lead at Shiloh Baptist Church in Garner. Doors open at 11:30 a.m.; lunch and program is between noon and 3 p.m. There will be a business meeting to elect new of-

icers and handle any other business. Register for this free event by Oct. 30. Participants can choose to attend in person or via live stream. Visit ncannualmeeting.org/event-ministers-wives-conference. Questions can be directed to Katie Eades at katieeades@hotmail.com or (828) 994-7282.

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NCBM team meets needs, shares hope in Louisiana

By WILL HALL | *Baptist Message*

Alexandria, Louisiana, is 130 miles north of the shoreline where Hurricane Laura made landfall with 150 mph winds in August. Still, a number of residents in this cross-roads city were not spared catastrophe, yet some received blessings despite damage to their homes.

The North Carolina Baptist Men disaster relief teams were some of the first out-of-state responders to arrive in Alexandria, bringing tarps, bottled water and food, and to deploy chainsaw crews to remove fallen trees.

Tony Hodge and Bill McCumbee, members of East Belmont Baptist Church in Belmont, North Carolina, were dispatched Sept. 16 to Dartmouth Street and later, Sept. 18, to 15th Street to perform needs assessment and to prioritize work in these neighborhoods.

“We were writing up what it would take to help the people get back in their homes,” McCumbee recalled. “They had such a story that touched Tony and me such that Tony decided to hold back the reports” (to personally oversee completion of the work orders instead of submitting them through normal channels).

The damage was “quite extensive,” according to Hodge. “A single tree basically obliterated the back of two houses and was on top of a third. The exposed root ball must have been 12-15 feet high.”

Back at Philadelphia Baptist Church, Horseshoe Drive, which was hosting disaster relief volunteers from multiple states, Hodge and McCumbee were able to talk with team leaders from two North Carolina crews.

Looking at the photos, they decided the massive job was a top priority because it would help three families in one project. The families were “elated” when he called that night to let them know teams would be on site in the morning, Hodge said.

“The next day we had 19 people working on that street, not counting the two of us” Hodge noted, pointing at himself and McCumbee. “The community was looking around, and one of the guys we call ‘the preacher,’ he goes and witnesses to six people.”

Needs met

Mike Wolff, a chaplain with North Carolina Baptist Men is “the preacher” who shared the gospel with neighbors who were watching the disaster relief teams remove the giant tree.

“It was a mammoth pecan tree,” said Wolff, a member of City Ministry Church in Charlotte, North Carolina.

His first encounter that day was a young woman and her 10-year-old son who were sitting on their front porch across from the work site. After checking on their safety and needs, Wolff talked with the boy about birthdays as a means to share the gospel.

“Kids love to tell you their birthday,” he explained. “So I asked him about his birthday and about his birthday party. After he finished giving me some details, I surprised them both by telling him I had two birthdays.”

“He cocked his head and looked at me; and, I could see the mother looking at me in disbelief, too,” Wolff recounted, saying they were all ears by this time. He then related the account of Nicodemus’s night-time encounter with Jesus, emphasizing the need to



Bill McCumbee, member of East Belmont Baptist Church in Belmont, N.C., stands next to a fallen tree in Alexandria, La. A team from Baptists on Mission was serving the area. (*Baptist Message* photo)

be born of the Spirit and the flesh – two birthdays.

“In order for you to go to heaven you have to have a birthday from your mother, but you also have to have a day where you birth the Spirit of God in your life,” Wolff told the young man. “My birthday is Oct. 16 and your birthday is April 27. But my second birthday is July 3. Do you have one of those?”

From that point, he shared the gospel and what it means to be a child of God, and then had a similar conversation with the mother. Both said they had experienced changed hearts, and he helped them pray their first prayer as Christians.

That day, Wolff shared the gospel with a family of five on that same street with four accepting Christ.

Two days later on 15th Street, where a giant tree had fallen on two homes, the same crew and Wolff teamed up again. Three people received salvation – a homeowner, a brother and his wife.

Reflections

“I have been a corporate chaplain for 25 years, but I don’t have much time in crisis care,” Wolff offered. “But here is what I know: Adults come to Christ more often during a time of crisis in their lives. These people


were living in the middle of a crisis, and so they were looking for something.”

Wolff also remarked about the energy and endless compassion the volunteers displayed on those two projects.

“I have been amazed, amazed, at these men. I worked this week with a man who is 74 years old, and he worked me to death,” he admitted.

“This morning as I was packing up, I was thinking about this week,” Wolff reflected. “I’m 63 years old. I have four screws in my back. In February, I had my second surgery on my left knee and I’ve got bad feet. My feet have ached all week and then I’ve got poison ivy on my eyes. Yet, I wouldn’t trade this week for anything.”

“Jesus was crucified, hanged on the tree until he died so that the entire world could see him. So I figure I can put up with a little discomfort for three or four days so that I can see nine come to know Him,” he shared. “So yeah, I will go home and it will take me days to get over this. But it’s been well worth it.”

(*EDITOR’S NOTE – Will Hall is executive editor of Louisiana’s Baptist Message.*) 

NAMB celebrates offering, passes reduced budget, looks to 2021

By MIKE EBERT | NAMB

Trustees of the North American Mission Board (NAMB) gathered Oct. 5-6 to celebrate God’s provision and Southern Baptist faithfulness during a year marked by a pandemic, economic uncertainty and social unrest. Most trustees attended the meeting in person with social distancing at NAMB’s building in Alpharetta while some participated online.

At the group’s Monday evening

celebration dinner, NAMB president Kevin Ezell noted that after the COVID-19 virus sent the United States into a lockdown just as most churches normally would raise funds for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, NAMB stopped promoting giving to the offering. But giving continued nonetheless as churches found creative ways to continue to promote and collect the offering.

“But 2020 was the greatest Annie

See NAMB page 11



CHILDSSEN

ANNUAL OFFERING
WEEK OF PRAYER NOV. 15-22
PLAN NOW ■ BCHOFFERING.ORG



Adopt Continued from page 1

live at one of BCH's cottage homes. The siblings gained a family through their cottage parents, Scott and Connie Cummings and John and Glenda Mercer, as well as the other boys in the cottage.

"They were able to provide for us, and we didn't have to worry about not being able to eat and not being able to do things," Nathen explains.

"We had a shower instead of having to bathe in a creek," Tylor recalls.

Even though they were receiving the care they needed at the cottage, the boys still dreamed of living in a permanent home with a mother and a father.

"We never really had a dad because our dads left our mom," Tylor says. The brothers had the same mother but two different fathers.

After living at BCH for almost a year, the dreams of the DeHarts and the boys began to come together. The staff arranged for Nathen and Tylor to go on a weekend visit with the DeHarts as the couple's foster care licensing was being completed.

"Here's these two beautiful kids standing there, both grinning from ear to ear," Mark describes. "It's like I had just become a dad right then."

The bond between the boys and the couple grew stronger as they spent more time together. It wasn't long before the DeHarts officially became foster parents to Nathen and Tylor.

"I didn't know I had that much love in me for somebody that I've never known, but I love these boys like they're my own kids," Mark says, his eyes glistening with tears. "I'd do anything for them. I love them to death."


On Oct. 24, 2019, the two dreams became one as Mark and Janina officially adopted Nathen and Tylor. They celebrated with family, friends and BCH staff members during an adoption party like the one from Janina's dream. This would not be the last celebration to take place during the family's first year together. On June 13 a small group gathered at a picnic shelter by the Tuckasegee River. It was not only Nathen's 16th birthday, but it was the day the two brothers would be baptized.



Mark and Janina DeHart officially adopted Nathen and Tylor Oct. 24, 2019. Front page photo: On June 13, Mark DeHart baptized both his sons in the local river. (BCH photos)

"They became Christians after they moved into the Children's Homes," Janina shares. "They had experiences that first year they were living at the cottage. They each at different times made decisions."

With friends and loved ones watching from the bank, Nathen and Tylor were immersed in the river's flowing waters by a pastor from the family's church and their adoptive father. Mark embraced his sons as each one emerged from the river. With tears streaming down his face, Mark raised his hand skyward and praised God. "I'm just glad that God is using me and Janina to help these young boys," Mark declares. "I want them to grow up in a godly home to be able to be a witness for Christ. I know they're going to be; they already are."

BCH, which was founded in 1885, is in 29 communities, including locations in North Carolina, South Carolina and Guatemala. The annual offering emphasis is coming in November. A week of prayer is Nov. 15-22, but there is also a month-long prayer guide, along with other offering resources, available. Visit bchoffering.org. 

WEEK OF PRAYER: NOV. 15-22, 2020

SUNDAY

Pray for children and families in your community and across North Carolina.

MONDAY

Pray for the thousands of lives BCH serves each year through its 29 locations.

TUESDAY

Pray for the cottage parents, care givers, chiefs, foster parents and staff who give of themselves around the clock to care for boys and girls.

WEDNESDAY

Pray God will lead couples to be foster parents through BCH's family foster care ministry.

THURSDAY

Pray for the men and women who live at BCH's nine statewide homes for intellectual & developmentally disabled adults.

FRIDAY

Pray for orphans at Good Shepherd Ministries in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala.

SATURDAY

Pray for BCH president/CEO Michael C. Blackwell as he leads the ministry.

SUNDAY

Pray that the children and families BCH ministers to will come to know Jesus as their Savior.

A month-long prayer guide is available at bchfamily.org/img/pages/Prayer_Guide_2020_WEB_-_Baptist_Childrens_Homes.pdf.

Election

Continued from page 2

concern regarding a surgery. Doctors can tell us whether a procedure is minor, significant, or life-and-death. Downgrading the election from life-or-death to significant, may remove the edge of panic, but still leaves us with a significant amount of unrest.

Second, decide which issues are most important to you. One candidate is going to win. That is going to give one party more power. Know what each party platform includes. Assess which aligns with your faith and values best. Based on that, decide how you will vote.

This lessens anxiety a bit more. Anxiety is repetitive in nature. When we're anxious, we ruminate. It may feel like our mind is running "a mile a minute" but the track is short. We cover the same ground many times in our vexation. Having made up your mind allows you to responsibly enact the third point.

Third, limit (not eliminate) your news intake. Before a choice is made, it is irresponsible not to actively get as much information as you can. After a choice is made, you only need to remain aware of the "big events"

that are large enough to change your mind. Because you know the values that guide your vote (point #2), you know what to listen for that might change your mind.

Limiting our unnecessary negative information intake lessens our anxiety. Here we are simply applying Philippians 4:6-8 to our media intake. The media attracts viewers by stirring emotions, rarely pleasant ones. The media plays a vital role in our society. We should give thanks for those who do their job well. But they focus on bad news – crises, scandals, disasters, etc. – to attract viewers. When we're struggling with anxiety, it is wise to limit our news intake to what is essential.

Fourth, identify what will not change in your life. There are people you will love, roles you will fill, and tasks you will find meaningful regardless of the election outcome. Make a list of these things. Thank God for each one of them. Tell the people how much they mean to you.

This lessens anxiety by reminding you of the good parts of your future, those things that are independent of


election results. Remembering these things is a way to remain emotionally grounded. The political winds may blow and cause the periphery parts of our life to sway, but these core things can provide a base for our emotions that politics can't move.

Fifth, think through what will change in your life. The book of Proverbs repeatedly tells us it is wise to plan. But plan for probabilities, not possibilities. We don't need to plan for every, "If [person] is elected, then [tragedy] will happen," prediction we hear in the news or read on the internet. That would be both emotionally exhausting and futile.

Asking, "Is this possibility realistic enough to make it worth planning for? If it's true, would it change anything in my life?" is a way to vet the significance of the pontifications you hear about the election results. For many of the things we hear, the answer will be "no." When we get a "no" answer, that gives us the emotional freedom to quit ruminating on that possibility. If we get a "yes" answer, then we have something productive to do instead of getting caught in circuitous worry.

Sixth, look for every opportunity to glorify and serve God between now and Nov. 3. Don't put your life on hold. God has many things He wants to do in and through your life between now and the election that have nothing to do with an elephant or a donkey.

Looking for, engaging with, and celebrating these opportunities is both a way to honor God and to regulate your emotions. Passive waiting is the most painful kind of waiting. This is merely the application of Matthew 6:25-34. Worry doesn't add anything to our life. It only robs us of today without enhancing tomorrow. Be fully present and on mission between now and when you vote, and you will realize how true the first point in this reflection really is.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Brad Hambrick serves as the pastor of counseling at The Summit Church in Durham, NC. He also serves as assistant professor of biblical counseling at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. This article originally appeared at bradhambrick.com. Reprinted with permission.) 

Meeting

Continued from page 1

Milton A. Hollifield Jr., who is retiring on Feb. 28, 2021.

The change to the registration process is one of several adjustments being made to annual meeting logistics in response to COVID-19.

Messengers and visitors may register individually, or churches may register multiple messengers at one time. A unique church ID and PIN number will be needed to register, which are included in the instructions being sent to churches. Registrants must also provide a valid email address when they register.

Within a week of registering, individuals will receive an electronic ticket at the email address they provided. Tickets must be presented at check-in at the annual meeting on Nov. 10 to receive ballots and other materials.

During registration, registrants will also be asked to select a time to check in on the day of the annual meeting in an effort to limit crowding and maintain social distancing. Check-in times will be available from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., and on-site check-in on the day of the annual meeting will close at 1 p.m.

Churches who don't receive their letters with registration instructions by Oct. 15 are asked to call the convention at (919) 459-5555 for assistance.


As part of additional enhanced health and safety measures, temperature checks will take place at the door of the facility, and social distancing protocols will be in place in the sanctuary. Face coverings will also be required.

In addition, this year's annual meeting will not include an exhibit hall or any ancillary meetings.

The annual meeting will also be livestreamed for those who cannot attend, however convention bylaws do not permit online voting during business sessions.

Breakout sessions will be prerecorded and made available for viewing online on Nov. 9 at 9 a.m.

Visit ncannualmeeting.org/breakouts to sign up for reminders.

The most up-to-date information and details related to the annual meeting will be posted online at ncannualmeeting.org. Individuals may also sign up to receive email updates by completing the form at ncbaptist.wufoo.com/forms/zjlor85lahlxn0/. 

Search

Continued from page 1

the BSC board of directors meeting the same day at Caraway Conference Center near Asheboro, N.C. The recommendation period ended Sept. 30.

Crowe told the *Biblical Recorder* in a phone interview that the nine-member committee sent letters to associational mission strategists across the state to solicit feedback about what they want to see in a convention leader. That message comes in addition to previous calls for input from a wide range of N.C. Baptists.

The committee requests that all communication about the search take place through a designated email address: ncedt@ncbaptist.org.

"I am excited about the enthusiasm that seems to be around the process as people give us glowing nominations and people's encouragement ... people reminding me that they are praying for us," Crowe said. "That's exciting to me that God by His Spirit is going to unify the convention and not divide us."

The search committee's next meeting is slated for Oct. 19 at Caraway Conference Center. 

Do you know someone who would enjoy receiving the *Biblical Recorder*? Email subscribe@BRnow.org to gift a subscription.

Board

Continued from page 3

Casey Norkett, missions pastor at Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte, was elected as the board vice president. Angela Kilby was re-elected as board secretary.

Fruitland board members

The board also approved three individuals who were recommended to serve on the Fruitland Baptist Bible College board of directors. They were:

- Ryan Bennett, pastor of Cross Memorial Baptist Church in Marion.
- Danny Hendren, a deacon at Three Forks Baptist Church in Taylorsville.
- Brandon Ware, pastor of Green Street Baptist Church in High Point.

Committee chairs elected

Board committees also elected new chairs for 2021. They were:

- Timmy Blair (Business Services Special Committee).
- James Harrington (Communications Committee).
- Charlie Martin (Evangelism and Discipleship Committee).
- Keith Stephenson (Convention Relations Special Committee).
- Travis Suits (Church Planting and Missions Partnerships Committee).
- Steven Wade (Christian Life and Public Affairs Committee).

The chairpersons of each committee also serve on the convention's executive committee.

EDT search update

Board member Noah Crowe, chair of the executive director-treasurer search committee, asked board members for continued prayers as the committee continues its work.

Crowe reminded the board that the deadline to submit names of individuals for consideration as the next executive director-treasurer was Sept. 30. (See story, page 1.)

Study committee announced

Board President Melanie Wallace announced members of a study committee that will examine the "relationships and funding models" between the convention and institutions and agencies that currently receive CP support.

The board approved the formation of the study group at the July meeting and authorized Wallace and Capps to appoint members.

- Named to the committee were:
- Chris Griggs (chair), pastor of Denver Baptist Church in Denver, N.C.
 - Katherine Batchelor, a layperson from Hephzibah Baptist Church in Wendell.
 - Jeff Isenhour, pastor of Arran Lake Baptist Church in Fayetteville.
 - Marisa Ivester, a pastor's wife from Faith Baptist Church in Durham.
 - Micheal Pardue, pastor of First Baptist Church Icard in Connelly

Springs.

• Joel Stephens, associated pastor of discipleship at Hopewell Baptist Church in Monroe.

• Jordon Willard, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Tarboro.

The *Biblical Recorder* and the North Carolina Baptist Foundation are agencies of the convention, and the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina and the North Carolina Baptist Hospital are institutions of the convention.

New resources for pastors, churches

During Hollifield's executive director-treasurer's address, several convention staff members shared updates related to ways the convention has continued to serve pastors and churches throughout the pandemic.

Sandy Marks, team leader for the Church Health and Revitalization team, shared how convention staff are coming together to place an emphasis on pastoral health.

He noted that convention staff are in the midst of trying to call every N.C. Baptist pastor in the state to encourage and pray with them. The convention engaged in a similar effort at the outset of COVID-19.

Marks also said convention leaders are developing additional programs to assist pastors that would include pulpit supply, working with churches

to assist pastors and congregations develop sabbatical packages, providing retreat opportunities, as well as other resources.

Brian Upshaw, who leads the BSC's Disciple-Making team, also announced a new resource called "Reimagine" for church leaders who continue to work through the impact and effects of COVID-19 on their ministries.


In announcing the resource, Upshaw represented a cross-divisional team of convention staff who worked together on the project.

The "Reimagine" project seeks to help apply New Testament principles to present-day modes of church practice, Upshaw said.

The newly launched website includes resources, videos and other tools for every area of local church ministry.

Board members honored

Hollifield recognized and thanked 20 outgoing board members who had completed their terms of service.

They were: Grant Atkins, Chris Benfield, Della Brindley, Walter Brooks, Robert Brown, Cail Elliott, James Felty, Bill Fryar, Troy Grant, Ron Greene, Wayne Harrifeld, Pat Hash, Kelton Hinton, Al James, Bob Jordan, Randy Locklear, Jon Morris, Josh Phillips, Tracy Smith, and Melanie Wallace. 

Capps elected board president

By CHAD AUSTIN | BSC Communications

Matt Capps, senior pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Apex, was elected president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's (BSC) board of directors during a meeting held Sept. 28 at Caraway Conference Center near Asheboro.

Capps was nominated by BSC President Steve Scoggins, pastor of First Baptist Church of Hendersonville, and he was the only candidate nominated. Capps currently serves as board vice president. He will succeed board President Melanie Wallace, whose term of service on the board expires at the end of this year. Capps will begin his new role as board president in January 2021.

"It is a great honor to be elected to serve as president of the board of directors," Capps said. "When I consider the churches of our great state, I believe that the Baptist State Convention of

North Carolina is collectively one of the strongest forces in our nation for impacting lostness through disciple-making."

Capps asked N.C. Baptists to pray for the work of the convention during what he called an "unprecedented time," citing the ongoing impact of the coronavirus pandemic and a leadership transition with the retirement of Milton A. Hollifield Jr., as executive director-treasurer effective Feb. 28, 2021.



MATT CAPPS

In nominating Capps, Scoggins praised his effectiveness as a pastor and denominational leader. Capps has been active in N.C. Baptist life since becoming Fairview's pastor in June 2015.

In addition to serving on the board of directors, Capps was the president of the N.C. Baptist Pastors' Conference in 2018. He has also been instrumental in organizing a statewide network of young pastors.

Scoggins said Capps' denominational service has

not distracted from his responsibilities as a local church pastor. Under Capps' leadership, Fairview's membership has doubled, and the congregation has eliminated a \$1.6 million debt, Scoggins said.

Capps is a Charlotte native, and prior to returning to North Carolina, he was on staff at LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville, Tenn.

Capps continues to contribute articles, book content and Bible studies to a variety of publications.

Filling Capps' vacated position as board vice president will be Casey Norkett, missions pastor at Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte. Norkett was nominated by board member Al James, a professor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

James said Norkett made a lasting impression on him as a student at Southeastern and praised Norkett's passion for the Great Commission. Angela Kilby was re-elected as board secretary and is a member of Cary First Baptist Church. She was nominated by board member Don Goforth, pastor of Great Marsh Baptist Church in St. Pauls. 

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Our Commitment to Christ

October 25

Focal Passage: Mark 10:13-22

What is Christ worth to you? I ask this question because many times we will say He is worth everything to us. But our commitment to Him says something else. Commitment is giving all of ourselves to something, no matter the cost. For many, we are committed to basketball. When our school plays, we make sure we clear our calendar to be able to watch them. When the month of March rolls around, I've heard stories of teachers putting on the games in school for students to watch their team play. Why is this the case? We are committed to our teams. But today we are going to look at how we are to commit our whole life in trust and obedience to Christ.

In Mark 10 we see that there are children trying to come up to Christ. However, Christ's disciples stop

them. Then Christ rebukes them saying, *"Let the Children come to me."* He uses this as a teachable moment telling all that we must come to the Kingdom like a child. We trust Christ like a child trusts.

We see a young man asks Christ what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus goes through the commandments with him. Then the young man says, *"Lord I have kept all of these."* Total commitment is demonstrated as we strive for obedience. But what we are going to see is this was only partial obedience.

Jesus tells him to sell everything and follow Him. The young man walked away because he had many possessions. We must learn to follow Christ wholeheartedly.



MATTHEW JACOBS
associate pastor, First Baptist Church, Crossnore

Focal Passage: Psalm 119:1-11

In college I got a new desk. The only issue was I had to build it myself. It was a really nice desk with a top shelf for books. When I opened the box, I thought I had opened an adult Lego set. The directions were not as easy to follow. I had to get roommates to come and help me; it was not working. The directions were not easy to follow.

Sometimes our lives are that way; they become complicated and hard. Sometimes we just need a little help with what we are supposed to do. Sometimes we get advice from others; some good, and some not so good.

God's Word gives trustworthy guidance for all of life. When we look

in Psalm 119, we can see how God gives us guidance for our daily walk with Him. We are blessed when we keep His commandments and seek after Him. Every day, we are called to seek after Him with our whole heart.

God's Word also leads us to live unashamed lives before Him. We are to fix our eyes on God. When I used to run, I would fix my eyes on an object and focus running to that object. Once I got to that object, I would focus on the next. As long as I was focused on that object, I never noticed how far or how long I was running. When I was focused on something, everything else faded away. As you focus on God other things do not matter as much as we once thought they did. God's Word is something we should focus on in life and obey, and as we do, everything will fade away that does not need to be there.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

God Renews

October 25

Focal Passage: Isaiah 40:18-31

I've walked through open markets in South Asia, East Asia and the Middle East. In those markets I've seen shop after shop with shelves overflowing with idols – the works of the hands of mere men. I've watched in Hindu and Buddhist temples as burdened and broken-hearted worshippers knelt or bowed before dead statues, lifting up heavy burdens before dead idols that, having ears, could not hear; having eyes, could not see; having mouths, could not answer them; and having hands, could not do one thing to lift their burdens. It was a hideously sad sight to watch.

And yet, Judah, the people of the one true and living God, had allowed their hearts to be drawn away to worshipping the works of the hands of men.

God had told them for most of 39

chapters that He would bring punishment on them for their rebellion and turning away.

But, God, who is rich in mercy, now promised them He had not forsaken them, but would renew them after the time of suffering ended.

Over the past couple of weeks I've been really sick, more so than in the past 20+ years. My body is still weak and in need of renewal. God hasn't forgotten me. He sees. He hears.

He knows. I am thankful that He is renewing my spirit, day by day, by the power of His Spirit, helping me trust in, and walk with, Him. One day that renewal process will be complete, and we will forever rest in Him. Until then, may we trust and obey Him alone.



RANDY MANN
pastor, Central Baptist Church, Henderson

Focal Passage: Isaiah 46:3-13

I forget stuff. Just ask my wife. She has to say, "Remember?" But we remember things in different ways and for different reasons. Some remembering is nostalgic. When I remember events from our 20th wedding anniversary trip to Jamaica, I smile and remember them fondly. I remember the birth of our children in the same way. Other remembering is practical. I can remember that I need to take the trash can to the street on Sunday evening. That kind of remembering simply helps me not to forget necessary tasks.

The people of Judah, and really all of Israel throughout her history, were forgetters. Read Deuteronomy and see how many times it says "Remem-

ber" or "Don't forget." But when God called His people to "Remember," as He does in verse 8 through Isaiah, it is not simply nostalgic or practical, but theological. God is saying "Remember who I am and what I have done," knowing that such remembering should lead them to faith and action today.

He is the God who existed before He formed them as a people and will be with them unto the end. He is not a god of wood or stone that has to be carried by men, but the almighty God who acts according to His sovereign plan and does all that He promises to do. As they remember, they can be confident He will act to fulfill His promise to deliver and restore them now as well.

God acted to bring redemption through His Son. God will act to one day make all things new. We can have faith and confidence in Him today.

AROUND THE STATE

NAMB Continued from page 6

Staff changes

JAMES “JIM” KILBY has been called as associational missionary for South Mountain Baptist Association, Vale. Kilby retired as pastor of Lawndale Baptist Church, Lawndale, after 17 years. He previously served two other churches – Long Shoals Baptist, Lincolnton, and Clover Baptist, Granite Falls. He is a graduate of Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute (now college) and Covington Theological Seminary, Roswell, Ga. (bachelor’s and master of arts degrees). He also has served on the board of directors for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and is currently chairman of Fruitland’s board. He and his wife, Wanda, have two children, two grandchildren and one great-grandson.

Retirement

CHARLES HARVEY retired from teaching and administration on Sept. 30 from Southeastern Seminary. He served as the director of the doctor of ministry degree since July 2011. He was also a professor of Christian education. He was from Shreveport, La., and received both a master of divinity and doctor of ministry degree from New Orleans Seminary, where he also served as vice president of development, associate director of the professional doctoral program and the director of continuing education and conference planning. He served as associate pastor/minister of education and administration at Ridge Avenue Baptist Church, West Monroe, La., (1977-’80) and as associate pastor and minister of education at First Baptist Church, Windermere, Fla. (1990-’97). From 1980-’90, Harvey directed the Baptist Collegiate Ministries for Louisiana State University at Eunice, LSU-Alexandria and University of Louisiana at Monroe.

Armstrong Offering in the history of the North American Mission Board,” Ezell said. “It was not the largest. But it was the greatest.”

Reporting a total of \$49.3 million given, Ezell said, “The faithfulness of Southern Baptists is absolutely incredible and to me, never demonstrated better than giving almost \$50 million in the midst of an unpromoted Annie Armstrong offering in the midst of a pandemic.”

In the full board meeting trustees unanimously passed a \$99.8 million operating budget for fiscal year 2021, heard reports from each of the board’s committee chairpersons and recognized outgoing trustees.

The budget is almost 20% below last year’s budget of \$124,230,000. Early on in the COVID-19 pandemic, NAMB instituted budgetary freezes and cutbacks designed to keep missionaries on the field.


In his president’s report, Ezell outlined three areas of priority focus for NAMB in 2021: collegiate evangelism, Hispanic church planting and Send Relief national mission trips. Ezell told trustees that with more than 21 million college students in North America and more than 5,300 college campuses, college students are among the top 10 unreached people groups in North America.

“We asked several Baptist Campus Ministry directors who they thought would be a good leader for collegiate evangelism and the person we chose was on every list, and typically he was the first on the list,” Ezell said. NAMB’s collegiate evangelism director will be named later in October.

Ezell outlined for trustees the projected growth of America’s Hispanic population over the next 40 years. In 2016 the Hispanic population in the United States was 57 million. By 2030 it is expected to jump to 74 million and then 111 million by 2060, far outpacing the growth of any other ethnic group.

“We are very excited about putting a good deal of emphasis on our Hispanic church planting, and the reason we are doing it is the demographic projections,” Ezell said. “We are trying to get ahead of the growth.”

Ezell also shared plans for Send Relief national mission trips which will take place each month in different cities throughout North America beginning in the fall of 2021.

Ezell was recognized for the 10th anniversary of his becoming NAMB president. Ezell was elected by NAMB trustees Sept. 14, 2010, at a point of significant uncertainty for NAMB after it had seen two presidents leave within a span of three years. 

CLASSIFIEDS

Pastor

Lakeview Baptist Church, Lenoir, NC, is prayerfully seeking a **full-time pastor**. Our mission statement is “A Loving Church, Serving a Loving Lord through prayer, worship, biblical teaching, ministry, evangelism and fellowship.” We are a congregation with over 50 years of church history that is seeking a pastor that is a graduate of a Baptist Bible college and has a minimum of 5 years prior pastoral experience. We also desire for the man to be mission minded, a gifted teacher, a great communicator and a man that is focused on evangelism and community outreach. Please send résumés to Lakeview Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, 325 Shasta Lane, Lenoir, NC 28645, or lakeviewpastorsearchcommittee@gmail.com. Résumés will be accepted until November 5, 2020.

Hallsville Baptist Church, Beulaville, NC, is prayerfully seeking a **pastor** to faithfully preach and teach the Word of God and lead our congregation. We are a mission-minded Southern Baptist church located in rural Duplin County. We have traditional Sunday School and worship services with average attendance of 50-70 with expectation to grow. The pastor will lead three services each week (Sunday morning, Sunday night and Wednesday evening). Please send résumés to: Hallsville Baptist Church, c/o Pastors Search Committee, 1291 Hallsville Rd., Beulaville, NC 28518.

Miscellaneous

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Cost for Baptist churches/organizations is \$1.25 per word, number and stand-alone initial (\$1.45 for commercial and non-Baptist entities) with a minimum charge of \$35. Classifieds also are carried online.

Interested in writing
Sunday School lessons?
Contact editor@BRnow.org.

2020 Fix Your Eyes Week of Prayer for Baptist associations Oct. 18-25

“So we do not focus on what is seen, but what is unseen” – 2 Corinthians 4:18

Day One: Sunday – Pray about the worship of those gathering with you today in your place of worship.

Day Two: Monday – Pray for your worship.

Day Three: Tuesday – Pray about reaching immigrants with the gospel.

Day Four: Wednesday – Pray for dying churches.

Day Five: Thursday – Pray about helping a sister church become stronger or perhaps asking for help from a sister church to help your church become stronger.

Day Six: Friday – Pray God’s richest blessings on the “other” churches in your own church’s community.

Day Seven: Saturday – Pray for you and your church making disciples who make disciples, especially young men.

Day Eight: Sunday – Pray for those missing in your place of worship today. Think about your church and the community/neighborhood around your church. Are they similar in demographics?

Visit ameresources.org.

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Some highlights since the last print edition:

American Sign Language Bible translation completed (Baptist Press) – After 38 years, the work of 53 translators is complete – a translation of the whole Bible into American Sign Language (ASL). The ASL Version (ASLV) project, led by Deaf Missions, marks the first time the Deaf community has access to the entire Bible in ASL. The project began in 1982 when Deaf Missions founder Duane King began asking why Deaf people did not have access to the Bible in their heart language. The New Testament portion of the Bible was completed in 2004. The ASLV, a series of videos, can be accessed at deafmissions.com.

GuideStone votes to establish presidential search committee (GuideStone) – At the request of GuideStone Financial Resources President O.S. Hawkins, trustees have appointed a search committee to begin considering a new president for the organization. No timeline has been set regarding Hawkins' eventual retirement. He assumed the presidency of GuideStone in 1997 and has seen the ministry grow into the sponsor of the largest faith-based mutual fund family in the U.S. GuideStone has more than \$18 billion in assets under management as of Aug. 31. Among GuideStone's greatest accomplishments is seeing Mission:Dignity, which provides financial assistance to retired Southern Baptist ministers and workers and their widows, raise more than \$150 million during his tenure. Southern Baptists interested in forwarding recommendations may do so through Jan. 1 to Tim.Head@GuideStone.org or through the mail to Tim Head, c/o GuideStone, 5005 LBJ Freeway, Ste. 2200, Dallas, TX 75244. In other reports, total assets are up almost \$1 billion, or 5%, since the end of 2019.

Alaska Baptists vote to withhold CP funds (BP) – Messengers to the annual meeting of the Alaska Baptist Resource Network took the unprecedented step of attempting to withhold the allocation of future Cooperative Program (CP) funds intended for the North American Mission Board (NAMB). The state convention moved Sept. 29 that beginning with the 2022 budget, "the percentage of Cooperative Program funds that traditionally were intended for the North American Mission Board ... be retained in Alaska" and designated for a state missions fund "until such time as there is a collaborative, cooperative and mutually-agreed upon strategy with the North American Mission Board, as determined by our executive director and the executive board of the Alaska Baptist Resource Network." Randy Covington, the convention's executive director, spoke in favor of the motion.

Cooperative Program thrives through COVID-19 pandemic (BP) – As the COVID-19 pandemic stymied the economy and forced numerous churches to cancel in-person worship for months, Southern Baptists continued supporting the Cooperative Program (CP), now in its 95th year.

Contributions for the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30 totaled just under 2% less than the previous year's giving, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee (EC) reported. Giving continued as, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research, the U.S. economy recorded its steepest quarterly decrease in economic output on record, a drop of 9.1%. CP Emphasis Month began Oct. 1 on the SBC calendar. Over the life of the CP, Southern Baptist churches have given more than \$19.5 billion of their offerings to the CP at the state level.

See full stories at BRnow.org.



ANNUAL MEETING NOV. 10 FIRST BAPTIST CHARLOTTE

CHECK-IN: 10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. *Reserve your time on registration form.*
SESSION: 1 - 5 p.m. *Masks & social distancing are required.*

ONLINE REGISTRATION

Messengers and visitors (*guests*) are asked to register online at ncannualmeeting.org/register. Messengers will need their church ID & PIN in order to register. This ID & PIN came via email and a printed letter to eligible churches. **If you have not received your ID & PIN call (919) 459-5555.**



SAM JAMES

Popular preacher and International Mission Board missionary for more than 50 years, Sam James will deliver our convention sermon. Sam served in Vietnam from the early 1960s throughout the Vietnam War. He planted Homestead Heights Baptist Church in Durham, now the Summit Church pastored by J.D. Greear.



EDT CELEBRATION

Milton A. Hollifield Jr. has served more than 14 years as the executive director-treasurer of the convention and will be retiring Feb. 28, 2021. We will celebrate the work that God has accomplished through him.

OCT. 1-30

PRAY FOR 30 DAYS

Learn more at prayfor30days.org

NOV. 9

VIRTUAL BREAKOUTS

Learn more at ncannualmeeting.org/breakouts

NOV. 10

ANNUAL MEETING

Learn more at ncannualmeeting.org

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