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Buckets of HOPE

One set of food staples finally cleared in Haiti

After languishing in the Port-au-Prince port for more than a month, the first shipping container filled with Buckets of Hope was released by the Haitian government June 2. The container, owned by the Florida Baptist Convention, carried buckets of various necessities donated by Southern Baptists across the country. Alabama Baptists contributed approximately 8,300 of the Buckets of Hope containers.

A second container owned by the Florida convention and filled with 41,200 pounds of rice also was released June 2 from the port in Saint Marc, located north of the capital city.

Dennis Wilbanks of the Florida convention's partnership missions department reported that the two containers were delivered to their location June 3.

"Before Sunday they will all be distributed," Wilbanks said.

There is urgency to delivering the buckets to Haitian pastors and distributing the contents to their communities as soon as possible, he said. "We must give the distribution report to the government officials in order to get more released."

During the months of February and March, more than 152,000

Buckets of Hope were packed with rice, flour, beans, oil and other food by Florida and Southern Baptists as they sought to alleviate some of the hunger after the devastating Jan. 12 earthquake. The foodstuffs were placed in utility buckets, sealed and labeled with the gospel message.

After being collected and sent to locations in Florida and Shreveport, La., the buckets were placed in shipping containers before being sent to Haiti. Only a portion of the containers were sent to Haiti initially, but these have been backlogged for weeks by government bureaucracy.

'Thankful'

Wilbanks and other Florida convention staff members had been working their way through the highest Haitian government channels in requesting the release of the containers.

While Wilbanks cautioned, "The battle is not over; this is just the first one," he is resolute that the other containers will be released soon.

"Most of all, I am thankful that by Sunday 41,200 pounds of rice and the contents of almost 1,400 Buckets of Hope will be on the table of so many who are hungry," he said.

Fritz Wilson, Florida's disaster relief director, said another 14-16 containers are awaiting release from the Haitian ports. (BP)



Packing Buckets of Hope



Transporting

Photos courtesy of BP and Doug Rogers/Graphic by Lauren Chow

The 'straw poll' results are in — GCR report loses out

If the vote on the Great Commission Resurgence (GCR) Task Force report were taken today, only 1 in 4 respondents to a recent survey would vote for it.

At least that's what an unofficial survey commissioned by *The Alabama Baptist* indicates.

The anonymous eight-question survey on SurveyMonkey.com ran from May 18 to June 2.

The 283 participants had opportunity to share opinions as well as answer the multichoice questions. Excerpts from the questions, answers and opinions can be found on page 5.

"This is certainly not a scientific survey, and these types of experiences tend to attract those with the strongest opinions," said Bob Terry, president and publisher of *The Alabama Baptist*. "There is no indication that this truly reflects what will happen in Orlando (Fla., at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting) June 15 when the official vote is taken.

"But it does seem to affirm what we are hearing anecdotally across the state," he noted.

The survey indicates that while the majority of votes in each of the questions opposes the GCR Task Force re-

port, it also makes it clear that the consensus is certainly not overwhelming.

As far as the up-or-down vote for the report itself, 27 percent of respondents indicated they would approve the report while 39.5 percent said they would vote to defeat it.

The remaining responses were closely divided between preferring to receive the report as information and referring it to various Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) entities (19.6 percent) and postponing the report for more study and reflection (16 percent).

In the area of funding, 58.4 percent said they oppose the new giving category called Great Commission Giving "because of its possible impact on CP giving." Those supporting the new giving category and seeing "no rela-

tionship between it and CP giving" made up 24.9 percent of the responses. Another 12.1 percent support the new giving category but did indicate concern about its impact on CP giving.

Addressing the report's recommendation to remove the geographical limitations on the International Mission Board (IMB), 46.4 percent of survey participants preferred leaving IMB's focus outside North America. They favored leaving missions work in North America as the North American Mission Board's (NAMB) responsibility.

Other responses included 27.9 percent noting the IMB should be able to work anywhere in the world and 26.1 percent calling for the IMB to work under NAMB's leadership when targeting North America.

(See 'GCR,' page 5)

COMMENT

What Wonders God Performs

From 1949 to 1950, Christian missionaries were unceremoniously chased out of China as the Communist government of Mao Zedong clamped a Bamboo Curtain around the most populous nation in the world.

Christian missionaries had worked in China for about 100 years, and the bragging number of Chinese Christians was reported to be about 700,000. Some historians say 500,000 is a more reliable number.

For the next 30 years, Christians around the world prayed for the Chinese people and the opportunity to spread the gospel among them. But little reliable information ever made its way out from behind the Bamboo Curtain. What information did get out told of seized church buildings, jailed pastors and disbanded fellowships.

To the outside world, it appeared a dark time for the gospel and the Chinese people. What Mao and his followers called the Cultural Revolution seemed aimed at stamping out every vestige of Christianity.

In the early 1980s, I coordinated a three-year missions partnership between the Missouri Baptist Convention and the Chinese Baptist Convention of Taiwan (a Chinese island). Many nights in Taiwan, I participated in prayer groups praying long into the night for the church in mainland China and Baptist leaders trapped there when the Bamboo Curtain fell.

Then almost as suddenly as the curtain fell, it began to lift.

In 1979, when Deng Xiaoping became the first vice premier of that communist country to visit the United States, President Jimmy Carter asked him to reopen the Christian churches in China. The next day, Deng agreed.

The world watched in astonishment as in quick order The China Christian Council (CCC) was formed in 1980 and churches began to reopen, primarily in Shanghai and then in other parts of the country. A national seminary in Nanjing was opened in 1981. The Amity Foundation was established in 1985 to provide an avenue for Christians from around the world to partner with CCC churches. Soon reports of a miracle of biblical proportions began to emerge. The Christian faith had not been stamped out by the Cultural Revolution. It had mushroomed.

Through networks of family and friends, the gospel had been shared person to person. The number of Christians had grown astronomically. By the mid-1980s, estimates of the number of Christians in China topped 10 million, though every number was heatedly debated.



THOUGHTS By Bob Terry

What could not be debated was the fact that the gospel of Jesus Christ had changed from a Western religion when the missionaries left to a Chinese religion when the government began reopening the churches 30 years later. Stories abound about churches being overrun by believers when they were reopened even though there had been no publicity about the first services. Believer told believer and the worshipers came.

Astronomical growth

Another 30-year period has passed since the first churches were reopened and the miracle continues. According to statistics provided by the International Mission Board (IMB), there are an estimated 75 million evangelical believers in China today. That is almost 15 million more evangelicals than in the United States — 60.4 million.

The total number of Christians may be more than 100 million, but numbers from China are still hotly debated. This is not to say that Christians do not have problems in China. They certainly do. Observers like to say that because the nation is so large, whatever one hears about the treatment of Christians in China is probably true somewhere.

Still that the number of Christians in China has grown more than a hundredfold, by conservative estimates, in the last 60 years is phenomenal. The IMB reports evangelical believers now make up 5.4 percent of the nation's population. That is the same percentage that Southern Baptists constitute of the U.S. population.

For perspective, evangelicals in the United Kingdom make up a little more than 3 percent of the population and in Canada, evangelicals account for about 8 percent of the population.

God has performed a marvelous wonder in China, and He is working elsewhere, too.

It is reported that the number of evangelical Christians in India is nearing the 19 million mark, making it the nation with the third largest number of evangelicals in the world. India is also a place of intense persecution of Christian believers, especially by radical Hindus.

Brazil has the fourth largest number of evangelicals in the world with 12.5 million, according to the IMB.

"Evangelical" is a more inclusive term than "Baptist." Baptists are one of several groups considered evangelicals. At most, there are about 75 million Baptists in the world. Those same sources place the number of evangelicals at 686 million, or about 10 percent of the world's population. Baptists make up a similar percentage of evangelicals — 11 percent.

That means God is using Baptists, as well as others, to make His glory known in China, India, Brazil, the United States and other countries around the world. Sometimes we Baptists believe the whole world depends on us. Sometimes we become prideful in the scope of our missions enterprise and the way God blesses it. Sometimes we conclude that the world is on fire and God has given us the only bucket with which to put it out.

I talked with missionaries who were forced out of China in 1949 and 1950, and they said sometimes they questioned how the churches would survive after the Bamboo Curtain fell. Those able to return in the 1980s rejoiced to see what wonders God had performed.

It makes us a little humble when we realize we are but a small part of the family of God. This family of God spreads across every nation and covers practically every tongue. We are grateful when God allows us to be a part of the wonders He performs. We are obedient when opportunities are presented.

Most of all, we rejoice at the wonders God performs no matter who He chooses to do them or what way He chooses to make His wonders known.

THE ALABAMA BAPTIST

"If ye continue in my word, then ... ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32).

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Letters to the Editor

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Montevallo couple use s'mores to minister at RV parks

By **Jeremy Henderson**
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

Jerry and Cynthia Winegard, members of Providence Baptist Church, Montevallo, in Chilton Baptist Association, are stocked up on Hershey's chocolate bars, marshmallows and graham crackers and are on the road again — again and forever.

"Well at least until the Lord says, 'Don't do it anymore,'" Jerry Winegard said. "But He has just given me a testimony that really has an impact on people when they hear it. But I never knew who I'd be able to share that testimony with other than people in the area where I live."

On Feb. 3, 1990, a robber shot Winegard twice in the chest. He was 26. The bullets crushed his spinal cord. Medically speaking, he was dead for seven minutes but lived to tell about it. Recently he's wanted to tell a lot more people about it.

"I'm not a rich person by any means with the means to travel around in order to do that, so over the years, I said, 'Lord, if that's what you want me to do, you're going to have to make it happen,'" Winegard said.

God soon obliged him in the form of a 19-foot 2008 Palomino Gazelle travel trailer. And that's all it took to get RV Outreach off the ground and on the road.

On May 30, the husband and wife team began pursuing the RV park and campground ministry full time, an idea Providence Baptist Pastor Allen Foster said was born through months of prayer.

"Jerry and I have probably been praying over this thing for a year and a half now or longer," Foster said. "It's just something he felt the Lord wanted them to do and they're suited for it. They've got wonderful personalities and they're grounded in their faith and organized down to every little dime they're going to spend as far as the things they're doing, especially with the kids."

Reaching out to the kids of America's campground-vacationing families with crafts, gospel tracts, Bible studies and scavenger hunts — one of the items on the list is a Bible — is one of the ministry's main avenues of witness.

"It's easy to connect with the kids, and then once you get them involved in something, then you can talk to the parents," Winegard said.

The first stops on the couple's itinerary include campgrounds in Georgia and North Carolina.

Moment of confirmation

Cynthia Winegard knows that not all the people they'll have an opportunity to minister to will be at the campgrounds for fun.

"The very first time we took out our camper was on a short trip to Oak Mountain (State Park in Pelham), and our granddaughter was with us, and while we were in the campground, we actually encountered a family living in their car and with a two-man tent," she said. "We didn't come prepared to give anybody anything, but we had bought the items to make s'mores. We did that and those little children were so excited. To me, that just confirmed the work we're planning on doing."

The Winegards are documenting their travels in a blog on their website, www.rvoutreach.org. Also follow them on Twitter at twitter.com/rvoutreach.



Wet/dry elections across state result in 6 towns voting for alcohol, 3 against

By **Kristen Padilla**
The Alabama Baptist

The results are in and the fate of several small Alabama towns has been decided — at least for the next two years.

On June 1, the towns held wet/dry referendums. Six towns voted to go wet, three voted to remain dry and in each case, it was by a narrow margin.

But the issue of alcohol sales could come up again in the not-so-distant future. State law says a wet/dry referendum may be held every two years, provided that a petition with 30 percent of the number of voters in the last general election is filed with the city or city clerk.

"We are disappointed in the ones that voted to go wet and are encouraged by the ones who voted to stay dry," said Joe Godfrey, executive director of Alabama Citizens Action Program.

"The big alcohol will be back in two years," he continued. "They'll keep pushing until every city and every county in Alabama is selling their alcoholic products. We've got to recognize this is a long-term battle and that we've got to keep fighting."

Pastors and churches in Aliceville, Chatom, Haleyville, Moulton, Thorsby and Town Creek are disappointed, too. They worked hard to keep their respective towns dry only to see the door opened to alcohol sales.

"We did everything we felt like was feasible and possible to do to appeal to people," said Scott Delashaw, pastor of Donald Baptist Church, Town Creek.

"We are disappointed in the outcome, but we believe that we got the truth out to the people and to the city."

Donald Baptist and First Baptist Church, Town Creek, held a vote no rally May 30, with Godfrey as guest speaker. In addition, members of Donald put out

yard signs, went door to door handing out fliers and sent mailouts to residents.

Delashaw hopes to re-petition in two years.

For Steve Agee, senior pastor of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Moulton, the question is where do we go from here.

"The first thoughts I had was 'How do we train and teach our people to keep a good spirit and to love those folks who were pro-alcohol?,'" Agee said. "We have to minister where we are and reach out in ways that we haven't done before."

He said the next step for Pleasant Grove Baptist is to find out what the City Council has recommended in regard to the sale of alcohol in its town.

"We've got some leg work to do and some research to find out what we're up against," Agee said. "We've at least made a statement in the community; they know our commitment and our beliefs and I think that's positive."

Staying true to the call

Pastor Ron Horton of New Prospect Baptist Church, Haleyville, requested prayer for his church.

"Ask churches to pray for us that we will know what to do as we deal with this," Horton said. "I feel like we as a church worked hard, and we put vote no signs up and put some advertisements in the local paper and tried to educate our people and our community about ... alcohol but we came up short."

"All I know to do is to continue to do what the Lord has called us to do — to be

a witness in the community and to reach people [with] the gospel," he added.

But pastors in Falkville, Good Hope and Phil Campbell are "excited about the future" of their towns now that they know alcohol won't be moving in.

"We rejoice today that it remained dry," Pastor Sammy Taylor said of Phil Campbell. "I believe God will bless our town ... and I think He will provide for the things we need if we seek His righteousness."

Taylor, who preached on the issue of alcohol for four weeks leading up to the vote and led Mountain View Baptist Church in the fight to stay dry, said, "I really believe that our church involvement had a lot to do with the outcome

of the election.

"I believe our church made a difference because we took an active part to defeat the No. 1 drug problem in our county and in our state and in our nation," he said.

According to Ralph Andrews, pastor of Good Hope Baptist Church, the outcome of the election in his town was affected by prayer.

"I told someone several weeks ago, 'We are going to work as if everything depended on us, but we are going to depend on God because ultimately it all depends on Him,'" he said.

In the days leading up to the election, Good Hope Baptist held two prayer walks and the day before the election, it held a 24-hour prayer vigil.

"We want everyone to recognize that ultimately it was in God's hands," Andrews said. "He deserves the credit and the glory, and we're going to do our best to make sure He gets it."

"We've got to recognize this is a long-term battle and that we've got to keep fighting."

Joe Godfrey
ALCAP

Afghan official calls for death of converts

An Afghan parliamentary official has called for the public execution of Christian converts from Islam following a television report that raised the suspicion of proselytizing and resulted in the suspension of two Christian organizations.

The report was broadcast by the little-known Afghan channel Noorin TV, described by *The New York Times* as an "antigovernment gadfly," and it showed photographs purportedly of Westerners baptizing Afghans and videotapes of Afghans praying to Jesus.

A European diplomat told Agence France-Presse (AFP) that Noorin TV had broadcast controversial reports in the past and there might be a "hidden political agenda at a time when stirring up anti-foreign sentiment is quite fashionable in Kabul."

Afghan President Hamid Karzai called for an investigation into the organizations and "strongly instructed" government officials to take "immediate and serious action" to prevent further conversions, according to a report by AFP. (BP)

Alabama pastor Soesbe dies at 60

Michael Soesbe, pastor of First Baptist Church, St. Elmo, in Mobile Baptist Association, died April 28. He was 60.

Soesbe, who was called as pastor of First, St. Elmo, Aug. 1, 2008, baptized 22 people and began and completed a building project within his almost two-year tenure.

"He loved people and was a God-fearing man," said Music Minister Vic Parnell. "He became more than our pastor; he became our friend."

Thomas Wright, executive director of missions for Mobile Association, counted Soesbe as a friend, too, and appreciated his commitment to his calling.

"In a conversation with Brother Mike shortly before he died, Mike was characteristically more concerned about my broken foot than talking

about his health," Wright recalled. "Our repeated requests for how to help were always met with 'Just pray for me, the church and my family.'"

Surrendering to pastoral ministry in 1990, Soesbe previously served as pastor of Shady Grove Baptist Church, Selma, in Selma Baptist Association; Perdido Baptist Church in Baldwin Baptist Association; and several churches in Mississippi.

A Foley native, Soesbe graduated from the University of South Alabama in Mobile and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Prior to attending seminary, he served with the U.S. Air Force and received two medals for hazardous flight duties over Vietnam.

Soesbe is survived by his wife of 40 years, Jane; two children; and two grandchildren. (TAB)



SOESBE

Nominees for SBC president

Leo A. Endel

Executive director

Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention

► **What is the most critical issue facing the SBC? What is your plan to address it?**

We must renew our love for lost people; when we do, we'll find passion for sharing the gospel. Southern Baptists need to unite as a family and actively engage our lost culture with compassion and love. I believe we need a leader who will unite us around missionally, strategically and lovingly sharing the gospel with North America.

► **Do you support or oppose the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force (GCRTF) report? Why?**

I have been a committed prayer partner for the task force from the beginning. I am grateful for the contribution these leaders have made to the work of Southern Baptists ... [but] I have serious reservations about approving the task force report.

While the report does have a number of strengths, the weaknesses (I see are):

► The task force had precious few voices from new work areas, from our ethnic groups or from our small churches.

► Because of our polity, the GCRTF is short on details. We really do not yet know how these components will be implemented. The new president of the North American Mission Board (NAMB) and his trustees will make these critical and strategic decisions; I believe the actual content of the GCRTF re-



Photo courtesy of Leo A. Endel

port is not nearly as important as the selection of the new NAMB president.

► This uncertainty has sent shockwaves through the new work areas at a critical time of transition when most Southern Baptist work is finally making a critical shift toward becoming indigenous.

► The conversation has had the unintended consequence of undermining trust in the Southern Baptist family.

► One final concern regards the loss of Cooperative Program material development from the SBC Executive Committee (EC). The assistance of the EC has saved all Southern Baptists millions of dollars by helping us collectively develop materials. (BP)

Jimmy Jackson

Senior Pastor

Whitesburg Baptist Church, Huntsville

► **What is the most critical issue facing the SBC?**

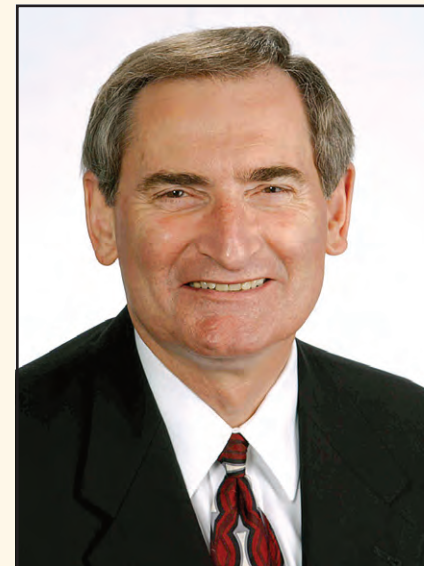
Our greatest need is for spiritual revival in the lives of all of our people. True revival will not come from wrapping biblical language around a change initiative, no matter who crafts it. We need the convicting power of the Holy Spirit to cause each of us to deal with personal sin and to lead us to confession and brokenness before God. In such an environment, relationships will be restored, forgiveness will be sought and granted and a fresh love for Jesus, His church and His calling will move us to live and proclaim the good news of our Savior's grace.

► **What is your plan to address this?**

Encourage our churches to have a season of prayer and fasting, Bible study and spiritual focus. Until we individually and corporately humble ourselves before God, we cannot expect Him to bless us with greater fruitfulness and effectiveness as a convention.

► **Do you support or oppose the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force (GCRTF) report? Why?**

Although I support heartily the need to come together for spiritual revival resulting in a major turnaround in reaching people with the [gospel], I do not support the rec-



BP photo

ommendations of the GCRTF. I am in favor of change where it is needed, but change in the SBC should come up from our churches not down from a select few. A plan that has shown signs of recommendation born out of anger ... should not be imposed upon the vast majority of churches and pastors — the bill payers.

The catalyst for change should arise from the churches that are doing the bulk of the work to support the whole of the work. It is their CP and they should have the majority say in what it should look like. They should not be brought in at the end and asked to give an up or down vote to someone else's plan. (BP)

Ted Traylor

Pastor

Olive Baptist Church, Pensacola, Fla.

► **What is the most critical issue facing the SBC? What is your plan to address it?**

Without doubt, it is the need for spiritual awakening. We need revival and passion for what brought Southern Baptists together in 1845 — sending the gospel to every person in the world and making disciples of all the nations. The most glaring metric of the spiritual stagnation is the graph that indicates a 10-year downward trend line in baptisms. A longer look shows we baptized 25,000 fewer people in 2009 than we did in 1950, even though we have 17,000 more churches today. I am glad baptisms came up 7,539 in 2009, but the total number remains low, and we need that to change.

Southern Baptists must call out to God in repentance and seek heaven's touch for Great Commission action. If elected, I will be asking pastors to call their churches to solemn assembly in January 2011 and I would explore the possibility of incorporating the solemn assembly model in our SBC annual meeting. In addition, I will be promoting the use of the NAMB initiative GPS (God's Plan for Sharing). This effort has had a very good beginning and needs to find traction across our denomination.



BP photo

► **Do you support or oppose the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force (GCRTF) report? Why?**

I support it because it has us talking about how to reach the nations and lifts up the CP.

I also support it because it is true to Baptist polity, it seeks to sharpen NAMB's focus with priority on church planting and evangelism and it focuses on the centrality of the local church and the Great Commission. The commission of our Lord to make disciples of all the nations was given to the church. The SBC and her partners in the states and associations exist to serve the local church. (BP)

Bryant Wright

Senior Pastor

Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, Marietta, Ga.

► **What is the most critical issue facing the SBC? What is your plan to address it?**

First of all, individuals within our churches returning to Christ as their first love. The idolatries of materialism and hedonism are such a part of the American church that they have made us more like the culture than being a transforming power within the culture.

The local church needs to reprioritize reaching its local missions field and get re-focused globally through praying, giving, going and partnering in missions where the needs are greatest.

I've addressed the need for state conventions to keep less in the state and send more dollars to the International Mission Board (IMB) and to other areas of the country where lostness is so prevalent. There needs to be a radical reprioritization of Cooperative Program funds to where the majority of funds go to missions to the unreached in the uttermost parts and the largely unreached areas of North America.

Another area of importance is seeing every church participate in sending its pastor and members on a missions trip each year. Every church can [do this]. They may have to join with other churches but it can be done.

► **Do you support or oppose the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force (GCRTF) report? Why?**



BP photo

I support the task force's recommendations in that I firmly believe we've got to get more people out on the missions field in order to fulfill Jesus' Great Commission. The recommendations of the task force are a hugely important first step, but it is only a beginning. The selection of the men to lead the IMB and NAMB are also hugely important.

As a former church planter, I am encouraged that the task force sees the importance of church planting in the areas of greatest need in the United States — particularly our pioneer states and our large cities. Also I agree with the task force that every church should be a "missional center." (BP)

GCR Task Force report survey

Question	Response Percent	Response Count
1. New missional vision statement		
<i>I support adoption of the proposed missional vision statement.</i>	38.9%	109
<i>I believe the purpose statement of the SBC constitution is sufficient and a new missional vision statement is not necessary.</i>	45.4%	127
<i>I believe the proposed missional vision statement is too limiting since it focuses primarily on evangelism.</i>	12.5%	35
<i>Other</i>	5.7%	16
2. New category of giving called Great Commission Giving		
<i>I support the new giving category and see no relationship between it and CP giving.</i>	24.9%	70
<i>I support the new giving category but am concerned about its possible impact on CP giving.</i>	12.1%	34
<i>I oppose the new giving category because of its possible impact on CP giving.</i>	58.4%	164
<i>I oppose the new giving category but see no relationship between it and CP giving.</i>	5.3%	15
3. Phasing out cooperative agreements between the North American Mission Board and state conventions		
<i>I support phasing out the way NAMB relates to state conventions presently and refocusing the entity on church planting in under-served areas.</i>	24.9%	70
<i>I support phasing out the way NAMB relates to state conventions presently but believe the entity should have a broader mission focus than church planting.</i>	9.3%	26
<i>I oppose phasing out the way NAMB relates to state conventions presently and believe the entity should concentrate more on church planting in under-served areas.</i>	10.7%	30
<i>I oppose phasing out the way NAMB relates to state conventions presently because I believe it provides a cooperative way for NAMB to work with state conventions to accomplish agreed upon ministry goals.</i>	50.9%	143
<i>I'm unclear about cooperative agreements and hesitant to make a decision.</i>	5.3%	15
4. Geographical limitations on the IMB be lifted		
<i>The International Mission Board should be able to station its personnel anywhere in the world a target people group exists in order to best utilize its resources.</i>	27.9%	78
<i>The International Mission Board should work under the leadership of the North American Mission Board to reach target populations in the United States and Canada.</i>	26.1%	73
<i>The North American Mission Board should keep this responsibility allowing the International Mission Board to concentrate on reaching people outside North America.</i>	46.4%	130
5. State conventions assume responsibility for promoting CP		
<i>I support the recommendation.</i>	27.0%	75
<i>I believe state conventions and the SBC should work cooperatively in promoting missions giving and that each partner should pay for the effort.</i>	52.2%	145
<i>I believe the SBC should lead CP giving and stewardship education and should pay for it.</i>	21.6%	60
6. Percentage of national CP funds designated for the IMB be increased from 50 percent to 51 percent		
<i>I support the recommendation.</i>	26.7%	75
<i>I support giving more to missions and believe all SBC allocations should be re-examined in order to give more to missions, even more than 51 percent.</i>	35.9%	101
<i>I believe 50 percent of the SBC budget going to missions is appropriate and helps Southern Baptists have a balanced program of evangelism, ministry and education at home and around the world.</i>	40.6%	114
7. Which statement most closely reflects your vote?		
<i>I would vote to adopt the report.</i>	27.0%	76
<i>I would vote to receive the report as information and refer it to the various SBC entities for consideration and feedback.</i>	19.6%	55
<i>I would vote to postpone the report in order to allow Baptists across the nation to reflect and discuss the report and its implications.</i>	16.0%	45
<i>I would vote to defeat the report.</i>	39.5%	111
8. Additional comments:		
<i>(See story, this page)</i>		69

Survey says... Excerpts from participants

► As much as I want to support this report, I sense an ulterior motive behind its inception. ... I've seen far too much back-room work in the SBC's past two decades to trust anything coming from a group composed primarily of seminary presidents and megachurch pastors.

► As a young, restless and reformed Southern Baptist, I am convinced that if the SBC does not change in the way it allocates its funds then it is destined to fail. If the people of the SBC realized how much money was spent on ourselves and on greasing the wheels of the machinery then they would leave the SBC even faster than they already are.

► Since 1925, the Cooperative Program has enabled Southern Baptists to develop, support and grow the message of Jesus Christ — His love, His life changing power and His Commission to us to go and tell. ... Apparently this group of people either don't know the real story of Southern Baptist work and missions, don't care or are so power hungry that all they see is their plan.

► Conventions are not churches. Much of the argumentation against the GCR simply misunderstands or ignores this point. ... The Great Commission Resurgence Task Force has given us a great report with good recommendations.

► There are no representatives of normal Baptist churches, only megachurches which, with few exceptions, have not demonstrated any interest or involvement in the Cooperative Program, the work of their state conventions or the ministries of their own associations. Their ignorance of what is really happening through these ministries is evident throughout the report.

► It seems to me that a "resurgence" should begin where the decline is. Our seminaries as a whole have been and are in a steady decline. Whatever form of Calvinism being taught puts a resurgence of the Great Commission ... at risk.

► I believe there is a need to examine the many levels of management in each of the institutions and

make as many "cuts" as possible, freeing up more funds to send people out into the field.

► Increasing giving to the IMB 1%???!! Are you kidding me? What is that going to do?

► I recommend that no one else that serves on the GCR committee be recommended for the other positions at NAMB or IMB.

► If the IMB should gain the responsibility and the extra funds that the report recommends, they would eventually appoint people to the very ministries that the state convention and NAMB personnel now perform. The strength of the CP and IMB is dependent on the work of mission education and support of the state conventions, NAMB and WMU.

► After only one year of working on this effort and considering some of the major concerns and issues that have been raised, I think it would be prudent for us to postpone the acceptance of the report until Southern Baptists and state conventions from across the nation have had the opportunity to pray about and discuss the matter further.

► We needed leadership in a resurgence what we got was a refinancing. If we would pray, preach and practice the Great Confession of John 20:28, the Great Commandment of Matthew 22:37-40, and the Great Commitment of Acts 1:8, then we will have a Great Commission Resurgence. II Chronicles 7:14 is still the formula for "resurgence."

► The most urgently needed and significant aspects of the original report have been dropped. This effort is an exercise in futility. The SBC is not truly interested in repentance, reformation and a radical investment in ministry that is effective.

► The six seminaries need to be scrutinized.

► I am in agreement with the need to reexamine our ministry/missions efforts with a view toward more effective strategies. I do not see the need to totally revamp the way we work together.

GCR debate about methodology

(continued from page 1)

As far as whether the existing cooperative agreements between NAMB and state conventions should be phased out, 50.9 percent of those responding said no and 24.9 percent said yes.

In the question concerning CP

promotion, 27 percent favored assigning it to the state conventions while 52.2 percent said CP promotion should be shared by the SBC and state conventions. The SBC should lead CP promotion, according to 21.6 percent.

(TAB)

Across Alabama's Associations

BESSEMER

► **Eastern Valley Church, Bessemer**, will kick off Vacation Bible School with a parade June 19, 9–11 a.m. There will be inflatables, games and food. John Mooney is pastor.

BIRMINGHAM

► **East Gardendale Church** will celebrate its 12th homecoming June 13, 10:30 a.m. Lunch will follow. To the End will sing during the service and following lunch. Allen Davis is pastor. ► **Eastside Church, Birmingham**, and **First Church, Zion City**, will hold a joint tent revival June 14–17, nightly at 6:30. The tent will be in the field next to Eastside. Mark Smith, pastor of Eastside, and Johnny Waites, pastor of First, Zion City, will preach. Carl Palmore and Kevin Brown will lead the music with a joint choir. David Paul Brooks (DPB) of the Basement will be present Monday.

CLARKE

► **Bill Weide** is the new associate pastor and minister of music for **Stave Creek Church, Jackson**, effective June 20. He comes from New Home Church, Perry, Fla., where he served as youth and music minister. A graduate of Brewton-Parker College in Mount Vernon, Ga, Weide has also served several churches in Georgia. He and his wife, Erica, have three children. Jamie Lay is pastor. ► **Stave Creek Church, Jackson**, will hold a special service of thanks and fellowship June 13, 11 a.m., honoring Jerry Hudson, of First Church, Satsuma, for his service as interim minister of music from August 2008 to June 2010. Jamie Lay is pastor.

COVINGTON

► **Arthur Johnson** retired from **First Church, Andalusia**, after serving as custodian for 32 years. There is a basket in the church office for those who want to express their

appreciation to him. Fred Karthaus III is pastor. ► **Harmony Church, Andalusia**, will hold revival June 20–23 with Evangelist Bob Pitman. Services will be Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. and weeknights at 7. Greg Cotter is pastor.

DEKALB

► **Valley Head Church** will hold a church and community cook-out June 27, 5 p.m., with Christian humorist Brother Billy Bob Bohannon. Darrell Haney is pastor.

MONTGOMERY

► **Eastmont Church, Montgomery**, will celebrate its 150th anniversary Aug. 14–15. The Sunday service will be at 10:30 a.m. There will be a guest speaker and an anniversary choir made up of former and present choir members. The church is looking for names and addresses of former members. Call 334-277-6300. Michael A. Northcutt is pastor.

MORGAN

► **Cave Spring Church, Decatur**, and **Shiloh Church, Somerville**, along with First Word Ministries, will host a Connection Point conference June 12, 11:30 a.m., at the Hartselle Tabernacle at Hartselle Camp Meeting. The main event will begin at 6:30 p.m. at Cave Spring. The apologetics conference equips young people to defend the Christian faith in today's skeptical society. There will be a creation vs. evolution presentation by Robert Carter and a concert by Seventh Day Slumber with special guests Torn Curtain and Wally from Total Axxess. To register visit www.connectionpointconference.com. Jason Moore is pastor of Cave Spring. Charles Owens is pastor of Shiloh.

NORTH JEFFERSON

► **Chad Durrett** is the new student pastor of **Smoke Rise Church, Warrior**. He comes from Bethel

Church, Dora, where he served as youth pastor and pastoral assistant. Durrett holds a bachelor's degree in Christian ministry from Leavell College at New Orleans Seminary and is currently pursuing a master of divinity from New Orleans Seminary. He is married to Lauren. Toby J. Shedd is pastor.

RUSSELL

► **Jeff Brogden** is the new interim minister of music for **Central Church, Phenix City**. Dexter James is pastor.

ST. CLAIR

► **First Church, Moody**, will host Jon Sheptock in concert June 20, 10 a.m. Joe Joyner is interim pastor.

TUSCALOOSA

► **Unity Church, Tuscaloosa**, will hold revival June 13–16 with Evangelist Larry Draper of Sound the Trumpet Ministries. Services will be Sunday at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. and weeknights at 6:30. A covered-dish lunch will follow the Sunday morning service. For information call 205-799-9325. Gene Dockery Sr. is pastor.

TUSKEGEE LEE

► **Will Haynes** is the new summer youth director for **Elam Church, Tallassee**. He is a member of the church and a student at the University of Mobile. He will serve for eight weeks. Don Stephens is pastor. ► **Elam Church, Tallassee**, will host Harlan Burton in concert June 13, 6:30 p.m. Don Stephens is pastor.

WEST CULLMAN

► **Seventh Street Church, Cullman**, will host singer, speaker and musical ventriloquist Lee Pitts and Nicky, God's Little Talking Tree, June 13, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Kerry Cleghorn is pastor.

Pastor seeks zero-tolerance ban on racism in SBC

A prominent black pastor has announced plans to ask the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) to amend its constitution to ban churches that condone racism. Dwight McKissic, pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church, Arlington, Texas, said in a blog and press release dated May 27 that he would ask messengers at the SBC annual meeting June 15–16 to consider amending an article on membership to exclude churches that “act to affirm, approve or endorse ... racial discrimination and bigotry in any form.”

The membership article already bans churches that condone “homosexual behavior” in an amendment added during the 1990s after one North Carolina church licensed a practicing homosexual as a minister

and another performed a ceremony blessing a same-sex union.

McKissic said he wants a similar zero-tolerance ban on racism because of “residual racism or latent bigotry” in the nation's second-largest religious body. Part of that is “unrepentant belief” in the “curse of Ham” theology used historically to mistreat people of color.

Biblical reference

The curse of Ham refers to one of Noah's three sons mentioned in the Bible. In Genesis 9:20–25, Ham enters a tent and discovers his father naked and drunk and then goes back to tell his brothers. They avert their eyes to avoid looking at Noah and use a garment to cover their father's nakedness. After he awakes Noah curses Ham's descendants

to become servants of those of his brothers.

Some scholars view the story as a rationalization for Israel's conquest and enslavement of the Canaanites, presumed to be descendants of Ham. Later some Christians came to believe the story explained different skin colors and used it to justify enslavement of African blacks.

In a related resolution submitted to the SBC Resolutions Committee, McKissic said Southern Baptists need to repent of racist theologies the way they apologized for condoning racist structures in 1995. Despite progress toward racial unity, McKissic said Southern Baptists “have not yet fully realized the full participation of our vast ethnic diversity in convention life and leadership.” (ABP)

Alabama updates

People, churches making news across the state

Montgomery Baptist retired police officer publishes memoir

Retired police officer Stephen Smith definitely has some stories to tell, and he's decided to share them with the world. Armed with a grateful heart for the “blessings and adventures” and memories of 20 years of protecting the citizens of Alabama's capital city through the Montgomery Police Department, Smith recently published “It's More Than Shootouts and Car Chases: Memoirs of a Montgomery Police Officer.”

A member of Thorington Road Baptist Church, Montgomery, Smith said he found ways to share his faith while wearing the badge. During his time with the police department, he worked with the traffic division, crime scene investigation and a high profile zero tolerance drug unit. Smith, who is certified as a police chaplain and chaplain liaison, also organized the local Cops for Christ group in 1992, which led to the creation of the River Region Chaplain Service. The service provides chaplaincy support to police, sheriff and fire departments in the region.

His book consists of nearly 100 short stories that offer the reader an inside look at life as a police officer from being shot at as a rookie officer to working as an evidence technician following the deaths of two fellow officers.

The stories and experiences found in Smith's memoir show the joys as well as the harsh reality of the dangerous job police officers take on. “I hope [readers] will enjoy reading about my career and will see police officers as just regular people doing a sometimes impossible job,” Smith said.

Smith currently works with the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office as a crime scene technician.

The book can be found at Barnes & Noble and www.amazon.com. For more information, e-mail Smith at MPDmemoirs@knology.net.

Chatom couple inducted into Washington Co. Hall of Fame

What might serving Washington County in an exemplary manor earn a citizen? Just ask Bobby and Betty Smith, members of Spring Bank Baptist Church, Chatom, in Washington Baptist Association.

Their “exemplary lifestyle and service” garnered them an induction into the Washington County Hall of Fame on May 7. A plaque of recognition is on display at the Washington County Courthouse in Chatom.

“[The Smiths] are well known in our county and are well liked by everyone,” said Barbara Waddell, Washington County's museum curator who was in charge of the induction ceremony. “You call them up and they are ready to help you out.”

And this is not the first time the Smiths have been honored. The pair received the United Way Humanitarian award in 2008 for their community service to Washington County.

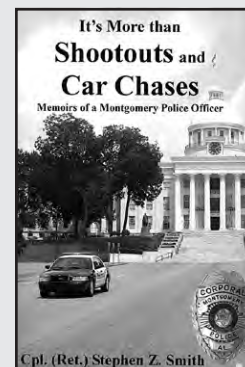
While Bobby is now semiretired as a pastor, the couple spent 57 years leading small churches, where the resources were few, Betty said. “When God called us to be a Christian, He called us to serve, and that's exactly what we've done.”

They did this while also being on-call 24 hours a day for many years (1971–1993) running Smith Ambulance Service. Bobby also served as the Washington County coroner and emergency medical technician, while Betty worked at various times at the county hospital, nursing home and an area bank.

Betty also served as a full-time pianist in two churches and an assistant in five other churches where Bobby served as pastor.

Bobby was ordained at Antioch Baptist Church, Grove Hill, in 1953 and served Spring Bank Baptist; Pine Level Baptist Church, Chatom; First Baptist Church, Chatom; Fairhope Baptist Church; Cullom-burg Baptist Church, Silas; Chapel Hill Baptist Church; Laton Hill Baptist Church, Chatom; and Good Springs Baptist Church, Winn. He also served as moderator of Washington Association, a member of the International Conference of Police Chaplains and chaplain of the Washington County Court and the Chatom Police Department.

The Smiths have two adult daughters.



THE SMITHS

Culture Day brings nations together in Cullman

By Kathy Dean
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

With eight nations represented in the English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at First Baptist Church, Cullman, the adult students have many different ways to say “thank you.” But there was no language barrier as the students shared foods, customs and costumes of their native lands with the West Cullman Baptist Association church’s Woman’s Missionary Union (WMU) during Culture Day on May 17.

“The students wanted to show appreciation to the missions groups and say ‘thank you’ for supporting us,” ESL instructor Kathy O’Dillon said of the inspiration for the event.

WMU donate funds that provide coffee, snacks, craft supplies and groceries for cooking activities for the ESL classes.

Most of the students are women in their 30s and 40s who moved with their families to Cullman for their husbands’ jobs at Japanese and German manufacturing companies or in the chicken industry. The students hail from Japan, Russia, Ukraine, Mexico, Germany, Uzbekistan, Israel and United Arab Emirates.

For Culture Day, they worked together to set up display tables featuring information, foods and objects from their native countries.

As WMU members and other church



Photo courtesy of FBC Cullman

UNITED NATIONS — English as a Second Language students at First Baptist Church, Cullman, hosted Culture Day on May 17 to introduce WMU members and other church members to their homelands.

members arrived, they were given a “passport” to bring to each table to get stamped.

O’Dillon said Culture Day marked the first time the ESL students and WMU members had interacted as a group.

“We do our classes and they support us but we haven’t melded together. Hope-

fully this is the start of that,” she said. WMU Director Carolyn Sharp agreed.

“I think all of us felt that this [was] a launching pad to do more,” she said.

In addition to introducing WMU members to the world, the event provided an opportunity for the ESL students to

get to know their new neighbors.

ESL student Sachie Asaka of Japan, who wore a kimono and brought some cookbooks, toys and decorations to display, said she enjoyed learning about her fellow students’ home countries and customs and getting to meet Americans.

That’s something she said she doesn’t have the opportunity to do much and appreciates about the classes.

“Sometimes I talk with my neighbor, but the ESL class and church give me many opportunities to have many times with American people,” Asaka said.

Asaka, who describes herself as “basically Buddhist,” is one of several Japanese women who also participate in the church’s handbell choir.

“I am not good at music, but I like to play music, so I keep playing because it’s fun,” she said.

“Sometimes we play in the church in a service on a Sunday. It’s a very good experience for me during the church service.”

And it’s a very good opportunity for the congregation of First, Cullman, said Senior Pastor Ed Hayes.

“[The contact with other cultures] is exposing our people to our responsibility to share Christ with all people groups. This is the world coming to us,” he noted.

“It is our opportunity to reach people of other language groups right here in our community.”

Central Park Church celebrates centennial, reflects on rich history

By Gary Hardin
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

Sarah Mullins, 92, loves to tell how God used her mother’s ministry to help start Central Park Baptist Church, Birmingham, in Birmingham Baptist Association (BBA).

In the early 1900s, the city of Birmingham designated an area of town to be called Central Park. Mullins’ mother, Nannie Bonham, realized the need for spiritual training for boys and girls in the soon-to-be Central Park neighborhood.

“My mother walked through the woods looking for children to invite to be part of a newly organized Sunbeam Band (now Mission Friends),” she said.

A short time later, a group of women, including Bonham, organized a Ladies Aid Society with DAVIS Lucas as its first president. This group encouraged the parents of the Sunbeams to attend soon-to-be-organized Sunday School classes.

J.R. Stodghill, then-director of missions for BBA, secured a vacant house to be used as a meeting place and helped organize the Sunday School. “My mother

and two other women taught three classes: one for adults, another for young people and the third for small children,” said Mullins, a retired Southern Baptist missionary to Hawaii and Macau.

With the help of Earl Parker, a student at Howard College (now Samford University) in Birmingham, Stodghill guided the Sunday School attendees to organize a church in 1910. Parker became its first pastor and served until 1913.

‘An icon in the state’

During the weekend of May 22-23, 2010, Central Park Baptist celebrated its centennial anniversary. On May 22, former and current choir members and musicians gathered to provide music for a reunion gathering. Afterward everyone met in the church’s gymnasium for small-group fellowship.

In the Sunday morning anniversary service, former members gave testimonies and provided special music. Lonette Berg, executive director of the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission, presented the church with an anniversary plaque. Bob Terry, president and publisher of *The Alabama Baptist*, preached the morning message.

Longtime Central Park members Cynthia Fuqua and Rhonda Sizemore organized the anniversary celebration. Fuqua developed CDs of historical photos and music from previous choirs.

Both women understand the significance of Central Park’s 100 years of ministry. “The church has been an icon in the state. The area around us has changed, but we are still here, still ministering, although we are much smaller in number,” Sizemore stated.

BBA uses Central Park’s former children’s building as a community ministry outreach facility, called The Center at Central Park. The center ministers to Birmingham’s West End community and provides dorm rooms for World Changers projects each year. The church also operates a Christian school for kindergartners through 12th-graders.

“This year, we graduated 22 students from our school, and all of them will be attending college,” Pastor Mel Deason said with pride. “We are a great church with 100 years of ministry behind us and finding our way in a different age.”

County Line Church marks 175 years, publishes book

County Line Baptist Church, Dudleyville, is so proud of its history that it prepared a hardback book chronicling events in the life of the congregation. The book tells of the church’s founding by settlers in the area, the three meeting places and former pastors, among other things.

Current and former members had an opportunity to purchase their own copy as the East Liberty Baptist Association church celebrated its 175th anniversary May 2.

Approximately 200 people attended the anniversary celebration, eclipsing the average of 30 who attend Sunday worship.

“It’s such a joy to see people still interested in the church and who come back to homecoming,” said Dorothy A. Allen, a member of County Line Baptist since 1947.

The service was followed by lunch and the opening of a time capsule buried on the church grounds as part of the 150th anniversary celebration.

The time capsule contained a Bible that belonged to James C. Johnston, who served as pastor from 1973 to 1985; a copy of *The LaFayette Sun*, the local weekly newspaper in Chambers County; photographs of church members and activities; and Sunday School curriculum.

The church history sold at the anniversary was taken from information written by Johnston covering events from County Line’s founding in 1835 until 1985, with updated information to 2009.

Tracing history

The history notes that one of the church’s founders was Benjamin Lloyd, the great-great-grandfather of current Pastor Wayne Barrett Sr.

Lloyd, along with Francis Calloway and Henry Perkins, met with 10 settlers in Chambers County to organize a Baptist church. The group met May 2, 1835, at one of the settlers’ homes, which was located two miles east of Dudleyville.

The current church building was erected in 1890 at County Road 51. It was placed on the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage on Jan. 14, 1980, and National Register of Historic Places on Aug. 19, 1982.

But Barrett pointed out that the church has always known it had to reach outside those four walls.

“They’re very missions-minded and have been all through the years,” he said. “We have a small Woman’s Missionary Union, but practically the whole church participates in missions studies, offerings and things like that.” (TAB)

Baptist Health System's Residency Program Trains Next Generation of Physicians

By Jennifer Jackson

At Baptist Health System education is continual. We recognize that quality patient care is greatly enhanced by residency training programs in which bright, inquisitive and energetic resident physicians actively pursue the study of medicine. The BHS philosophy "to enhance the health, dignity and wholeness of those we serve," begins with this newest crop of residents and is one that we hope will endure throughout their medical careers.

Headed by BHS Chief Medical Officer Dr. Elizabeth Ennis, the BHS graduate medical education programs train residents in an academically oriented, community-based environment. While the curriculum is standard as set forth by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, the experience is very different than that of a typical university residency program. The unique, community-based environment naturally attracts individuals who thrive on personal attention and are eager to assume progressive responsibility. Each year, approximately 40 new residents are accepted into the program across the five disciplines of Internal Medicine, General Surgery, Diagnostic Radiology, Anatomic and Clinical Pathology and the Transitional Year. Dr. Ennis notes a key component of the matriculation process is that the match is resident-driven. "We have an opportunity to fulfill a unique role for our residents. We want residents who are able to thrive in a faith-based environment, one that fosters professional excellence and collegial interactions. And because our program is community-based, residents on many clinical rotations work one-on-one with an attending physician giving them the opportunity to glean things that sometimes have nothing to do with traditional medicine."

Through the BHS Internal Medicine Continuity Clinics, residents see and treat patients under the supervision of currently board certified clinician educators. According to Dr. Ennis this is really a



Photo by Robert Farley
Baptist Health System's Chief Medical Officer Dr. Elizabeth Ennis (second from left) discusses patient care options with resident physicians (left to right) Drs. Patrick Druhan, Corie Noble and Rane McLaughlin.

win/win. "Within the Continuity Clinics we see a variety of patients, which allows the residents to care for patients from diverse educational and socioeconomic backgrounds. There is hands-on, practical experience under the supervision of an attending physician. This physician/resident situation fosters intellectual curiosity with four sets of eyes reviewing patient data. The collaboration between the supervising attending physician and the resident physician fosters an environment that leads to a careful, evidence-based plan of care for patients." Similarly, resident surgeons have access to an ambulatory clinic that serves the same purpose.

While funding for the program and its residents is secure, unfortunately educational needs extending beyond the program's tightly defined scope go unfulfilled. One such growing need is in the area of simulation training. Dr. Ennis and the core clinical faculty strongly support the inclusion of simulation training with labs, tools, ICU beds and dummy patients at both teaching hospitals. "This simulated environment will allow residents to gain practical experience and hone their skills safely. It's an educational element that extends beyond our traditional training and one that could potentially benefit legions of patients in the future. On a national level, simulation is becoming a requirement for clinical programs and is no longer "optional."

Dr. Ennis' passion for education, training and the overall program means she, along with the faculty, will no doubt work with BHS and the Baptist Health Foundation to push for the best teaching resources for her bright, inquisitive resident physicians.

Today, you can play a significant role in training tomorrow's medical professionals. Your gift to the Baptist Health Foundation will help ensure that BHS physicians and nurses have the latest and most comprehensive training available. To make a gift, call toll free 1-877-474-4243 or visit www.bhsala.com/Foundation.

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Seminaries confer degrees on Alabamians

The following are Alabama Baptists who graduated with degrees at the master's level or above from Southern Baptist seminaries and Alabama Baptists' divinity school during the spring 2010 semester.

The following list represents seminaries with May graduates from Alabama and was provided by the schools:

► Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Master of arts, counseling — Elaine Epperson Lay, Brierfield

► New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Doctor of educational ministry — Stephen L. Shelton, Birmingham

Doctor of ministry — Robert Fulton Atwell III, Sheffield; Raymond G. McKenzie, Fairhope; Randall Scott Norris, Hoover; and Jason Steven Rodgers, Cullman

Master of divinity — Richard Wayne Hall Jr., New Site; George Marland Hayes Jr., Birmingham; David Braxton Hobson, Hueytown; Jonathan Cory Horton, Montevallo; Colby Brooks Mouchette, Tuscaloosa; Emily Anne Pontero, Trussville; Dustin Conley Sheldner, Hamilton; Joseph Mark Tucker, Russellville; Jeremy Clint Wortham, Pelham; and Aaron Layne Zakeri, Hoover

Master of divinity with a specialization in Christian education —

Bradley Gregory Strom, Decatur
Master of arts in missiology — Thomas Joel Braswell III, Opelika

► Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

Master of divinity with biblical counseling — Patrick Eli Hearn, Muscle Shoals

Master of divinity with Christian apologetics — Catherine Collier Garrison, Gadsden

Master of divinity with Christian ethics — Daniel Curtis Jones, Dothan

Master of divinity with Christian ministry — Jade Jones, Glencoe, and Daniel C. Reed Jr., Mobile

Master of arts in Christian education — Michael Scott Walters, Somerville

Master of church music — Jonathan Hugh Woodham, Dothan

► Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Doctor of philosophy — Michael Brian Trapp, Florence

Doctor of ministry — Myung-Ho Cook, Madison

Master of divinity — Trace Hamiter, Opelika; W. Ross Kilpatrick, Reeltown; and M. David Richards, Trussville

Master of arts in biblical counseling — Katie Jo Van Dyke, Foley

► Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Advanced master of divinity — Jason Matthew Nolen, Mobile

Master of divinity — Britton Latham, Tuscaloosa

Advanced master of arts in Christian education with a concentration in student ministry — Christian Douglas Nichles, Moody

Master of arts in Christian education with a concentration in administration — Charles Fondren Bradford, Muscle Shoals

Master of arts in Christian education with a concentration in teaching — Jason Eliot Norris, Tuscaloosa

► Beeson Divinity School

Doctor of ministry — Rickey Allen McClain, Calera, and James Ralph Wooten Jr., Eufaula

Master of divinity — Robert Allen Boyd, Huntsville; Justin Warren Burkhead, Trussville; Daniel Caleb Ellis, Birmingham; Juan Andre Ford, Montgomery; John Noel Forlini, Birmingham; Philip Colton Houston, Birmingham; John Douglas McNutt, Demopolis; Michael Anthony Motta, Dothan; Paul Charles Podraza, Birmingham; Preston Young Register, Dothan; Benjamin Scott Richey, Prattville; and Tina B. Whitfield, Trussville

Master of theological studies — Christopher James McCaghren, Birmingham, and Katherine Yvette Scott Parham, Fairfield (TAB)

CORRECTION

The cutline for the page 13 "Assembly Line" photo in the June 3 issue of *The Alabama Baptist* incorrectly identified one woman as Barbara Woods. Her name is Barbara Moore.

Religion In America

Compiled from Wire Services

Church picketing military funeral: Free speech?

WASHINGTON — The father of a Marine killed in Iraq in 2006 filed a brief May 24 with the Supreme Court arguing that the free-speech rights of a church that picketed his son's funeral should not trump his family's right to mourn in private.

Lawyers for Albert Snyder, of York, Pa., argued that a lower court erred in ruling that protests by Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kan. — a small congregation notorious for showing up at military funerals carrying placards with messages like "Thank God for Dead Soldiers" — are absolutely protected by the First Amendment.

Snyder originally won a \$10.9 million judgment against the church in 2007 for intentional infliction of emotional distress, invasion of privacy by intrusion upon seclusion and conspiracy. A court later reduced it to \$5 million. The Virginia-based 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals voided that judgment in 2009, however, finding that the controversial signs were not statements of fact but "rhetorical hyperbole" protected by the First Amendment.

Snyder argued in the Supreme Court brief that such a broad ruling "completely vitiates" state laws that allow private citizens to receive damages for emotional distress. The Supreme Court accepted the case, *Snyder v. Phelps*, in March. It is expected to be one of the most-watched cases in the court's 2010-2011 term, testing the limits of free speech and the right to privacy.

Westboro Baptist Church is an independent congregation not affiliated with any denomination. Most of its members are relatives of Pastor Fred Phelps, who started the church in 1955.

Graduation service can't be in a church, judge says

BLOOMFIELD, Conn. — A federal judge ruled May 31 that a Connecticut school district's plan to hold graduation ceremonies in a megachurch violates the constitutionally mandated separation of church and state and ordered school officials to find a secular alternative site.

U.S. District Judge Janet Hall handed down a preliminary injunction blocking Enfield Public Schools from holding graduations for two high schools scheduled June 23-24 at The First Cathedral, a 120,000-square-foot facility that is home to an 11,000-member Christian church.

The judge said two seniors at Enfield High School and three parents proved "a likelihood of irreparable harm" if the court did not intervene and "a substantial likelihood of success" in their lawsuit alleging that holding the graduation at the church instead of a neutral site violates the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. ■

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CHURCH POSITIONS

PASTOR: Fayetteville Baptist is accepting resumes for church pastor. Small congregation. Sunday morning services only. For more information call B.J. Wood at 256-378-5882.

MINISTER OF MUSIC: Seventh Street Baptist Church in Cullman is searching for a full-time minister of music with some help in program development. A degree in church music with some experience is preferred. Send resume to: Search Committee, P.O. Box 391, Cullman, AL 35056, or e-mail: seventhstreetbaptist@hotmail.com.

MINISTER TO STUDENTS: First Baptist Church, Tullahoma, Tenn., a conservative Southern Baptist Church, is seeking a full-time minister to students to serve alongside four full-time ministers. The minister will focus on middle school, high school and college students. Contact Pastor Herb Hester at 108 East Grundy Street, Tullahoma, TN 37388, or hester.herb@fbctullahoma.org.

STUDENT MINISTER: Southside Baptist Church is receiving resumes for the full-time position of student minister. Mail resumes to: Southside Baptist Church, ATTN: Student Minister Search Committee, 1213 West Bypass, Andalusia, AL 36420.

AL 36420.

PART-TIME CHILDREN'S MINISTER: North Valley Church in Margaret, Ala. — a fast-growing, family-focused contemporary ministry. Theological training, experience preferred. Send resume to: chris@mynvc.org.

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SOCIAL WORKER/COUNSELOR: Needed in Dothan office of Alabama Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries. Duties include counseling, group home caseload, licensing foster homes and foster care responsibilities. Ideal candidate has clinical and case management experience. Must have LCSW or LBSW/LPC and be a Christian actively involved in local church. Send resume to: Kim McGainey, kmcgainey@abchome.org or 1302 Ross Clark Circle, Dothan, AL 36301.

MINISTRY ASSISTANT/SECRETARY: Full-time, experience preferred with a heart for ministry. Send resume to: Ministry Assistant/Secretary, PMB#304, 1305 S. Brundidge Street, Suite A, Troy, AL 36081.

DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES: The Mobile Baptist Association of Mobile, Ala., is currently seeking

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MISCELLANEOUS

CAMP MACOBA: Camp MACOBA (Madison County Baptist Association) needs Christian-minded businesses and individuals as financial partners. Much needed improvements are on hold due to lack of funds. Campmacoba3@gmail.com for more information.

Baptist News Briefs

Compiled from Wire Services

2009 Lottie Moon offering third largest in history

RICHMOND, Va. — Southern Baptists stayed true to their passion for telling the world about Jesus in spite of a weakened economy and sluggish recovery, giving \$148.9 million to support international missionaries through the 2009 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. It is the third-largest Lottie Moon offering in history.

"I am deeply grateful for the increase in giving, some \$7.6 million above the 2008 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, and for the sacrifice made by Southern Baptists during these difficult economic times," said Jerry Rankin, president of the International Mission Board (IMB).

"For this year's total to be the third-highest in the history of the offering is remarkable given the economic challenges that continue to impact many across the U.S.," said Wanda Lee, national Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) executive director. "It is truly a testimony to the faithfulness of God and the deep-rooted commitment among Southern Baptists to share Jesus with those around the world who have yet to hear of His love. We are grateful for WMU leaders and members who champion the missions cause in their churches through personal involvement and by urging Southern Baptists to give sacrificially and pray fervently for missions."

While the \$148.9 million offering meets the requirements for the IMB's 2010 operating budget, it doesn't allow room for growth or reversal of budget cuts.

Seventy-one percent of the IMB's budget is spent on missionary support, including housing, salaries, medical care and children's education. It averages \$43,800 annually per missionary.

Though the \$148.9 million offering is \$7.6 million above 2008 giving, it is \$1.4 million below the 2007 record offering of \$150.4 million. It is also \$26 million short of the 2009 goal of \$175 million.

Romanian pastors in the States seek 'a new blaze'

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — "We need a new blaze," said Ted Cocian, pastor of First Romanian Baptist Church of Atlanta.

Romanian Southern Baptists need to move quickly, Cocian and other pastors agreed, in order to reach a vision of doubling their congregations and revitalizing the Romanian Baptist community in North America.

That "new blaze" is a call for each of the 45 Romanian churches that are part of the Southern Baptist Convention to focus their energies on planting one church or more — thus increasing the number of Romanian Baptist churches to about 100 by the year 2020.

The pastors recognize they are commanded to make disciples of all people — Romanian or not. But among the 500,000-plus Romanians living in the United States and Canada, the influence of Christians is dwindling as second- and third-generation Romanians leave churches in large numbers.

Liviu Percy, pastor of the Romanian Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C., said a fondness for the good old days keeps Romanian churches from reaching outside themselves.

"Romanian culture is so rich," Percy said. "We enjoy good music, good plays, good poetry, and it's easy for our members to think that this is all church is about. But these cultural experiences and fellowship are just the beginning."

Romanian pastors came from California, North Carolina, Michigan, Texas, Ohio, Illinois, Florida, Massachusetts, Georgia and British Columbia for the March 24–26 sessions at the North American Mission Board in Alpharetta, Ga.

Cooperative Program giving behind 2009 pace

NASHVILLE — Year-to-date contributions through the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) are 1.3 percent below the same time frame last year, according to a news release from SBC Executive Committee President and Chief Executive Officer Morris H. Chapman.

As of May 31, the year-to-date total of \$132,859,692.48 for CP missions is \$1,753,044.75 behind the \$134,612,737.23 received at the end of May 2009.

Monthly CP receipts totaled \$16,794,961.96.

Month-to-month swings reflect a number of factors, but largely result from the timing of receipts from state conventions. The end-of-month total represents money received by close of business on the last business day of each month.

For the SBC CP Allocation Budget, the year-to-date total of \$132,859,692.48 is 97.51 percent of the \$136,257,061.75 budgeted to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America. The SBC operates on an Oct. 1–Sept. 30 fiscal year.

Fairhope church starts medical ministry, gives 'hope' to community

By Emily Flack
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

It's not a normal day at the dentist when you get treated at the Hope Center, a Christ-centered medical ministry in Fairhope. You may be visiting to have a cavity filled, yet you'll be sure to also receive a heartfelt conversation and hug.

The center, an outgrowth of Church on the Eastern Shore (COTES), Fairhope, that operates as a separate nonprofit, had its grand opening in March and has already provided care to more than 600 people who are uninsured or underinsured.

An army of 60 volunteers including doctors, dentists, licensed counselors and an evangelism team run the center, providing care on three levels: medical, dental and counseling.

"We try to invest in their life, the total package," said Dana Smith, health center director.

'Total package'

"Our mission at the Hope Center is to expand His Kingdom, to share Jesus Christ with everyone who walks in the door," she said. "We just use medical, dental and counseling to get there."

After filling out paperwork, patients meet with the evangelism team before seeing a doctor for everything from tooth extractions and fillings to premarital and substance abuse counseling.

"At their first visit, we share with them the gospel and give them a Bible," said Jennifer Miles, director of development.

On subsequent visits, the evangelism team finds out where the patient is emotionally and spiritually by asking about family situations and church membership, among other things.

"It's a community-oriented ministry," said Mark Price, pastor of the Baldwin Baptist Association church. "Our goal is to meet a felt need and to share Christ as we do that."

Ever since Price visited another church's medical clinic in 2003, he and COTES have been praying and working toward that type of umbrella ministry to "preach

good news and bring a ministry of healing to the brokenhearted and poor."

Every year since then, COTES has sent a team to Tanzania to treat 2,500–3,000 patients in a two-week span using mobile medical clinics.

"Our mission at the Hope Center is to expand His Kingdom, to share Jesus Christ with everyone who walks in the door."

Dana Smith
Hope Center

"We've seen thousands come to faith through that. We've watched for years how it works in Tanzania and so I asked myself, 'Why on earth would it not work in the states?'" Price said.

Miles said to love one another properly, the church must be the hands and feet of the community, take care of people physically and emotionally.

That's the focus of the Hope Center, she explained.

The center opened in three stages but is now in full swing with a waiting list of 100 people and phones ringing off the hook. It is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.

Letters to the Editor

CP GIVING DIDN'T DECLINE

First Baptist Church, Springdale, Ark., operates on the fiscal year of what is historically known as the official church year, Oct. 1–Sept. 30. Therefore any discussion we have is always around our fiscal year, which is also the fiscal year of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) reporting and budget.

Therefore we know through all decisions and verifications from our audited records the fol-

lowing about our CP giving.

This is the way our church board of directors makes financial decisions. It is also the way our church makes decisions as related to the adoption of our annual budget.

The following represents those decisions and actualities toward our CP giving:

2007–08: \$243,000

2008–09: \$350,000

2009–10: \$400,000

Our intention and commitment to giving through the CP has resulted in an increase of 64.60 percent over the past two years. This is what we have adopted and operated by as a church.

The \$400,000 gift this present church year will place our church probably in the top 60, perhaps 50, churches in the SBC.

We are going in the right direction. Pray for us that we will be able to do that. It is our heart.

Pastor Ronnie Floyd
FBC Springdale, Ark.

EDITOR'S NOTE — In the May 13 editorial in *The Alabama Baptist*, "Needed: Worthy Examples of CP Support," a reference was made to CP giving at First, Springdale, Ark., declining in 2009. The information indicating a decline came from the Southern Baptist Directory Services, which

records the Annual Church Profile (ACP) for all churches that want to participate. But what Floyd has discovered since then is that the Arkansas Baptist State Convention records CP giving on the ACP based on a calendar year instead of the church's fiscal year. Because First, Springdale, Ark., uses the Oct. 1–Sept. 30 fiscal year, a false impression of its CP giving is reflected in the ACP when looking at a specific year. When calculated on the church (fiscal) year, the percentage of undesignated receipts given through the CP at First, Springdale, Ark., increased from 1.65 percent in 2007–08 to 2.61 percent in 2008–09.

EQUIPPING THE CHURCH

While Southern Baptist conventions, conferences, committees and churches discuss and debate the Great Commission, The Church at Brook Hills is doing the Great Commission. Young pastors like David Platt, Matt Chandler, Voddie Baucham and Francis Chan are equipping the Church to be the Church.

I thank God for raising up this new generation of leaders who are leading their flocks to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

Rick McLain
Millbrook, Ala.

VOICE YOUR OPINION



SPEAK UP on issues in the Baptist world by writing a letter to the editor of The Alabama Baptist.

Remember to:

- Include your name and address
- Focus on issues, not people
- Be as concise as possible

States betting on gambling as an economic answer ‘prey on the weak’

Several states are turning to gambling for potential income amid budget shortfalls, even as the American Gaming Association reported that revenue from casino gambling fell 5.5 percent overall last year.

“It is deeply disappointing that some of our states are turning to gambling to help them close their budget gaps,” said Barrett Duke, vice president for public policy and research at the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

“If gambling was unacceptable when the state economies were doing well, it should be even less acceptable when their economies slow down. Government programs aren’t the only thing hurting in these difficult times,” Duke said. “Families are hurting as well. These state governments should be cutting their own expenses rather than looking for easy fixes that prey on people, especially gambling addicts, to close their budget shortfalls.”

The Wall Street Journal, in a May 11 article with the headline “Strapped States Find New Virtues in ‘Vice,’” said nationwide the public-funding crisis has led state and local leaders to condone activities and businesses they’d be apt to

restrict in better economic times.

California, for instance, is debating whether to allow and tax Internet poker, which is prohibited by federal law. A measure will be on the ballot in that state in November to decide whether to expand and tax marijuana sales, and at least half a dozen other states are considering the revenue potential marijuana might provide.

Some states have loosened decades-old restrictions on Sunday alcohol sales, the newspaper said. One commentator said “blue laws” are a common casualty of recessions. “Every time there’s an economic contraction, sure enough, you start seeing local repeal efforts,” the economics professor said.

“Prior to the Great Depression, the U.S. had a near-total ban on gambling, and since 1920 barred alcohol sales,” The Journal said. “But the government legalized horse-race betting during the depression and in 1933 repealed Prohibition, partially due to the high cost of law enforce-

ment and need for tax revenue.

“Atlantic City voted to allow gambling in 1976, when the city was economically depressed and nationwide economic growth was slowing. The early-1990s recession prompted states like Mississippi, Louisiana and Indiana to bank on new gambling facilities for revenue. And after the 2001 terrorist attacks, New York expanded video gambling in bars to help make up for projected losses from lower tourism.”

Duke warned against following the same pattern in the current economic slowdown.

“By turning to gambling to raise additional money, the states are sending the wrong message to their citizens,” he said. “Instead of modeling good financial discipline and reducing their spending, the state that turns to gambling to plug funding shortfalls is communicating to its citizens that it is preferable to prey on the weak than to live within one’s means.” (BP)

“If gambling was unacceptable [before], it should be even less acceptable when ... economies slow down.”

Barrett Duke
Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission



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It takes many hands to make our ministry possible, and we are truly blessed to have volunteers from around the country, rolling up their sleeves and going to work with us.

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They hail from all sorts of places under all kinds of monikers, but they're mission is the same — offering a helping hand at Shocco Springs Baptist Conference Center.

Throughout the year, you'll find SOWERS, Servants on Wheels Ever Ready, RVICS, Roving Volunteers in Christ's Service, Campers on a Mission, Carpenters for Christ, Mobile Missionary Assistance Program, and others whose handiwork can be seen throughout the massive acreage that defines

the Shocco footprint in Talladega.

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We see the fruits of their labor in Weaver Chapel, built almost wholly by volunteers, and we see it in every lodge, every room and just about every square inch of Shocco.

In 2009, 4,900 volunteer hours were spent working at Shocco. In 2010, volunteers have already logged another 3,840 hours.

Shocco is a place where 45,000 people representing nearly 500 religious and nonprofit groups visit annually, and it is easy to see the pivotal role volunteers play in helping us successfully fulfill our mission. We could not do it without them.

We humbly thank them for their work, and we thank them for making their mission a helping hand to support the work we do for others.

What they do makes what we do possible.

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Randy Driggers | The Baptist Foundation of Alabama | 334.394.2001 | rdriggers@tbfa.org
Wendy Westerhouse | Shocco Springs | 256.299.0305 | wwesterhouse@shocco.org



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Want to know God?

By Pastor Terry Sutton
First Baptist Church, Montevallo

I was recently reminded of the wonderful grace of God through an excerpt from "Saving Private Ryan." The movie ends with Capt. Miller (Tom Hanks' character) sitting near a bridge after an attack by German forces. His life is ebbing away as he pulls Ryan (Matt Damon) down toward him. Struggling for breath, he whispers, "Earn this, earn this." As Ryan stands, his face morphs back into the present as a senior adult searching for Miller's cross in the cemetery. Crying, he turns to his wife and says, "Tell me I'm a good man."

Many people believe that Christ died for them, but they have an attitude that He has commanded them to "Earn this" in regard to their salvation. They spend their lives trying to receive validation of their good deeds through religion so that people will tell them, "You're a good man or a good woman."

It is difficult for our pride to rest totally on God's grace for our salvation. We feel we must "do" something to earn our way to heaven and to atone for our sins.

I heard a humorous story of a very old rich skinflint in declining health finally getting serious about his relationship with the Lord. He had apparently been very successful in life with his earnings. He went to his pastor in an effort to do what he could in the last days of his life to get to know the Lord and settle his eternal estate. He was graciously received by the pastor and invited to be seated. The pastor said, "Well you finally got around to getting things right between you and the Lord, eh?" Convicted, the old miser finally said, "OK. ... How about if I give every cent I've got? Will that do it; will that guarantee I'll go to heaven when I die — if I give my entire fortune to you?" The pastor paused a moment and then replied, "Well it's worth a try!"

On a more serious note, the Scripture is very clear about knowing God and going to heaven: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this is not of yourselves, it is a gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). Knowing God can be experienced as we receive His grace.

Campus News



Samford University

► **Samford Presents 'Side Show' Musical:** Samford University's Praxis Project will present the musical "Side Show" by Bill Russell and Henry Krieger June 10-12 at 7 p.m. in the university's Bolding Studio.

"Side Show," based on the true story of Depression-era conjoined twins Violet and Daisy Hilton, is the first musical to be produced by Praxis Project, which provides additional artistic opportunities for Samford students and alumni.

For ticket information, call the Samford Arts Box Office at 205-726-2853 or visit www.samford.edu/arts/tickets.

► **Samford Names New Choral Director:** Philip Copeland has been appointed to the faculty of Samford University's school of the arts as director of choral activities and associate professor. His focus will be the A Cappella Choir, conducting and music education curriculum.

"Philip Copeland is the right person to continue the legacy of Samford A Cappella and build new traditions for the future," said Joseph Hopkins, dean of the school of the arts.

Copeland was previously at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), where he led the choral program for nine years. The UAB Concert Choir achieved national recognition through significant performances at conventions of the National Collegiate Choral Organization and the American Choral Directors Association. He also led the choir to participate in two international choral competitions.

This fall, Copeland will lead the newly formed the Alabama Symphony Chorus in preparation for masterworks with the Alabama Symphony Orchestra.



Judson College

► **Outgoing Judson Alumnae President Honored:** Anne Williamson Shumaker,

of Centre, was honored April 10 as she completed her two-year term as president of the Judson College Alumnae Association.

Shumaker has been an ardent supporter of Judson since her graduation in 1966. She's served on the alumnae executive board in various capacities and the college's board of trustees since 1990.

"Judson is one of my passions," Shumaker said. "I enjoyed serving as alumnae president and meeting so many of my Judson sisters I'd not met before. It was an honor to serve, and I trust it was a way to help the college, too."

Shumaker said during her presidency, she appreciated the hard work of all the officers, committee chairwomen, alumnae chapter officers and Alumnae Relations Director Jennifer Truelove.

Shumaker is a member of First Baptist Church, Centre.

► **Judson Holds Ministers Golf Tournament:** Nearly 50 Alabama Baptist ministers gathered May 10-11 for the 48th annual Judson College Ministers Golf Tournament at Marion Military Institute's golf course.

"The greens were marvelous and the weather was beautiful," said golf committee chair David Byrd, pastor of Northside Baptist Church, Jasper.

Byrd said the annual tournament is a time for ministers to relax and enjoy one another's company, plus they get to learn more about what Judson offers.

Shannon Allen, pastor of Pine Grove Baptist Church, Brent, placed first. Byrd placed second and Ron Lynch, church ministries director for Madison Baptist Association, placed third.

Judson President David Potts awarded prizes at the concluding luncheon. "We're happy to host this tournament, and we appreciate what these ministers do for our institution and for God's Kingdom in Alabama," Potts said.

► **New Book of Letters Tells of Life in Alabama's Black Belt:** Judson College Artist in Residence Billie Jean Young has published a 203-page collection of letters from her mother in a volume titled "Now, How You Do? A Memoir."

The correspondence of Susie M. Young, now 90, offers insight into the lives of blacks in Alabama's Black Belt region a generation ago.

"I planned this book many years ago," Billie Jean Young said. "I always knew what Mama had to say was important, and her letters were always precious to me."

The letters tell of Susie M. Young's struggles in raising her seven children, handling money, taking care of farm business and seeking proper health care all by herself following her husband's death.

The book is available online from Amazon and Barnes & Noble and through local booksellers. For more information, visit www.billiejeanyoung.org.

► **Hightower Receives Award for Staff Excellence at Judson:** Lesia Barton Hightower received the Past Presidents Award for Staff Excellence on April 10 at Judson College's annual J-Day alumnae celebration.

Hightower is the eighth recipient of the award, which was first given in 2003, to recognize college staff for their contribution.

The award is determined by the

past presidents of the Judson College Alumnae Association based on nominations received from Judson students, faculty and staff.

Hightower, administrative assistant for institutional advancement, has worked at Judson for 11 years. She also assists with J-Day and the ministers' golf tournament in May.

► **Iona Gillespie Receives 2010 Alumnae Loyalty Award:** Iona Gillespie Fontaine received the 2010 Alumnae Loyalty Award on April 10 at Judson College's annual J-Day celebration.

Fontaine, a member of Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Montgomery, graduated from Judson in 1935 with a bachelor's degree in mathematics.

The award is given each year to an alumna recognized by her peers and the executive board as having supported the work of the college through involvement in her local alumnae chapter, participating in campus activities and serving as a mentor to others through community involvement.

"Iona Fontaine is deservedly recognized for her more than 75 years of devotion to her alma mater," said Judson President David Potts. "Her constant advocacy for Christian higher education in behalf of young women has been an important part of a truly remarkable life."



University of Mobile

► **UMobile Announces 2010-11 SGA Cabinet:** The Student Government Association at the University of Mobile announced the new cabinet for the 2010-11 school year.

Officers are Morgan Carnley, of

Enterprise, president; Josh Hem-bree, of Mobile, vice president; Amy Wright, of Mobile, secretary of academic affairs; Katie Allred, of Clanton, secretary of technological advancement; and Sara Dye, of Huntsville, secretary of campus relations.

► **Prestigious Megginson Awards Presented to Three U-Mobile Employees:** The 2010 Megginson awards were recently presented to three University of Mobile (UMobile) faculty and staff members at the university's spring employee luncheon.

These are the most prestigious employee awards at UMobile and are given every year to full-time faculty and staff who have made certain contributions to the teaching and betterment of the university.

The William A. Megginson Teaching Award was presented to Cynthia Biegler, chair of the department of early childhood education in the school of education. The Mitford Ray Megginson Research Award was presented to Mihaela Buhaiciuc, assistant professor of music in the Center for Performing Arts (CPA). The Emma Frances Megginson Service Award was presented to Lisa Normand Davis, administrative assistant in the CPA.

The individuals who received the Megginson awards were nominated by students, faculty and staff of the university.

Also honored were UMobile employees with 25 years of service: Vicki Burgin, director of campus operations; Jane Byrd, professor of management and accounting in the school of business; and Ted Mashburn, associate dean of the college of arts and sciences.



Photo courtesy of Glynwood Baptist Church

GLYNWOOD CHURCH NAMES TWO MEN DEACON EMERITI

On May 2, Glynwood Baptist Church, Prattville, honored Ray Graham (left) and Billy Waters (right) for their faithful service as deacons. Each was given a plaque and named deacon emeritus. C. Bruce Hose is pastor.



Photo courtesy of Missouri's Sedalia News-Journal

UP FROM THE ASHES — The Brothers of the Son motorcycle ministry in Sedalia, Mo., restored this 1967 Ironhead Harley-Davidson as a tool to get other bikers to attend local churches.

Raising Lazarus

Harley helps Missouri ministry introduce bikers to Christ

The 1967 Harley-Davidson Ironhead motorcycle once slumped against a wall, in bad shape and with a mulberry tree growing right through its heart. Rescued and restored, however, the Harley brought several motorcyclists back to God's house.

As soon as Donnie Hayworth eyed the vintage bike, he knew Brothers of the Son, a Sedalia, Mo.-based motorcycle ministry, had to attempt to restore it. As the months-long effort took shape, the men dubbed the Harley "Lazarus" and the process "the Lazarus Project."

'Beautiful,' 'desirable'

"We brought it from something unusable and undesirable to something beautiful, usable and desirable," Hayworth explained.

They recognized that God had accomplished the same thing in each of their lives.

"Jesus Christ does the same for us," Hayworth said. "We brought this motorcycle from the dead just as he raised Lazarus."

The men wanted to use their Lazarus, which hadn't been licensed since 1982, to demonstrate publicly God's transforming work in their hearts.

So they opted to give the bike away — but to add a little twist. They wanted to encourage the unchurched motorcycle community to see the church as a place of refuge and hope.

They found 12 churches willing to welcome bikers into their congregations. They created raffle tickets and distributed them at motorcycle rallies and wherever else they found ministry opportunities.

"All they had to do was to go to church, fill out their contact information and place it [the ticket] in the offering plate when it was passed," Hayworth explained.

Believing God has not called them to start a separate church but rather to minister through existing congregations, members of Brothers of the Son relied on the 12 partner churches to follow up with motorcyclists who visited worship services.

"Our goal is to get bikers in church ... not to create a church of our own, but to get them involved in those out there. We want to be a bridge," Hayworth said.

"I stressed [to the pastors] that [follow-up] was the most important key to the program. We gave them more tickets so that whoever went to do the follow-up could leave another ticket."

By the April 10 giveaway, 107 tickets had found their way into various offering plates. The event attracted some bikers to worship more than once.

"One guy finally stopped putting in tickets but kept going to church," Hayworth said.

Shannon Albright, who dropped his ticket into the plate at Olive Branch Baptist Church in Sedalia, won the April 10 drawing. When they gave him the bike, the Brothers of the Son emphasized that God had a purpose for his life.

"We told him that God had chosen him to receive it," Hayworth said. "He was completely blessed."

The Brothers of the Son meet monthly "but are involved in each other's lives daily," Hayworth explained.

They usually don't sponsor events. Instead, they participate in those scheduled in the motorcycle community where they can reach out "and get involved in their lives."

"Unless we build relationships with the people we try to minister to, it [ministry] will come to nothing."

The group is refurbishing a building in the small Missouri city's downtown. In it, they hope to host drug- and alcohol-recovery meetings and possibly a Friday or Saturday night service of some type.

"The weekend is hard for those trying to straighten up their lives. Many won't go to church," he said.

The Brothers of the Son see their lives as bridges to the church because they remain bikers themselves. "We live in the motorcycle community," he said. "The only difference is now we have Christ."

More Lazaruses

The Harley is actually the second bike Brothers of the Son have given away this year. They recently turned over the title to a 1972 Honda Scrambler to Terry and Carolyn Routon to use in their mission work in Haiti.

The bikers have already started restoring another deteriorated classic bike — a 1965 Triumph — to be given away next spring. "The rebuilding gives us a chance to pray over everything ... to make it into what Christ wants," Hayworth said.

And a chance for another "Lazarus" to bring a biker to Christ. (ABP)

World of Religion

Compiled from Wire Services

Youth in Nigeria burn church buildings, pastor's home

KWASAM, Nigeria — Scores of Muslim youth May 19 besieged church property in Kano state in northern Nigeria, destroying two church buildings and a pastor's residence.

One of the buildings and the pastor's house were set ablaze on the premises of the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) at Kwasam, in the Kiru Local Government area, while another building under construction was demolished.

A group reportedly numbering more than 100 in the predominantly Muslim area stormed the church grounds.

"The problem started when some Christian youths of ECWA church were converted to Islam," said Pastor Lado Abdul, chairman of ECWA district in Kano. "They swore that the ECWA church would not remain in the area, as they would do everything possible to chase Christians out from Kiru."

No life was lost during or after the incident. Abdul, however, lamented the denial of rights to Christians in Kano by area Muslims.

"Here in Kano, nobody gives you land to build a church," he said. "The old churches built before now are being demolished for reasons no one can easily grasp."

Kano State Police Commissioner Mohammed Gana said the attack on the church buildings grew out of a land dispute.

Four suspects have been arrested, and an investigation continues, the police chief said.

Two Iranian Christian women acquitted of all charges

TEHRAN, Iran — Nearly five months after releasing them from prison, an Iranian court has acquitted two women of all charges related to being Christians and engaging in Christian activities.

Iranians Maryam Rostampour and Marzieh Amirizadeh Esmaeilabad were arrested March 5, 2009, and detained on charges of "acting against state security," "taking part in illegal gatherings" and "apostasy" (leaving Islam) under Iran's Revolutionary Court system.

After eight months, on Nov. 18, 2009, authorities released them conditionally. Elam Ministries said the two women had fled Iran on May 22 to an undisclosed location and were recovering. Another Iranian convert who was forced to flee his country said the court likely made a political decision.

"The government would not want them to stay in the country as heroes," said the source, who requested anonymity. "It would be better for the government if they left Iran and didn't become a positive example for the rest of the Christian community in Iran. Otherwise they would create a precedent of [Christians] who have not denied their faith, who have been acquitted and still live as Christians inside the country."

Protestants arrested; church raided in Uzbekistan

TASHKENT, Uzbekistan — Uzbekistan has continued short-term jailing of religious minorities, with three Protestant Christians from a registered church receiving 15-day jail terms May 18.

Three other Protestants — arrested after a raid on the Tashkent church — were each fined 80 times the minimum monthly wage, and two other Protestants were fined five times the minimum monthly wage.

Six computers seized during the raid were ordered to be given to the state, and seized Christian literature was ordered to be destroyed.

"Everyone was shocked at the verdict because the defendants proved in court that they were innocent and there were so many violations of legal procedure," one Protestant said.

The court sat into the evening and the sentences were given at about 10:30 local time.

Among other recent punishments for "illegal" religious literature, one Baptist has been fined 20 times the monthly minimum wage and his religious literature — including the New Testament — was ordered to be destroyed.

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