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# FATHER'S Day is June 20

A tale of two young fathers holding onto faith while fearing the worst

By Jennifer Davis Rash  
The Alabama Baptist

In less than two weeks' time in 2009, two student ministers in different states began an eerily similar journey that makes this Father's Day extra special for them.

You see both of them still have their youngest daughters, something neither takes for granted.

First, there's Stephen Hall, minister to students for NorthPark Baptist Church, Trussville.

His 11-month-old daughter, Sadie, has multifocal lymphoendotheliomatosis with thrombocytopenia. This rare disease leaves her with skin lesions that are also on her gastrointestinal tract. These lesions cause bleeding and dangerously low blood levels. She is currently rotating between various procedures, blood

transfusions and several medications.

Then there's David Mitchell, minister to students for First Baptist Church, Rock Hill, S.C. His 3-year-old daughter, Belle, had a rare tumor called choroid plexus carcinoma removed from her head. It had metastasized to her spine before the first tumor was found. She is currently undergoing chemotherapy.

Both prognoses are uncertain.

Hall's journey began just after Sadie was born July 12. Mitchell's started in late July after Belle had surgery for a broken finger and her tremors were noticed.

Hall and his wife, Kelly, made their first www.CaringBridge.org (a free website to connect family and friends during a serious health event) blog entry Sept. 23. Mitchell and his wife, Kelley, made their first entry Sept. 29.

Did you notice Hall's and Mitchell's wives' names?

The Halls have three children. The Mitchells have four.

Sadie's full name is Sadie Annabelle, and she is sometimes called Sadie Belle. Belle's full name is Susanna Belle.

Both Hall and Mitchell have strong support from their respective church families. Both work with middle and high school students and have divinity degrees from Southern Baptist seminaries.

And while the two have never met, they know about each other's story and agreed to share their thoughts on this year's Father's Day.

## From Stephen Hall ...

Father's Day is coming soon. More than anything else, I am thankful that God has allowed me to be a dad to my three kids. He has given me the strength to stay faithful during the toughest year of my life. As a father, I would love to take on myself the pain my children feel. However, that is not possible in this case. I am grateful to God for allowing Sadie to live. I have learned to cherish the good moments God gives. I have also learned to be a father in the tough moments. In a phone call with a church member during one of the dark hours of this past year, he commented that my strong faith inspired him. I remembered thanking him while not understanding how in the world he saw my wreck of a life to be a strong faith. In the midst of the storm, I was do-

ing the only thing I could do. I was putting one foot in front of the other and continuing on the path to which God called me. I had no option other than to trust God's guidance and rely on Him. Throughout the year, a lyric from a song written from a good friend has resonated through my mind: "Though my heart and flesh may fail, Your Truth abideth still. Great is Your faithfulness to me." Before this year, I taught of God's abiding presence found in Jesus. As a father of a child struggling with a disease, I have experienced the abiding presence of God. His presence provides strength, joy and peace. Although I still have no ability to comprehend the greatest love act of

(See 'How,' page 3)

**Sunday, Nov. 15, 2009:** My body, mind and soul have begun to realize the craziness of the past few months. ... My soul hurts from what we have gone through with Sadie. I still have not let my mind think forward to the struggles that Sadie (and we) might endure. I have remained on the task at hand. Tomorrow is uncertain. ... Is there a reason for this? I realize that our character will be developed in this process, but I would rather not see my infant daughter tortured for my character development. Can healing happen? Will God save the day? How fervently should I pray? ... Would God respond? ... (As I ask) God's desired outcome in this, (I also know) God is my refuge. He is the supplier of my peace despite this turmoil. ... His blessings on my life are plentiful. ... To Him be all glory!

- Stephen

David and Belle



Stephen and Sadie

# COMMENT

## To Win or to Build Consensus?

It was supposed to be a day of celebration. After all, the event was the dedication of a new church building. Instead it was a sad day when fewer than half the church members joined the festivities. And even they wondered about how they would pay for the new complex.

About two years earlier, the church's new pastor had a vision of a new brick building located along a sweeping curve of a well-traveled county road about two miles from where the old wooden building stood. Some members bought into his vision, and the church made plans to relocate and construct a new building.

When decision time came, the motion to relocate passed by one vote. Such division might have caused some churches to take a second look at the project. But not in this case. Buoyed by a majority vote of one, the pastor moved ahead.

On the day the church was dedicated, his victory was clear for all to see. He had his new building, an impressive sight from either direction. Unfortunately he lost most of the church members as every step toward the new building seemed to result in fewer and fewer people committed to the project.

I left that service wondering if church leadership is about winning or about building a working consensus within the body of Christ. That is still an open question.

Sadly the young pastor moved to another church a few months after moving into the new building, leaving the members to struggle with a huge debt and a critical reputation for the next two decades.

### 'Bulldozing' toward a goal

James L. Sullivan, former president of the Baptist Sunday School Board (now LifeWay Christian Resources), used to talk about a bulldozer setting out to make a path from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Sullivan pointed out that a bulldozer is powerful enough to scrape aside obstacles in its path but when it reaches its final destination, it has only debris scattered along its way.

His point was bulldozing toward some goal may do more harm than good. This is especially true in volunteer organizations in which working together depends on common commitments to common values resulting in common goals.

Hudson Baggett, former editor of *The Alabama Baptist*, used to ask, "What convention?," when told that because the convention had voted on something, the issue was settled. Baggett asked if 8,000–10,000 messengers could adequately re-



### THOUGHTS By Bob Terry

flect the thinking of 14 million Southern Baptists (now the Southern Baptist Convention claims 16 million-plus members) or if 1,000 messengers could reflect the values of 1 million Alabama Baptists.

Baptists recognize the impossibility of "representing" others by our polity. No messenger represents anyone but himself or herself. Actions by a convention or opinions expressed in resolutions are binding only on those present and voting.

Baggett asked about the churches that were not represented when a vote was taken, about opinions of lay leaders, about those who help the individual congregations, which make up a denomination, function week in and week out. "What do these people think?" he frequently asked. And for him, what people in the local church felt was far more important than the result of some vote during a convention.

Baptists' congregational polity indicates that effective leadership is not so much about winning a vote in a church business meeting or a denominational annual meeting as it is about building a working consensus that allows the whole body to move forward together. After all, God is not divided.

The Great Commission Resurgence (GCR) Task Force report illustrates this point. These words were written before the vote on that important report. But one thing is clear: No matter the outcome of the vote on the GCR Task Force report, it is like the first inning of a ballgame. If the report was adopted June 15, then the next inning will be played in the various SBC entities charged with studying the issues and making decisions about implementing the recommendations. State conventions will play an inning as they determine how best to respond to the various recommendations. Of course, none of the recommendations will be effective without buy-in from local Southern Baptist churches, so the inning played there will be the most important of all. And there will be another inning in the national convention as messengers vote on implementation.

Whether the report was approved or declined, the game still continues. Every denomination must constantly change to face new challenges and respond to new opportunities. Issues raised

by the task force are not going away because of some convention vote. They must be addressed so again, SBC entities, state conventions and, most importantly, local churches will all play a part in determining the final outcome.

Just as it would be wrong for GCR champions to ignore the concerns of those who oppose the report, it would be equally wrong for opponents to ignore the passions of those who favor the proposed changes.

The report calls for unity where Southern Baptists work together in love for the sake of the gospel. The report lifts up the importance of relationships in which we consider others more important than ourselves. The report calls for us to speak truth to one another rather than attention-grabbing sound bites. The report envisions a future when all Southern Baptists are welcomed.

### All are welcomed

This kind of future is not based on winning. It is based on building a working consensus whether in a local church or a national body.

The pastor of the church mentioned above was ahead after the first inning of his church-relocating game. He got his new building but ended up losing the game. We hope Southern Baptists will be wiser than that young man and that we will be more concerned about building consensus than about our side winning.

## 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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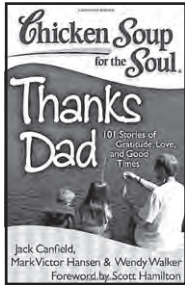
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## Alabama Baptist dad showcased

Bryan Gill is an author through and through. He's attempting to write more books — all at the same time — than most people read in a year.

And while it was *The Alabama Baptist* that gave him his first by-line, Gill recently made his national debut in the newly released "Chicken Soup for the Soul: Thanks Dad."



Gill's story about his father, David, garnered page 1 in a book of 101 Father's Day-related articles.

"I couldn't be more thrilled to be published in such a widely read book," said Gill, Baptist Collegiate Ministry director for Metro Memphis, Tenn. "I hope I never get used to the butterflies of seeing my name in print. I hope millions of people read it (and) see a beautiful picture of God's love. People need to know their Dad loves them."

### Unconditional love

Gill's story revolves around his final high school football game. A win meant his team would play in the state championship game, but his team lost by three points.

In humiliation, Gill did not want to see his dad, but with his dad's whistle came a dad's love. Gill thanks his dad for his unconditional love and for mirroring his heavenly Father's love for him.

Gill grew up in First Baptist Church, Eufaula, and was a member of First Baptist Church, Opelika, while a student at Auburn University. He also served as student minister for Farmville Baptist Church, Auburn. While working on his master of divinity from Beeson Divinity School at Samford University, Gill served in intern positions at Shades Mountain Baptist Church, Vestavia Hills, and Shades Crest Baptist Church, Bluff Park.

He has also served as a North American Mission Board summer missionary and worked with the collegiate and student office of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions. (TAB)

# Taking it to the next level

## Youth event to help teens create habit of sharing gospel

By Kristen Padilla  
The Alabama Baptist

This year's Youth Evangelism Conference (YEC) at Samford University in Birmingham July 16-17 promises to be more than a two-day event — if students let it.

After the speakers go silent and the music stops, the impact of YEC can go on if students take up its new 21-day challenge.

"There was a sense of leading from God that we needed to do more to help from this point — not to do a great two-day event but to help take the two-day event home and to take the two-day event to the next level of its impact," said Kyle Wiltshire, an associate in the office of collegiate and student ministries at the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions (SBOM).

To do that, the SBOM contacted Wayfarer ministries in Spartanburg, S.C.; worked with it to come up with this year's theme, "Breakable;" and signed it up to write the daily challenges, which vary from hosting a movie night with lost friends to prayer walking the church with someone else taking the challenge.

But why 21 days?

"There are some studies that show that if you do something for 21 days, it will create a habit," Wiltshire said.

The habit SBOM organizers hope students will create is one of "building relationships to share the gospel," said Keith Loomis, an associate in the collegiate and student ministries office.

Loomis noted that students can do the challenge collectively as a youth group or individually.

Youth leaders will walk away from the conference with "home-work," too, as there are four ser-



Graphic courtesy of SBOM

mon guides to go along with the challenge.

"If we have students and adults go back into their community and take this challenge and be intentional, then they'll make it into a routine ... and have a long-term impact," Loomis said. "The event will be wonderful, but as they leave the event, we're going to have a great opportunity for the message to last."

The event itself will be divided

into three parts: God breaking into our lives (salvation), God breaking through to change our lives (discipleship) and us breaking out to make Him known (evangelism).

### Working together

YEC will feature Wayfarer speakers Chris Brooks, Chad Norris and Dave Rhodes.

"They've been preparing three specific messages that work in concert," Wiltshire said. "They went

to college together, went to seminary together and are close friends. [They] are working together toward this 'Breakable' theme in order to bring forth a more unified presentation that has a beginning, middle and end." David Walker, who has worked with Wayfarer in the past, will lead worship, with special guest T Force Ministries.

For more information, call 1-800-264-1225, Ext. 275, or visit [www.thestudenthub.org](http://www.thestudenthub.org).

# HOW PRECIOUS IS THE TITLE *Daddy*

**Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2009:** We just spoke with the oncologist and are trying to digest what he has told us. ... Belle's cancer is rare and tough to beat, so the doctors aren't giving us much to hope on. ... They are painting a fairly dismal picture of her chances ... but I keep thinking that with God, all things are possible. I just want Him to step in and show these doctors what He can do to heal a baby from cancer when they can't find a way.

**Thursday, Oct. 8, 2009:** I am not sure how to feel anymore. I know I can trust God, but my emotional state is in major fatigue. ... God's power is not limited by my feelings or my exhaustion.

— David

(continued from page 1)  
all — God's turning away as His Son faced the wrath for my sin — Sadie, along with her struggles, has drawn this father closer to the Father than I could ever have been.

### From David Mitchell ...

Father's Day has always been one of those forced holidays that meant very little except the occasional crayon-drawn card that is somewhere between a drawing of an elephant and a picture of daddy. Just one of those days where mommy is forced to feel guilty enough for her flowers at Mother's Day to do some small token for the father. If I am to be completely honest, it never really meant much to me.

But all of a sudden, you hear the words "baby" and "cancer" in the same sentence and your perspective changes. What you previously viewed as a sad attempt to make

dads feel important takes on a whole new meaning.

Father's Day is not a day for others to lift you up and pat you on the back, but it is a day to be reminded how precious a gift you were given as a man when God allowed you the title of "daddy."

Isn't it funny how we view the world through the eyes of a narcissist and make self the center of the universe? I now know that I need to cherish every moment I can with my precious children, knowing that tomorrow is not promised nor guaranteed.

I love my babies and it is time for me to see how many smiles and laughs I can create with my children while I have them with me.

Thanks for a day like Father's Day to remind me that I am blessed beyond measure to have an opportunity to show the love of God to some small versions of myself. ❏

# Alabama hosts first stateside Nehemiah Teams training

By Kristen Padilla  
The Alabama Baptist

For Nazareth Baptist Church, Rainsville, the opportunity to impact seven countries and 15 people groups with the gospel seemed like a distant reality.

So when Pastor Roger Graham was asked if the DeKalb Baptist Association church could host 105 college students from 19 states and Canada training to work with Nehemiah Teams this summer, he jumped at the chance.

Started by International Mission Board (IMB) representatives and Alabama-natives Jim and Jill Smith, Nehemiah Teams is a summer international missions opportunity for college students. The students are divided into small teams and sent to work alongside IMB representatives throughout the world.

"These students are going out for 52 days," Jill Smith said. "If there were just 100 of them, that would be 5,200 days. Just the impact they are able to make in two months is more than one person could do in 14 years."

But before the students can make an impact, they have to be trained. In previous years, training was done on-site by the Smiths and other IMB representatives.

## 'Phenomenal' help

This year, the Smiths realized they couldn't do what God was asking them to do without some help and partners. So for the first time, training was provided May 31-June 8 at one location in the United States — Rainsville.

"It has been phenomenal how the church (Nazareth Baptist) and other churches have stepped in to help," Jim Smith said.

Though Nazareth has many resources, it needed and wanted other churches to help if for no other reason than to pass on the blessing, said Chris Townson, director of youth ministries at Nazareth.

"I found that the more people we can get involved to allow them the opportunity to serve our Lord by serving others just perpetuates that attitude of Christ," he said.

At least 11 other Baptist churches — Antioch, Fyffe; Broadway, Rainsville; First, Rainsville; First, Fort Payne; Second, Fort Payne; Maranatha, Rainsville; Minvale, Fort Payne; Mount Hermon, Fort Payne; Ruhama, Fort Payne; and Wills Valley Community, Fort Payne, all in DeKalb Association, and Happy Home, Henagar, in Sand Mountain Baptist Association — chipped in with meals, lodging, transportation and other needs.

"We were like God's church; we felt like we were just one big family," Graham said.

Kenneth Clement, director of missions for DeKalb Association, likened the coming together of the churches to a jigsaw puzzle.

"Everyone had a part and it all fit together," he said.

And churches weren't the only ones jumping in to help. St. Clair Baptist Association took its disaster relief shower trailer to Nazareth so the students could shower during their stay.

By holding training at one central location in the United States, Nehemiah Teams was able to do more to prepare the students like having them go through the IMB's risk management training and hear from Jeff Palmer, executive director of Baptist Global Response; past Nehemiah Teams participants; and other IMB personnel, Jill Smith added.

The students even had the opportunity to learn some languages and how to kill and skin chickens for food.

On June 6, Nazareth held a community worship celebration for the students. About 200 people were present to cheer the students on and hug them for their families who could not be present.

"We got to put the hands and the feet and the voice and the hug to [parents', pastors' and churches'] prayers," Graham said. "That's an overwhelming feeling when God gives you the opportunity to stand in the place of someone who has loved that young man or woman since they were an infant and you get the privilege of hugging them."

The celebration really hit home for many Nazareth members as five of the church's students were among those being trained to serve with Nehemiah Teams in Southeast Asia this summer.

## 'Big encouragement'

Jordan H., a Nazareth member and senior at the University of Alabama, said it was a "big encouragement" for him to know that there are 104 others just like him sharing the gospel and that they would all be praying for one another.

"Everyone is so excited and on fire," he said, asking for consistent prayer for them this summer.

The students will convene back at Nazareth Aug. 1-2 for a time of debriefing.

For more information, visit [www.nehemiateams.com](http://www.nehemiateams.com).

*EDITOR'S NOTE — IMB representatives names changed for security reasons.*



Photo courtesy of Nazareth Baptist Church

**VICTORY LINE** — Nazareth Baptist Church members and others form a victory line for Nehemiah Teams participants as they leave June 8 to serve in different parts of the world for 52 days. Training for the missions opportunity took place at Nazareth Baptist.



By Matthew Stephens  
Correspondent, TAB

## Someone You Should Know

### ANN DENDY

First Baptist Church, Pell City  
St. Clair Baptist Association

**FAVORITE BIBLE VERSES:** John 14:1-3  
and Matthew 6:9-15

**FAVORITE HYMNS:** "Because He Lives"  
and "It Is Well With My Soul"

**HOBBY:** Gardening

**FAMILY STATUS:** Married to James; five  
children from a previous marriage,  
Tom, Susie, Cindy, Jimmy and Judy



DENDY

Ann Dendy is a very active member of First Baptist Church, Pell City. She has been the church clerk for the past 15 years and is involved in Woman's Missionary Union. Dendy and her husband, James, also have created a unique ministry at their church. They pay the way for people who otherwise cannot afford it to go on missions trips.

**Q: What was your childhood like?**

A: I grew up in the Center Point area and attended Dawson Memorial Baptist Church. I grew up in a nice Christian home. Rev. J. Ivey Edwards baptized me when I was 11 years old.

**Q: How have you been involved in church through the years?**

A: I taught Sunday School for several years at Dawson. I also

taught a young women's class while we lived in Tallahassee, Fla. I do many things at [First,] Pell City, but one of my favorite ministries is one I created. My husband and I have the privilege to help [pay] for people to go on missions trips all over the world. It costs a lot to go on a missions trip, so we help people who cannot afford it. We also have a nursing home ministry. My husband and I go to different nursing homes and visit people. I had the privilege recently to visit someone and carry them a lily.

**Q: What did you get from those ministries?**

A: I get a blessing out of all of the things I do at my First Baptist Church of Pell City.

**Q: How have churches changed over the years?**

A: My church has grown to be

more missions-minded than it was when I was growing up.

**Q: How do you see yourself involved in church in the future?**

A: I will continue to sponsor missions. I will also continue to attend Sunday School, (be) a member of WMU and (be) the church clerk for as long as God wants me to.

**Q: What difference has being a Christian made in your life?**

A: God has enabled me to grow through the trials of life.

If you know of a person who should be featured as "Someone You Should Know," send his or her name, a contact number and the reason you think he or she should be featured to Someone You Should Know, c/o The Alabama Baptist, 3310 Independence Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209.

## Alabama Cooperative Program Gifts

Alabama Baptist Giving  
Year to Date through May 31, 2010

MAY	
CP Challenge Budget Goal .....	\$3,875,000
CP Challenge Budget Gifts .....	\$2,628,371
Under Goal for Month .....	\$1,246,629
YEAR TO DATE	
CP Challenge Budget Goal .....	\$19,375,000
CP Challenge Budget Gifts .....	\$17,388,662
Under Goal for Year .....	\$1,986,338

# Baptist News Briefs

Compiled from Wire Services

## Dallas church declared 'out of fellowship' with Texas convention

DALLAS — The Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) Executive Board voted May 25 to refuse any financial contributions from a Dallas church that has ordained as deacons practicing homosexuals, and the board has asked the church to stop identifying itself as affiliated with the BGCT.

The 63-4 vote by the BGCT Executive Board regarding Royal Lane Baptist Church came one day after Dallas Baptist Association's board voted to declare the church out of fellowship with the association. The BGCT board approved a motion from its executive committee acknowledging the autonomy of Royal Lane Baptist but also stating the BGCT "expresses its standards for churches identifying with the BGCT."

"In ordaining practicing homosexuals as deacons, the actions of Royal Lane place the church outside the BGCT understanding of biblical and historic views on sexual ethics," the motion said.

"Therefore, the executive committee recommends that the BGCT not accept any funds from Royal Lane Baptist Church in Dallas. We request that Royal Lane Baptist Church discontinue the publication of any materials that indicate that they affiliate with the BGCT. Funds received from Royal Lane Baptist Church since Jan. 1, 2010, will be returned to the church. This will also result in the disqualification for service of Royal Lane Baptist Church members on the BGCT staff and membership on boards and committees elected by the BGCT."

Two BGCT employees are members of Royal Lane Baptist Church, and the board was told they plan to move their membership to another church. Doug Washington, a director of the BGCT Executive Board and deacon at Royal Lane, spoke against the motion.

## New executive director elected for Tenn. Baptist Convention

BRENTWOOD, Tenn. — Randy Davis, president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention (TBC), was elected unanimously as the convention's next executive director, effective July 1, during a called meeting of the TBC executive board June 2.

Davis did not immediately accept the position, noting that he wanted to share his decision with his congregation, First Baptist Church, Sevierville, on June 6. After speaking to his church, Davis notified the executive board's president, Lon Shoopman, that he would accept the TBC position. Davis, 53, also had been the unanimous choice of both the search committee and the administrative committee of the executive board.

A native of Mobile, Davis has served in Tennessee since 1992 when he became pastor of First Baptist Church, Morristown. During his tenure there, the church averaged more than 150 additions each year. The church also increased its Cooperative Program (CP) giving from \$32,897 (4.2 percent) to \$188,373 (9.8 percent).

Davis accepted the pastorate of First, Sevierville, in 2001. The church has 4,300 members with an average attendance of 1,975. During Davis' tenure, the church has had more than 900 baptisms. CP giving has increased from \$105,000 (4 percent) in 2001 to \$388,000 (8.3 percent of current budget) with a goal of moving to 10 percent.

In addition to serving as the TBC president, Davis has been president of the Tennessee Baptist Pastors Conference and has served on the board of trustees of Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City. At the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) level, Davis has served as a trustee of the International Mission Board and on the SBC Committee on Committees and the Committee on Nominations.

## Tenn. Baptist secretary arrested on embezzlement charges

MORRISTOWN, Tenn. — A Southern Baptist church in eastern Tennessee is considering cutting back on ministries amid reports that a trusted employee of 47 years embezzled more than \$1.5 million in church funds. Police arrested Barbara Whitt, 68, longtime financial secretary at First Baptist Church, Morristown, Tenn., May 10 after a church audit found nearly \$500,000 in funds was missing. She is out of jail on a \$175,000 bond.

By May 26 local media were reporting that the amount of money stolen could be \$1.5 million, making it the biggest theft in the history of Hamblen County. "We're not going to stop the programs entirely," Pastor Dean Haun told the *Knoxville News-Sentinel*. "But we might have to tap on the breaks."

Whitt, a widow, is accused of writing 1,647 checks to herself between January 2008 and April of this year. Investigators say that each of the checks was larger than \$900 and totaled an average of more than \$50,000 each month. She is scheduled to face a grand jury July 2. If convicted, then she could be sentenced from eight to 12 years in prison.



Photo by Zach Pratt

**BLUE PRINTS** — Curtis Lauderdale (left), construction volunteer from Douglas Baptist Church, and Norman Hunter from FBC Akron look over blue prints for FBC Akron's new building.

# 'Building' up God's Kingdom

## Trussville's CrossPoint Baptist partners with FBC Akron

By Doug Rogers and Zach Pratt  
Correspondents, The Alabama Baptist

In a shady spot in the corner of the property, W.C. Walton was enjoying a front-row seat for history in the making.

In his nearly 93 years of living, most of it in the small west Alabama town of Akron, Walton certainly has seen his share of history. He remembers having just a wagon and a buggy before the days of trucks and tractors.

But nothing quite compares to the sight of 60 volunteers constructing a church in a part of town where no church has been before.

Of course, this isn't just any church. It's First Baptist Church, Akron — his church.

A member of First, Akron, "since I was grown enough to know I was a baby crying," Walton can think of only one word as he watches the volunteers from CrossPoint Baptist Church, Trussville, hard at work: "joy."

"We are blessed enough to have some help. We are really blessed," Walton said amid the echoes of hammering.

The building project, which took place June 7-11, was the realization of a dream that began about three years ago. "We started talking about building a church, but we didn't know how we were going to do it," explained Norman Hunter, co-chairman of deacons. "We knew we needed another church. We had a lot of children but no classrooms to educate them."

Hunter soon met Bill Wallace, director of missions for Hale Baptist Association, and told him of the

need for a new building. Wallace offered his help and put the church in touch with Mel Johnson, an associate in the office of global missions at the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions.

Johnson then presented the need to CrossPoint Baptist, which spends a week each year helping to construct a new church building somewhere in the United States.

Although CrossPoint considered several projects farther away from home, God clearly led it to make First, Akron, its 2010 project, said Executive Pastor Steve Parr.

"We just really feel like we're an answer to prayer for them," he said.

Members of the construction team began arriving June 6 and worshiped with the First, Akron, congregation in its current building. The next morning, a full crew of volunteers, which included members of churches CrossPoint has helped

build in previous years, began putting up walls on the concrete slab two blocks away. By the evening of June 10, the closed-in structure was hosting worship for members of the construction team and First, Akron.

Those who passed by the site as the church was going up saw barriers being broken down with a black church in a predominantly black community being built by predominantly white volunteers.

"To see our brothers and sisters come down like they did from Birmingham is just heartwarming," Hunter said. "We're all trying to work together to build up God's Kingdom here on earth."

The church's new location is significant, too. A railroad track runs through the middle of town, and this is the first church to be built north of the track. It's something God had planned, Hunter said.

"To have this church built right here is going to be a great asset to the town of Akron. I think it will bring it back to life," he said.



WALTON



Photo by Zach Pratt

**LOCATION** — Volunteers constructed the new walls of FBC Akron Jun 7-11 just two blocks from its original site. Its new location makes it the first church to be built on the north side of town.

# Across Alabama's Associations

## AUTAUGA

► **T.J. Conwell** is the new pastor of **County Line Church, Deatsville**. ► **Paul Pierce** is the new interim pastor of **Evergreen Church, Billingsley**.

## BESSEMER

► **Eastern Valley Church, Bessemer**, will hold Grand Summer Slam. On June 30, James Spann will speak, and the Lighted Road praise group will provide special music. On July 7, Ron and Austin Foster will sing gospel music. On July 14, Ryan Hand's band will sing contemporary music, and there will be a community party. On July 21, ventriloquist Geraldine and Ricky will perform. John Mooney is pastor. ► **Shady Grove Church, Bessemer**, will celebrate its 94th homecoming June 27, 11 a.m. A covered-dish lunch will follow. New Vision will sing at 1 p.m. Patrick Buckner is pastor.

## BIRMINGHAM

► **First Church, Overton**, in Irondale, will celebrate homecoming June 20, 10:30 a.m. Uplifted will sing. Lunch will follow. There will be at singing at 1 p.m. Jimmy Ray is pastor.

## CLARKE

► **Stave Creek Church, Jackson**, recently completed its new restroom facilities. It is currently working on a new children's playground. Jamie Lay is pastor.

## COFFEE

► **Fairview Church, Samson**,

will hold revival June 20–23 with Jimmy Allen, of Dadeville. Services will be Sunday at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. and weeknights at 7. Ralph Jones is pastor.

## ETOWAH

► The chancel choir of **Twelfth Street Church, Gadsden**, will present "Homeland" June 27, 6 p.m. Ronnie Cornutt is minister of music. Craig Carlisle is pastor.

## FRANKLIN

► **Calvary Church, Russellville**, will celebrate its 50th anniversary July 11, 10:30 a.m., with former Pastor James Warren as guest speaker. There will be special music. Sunday School will be at 9:30 a.m. Lunch will follow the service. The church is looking for mailing addresses of former members. Call 256-332-2804. Wade Wallace is pastor.

## MADISON

► **Flint River Church, Hazel Green**, will hold its 5th annual Freedom Celebration June 27 with Wally, host of the nationally aired radio show Total Axxess. Gates will open at 3:30 p.m. There will be fireworks, hot air balloon rides, segway rides, amusement rides, inflatable games, a custom car show, food and music by McKenzie Lockhart, Rush of Fools and NewSong. For information visit [www.frbc.org](http://www.frbc.org). Steve Bell is pastor.

## MUD CREEK

► **First Church, Oak Grove, in**

**Bessemer; Smithville Church, Bessemer; and Union Hill Church, Bessemer**, will host a community revival June 27–30, nightly at 6:30, at Oak Grove High School. Evangelist Bill Stafford will speak Sunday; Mike Simpson, pastor of Smithville, Monday; Lee Praytor, pastor of First, Oak Grove, Tuesday; and Mickey Bell, pastor of Union Hill, Wednesday. For information call 205-491-1103.

## NORTH JEFFERSON

► **Sharon Heights Church, Birmingham**, and the North Jefferson Chapter of BHA (Bowhunters of Alabama) will hold its annual Archery 3D Tournament July 10, 8 a.m., at Brookside Greenway Park. BHA rules and classes will apply. Food and drinks will be available. For information call 205-674-9206 or visit [www.sharonheights.org](http://www.sharonheights.org). Jason Dunlap is pastor.

## PICKENS

► **Pleasant Hill Church, Sapps community**, will celebrate homecoming June 27, 10:30 a.m., with Bryan McElroy as guest speaker. A covered-dish lunch will follow at noon. Singing with Doug Warren will be at 1 p.m. Billy Little is pastor.

## ST. CLAIR

► **Spring Valley Church, Springville**, will host coaching legend Bobby Bowden June 20, 10:15 a.m. Barry L. Britt is pastor. ☞

# FBC Talladega reflects on 175 years of ministry, looks forward to future

By **Greg Heyman**  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

One hundred and seventy-five years — that's a lot of lives that have been touched," Terry Barksdale said of the ministry of First Baptist Church, Talladega.

The Coosa River Baptist Association church celebrated its heritage May 30.

Approximately 350 people attended the celebration, compared to an average worship attendance of more than 250, according to Barksdale, minister of music and senior adults.

"We had several folks who came in from out of town and lots of adults who had been raised in the church that were here with their families," he said.

Rick Lance, executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, delivered the message.

A history of First, Talladega, was prepared by Lela Locklin, a member since June 1965. The history tells of the church's various

locations and name changes and the role it played in events related to Baptist life in the state.

The church was begun by 10 members in 1835, and its first building was located at the corner of Spring and North streets. The congregation moved to a new building approximately five blocks away on East Street in 1873 and met in the basement until renovations on the upper floor could be completed in 1878.

In February 1933, the congregation moved to its current meeting place on North Street, just two blocks from the East Street location and seven blocks from its original site.

## Historical moments

A new sanctuary was added to the property in December 1948. The former worship center is still used as a chapel that Barksdale said was renovated in conjunction with the anniversary.

The history also notes that the Alabama Baptist State Convention met at the church in 1841, 1857,

1878 and 1888. During that first meeting, a discussion was held about the establishment of what would become Samford University.

## 'Give God the glory'

Barksdale said the church once commanded a large membership. "In 1954, the membership peaked at 1,515 members and from 1975 to 1984, exceeded 1,300 members," he said.

While she enjoyed seeing old friends return for the anniversary celebration, Locklin said the celebration was really about the new things God is going to do in the life of First, Talladega.

"The Lord has done great things in this church, and He's going to do great things from now on," she said.

"And I think one of the advantages of looking at the past is so you can be inspired to go on and continue the work and to give God the glory."

James McCain is interim pastor of First, Talladega. ☞

# Alabama updates

## People, churches making news across the state

### *Pintlala Baptist Church celebrates golden anniversary*

There was a feeling of excitement in the home of Curtis and Katharine Massey on that day in 1960.

It was June 5 and 48 people had gathered to be a part of history — the launching of Pintlala Baptist Church. Bart Kennedy, a student and football player at Howard College (now Samford University) in Birmingham, delivered the first sermon. It was a celebratory first worship service.

There was a similar atmosphere of excitement 50 years and one day later as members of Pintlala Baptist gathered to celebrate the church's golden anniversary.

During Jubilee Celebration Day on June 6, Pastor Gary Burton described highlights of the church's history and those in attendance were invited to sign a banner, which will be on display throughout the 50th anniversary year and will be placed in a time capsule on the 51st anniversary. Montgomery Baptist Association and the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission also presented plaques to the church.

Charter and 50/50 members were recognized during the celebration. The 50/50 concept was developed two years ago by Bev Williams, coordinator of ministries and financial assistant at Pintlala Baptist. She challenged the church to add 50 new members by its 50th anniversary, and the goal was surpassed with 52 new members. Framed photos of each of the 50/50 members were on display at the front of the sanctuary during the service.

While honoring and remembering the past, Burton also encouraged the church to look toward the future. "We are Christians first and Baptists second," he said. "As we face transition and find a new image, we must never forget our heritage and identity."

### *Covington church's deaf ministry marks 25 years*

Twenty-five years ago, Covington County's deaf population was offered an opportunity to participate in worship services and church activities. That opportunity quickly grew into a full-scale ministry at First Baptist Church, Andalusia, in Covington Baptist Association.

On April 24–25, the ministry celebrated its silver anniversary with special activities, including a reunion.

The ministry began in 1985 after Roy and Linda Weaver moved from a Florida church where they had been interpreters for the deaf. They asked then-Pastor John Foster if they could start a deaf ministry at First, Andalusia. Foster agreed.

Interpreters translate the sermon as well as the music's lyric. Each year, the interpreters, as well as the deaf participants, attend a conference at Shocco Springs Baptist Conference Center in Talladega. Mary Hill, who was one of the first people to get involved in the ministry and served as its director for a 10-year stint, said it is one of the most exciting things they do together. "It is always very meaningful for us," she said.

Pastor Fred Karthaus said, "[The deaf ministry] has been very meaningful in many ways to our church. It has opened up an opportunity for the deaf to be actively involved in our worship service and to be able to hear through sign the music and sermon that is preached.

"[The deaf ministry] has been a blessing to me as a pastor and I know to our congregation for these past 25 years."

John Twitty currently serves as director of the ministry.

### *Bigbee Association relocates, has new 'identity'*

For the first time in its history, Bigbee Baptist Association has an office building away from the University of West Alabama's (UWA) campus in Livingston.

Up until about two years ago, the office of the director of missions and the Baptist campus minister of UWA was one and the same. Once the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions decided to separate the two positions, Bigbee Association began looking for new property.

After coming on board seven months ago, Director of Missions Larry Potts went to a real estate agent office to look at property; instead the agent offered to sell his building in downtown Livingston.

"It was a walk-in kind of deal," Potts said. "I saw this as God's hand. You see His hand throughout the process; it was one of those God things."

So after purchasing the building in November 2009, the association moved in April 15 and held an open house and dedication May 23.

"(For) so many years, [the associational office] was a combination (with UWA's campus ministry), and so many small churches didn't have a concept of what the association could do," Potts said. "I think having a building gives us a sense of identity with the churches. I hope it's more conducive (for our churches) to visit the associational office." ☞

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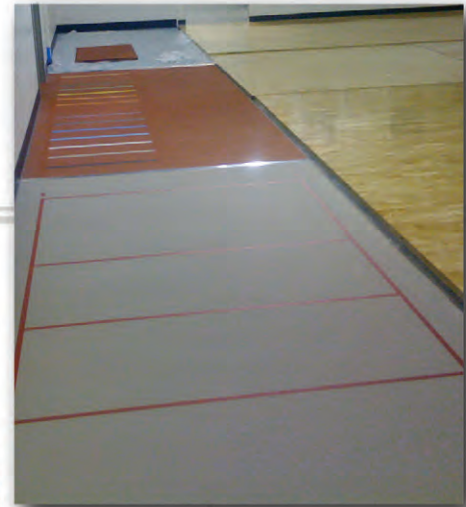


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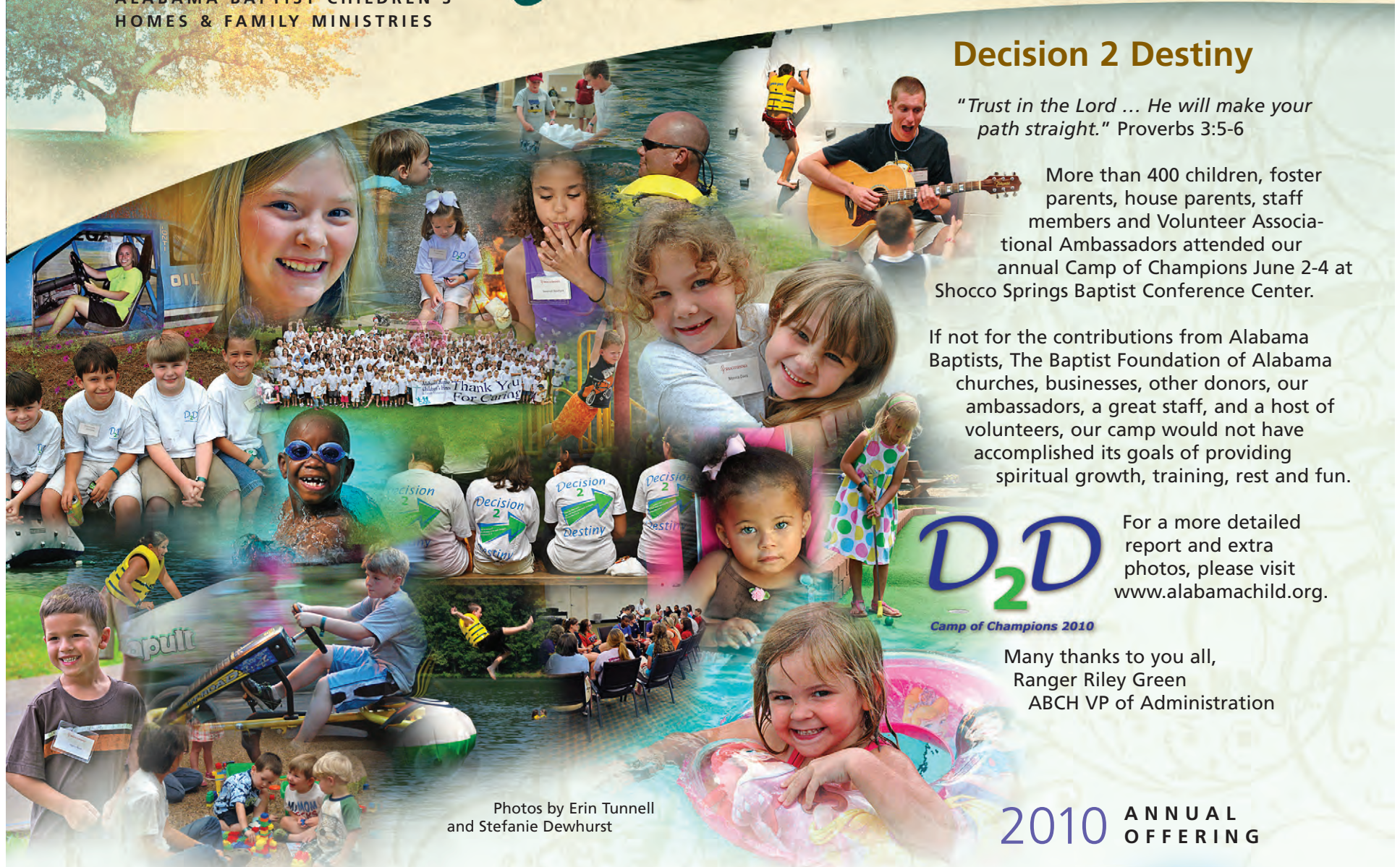


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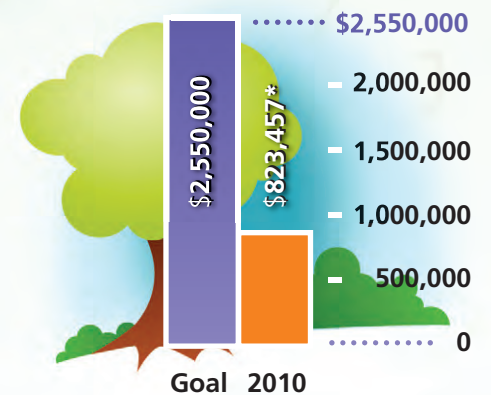


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## ask Anne

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If this is the case, you might want to encourage him or her to make a doctor's appointment to rule out any medical cause for this behavior. If you are still concerned after a healthy check-up, remember that there may be underlying emotional difficulties that need to be addressed through a conversation with a friend, loved one, or a therapist.

Have a question for Anne? Email [askanne@abchome.org](mailto:askanne@abchome.org) or mail "Ask Anne" c/o Alabama Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries, 2681 Rocky Ridge Lane, Birmingham, AL 35216.

\*This column is not intended to substitute for an actual session with a licensed counselor.



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## Resource center 'enhances' bivocational program

By Anna Swindle  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

It's difficult enough balancing one full-time job with a family and social life, but for the pastors of about half of Alabama's Baptist churches, there's another layer added on.

"Fifty-four percent of Baptist churches in Alabama are pastored by a bivocational minister," said Chip Smith, an associate in the office of LeaderCare and church administration with the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions. "That means if these people didn't do what they do, half the Baptist churches in Alabama would have to close their doors."

But even though bivocational pastors make up a staggeringly significant portion of the pastoral population in the state, they often feel isolated within their communities, Smith said.

Fortunately Samford University's Resource Center for Pastoral Excellence recognized their need and created programming specifically aimed at generating networking, support and educational opportunities for pastors who find themselves juggling two jobs.

"Our state convention does what it can but it's never enough," said Michael Wilson, the center's program director. "This group is under-resourced more than any group of clergy. What we're hoping is that most of our programming now goes to the location where these ministers are. When you work full time and then pastor, you don't have much discretionary time."

The center's efforts haven't gone unnoticed. Started thanks to support from the Lilly Endowment's Sustaining Pastoral Excellence initiative in 2003, the center reaches out to ministers across the state, Baptist and otherwise. Since 2008, it also has received support from the James E. Davidson Fund for Rural Ministries, which has helped it reach bivocational pastors specifically. It has worked to create networks with other such centers nationwide, and that led to it being named a Regional Resource Center by the Bivocational & Small Church Leadership Network this past spring. It is one of only seven such

centers in the United States. And what does such a designation mean for the center?

"The regional center will allow us to do the same thing we've been doing, only enhanced," Wilson said. "For example, we've been wanting to host a computer workshop at Samford. We want to bring a group of bivocational ministers up Friday night and lodge them, and then we'd have the meeting Friday and Saturday. We'd give them software that would be very helpful to them. We'd train them in it and provide them with a copy of the software at no cost to them. What we're trying to do is provide the next level of resources for those who can take advantage of it."

Access to such events wouldn't merely be educational — it also would be immensely encouraging, serving as a chance for bivocational pastors to gather and fellowship.

Tim Fields, who was a bivocational pastor for several years before retiring from BellSouth and moving into full-time ministry at Big Sandy Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa, said the center is helping to fill a gaping hole for bivocational pastors.

### Not alone

"As a bivocational pastor, being able to study [with others] is rare," Fields said. "It's good to sit down and read a book or go through a course of study, and you can learn a lot, but to be able to sit down and have somebody lead that and give everyone the opportunity to be involved, you can just learn more, not just from what you're seeing and reading but also gathering from other people's experiences. Just the fellowship meant so much. It's one of those things where you're out there and thinking you're an island by yourself and you find out you're not."

Expanding that breadth of coverage and reaching out to more bivocational pastors on a more consistent basis is the ultimate goal, Wilson said. "We love to collaborate and are always happy to find partnerships to encourage and strengthen ministers," he said.

For more information, visit [www.samford.edu/rcpe](http://www.samford.edu/rcpe) or call 205-726-4064.

*"What we're hoping is that most of our programming now goes to the location where these ministers are."*

Michael Wilson  
Resource Center  
for Pastoral Excellence



Reuters photo

**ENTHUSIASTIC** — Fans hold up a South African flag before the 2010 World Cup opening match between South Africa and Mexico at Soccer City stadium in Johannesburg, South Africa.

## A world-sized platform

### Baptists use World Cup to take gospel to nations

For most of the globe outside the United States, it's like the Super Bowl plus the NCAA Basketball Tournament plus the World Series plus the Olympics, all in one event. And Baptists in South Africa and elsewhere were ready for the ministry opportunities surrounding the FIFA World Cup, which began June 11 in South Africa. The 32-team tourney is scheduled to last a month, with a championship match July 11 in Johannesburg.

South African Baptists have planned ministry opportunities around the quadrennial international soccer tournament — from screenings of matches in local churches to sponsorship of children's soccer tournaments to the publication of a special outreach-oriented newspaper at World Cup events, according to the Baptist World Alliance.

Eastside Community Church in Pretoria, South Africa, sponsors a yearlong internship program for young Christian leaders called Ignite the Flame. The program focuses on developing the outreach of smaller and under-resourced congregations through the interns, and in 2010 it has had a special focus on developing ministries and partnerships around the World Cup events.

Among the Ignite interns are a group of Virginia Baptists who will help lead soccer clinics and direct other children's ministry events with a soccer theme.

Brazilian Baptists have sent more than 150 volunteers. They'll work as part of the Africa Connection 2010 program and will help with sporting events, personal evangelism, Vacation Bible Schools, seminars, evangelistic meetings and medical care. BMS World Mission, the mis-

sions arm of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, already sponsored a Nicaraguan team in a soccer tournament, held in March in South Africa for street children.

During the World Cup festivities, BMS is offering a series of soccer-related video resources — including testimonies from Christian soccer stars — to churches to use as outreach devices.

### Tapping into the passion

Southern Baptist Convention representatives with the International Mission Board (IMB) are also among the crowds spreading the gospel.

"The world is coming to South Africa," said IMB representative Wade Coker. "There is such a passion for the sport that ... [w]e want to tap into the passion they have for that with the passion we have for

our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."

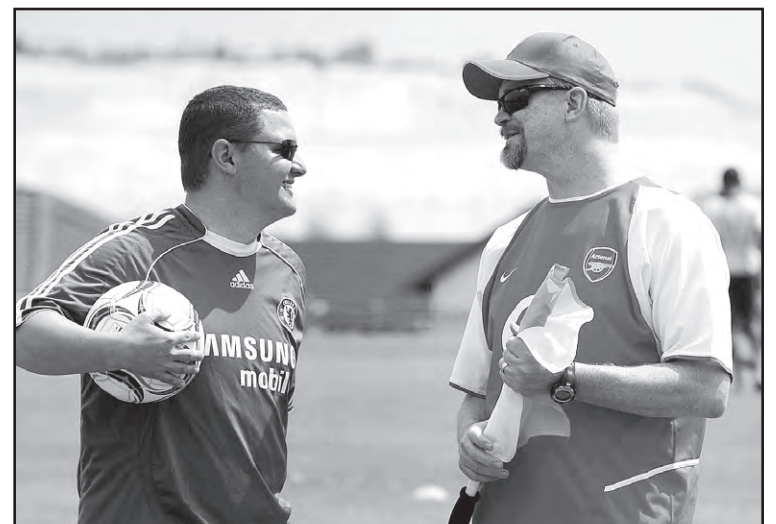
Plans are to share the gospel with the hundreds of thousands of fans who will be attending. In addition, efforts will be made to use the event as an avenue to evangelize and plant churches in some of South Africa's major urban centers.

IMB representative Kurt Holiday added, "We will have the ability to use soccer to get into areas where it is normally not easy to get into, to be welcomed and have a platform."

And telling the story of all of it will be 20 Baptist journalists, most of whom serve with the IMB. The group of writers, photographers and videographers will focus on missions efforts as well as Christian athletes competing in the event.

For prayer resources and daily news about World Cup events, go to [www.WorldSoccerJourneys.org](http://www.WorldSoccerJourneys.org).

(ABP, BP)



BP photo

**MORE THAN A GAME** — IMB representatives Brad Siedschlag (left) and Kurt Holiday enjoy a brief moment while working with kids at a soccer camp.

# SoulStock draws thousands of youth to Decatur to worship, hear gospel

By **Martine G. Bates**  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

The sun was hot, the crowds were large, the music was loud and the enthusiasm was palpable at Point Mallard in Decatur for the 12th annual SoulStock on May 22. Vendors lined both sides of the park's large grassy field, but the attention was all on the stage as a series of bands and speakers led the audience in worship.

Although the event featured eight bands, promoters are quick to point out that SoulStock is not a concert.

## Obama expands benefits to same-sex partners

President Barack Obama extended more benefits June 2 to the same-sex partners of federal employees.

Adding to privileges he bestowed on partners of homosexual federal workers last June, Obama included the following benefits among those he ordered to be granted by executive agencies: designation of same-sex partners and their children as "family members" in assistance programs, payments for travel and relocation and access to credit unions, fitness centers and counseling services.

The president also instructed all agencies that extend new benefits to spouses of heterosexual employees to provide those same rights to same-sex partners of federal workers.

The new memorandum was another in a series of White House actions supporting homosexual

"It's a Christian music festival — a worship event," said Phillip Presley, pastor of The Bridge at Valley Church, a nondenominational church in Athens. "We're not here to entertain but to worship. The entertainment is a bonus."

The event began in 1998 as Rockin' With Jesus, an attempt by Presley to reach youth in the area.

"We (the church) wanted to have a youth rally," he recalled. "We brought in a band and invited everybody. We held it behind the church, served grilled hamburgers for the

175 who showed up and when it was over, people volunteered to help make it an annual event."

This year, the event was moved to Point Mallard and featured several artists, including local favorite Sarah Reeves and the big draw of the evening, Newsboys. Matt Pitt, who runs a Birmingham-based ministry called The Basement, was the featured speaker.

Brittney Plemmons, who attended with her family and youth group from Cave Spring Baptist Church, Decatur, was especially impacted by Pitt's message.

"Matt Pitt really got the crowd into it," she said. "His whole message was just amazing — he shared his testimony about being a drug addict for seven years."

Not all of the action was on the stage though. For people who want to accept Christ or have other needs, a prayer tent is a regular feature at SoulStock.

Alan Watson, a member of Life-Point Baptist Church, Decatur, wandered into a SoulStock prayer tent a few years ago during a troubling time in his life.

"I got prayed for and encouraged," he said. And for the past two years, Watson has volunteered to work the prayer tent so he might help and encourage others.

"I usually pray with about 15 to 20 people each year at SoulStock. Some want prayer for salvation,

but most need prayer for a problem they have. It can be embarrassing to talk to friends, but people can get ministered to here," Watson said.

Presley noted that although there is a place for prayer at the event, there is not an emphasis placed on collecting information on decisions made. Follow-up is left to local youth ministers and Christian youth.

"Matt Pitt encouraged people to respond to their own youth pastor — even if they didn't come with a church, go to their neighbor they came with," Presley said. "We try to plug it as 'bring a friend to

a free concert.' We plant the seed and let it go from there. We're not big on numbers. When we get to heaven, I guess we'll log on to the computers and see how many we reached."

This year's SoulStock drew more supporters than ever before with 39 churches (17 of them Alabama Baptist churches) and several businesses serving as sponsors. Presley reported that estimates put the crowd at somewhere between 12,000 and 20,000.

"We were able to plant the seed of Jesus and promote a spirit of unity," he said. "It's all to God's glory."

Presley said next year's SoulStock is "penciled in" for May 21 and should be held again at Point Mallard.

For more information, visit [www.soulstock.com](http://www.soulstock.com).

*"We plant the seed and let it go from there. We're not big on numbers."*

Pastor Phillip Presley  
The Bridge at Valley Church

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**BIVOCATIONAL MINISTER OF WORSHIP:** Calera Baptist Church is accepting resumes for a bivocational minister of worship. Please forward resumes to: Search Committee, Calera Baptist Church, P.O. Box 186, Calera, AL 35040, or e-mail to: [andy.gill@cvhealth.net](mailto:andy.gill@cvhealth.net).

**MINISTER OF YOUTH & EDUCATION:** New Hope Baptist Church in the Clarkdale community of Lauderdale County, Miss., is seeking God's man for the full-time position of minister of youth and education. Please e-mail resumes to: [prawson@bellsouth.net](mailto:prawson@bellsouth.net), or mail to: NHBC Search Committee, 6573 Hwy 145, Meridian, MS 39301. Deadline for submitting is July 17.

**PART-TIME/BIVOCATIONAL YOUTH MINISTER:** Montevallo First Baptist Church is seeking a part-time/bivocational youth minister. If interested please

call 205-665-2566.

### OTHER POSITIONS

**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](mailto:kmcgainey@abchome.org) or 1302 Ross Clark Circle, Dothan, AL 36301.

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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



## University of Mobile

► **Summer Events Part of 'Injustice' Focus:** The University of Mobile (UMobile)

will set the stage for the launch of International Justice Mission's (IJM) 5 Weeks for Freedom campaign — a 1,800-mile bicycle tour along the Underground Railroad to raise awareness and funds for IJM's work to combat modern-day slavery, sexual exploitation and other forms of injustice.

The public is invited to June 26 events in Ram Hall on the UMobile campus. These include

► a concert by UMobile student Kyle Fredicks and the rock group The Wrecking at 6:30 p.m.

► a screening of the "rockumentary" Call + Response at 8:30 p.m. This film takes viewers to where slavery is thriving, from the child brothels of Cambodia to the slave brick kilns of rural India, and reveals that in one year, slave traders made more money than Google, Nike and Starbucks combined.

June 26 events also will feature appearances by the riders who will cycle to bring awareness of slavery to the historic Underground Railroad from Mobile to Buffalo, N.Y.

For more information about IJM and how to get involved in the Weeks for Freedom campaign, visit the official campaign website at [www.5weeksforfreedom.org](http://www.5weeksforfreedom.org).

For information about the kick-off event at UMobile, call the UMobile Campus Life office at 251-442-2429.



## Samford University

► **Three Samford Students Receive Fellowships:** Recent Samford University graduate Jeremiah I. Chester, of West Palm Beach, Fla., and religion majors Megan Lacy, of Murfreesboro, Tenn., and Andrew Toney, of Collierville, Tenn., have been awarded competitive fellowships from The Fund for Theological Education (FTE), funded by Lilly Endowment Inc.

Chester was named a 2010 FTE Congregational Fellow in recognition of his demonstrated gifts and commitment to potential ministry. He will receive a \$10,000 fellowship during his first year in the master of divinity degree program at Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey.

Lacy and Toney will each receive

a FTE Undergraduate Fellowship, which includes \$2,000 for tuition and other educational expenses.

FTE undergraduate and congregational fellows are chosen by a national committee of theological educators and church leaders on the basis of academic achievement, an interest in exploring ministry as a vocation and demonstrated leadership in a church or school. Fellows were selected from applicants across the United States and Canada.



## Judson College

► **Chemist to Speak at Judson:** Chemist and alumna Evelyn J. Ellis-Grosse will

be commencement speaker at Judson College on June 26.

Ellis-Grosse, a native of Centre, graduated from Judson in 1988 with

a bachelor of science degree and earned a master's degree in pharmaceutical science and a doctorate in biopharmaceutics at Auburn University.

Commencement will be at 11 a.m. in the Alumnae Auditorium.

► **Psychology Professor Retires:** Longtime psychology professor Jack Fowler will retire at the end of the summer after 44 years at Judson College.

During his time at Judson he won both of the teaching awards for classroom excellence twice.

Fowler, a native of Panola, earned his bachelor's degree in secondary education at Livingston State Teacher's College, now the University of West Alabama. Fowler earned his master's degree and his doctorate in educational psychology and counseling at the University of Alabama.

He and his wife, Maxine, are members of Siloam Baptist Church, Marion. He has also served as dea-

con, on various church committees and in the sanctuary choir.

► **Brooks Promoted to Professor:** Judson College trustees voted to promote associate professor Michael Brooks to the rank of professor at their spring meeting. Brooks has taught at Judson since 1998. He teaches courses in public speaking, journalism and religion and serves as public relations officer for the college.

He also serves as pastor of Pine Flat Baptist Church in Cahaba Baptist Association.

► **New Department Head Named:** Gwen McCorquodale has been named department head for Judson College's teacher education program. McCorquodale has taught at Judson since January 2008 and was named interim department head last August.

She is a member of Vestavia Hills Baptist Church in Birmingham Baptist Association.

## HEART OF MISSIONS ...

Youth from five **Autauga Baptist Association** churches took part in the fifth associational Guatemala youth missions trip. Led by Bo Mills, youth pastor of Camellia Baptist Church, Prattville, and Larry Jenkins, student minister of First Baptist Church, Prattville, a team of 32 traveled to Xelaju (Quetzaltenango), Guatemala, March 12–20. Carlos Lemus, Hispanic missionary for Autauga and Chilton associations, helped plan and lead the trip. He served as a translator and guide since he is from Guatemala.

The missions team communicated the gospel in school assemblies. In elementary schools, the team held Vacation Bible School (VBS) type of presentation including a Bible story, crafts, dramas put to music and puppets. In junior high and high schools, the team gave a True Love Waits presentation including dramas put to music and skits.

The team held VBS for Judah Baptist Church, one of the two local churches with which it partnered. The female team members led a women's conference at Judah Baptist, where five women made professions of faith in Christ. The group also visited a nursing home, where two of the residents made professions of faith.

"We felt we were effective in sharing the gospel in the schools and getting the church's name throughout the community," Mills said. "Hopefully the name recognition will increase the community's awareness of the church and help

them when they knock on someone's door."

After presenting the gospel in a neighboring community, one man professed his faith in Christ. One of the translators expressed how important that single decision for Christ was, because it likely will lead to the conversion of his family.

Chris George, pastor of **First Baptist Church, Mobile**, led a team of 19 people to Mission, S.D., May 29–June 5. This was the third trip to minister to the Lakota (Sioux) on the Rosebud Reservation. The missions team not only wanted to share the gospel, but they also "wanted to learn more about this neglected and forgotten group of people in our own country," George said.

There they worked with Methodist representatives Russell and Donna Masertis of Tree of Life Ministry and partnered with a small Methodist church from Kansas and two larger Catholic groups from California and Nebraska.

The members of their group installed a tin roof on a large warehouse facility, completed many construction projects, visited with the elderly at a local nursing home and cooked and served meals to nearly 200 people each day. They also worked in a thrift shop sorting clothing and stocking shelves, all while building relationships with the Lakota people. Each night, they had an opportunity to meet with a member of the Lakota tribe and

learn about life on the reservation and share with them the gospel.

"The trip was a wonderful success," George said. "Even as we sought to touch others, we realized that we were being touched by this experience. We discovered that God is at work in the South Dakota plains, remembering these forgotten people and loving them."

Herman Pair, pastor of First Baptist Church, Sandusky, in Birmingham Baptist Association and president of International Bible Institute, traveled to Limuru, Kenya, April 5–14. Three other institute leaders also participated.

They worked with the Baptist Convention of Kenya to train 50 pastors to start 50 International Bible Institute satellite schools in Eastern Africa. The ministry provided the lodging, food and educational materials for the pastors who traveled from Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Congo. The training took place at Kenya Baptist Theological College in Tigoni and involved 16 basic courses including pastoral ministry, preaching, Bible survey, pastoral counseling, Christian doctrine, leadership and missions training.

This was the sixth year that the ministry has sponsored such a missions trip.

"Throughout the six years we've gone, over 200,000 people have come to Christ through pastors trained [at the conference] and over 1,500 churches have been planted [in Africa]," Pair said.

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# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For June 20

## Explore the Bible By Robert Olsen

Assistant Professor, School of Christian Studies, University of Mobile

### FOUR REASONS TO PRACTICE CHRISTIAN MORALITY 1 Corinthians 6:1-11, 13b-20

#### To Help Your Church (1-6)

Paul criticized the Corinthians for taking lawsuits to the public courts instead of using the church to settle the matter. How can Christians claim to be one in the body of Christ when they look to non-Christians to settle internal disputes? In resolving matters internally, while looking to godly leadership, the church demonstrates its unity and casts a positive light on Christ's body. It is not exactly clear what Paul meant when he spoke of judging angels — either we will sit in judgment upon Satan, a fallen angel, and his demons or Paul was referring to how Christians will be placed over angels when in heaven — regardless, since we will be privileged enough to be judging angels, we surely should be able to resolve our disagreements within the church here on earth. When our churches act in a moral fashion, we should be able to avoid situations in which a court would be needed in the first place so that we portray a positive picture of unity and love.

#### To Exhibit Your Salvation (7-11)

The fact that there were lawsuits in the church at Corinth reflected poorly on its level of spiritual maturity. Paul said it would be better for the believers to accept being wronged rather than create division in the church. The causes of discord in the church were a reflection of immoral behavior. In fact, those who practice these behaviors and show no sign of repentance are likely not truly saved and need to examine themselves. Included in this list are the sins of idolatry, adultery, homosexuality, drunkenness and thievery. Despite what the world may say, the Bible is clear that these are not acceptable behaviors for a Christian. Paul mentioned that many of those in the Corinthian church came out of such immoral backgrounds and had been "washed." The "washing" here may refer to baptism, but baptism is not what produces the inner

washing. The washing ultimately refers to the cleansing from sin through the saving work of Christ, which baptism portrays but does not by itself provide. Because of the salvation that the Corinthians had in Christ, they should act in a different manner than the non-Christians who lived around them. Even today, our moral character should be a sign to others that there is something different about us, that Christ has saved us and called us to live holy lives.

#### To Maintain Your Godliness (13b-17)

The temple of the love goddess Aphrodite was located at Corinth, making this city a haven of sexual immorality. Paul warned the Corinthians to avoid sexual immorality. Because we have been united to Christ, we should not unite ourselves with a prostitute; not only is this immoral but it could also be seen as a sort of idolatry since prostitution was used in worship to Aphrodite. Paul was not suggesting that sex within marriage is a violation of our union with Christ, as he even cited Genesis 2:24. He was saying that one who unites himself to a prostitute is abusing the way God intended sex to be. The church at Corinth was called to be different than the culture around it, and likewise Christians today need to take care not to mimic the culture that surrounds us. Instead we have been set apart and need to practice moral behavior, which helps us maintain a close relationship with God.

#### To Safeguard Your Well-being (18-20)

Paul stressed the need to flee from sexual immorality. As Christians, we need to reflect the purity and holiness of God. When we use our bodies in a sinful fashion, we are warring against the Holy Spirit who indwells believers. Since we were purchased with a heavy price — Christ's death — we ought to seek to honor God with every aspect of our lives. Many people think that sin only affects them spiritually, but it also can affect them physically. Therefore, when we live in a moral fashion, in a way that is different from the world around us, we benefit not only spiritually but also physically. ☞

## Bible Studies for Life By James R. Barnette

Professor of Religion, Department of Religion, Samford University

### WHEN EXTERNAL THREATS COME 1 Samuel 7:2-17

This passage contrasts the faithful leadership of Samuel to the earlier leadership of Eli and his sons. Hophni and Phinehas trusted in the Ark of the Covenant to bring them victory; Samuel trusted in Yahweh to lead Israel. Unlike the house of Eli, Samuel's faithfulness brought victory to God's people.

#### Dedicate Yourself to God (2-6)

For 20 years, the Philistines oppressed the defeated Israelites, even after the Ark returned to Israelite territory. Now the Israelites were prepared to offer themselves in full repentance and submission to their God. Note that Samuel suddenly reappears in verse 3. The last mention of him was in 1 Samuel 4:1. He appears to have been neglected or unnoticed during these dark days. Now he was back to lead his people with an effectiveness that recalls the leadership of Moses. Three things were commanded of the people: (1) turn aside from idolatry, (2) fix the heart on the Lord and (3) serve Him alone. Samuel urged the Israelites to return to Yahweh with all of their hearts. For ancient Hebrews, the heart was the organ of commitment and loyalty. Israel was to have a single heart, a single loyalty to the one true God. Pouring out water before the Lord became a practice at the Feast of Tabernacles, commemorating those events when Yahweh provided water in the wilderness (see John 7:37-39). For the first time in 1 Samuel, Samuel is portrayed as a leader of the people. So at Mizpah began the ministry of the greatest prophet and judge since Moses.

#### Overcome Your Fears (7-11)

Unlike the later elders of Israel who requested a king, here the sons of Israel asked Samuel to pray that God would help them overcome the Philistines. Fear gripped the Israelites when they learned that the Philistines were advancing toward them. Here is a parallel with Moses, as up to now, Moses was the only other prophet-leader who was asked by the Israelites to intercede before the Lord during a time of national emergency (see Numbers 21:7, for example). Samuel's "cry" was

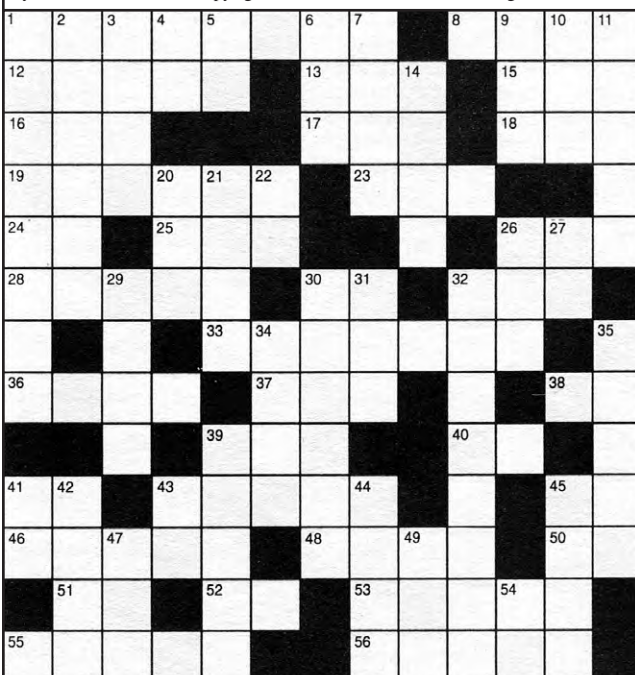
an act of repentance on behalf of all of Israel. An Aaronic priest ordinarily carried out both the "suckling lamb" sacrifice and the "whole burnt offering." However, Samuel took on this responsibility himself, once again asserting his leadership in an unprecedented way. The Philistines interpreted the loud, unexpected thunder as a bad omen. Some question whether this thunder was a real sound or a metaphor. In either case, it depicts and verifies the Lord's special intervention that led to victory for His children. That the Philistines were "confused" recalls another Mosaic event in which the Lord threw the Egyptian army into confusion (see Exodus 14:24).

#### Commemorate God's Help (12-17)

"Ebenezer" literally means "The Stone of Help." In Genesis 49:24, Yahweh is referred to as the "Stone of Israel." Erecting this stone between Mizpah and Shen was Samuel's visible reminder to his people that their Lord was indeed their present help in times of trouble. This act inspired a phrase in one of our most beloved hymns, "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing": "Here I raise mine Ebenezer; hither by Thy help I'm come." "Thus far" carries both spatial and temporal significance: The Lord had helped Israel as far as this spot at which they gained victory over their enemy but also the Lord had helped the Israelites up to this point in history. After a long period of faithlessness, God's children were realizing that it was His power and grace that had — as another hymn proclaims — brought them "safe thus far." The Amorites were the pre-Israelite people of ancient Canaan. The term here is referring to all Canaanite inhabitants. Rather than challenging the Israelites militarily, these people deemed it best to keep the peace with this Israel whose renewed faith in its Lord helped bring triumph over its oppressors. It is important to remember that God's helping the Israelites is more an act of His sovereignty than a response to human petition. God does not always respond to our cries as we wish, but there lays our call to trust in His sovereignty and to conform to His divine will. That is the faithfulness that leads to victory, both in this world and the next. ☞

## Christian Crossword

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### Across

- In his days the \_\_\_\_\_ revolted. (2 Chron. 21:8)
- A pillar, which is in the king's \_\_\_\_\_. (2 Sam. 18:18)
- The \_\_\_\_\_ are fallen unto me. (Ps. 16:6)
- But put forth thine hand \_\_\_\_\_. (Job 1:11)
- Hath not one \_\_\_\_\_ created us? (Mal. 2:10)
- And Adam knew \_\_\_\_\_ his wife. (Gen. 4:1)
- He shall \_\_\_\_\_ without instruction. (Prov. 5:23)
- Any taste in the white of an \_\_\_\_\_? (Job 6:6)
- Mibsam his son, \_\_\_\_\_ his son. (1 Chron. 4:25)
- Make bare the \_\_\_\_\_. (Isa. 47:2)
- Which perished at \_\_\_\_\_ dor. (Ps. 83:10)
- For \_\_\_\_\_ of Zion shall go forth the law. (Isa. 2:3)
- How we say "hath" today.
- Where the birds make their \_\_\_\_\_. (Ps. 104:17)
- And \_\_\_\_\_ came to pass. (1 Kings 16:11)
- A raiser of \_\_\_\_\_ es. (Dan. 11:20)
- Our brother \_\_\_\_\_ is set at liberty. (Heb. 13:23)
- And he \_\_\_\_\_ the burnt

- offering. (Lev. 9:12)
- Do all the words of this \_\_\_\_\_ (Deut. 28:58)
- Lord looked down from heaven \_\_\_\_\_ on the children. (Ps. 14:2)
- Taken a \_\_\_\_\_ of money with him. (Prov. 7:20)
- Children of Aram \_\_\_\_\_ and Hul. (Gen. 10:23)
- \_\_\_\_\_, not so, my Lord. (Gen. 19:18)
- I have been an \_\_\_\_\_ in a strange land. (Ex. 18:3)
- To offer unto \_\_\_\_\_ in their due season. (Num. 28:2)
- The words of \_\_\_\_\_ from the mouth of God. (2 Chron. 35:22)
- Sibbechai the Hushathite slew \_\_\_\_\_. (2 Sam. 21:18)
- To the chief Musician, \_\_\_\_\_-taschith. (Ps. 57:1)
- An abbreviation for the book of Ruth.
- You, \_\_\_\_\_ that one reign over you? (Judg. 9:2)
- Noah builded an \_\_\_\_\_ unto the Lord. (Gen. 8:20)
- A nation \_\_\_\_\_ out and trodden down. (Isa. 18:2)
- After they were come to \_\_\_\_\_. (Acts 16:7)

- the world. (Gal. 4:3)
- While they \_\_\_\_\_ a lie unto thee. (Ezek. 21:29)
- All their little \_\_\_\_\_, and their wives. (Gen. 34:29)
- Hear \_\_\_\_\_ now therefore. (Prov. 5:7)
- Saying, \_\_\_\_\_ this the city? (Lam. 2:15)
- Unto the \_\_\_\_\_ of the eleventh year. (Jer. 1:3)
- It was planted in a good \_\_\_\_\_. (Ezek. 17:8)
- Mine \_\_\_\_\_ is as nothing before thee. (Ps. 39:5)
- Trespass offering, and the \_\_\_\_\_ of oil. (Lev. 14:24)
- By the two \_\_\_\_\_ was it coupled together. (Ex. 39:4)
- The people \_\_\_\_\_ throughout their families. (Num. 11:10)
- When the sun waxed \_\_\_\_\_. (Ex. 16:21)
- So he \_\_\_\_\_ do after the law. (Num. 6:21)
- Hath required this \_\_\_\_\_ your hand. (Isa. 1:12)
- The \_\_\_\_\_ appeareth, and the tender grass. (Prov. 27:25)
- With the \_\_\_\_\_ to cut down. (Deut. 19:5; alt sp.)
- Have they not \_\_\_\_\_? (Judg. 5:30)
- The groves and \_\_\_\_\_ shall not stand up. (Isa. 27:9)
- As a thread of \_\_\_\_\_ is broken. (Judg. 16:9)
- Of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the heart.

- (1 Chron. 29:18)
- \_\_\_\_\_ the Ahoite. (1 Chron. 11:29)
- On the wall of \_\_\_\_\_ he built much. (2 Chron. 27:3)
- Become \_\_\_\_\_ upon the dry land. (Ex. 4:9)
- The birth of Jesus Christ was \_\_\_\_\_ this wise. (Matt. 1:18)
- But abide \_\_\_\_\_ fast by my maidens. (Ruth 2:8)
- \_\_\_\_\_! it is made bright. (Ezek. 21:15)
- Iru, Elah, and \_\_\_\_\_. (1 Chron. 4:15)
- Call me not Naomi, call me \_\_\_\_\_. (Ruth 1:20)
- Ye shall be \_\_\_\_\_ in pieces. (Dan. 2:5)
- One of several layers.
- Men of \_\_\_\_\_ smote of them. (Josh. 7:5)



# RESOURCES:

Your Guide to Today's New Music and Literature



## Sound Bites By Jeremy Henderson

**JIMMY NEEDHAM**  
*Night Lights*  
Inpop Records

If he had tried out this season, it's hard to imagine that Simon wouldn't have smiled at him and said, "I like you, Jimmy Needham."



Because several of the 12 male semi-finalists for this season's "American Idol" were obviously going for the same mellow, neo-crooner vulnerability that has, over the last decade, made household names out of Jason Mraz, Gavin DeGraw and John Mayer, and which Needham has unabashedly emulated since his fantastic — if not entirely original — 2006 debut.

However, with his third album, Needham — despite the fedora — seems primed for a relevance all his own thanks to a refreshing

embrace of funk, gospel ("Moving to Zion") and something close to hip-hop ("Grace Amazing"). Well done.

### SIXTEEN CITIES

*Sixteen Cities*  
Centricity Music

It's not really fair, because if they would have released this record five years, four years, even three years ago, they would likely be getting hearty applause for freshness and verve.

But since they didn't — since it's 2010 — the five young members of Sixteen Cities will likely be fighting an uphill battle to make a splash outside of their press releases. Not that it can't be done. And not that the songs are bad — far from it.



They've got a good beat. They've

got a good tone. They've got a good message. It's just that they're somewhat indistinct, not only from those by other tingle-tugging, pop-praise boy-bands that have cited Jars of Clay and The Fray as influences over the past five years, but even from the other songs on the band's debut. That said, they're very easy to listen to.

### TENTH AVENUE NORTH

*The Light Meets the Dark*  
Reunion

Fear not the sophomore slump ye fans of Tenth Avenue North.

"The Light Meets the Dark," the second album from Florida's college-praise-band-turned-worship-rock superstars is every bit as powerful and poignant as the 2008 debut that won them 2009's Dove Award for New Artist of the Year. Some might argue more so.

The lyrics are more personal, more confessional, and the sound continuing to meld the innovative



ment: They're in it for the long haul.

**HAWK NELSON**  
*Live Life Loud*  
BEC

The latest solid effort from the reigning champs of Christian pop-punk doesn't disappoint for a second.

best of both Jars of Clay and Switchfoot, and even, in dashes, of Coldplay. The record feels like a state-

Despite its somewhat cliché name, "Live Life Loud" is a fresh round of the band's signature, catchy, clap-clap odes to both the serious and the silly.

To wit: the fantastic title track features the I-got-spirit-yes-I-do meter and verve of actual cheerleaders while Sandi Patty's daughter Jenn Helvering lends her vocals to a fantastic, bagpipe-laced cover of the hymn "Tis So Sweet." Well done.



## Book Reviews

By Grace Thornton,  
Alice L. Elmore  
and Malinda McGill

### Dug Down Deep: Unearthing What I Believe and Why It Matters

*Joshua Harris. Colorado Springs, Colorado: Multnomah, 2010. 241 pp. (Hardback).*

Joshua Harris is nothing if not honest. In this book, the author takes a long, hard look at what he was taught about God and church growing up and the frustration that grew from a shallow understanding of what the truths of Christianity really meant. Harris, who is now a pastor but as a young single wrote the book "I Kissed Dating Goodbye," followed by several others, transparently addresses the holes he found in his own faith and how he was driven to dig deeper to learn what his beliefs meant.

The majority of the chapters each focus on a specific theological truth, sharing anecdotes occasionally but mainly laying down the basics of Christianity. Salvation, the work of the Holy Spirit and the purpose of the church are among the topics covered. This book will resonate with anyone who grew up in church but is aware of a disconnect between deep truth and their understanding of it. For those who have a base in theology, the book is a good review, plus it will point to more extensive reads by theologians such as A.W. Tozer, John

Stott and Mark Dever. (Thornton)

### On Jordan's Stormy Banks: A Man's Journey Home

*Bob Lankford. Mustang, Okla.: Tate Publishing, 2010. 392 pp. (Paperback).*

In this work of historical fiction, we learn the story of Wiley Jackson Moses, a Confederate soldier who never met a man he couldn't lick — in his native Alabama or in the midst of the Civil War's worst bloodshed. But, on the eve of the Battle of Gettysburg, he is faced down by Rose, a little slave girl who would soon free him to experience the greatest love: that of God, and His Son. During his salvation struggle, Moses finds encouragement in the form of Silas Swann, a scared, young soldier who loses his life during the battle. From then until the end of his long life, Moses thinks every day of Rose, Silas, his Savior and the transformation they brought to his dark existence. The novel devotes a chapter to each day of the battle, and then jumps ahead in time to the 50-year reunion of Gettysburg veterans. The author uses as the book's foundation real-life action seen by soldiers of the Fifth Alabama. Civil War buffs will appreciate the numerous authentic details, but readers must note that this includes some

rough language one might expect to hear in a battlefield setting. The author is the great-grandson of three Confederate veterans. (Elmore)

### Bringing Up Girls

*James Dobson. Carol Stream, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers Inc., 2010. 304 pp. (Hardback).*

James Dobson does it again. After Dobson wrote "Bringing Up Boys," people have asked him when he would write a similar book for girls. None too early, his latest publication pulls together insights from his own experience raising a daughter with his years of experience as a psychologist and educator to warn, inform and encourage parents of girls. As Dobson points out continually throughout this book, the role of fathers is of significant importance in their daughters' lives, and this volume is therefore especially helpful — and commanding — for dads. "Bringing Up Girls" would be a useful read, however, for any adult with influence in the lives of girls.

The author uniquely presents a scientific and scriptural understanding of the timeless needs and intricacies of the "fair sex," and merges it with instruction on handling current concerns such as technology and bullying. It appears that Dobson may assist yet another generation of Christian parents in raising their children. (McGill)

### Christian Marketplace

## Top Ten Best Sellers

#### Young Adult

1. **Girl After God's Own Heart**, Elizabeth George (Harvest House)
2. **Lies Young Women Believe**, Dannah Gresh (Moody Publishers)
3. **Do Hard Things**, Alex and Brett Harris (Waterbrook)
4. **Armed and Dangerous**, Ken Abraham (Barbour Publishing)
5. **Last Thing I Remember**, Andrew Klavan (Thomas Nelson)
6. **God Girl**, Hayley DiMarco (Revell)
7. **Door Within**, Wayne Thomas Batson (Thomas Nelson)
8. **Family Devotions**, Josh McDowell (Tyndale House)
9. **So Not Happening**, Jenny B. Jones (Thomas Nelson)
10. **Starlighter**, Bryan Davis (Zondervan)

#### Kids

1. **Beginner's Bible** (Zondervan)
2. **Jesus Wants All of Me**, Oswald Chambers and Phil A. Smouse (Barbour Publishing)
3. **Jesus Storybook Bible**, Sally Lloyd-Jones (Zondervan)
4. **Standard Bible Storybook**, Carolyn Larsen (Standard Publishing)
5. **Sweetest Story Bible**, Diane Stortz (Zondervan)
6. **Sweet Dreams Princess**, Sheila Walsh (Thomas Nelson)
7. **Read With Me Bible** (Zondervan)
8. **Tiny Bear's Bible for Girls**, Sally Lloyd-Jones (Zondervan)
9. **Tiny Bear's Bible for Boys**, Sally Lloyd-Jones (Zondervan)
10. **Adventure Bible Storybook**, Catherine DeVries (Zondervan)



WMU photo

**ON MISSION** — Members of Girls in Action write messages and decorate squares on lap quilts for senior adults as a hands-on missions project at Camp Pinnacle in north Georgia.

# ‘Jesus loves you’

## GAs make lap quilts for senior adults in Appalachian region

In the mountains of north Georgia, Camp Pinnacle provides a place for those who share its mission — to lead people to Christ, promote Christian character and promote world missions.

For fourth-grader Stephanie Patten and more than 900 other Girls in Action (GA) members at Camp Pinnacle last summer, “world missions” began in nearby Appalachia, where two special projects ministered to people in need. Through a week of hands-on activities and a personal visit with Bill Barker, director of Appalachian Regional Ministry, the girls discovered the needs of people in central Appalachia — home to 37 of the nation’s

100 poorest counties. With those needs in mind, the girls began making lap quilts for senior adults in the Appalachian region. Adult volunteers prepared for the project by cutting scrap blocks for 70–80 quilts and creating a simple block pattern with a cross in the middle.

### ‘It felt good’

Patten explained that the girls got around a table and sowed pieces of cloth together. As they worked, conversation turned to the people who would receive the quilts and how the girls wanted to decorate and personalize the blocks with fabric paint.

“Before we started, one of the

leaders prayed for the people who would get the quilts,” Patten recalled. “I knew I was helping someone that needed it. It felt good. We wrote things like ‘Jesus loves you!’ and drew crosses and stars.”

Adults quickly stitched the blocks together, then showed the girls how to do the hand-quilting and hemming. As a companion project, girls brought items to Camp Pinnacle for hygiene bags to donate to the Freeda Harris Baptist Center in Pike County, Ky. The center provides benevolence ministries as well as Bible study and community classes for area residents. GAs learned — and were amazed — that the new, clean underwear in the hygiene packs might be the first that some children would ever receive.

Karen Pace, Georgia Baptist WMU consultant, said teaching Camp Pinnacle’s GAs to be on mission begins with teaching them to maintain a close relationship with God.

“[We’re] helping kids learn to love God more than anyone else, then being obedient to Him,” she said. “I don’t see how anybody can love Jesus and not be on mission.”

Pace encourages children’s missions leaders to investigate ways they can involve kids in North American missions. Leaders can connect with missionaries via their state conventions for good ideas, and she contends that helping boys and girls see how God is at work near them will naturally lead to excitement and involvement in missions. (WMU)



WMU photo

# World Religion

Compiled from Wire Services

## Episcopal head defends church’s acceptance of homosexuals

**NEW YORK** — Episcopal Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori has forcefully defended her church’s embrace of gays and lesbians and firmly rejected efforts to centralize power or police uniformity in the Anglican Communion.

Anglicans should be led by local communities rather than powerful clerics, Jefferts Schori argued in a June 2 letter to her church’s 2 million members. And, after 50 years of debate, the Episcopal Church is convinced that gays and lesbians are “God’s good creation” and “good and healthy exemplars of gifted leadership within the church, as baptized leaders and ordained ones.”

In May, the Episcopal Church consecrated its second openly gay bishop despite warnings the move would increase tensions in the worldwide Anglican Communion, many parts of which view homosexuality as a sin. Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams said Episcopalians, who form the U.S. branch of the 77 million-member communion, are out of step with fellow Anglicans and should not fully participate in ecumenical dialogue and doctrinal discussions.

As head of the Church of England, Williams is spiritual leader of the communion but has limited power. He and other Anglicans have been pushing for more centralized authority in recent years as the communion struggles to overcome disagreements on how to interpret what the Bible says about homosexuality.

## Muslims order Christians to leave village in Pakistan

**KHANEWAL, Pakistan** — The head of a Muslim village ordered 250 Christian families to leave their homes in Khanewal district, Punjab province, area residents said.

Katcha Khoh village head Abdul Sattar Khan, along with other area Muslim residents, ordered the expulsions after Christian residents objected too strenuously to sexual assaults by Muslims on Christian girls and women, said Emmanuel Masih, a locally elected Christian official.

Most of the village’s Christian men work in the fields of Muslim land owners, while most of the Christian women and girls work as servants in the homes of Muslim families, said Rasheed Masih, another Christian man.

The Muslim employers have used their positions of power to routinely sexually assault the Christian women and girls, whose complaints grew so shrill that four Christian men — Emmanuel Masih, Rasheed Masih, his younger brother Shehzad Anjum and Yousaf Masih Khokhar — sternly confronted the Muslims, only to be told that all Christians were to leave the village at once.

Asked why they didn’t contact local Katcha Khoh police for help, Emmanuel Masih and Khokhar said filing a complaint against Muslim village head Khan and other Muslims would only result in police registering false charges against them under Pakistan’s notorious “blasphemy” statutes.

## Hindu extremists attack Indian church, place idol inside

**TADIPATRI, India** — Hindu extremists from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh organization damaged a church building and installed an idol of the Hindu god Hanuman inside it on May 23 in Tadipatri, Anapatpur, in Andhra Pradesh state.

The All India Christian Council (AICC) reported that at about 9 a.m. the extremists from the World Hindu Council attacked Indian Pentecostal Church’s Holy Spirit Prayer House, which was under construction.

Pastor Venugopal Reddy approached Tadipatri police, but officers refused to help him. After local Christian leaders’ intervention, police questioned the attackers. The AICC reported that Reddy had acquired government permission to build the church building.



**Y**et, O LORD, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.”

Isaiah 64:8