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'Good things are going on'

Outgoing state convention president says 'we are a healthy convention'

Jimmy Jackson, senior pastor of Whitesburg Baptist Church, Huntsville, will complete his second one-year term as president of the Alabama Baptist State Convention during the upcoming annual meeting.

"It's been good. I've enjoyed the journey," Jackson said. "It was wonderful to get around the state and meet people and to get to know more about how Alabama Baptists function."

"I've served as a pastor almost 40 years in the state, and I've learned more in the last two or three years than the whole other time," he said.

"It was good to see how the network functions and how many good things are going on. We are a healthy convention. God has blessed us with the kind of leadership we have and the kind of followership we have. I want to do everything I can to strengthen that."

Set for Nov. 16-17

Jackson will call the two-day annual meeting to order at 8:45 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 16 at Hunter Street Baptist Church, Hoover. His presidential address will be at 11:30 a.m. Tuesday. The meeting will conclude before noon Wednesday.

To order messenger cards, contact Traci Jackson at tjackson@alsbom.org or 1-800-264-1225, Ext. 266.

For more information about the state convention annual meeting, visit www.alsbom.org. (TAB)



Photo by Grace Thornton

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS — Alabama Baptist State Convention President Jimmy Jackson, senior pastor of Whitesburg Baptist Church, Huntsville, addresses convention messengers during the 2009 annual meeting at Whitesburg Baptist. During his presidential address, Jackson told messengers, 'We are the army of God, and we need to rally together from time to time.'

World Christian leaders gather to talk evangelism

Four thousand Christian leaders from about 200 countries gathered in Cape Town, South Africa, Oct. 16-25, for the third Lausanne Congress on Global Evangelization to pray, repent, dialogue and take action in regard to spreading the gospel.

Some of the top issues of discussion were other world faiths, poverty, HIV/AIDS and persecution.

The Lausanne movement actually began with Evangelist Billy Graham, who as he began preaching inter-

nationally, developed a passion for uniting the world's evangelicals. In 1966, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and *Christianity Today* sponsored the World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin.

Although the congress was a success, Graham saw the need for a larger and more diverse congress to re-examine the issue of Christian evangelization in light of the world's changing and somewhat troubling social, political, economic and religious climate.

In 1974, the International Congress on World Evangelization was held in Lausanne, Switzerland, with 2,700 participants from 150 countries. The congress achieved something that had never been done — bringing together an unprecedented variety of nationalities, denominations, ethnicities, ages and occupations.

TIME magazine described it as "possibly the widest-ranging meeting of Christians ever held."

But what was special about this congress was the producing of the Lausanne Covenant, a declaration and statement of faith that was "intended to define the necessity, responsibilities and goals of spreading the gospel."

A declaration

The Lausanne Covenant makes a declaration on 15 subjects, which include the nature of God, Scripture, the person and work of Jesus Christ, evangelism and freedom and persecution.

As another congress was to follow 15 years later, the 1974 congress became known as Lausanne I. Lausanne II was held in Manila, Philippines, in 1989. Lausanne III is just as, if not

more, diverse than the other two congresses.

However, there were about 200 noticeably empty seats. Those seats represented Christian leaders from China who were not allowed to leave their country to attend the congress.

As early as August, authorities warned Chinese invitees not to attend. But at least 15 still attempted to go only to be turned back at Beijing's Capital Airport and have their travel documents confiscated. However, a handful of delegates from China slipped through the system and made it to the congress.

The same situation occurred at Lausanne II when 200 delegates from China were prevented from attending. But many had hoped things would be different 21 years later.

This congress also faced other trials.

(See 'Southern,' page 3)

COMMENT

Decision Day in Alabama

The Oct. 4 announcement of 11 federal indictments alleging a brazen vote-buying scheme in the Alabama Legislature effectively recast the Nov. 2 election. Instead of focusing on statewide and legislative races, the indictments showed the dirty underbelly of Alabama politics and highlighted the need for basic changes in the way Alabama governs itself.

What right-thinking person would not be appalled at the charge of legislators receiving promises of \$1 million or more for a favorable vote to legalize electronic bingo gambling in the state? The indictments only verify the oft-repeated stories of special interest groups wheeling and dealing around the state Capitol with large amounts of cash.

And most of the actions are taken with impunity because Alabama law makes it next to impossible to track the money trail. Political Action Committees (PAC) transfer funds to other PACs that transfer the money to other PACs, and no one knows the difference even though the PACs may all be controlled by the same person or special interest group.

Alabama law is among the most lenient in the nation in allowing people like Milton McGregor and Ronnie Gilley — two high-rolling gambling promoters who were among those indicted — to hide their nefarious deeds behind financial secrecy.

The Bible says men love darkness because their deeds are evil (John 3:19). Light exposes one's deeds. Light leads to judgment — good or evil, the Scriptures say.

Alabama needs light in its political process, especially in who is bankrolling candidates and ballot issues. That means stopping PAC-to-PAC transfers so voters can know and decide for themselves.

The state's ethics laws are outdated, and the Ethics Commission is hamstrung without power to do proper investigations. The Ethics Commission cannot even subpoena documents related to cases before it.

These are not new problems. They are well-known and every year, candidates for the state Legislature and statewide offices pledge their support to wipe out these wrongs. The tragic thing is that nothing ever changes. Legislators talk about the issues to provide some cover for themselves back home, but no meaningful change is ever adopted.

The result is the legislative process described



THOUGHTS By Bob Terry

in the 11 indictments. The result is attorneys for the defendants saying their clients' actions were "just the way business is done in Montgomery."

Alabama deserves better. Alabama must have better if it is ever to break the stranglehold money and special interests have on its future. That is why Nov. 2 is Decision Day in Alabama. Voters will declare the kind of future they want for the state by the people they elect to statewide office and the state Legislature.

Major issue

Gambling remains a major issue in Alabama. During the past four years, gambling proponents persuaded some state legislators to bring the legislative process to a standstill as they tried to force a statewide vote on gambling. Despite the indictments, the gambling proponents will be back.

If Alabamians are tired of the influence and tactics of this evil, then the best way to stop it is to elect state senators and representatives who are committed to vote against gambling.

An amendment to the state constitution will be necessary for the gambling crowd to win, and the governor does not have veto power on a constitutional amendment. That is a decision of the state Legislature. Who you vote for makes a difference. Your state senator and representative will help decide this issue.

Obviously the governor's influence is important. Alabama is fortunate to have had Gov. Bob Riley for the past eight years to stand against the gambling crowd and enforce the laws when others chose to wink at them, if not worse.

Neither of the gubernatorial candidates is as strongly opposed to gambling as Riley and that is unfortunate. But there is a difference between one

who advocates gambling as economic development to solve the state's financial problems (Ron Sparks) and one who will support only a vote to either legalize gambling or get rid of it all together, including the Indian casinos (Robert Bentley).

Both said they plan to let the state's attorney general take the lead in enforcing laws against gambling rather than appointing a special task force to deal with the issue. That makes the race for attorney general especially important for those of us opposed to gambling.

But gambling is only one issue facing the state. What about the way Alabama is governed? What will legislative and statewide candidates do about PAC-to-PAC transfers? What is their position on the power of the Ethics Commission to investigate alleged abuses and corruption? Will legislators and public officials continue efforts to clean up Alabama's two-year college system and eliminate conflicts of interest in which officials sometimes vote on budgets and other issues for their own employers?

Public education is another important issue. So are right-to-life issues and the list goes on. In the end, Alabama Baptists and other voters will cast their ballots based on a wide range of positions held by candidates, not just a single issue.

Decision Day is rapidly approaching. In these closing days, take time to study candidates' positions on issues of importance to you. Candidates for state Legislature can be contacted personally and asked pointed questions about their positions on vital issues.

When you vote, you are not voting for a "neighbor" or "nice person." You are voting for the direction you want Alabama to go for the next four years. That is an important decision. Be sure you pray about your decisions, and then go to the polls Nov. 2 and cast your ballot.

As a responsible Christian citizen, be a part of Decision Day in Alabama.

Letters to the Editor

BAPTIZING CHILDREN

Regarding your article on the baptism of children in our Baptist churches (*The Alabama Baptist*, Oct. 14), I want to congratulate the author. It was very historical and moderate regarding the issue.

I come from a religious background in my country where baptism among infants is very common (in the Catholic religion). That is why when we baptize, we are careful to whom we do so.

This article raises another question. When does a child need to be saved?

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Matt. 19:14). If that is the only condition to be baptized, shouldn't we think about it?

(See 'Letters,' page 17)



"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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Someone You Should Know

By June Mathews, Correspondent, TAB

Tonya Jones

Union Hill Baptist Church, Bessemer
Mud Creek Baptist Association

FAVORITE BIBLE VERSE: Psalm 23

FAVORITE HYMN: "Amazing Grace"

HOBBIES: "I love to read but I just don't get to do it often enough."

FAMILY STATUS: Single mother of three: Prentice, Kayla and Kendyl



JONES

Tonya Jones considers music a ministry, as well as a big part of her family life. She recently recorded her first CD, "My Redeemer Lives," which includes two songs that are duets with daughter Kendyl.

Q: What was your childhood like?

A: I was raised in Bessemer by Christian parents, who are wonderful. My father sang in a gospel quartet called the Jubileans, and my mom was a wonderful Christian example to all of us kids. As far back as I can remember, music was always a part of our lives.

Q: When did you come to know the Lord?

A: I was saved at the age of 8 at my home church, Hopewell Baptist in Bessemer, and I rededicated my life at the age of 18.

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

A: I've been singing in the church since I was a teenager in youth choir. As an adult, I have been involved with the choir and sang in an ensemble at our church. For around 15 years, I worked with teenagers in the church, and now I lead worship on Wednesday nights at Union Hill Baptist Church and sing solos during Sunday services sometimes.

Q: What have you gotten from that involvement?

A: I have a strong faith in God, and I am so thankful for the chance to lead worship in the church. Doing this has taken me out of my comfort zone, and it has helped me to grow spiritually and as a leader.

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

A: I hope to become more involved in leading worship, and I would love to work with senior adults down the road. I'm not sure in what way at this point, maybe planning activities for them and things like that.

'Biggest concern is young people'

Alabama Baptists join in fighting upcoming wet/dry referendums

By Kristen Padilla
The Alabama Baptist

It has been only eight years since Walter Blackman, pastor of East Highland Baptist Church, Hartselle, joined others from the political action committee (PAC) Families for a Safe Hartselle to keep their town of nearly 14,000 from legalizing the sale of alcohol.

In 2002, the wet/dry referendum failed by a 62 percent margin, Blackman said.

But with approximately 1,400 more people in Hartselle than there were in 2002, he knows that one cannot assume that the outcome will be the same this time.

"It gets nasty," Blackman said. "Friends get divided over this. Even church members do. I hate it every time it comes up, but we're still going to take a stand and hopefully keep it out for another few years."

Geneva, Cedar Bluff, Fayette and Arab, to name a few, are examples of towns that voted to stay dry in past referendums but went wet in their most recent elections.

Knowing that this could happen in Hartselle, too, Families for a Safe Hartselle was reorganized after it was announced that the town had received a petition with enough signatures to hold a referendum Nov. 2.

Blackman said the PAC represents all Hartselle citizens and consists of believers, unbelievers, churchgoers and nonchurchgoers.

"We found it's better if the pastors don't take the lead but be supportive of a group that is comprised of citizens," he said. "By doing it the way we did, we were able to enlist people's help who may not be involved in the church but didn't want the town to change."

Members of the PAC have taken shifts to hold up Burma-Shave signs, which have one word per sign, in various prominent areas of town; sent mailouts; called registered voters; and put out yard signs.

"It kind of had an impact," Blackman continued. "Everybody is on the same page." But that hasn't been the case for all the towns facing the same question Nov. 2.

Scott Moore, pastor of First Baptist Church, Rogersville, said his church members are "lone rangers in this (fight)."

They have put out yard signs, hung posters at every entry point into town and taken out a half-page ad in the county newspaper. Moore even preached about alcohol.

While he is concerned about the moral issue of alcohol, Moore also has social concerns. He worries that if the town known as the "fishing man's paradise" legalizes alcohol sales, then there will be more boating accidents and other consequences that will change that image.

"It'll definitely change the complexion of our town," Moore said. "I don't think that is something you want to have in a town of our size." (Rogersville only has about 1,500 people.)

Voters in Sulligent and Vernon will decide if their towns will be the first to go wet in their dry county. (Currently there are five dry counties with no wet towns in Alabama.)

Like Moore, First Baptist Church, Sulligent, members Linda and Roger Batchelor feel like lone rangers in the fight to keep their town dry.

"We just don't have a cohesive organization, churchwise or townwise," Linda Batchelor said. "This is the first time we have faced [a wet/dry referendum], and we never thought we would face this here. So we really don't know what to do. We are wandering out here on our own."

'Something needed to be done'

The Batchelors, who live outside the city limits between Sulligent and Vernon, said they will be affected by what happens in both of these towns. With no one really stepping up to the plate in their town of about 1,500, they "felt like something needed to be done."

Roger Batchelor talked with the deacons at First, Sulligent, and several families decided to help put out yard signs that said, "Vote No."



Photo by Jim Rooks

When some of the signs went missing, Linda Batchelor said she thought about purchasing a newspaper ad that said, "You can steal our signs, but you can't steal our vote."

But limited funds are available for purchasing ads, so the Batchelors are focused on the power of prayer.

"I guess prayer is our biggest [weapon]," Linda Batchelor said. "We are praying that people will think this through."

About 10 miles south of Sulligent sits Vernon, where First Baptist Church, Vernon, is doing everything it can to make certain its town of about 2,000 stays dry. The church, under the direction of Senior Pastor Clyde Stevens, has taken a half-page ad out in the county newspaper, advertised on a local radio station and put out yard signs. While the slogan of those who are pushing for the legalization of alcohol sales is "Vote yes for progress," the church's message is "Vote no. We're standing with God."

"We have been very proud of the town and county for the stand that they've been taking," Stevens said. "We are praying and trying to do the things we're supposed to do. All we can do is ask God for His blessing."

And asking for God's blessing is what many Baptists in the nine towns that face a wet/dry referendum Nov. 2 are doing. In addition to Hartselle, Rogersville, Vernon and Sulligent, Russellville, Cullman, Boaz, Centre and Priceville also will hold referendums to decide whether their towns should go wet.

"The more accessible the alcohol sales, the higher the rate of underage drinking," said Joe Godfrey, executive director of Alabama Citizens Action Program.

"My biggest concern in all this is young people and children."

For statistical information on the side effects of alcohol or resources to use in fighting a wet/dry referendum, visit www.alcaponline.org or call 205-985-9062.

Southern Baptists among global gathering of Christians

(continued from page 1)

For the first time, the Lausanne congress expanded to cyberspace broadcasting its conferences to 10,000 people in 95 countries. But the network was compromised the first two days because of "malicious attacks."

Still these things did not deter those gathered in Cape Town from the task at hand.

Among the attendees were recently retired International Mission Board (IMB) President Jerry Rankin and his wife, Bobbye.

'Gain some insights'

"I hope to gain some insights to share with IMB leadership and others," said Rankin, who had committed to attend the event before his Aug. 1 retirement. "There is so much happening globally that we need to be aware of."

"The real advantage is broadening our understanding of what is going on among Christians worldwide," he continued. "Networking and joining others in what they are doing is also important. ... Southern Baptists are firmly

grounded in the fundamentals of faith; we should contribute to these global gatherings.

"God is raising up a great Kingdom people," Rankin added. "If we are truly committed to the Great Commission, we need to know what God is doing through others."

The Rankins were among only 400 par-

ticipants from the United States, including about half a dozen IMB workers. Also in attendance was M. Sydney Park, assistant professor of New Testament at Samford University's Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham and a member of Vestavia Hills Baptist Church. (TAB, BP)

Baptist women worldwide plan to pray

Baptist women will gather all across the world to pray Nov. 1 as part of the Baptist World Alliance's (BWA) annual Baptist Women's Day of Prayer.

The day of prayer, which began in 1948, has evolved over the years in some churches to include a weekend prayer retreat, a special program and monthlong activities.

Women also are encouraged to give to an offering for the department that day. The department depends on this offering as its main source of income to help and impact women worldwide.

"It is the state of women in the world that

makes it essential for Baptist women to come together for one day or during the entire month of November to pray and give so that our world will be impacted for Christ," said Patsy Davis, director of the BWA women's department. At the BWA Women's Leadership Conference in July, the department introduced its theme for the next five years — "In Step With the Spirit," based on Galatians 5:25 — and women are encouraged to incorporate it into the day of prayer. Downloadable resources are available in 18 languages.

For more information or resources, visit www.bwawd.org. (TAB)

GAMBLING

IN ALABAMA

FINAL IN A SERIES

Gambling's influence
nationwide

Riley goes after Indian 'bingo'

All major casino-style, slot machine-type gambling facilities in the state are shut down, at least all the ones not on an Indian reservation.

But if Gov. Bob Riley has anything to do with it, then the three facilities run by the Poarch Band of Creek Indians in Atmore, Wetumpka and Montgomery will be closed soon. He plans to ask federal officials to shut down the machines being labeled electronic bingo.

John Tyson, commander of the Governor's Task Force on Illegal Gambling, said, "We've said all along that we were to establish clearly that the state of Alabama outlaws slot machines and we have the [authority to enforce the law]."

"The (Oct. 4) federal indictment (of 11 people arrested in an FBI 'bingo' probe) explains in better detail that what we are battling here is not just illegal gambling; it is corruption in the state of Alabama and we've made quite a bit of progress in that regard," Tyson said. "Now it's time for us to take these developments to the Indian Gaming Commission and insist that they enforce Alabama law as well."

"We have planned from day one to do that, so when the governor is speaking now it's not a new idea," he said. "It's just an announcement of the plan he's had from the beginning. We are preparing for those arguments right now."

Tyson said the next step is likely a personal visit to the National Indian Gaming Commission in Washington.

Officials with PCI (Poarch Creek Indians) Gaming in Atmore could not be reached by press time, but PCI Gaming President Jay Dorris was quoted by *The Birmingham News* as saying, "Bingo, as we play it, is acceptable." (TAB)

Define grass-roots effort

Are large groups of 'gambling supporters' being paid to show up?

By Sondra Washington
The Alabama Baptist

Are the tactics being used to convince Alabamians to legalize and expand gambling a grass-roots movement of the people, as some have claimed, or a scheme of a few hoping to score big in business? Gambling opponents say a deeper look into the rallies, marches, commercials, concerts and big-name guest speakers pushing the gambling cause across the state may reveal efforts steered by a handful of moneymakers and politicians — not the community at large.

Last year, an Enterprise-based group called the Sweet Home Alabama Coalition began running commercials calling for taxation on slot machine-style gambling being called electronic bingo. Later it was discovered that casino developer Ronnie Gilley was behind the group, which was founded to promote gambling bills legalizing and expanding the activity at Houston County's Country Crossing development and other venues across the state.

"I wouldn't doubt if they spent several million dollars on ads," said Birmingham attorney Eric Johnston, who also directs Citizens for a Better Alabama (CBA). "I think the goal, by the gamblers running those ads, was to deceive the public and make them think it was grass-roots efforts. ... Their ads were meant to get support for the bills that they wanted. The whole purpose of the bill was to legalize and monopolize the bingo gambling that's already going on in the state. ... What they (gambling bosses) were trying to do is save their bacon. ... They knew they were going to lose."

After several years of fighting gambling on the state level, Johnston founded CBA, which ran advertisements to show the state's residents the negatives surrounding gambling and the legislation drafted to expand it.

"We were just running ads because the bills were bad," Johnston said. "Our supporters had no stake in it at all. They were just good Christian businessmen, and [CBA] was not (funded by) any Indian gambling money. [Gambling bosses] were trying to create a monopoly that was not subject to the law of this state and that exempted them from the Alabama criminal code, the statutes of the state, the Alabama Constitution and the decisions of the Alabama Supreme Court."

Busing in 'supporters'

During the past few legislative sessions, pro-gambling forces were also said to be the culprit behind the large number of Alabama citizens brought to the Statehouse on charter buses to support gambling expansion bills at public hearings. Most of the citizens came from Houston, Greene or Macon counties, the homes of Country Crossing near Dothan; Greenetrack in Eutaw; and VictoryLand in Shorter.



Photo by Robin Cooper

GAMBLING PROPONENTS INTERRUPT ANTI-GAMBLING RALLY — Gov. Bob Riley (at podium) yells over protesters who interrupted a Feb. 23 anti-gambling rally held on the Statehouse steps in Montgomery. Their own rally was scheduled to take place after this rally.

But when Alabama Citizens Action Program (ALCAP) and CBA tried to hold an anti-gambling rally on the Statehouse steps Feb. 23, several busloads of pro-gambling Alabamians arrived and out-yelled ALCAP and CBA's speakers, including Gov. Bob Riley and first lady Patsy Riley, as they attempted to address the crowd.

"It was obvious that they had been instructed to shout down all our speakers because nobody acts that way," said Joe Godfrey, executive director of ALCAP. And the signs used by pro-gambling attendees appeared to be professionally printed while the signs used by people supporting ALCAP and CBA were homemade, he added.

"Who produced the signs?" Godfrey asked. "We could not afford buses. Our people got off from work and drove their personal vehicles great distances. There were some church vans, but for the most part, it was individuals who drove themselves and carpooled to get there. ... I did hear people say they were employees of casinos and had been laid off, and I would assume they were paid by the casino owners to be there."

Johnston also believes the gambling forces are "orchestrating" the rallies.

"It's not people from all parts of the state (participating) — just people from Macon, Greene and Houston counties," he said. "A grass-roots effort means that it comes from the people ... who have a concern. It's not orchestrated by the people who have a special interest."

Jefferson County District Attorney Brandon Falls said, "I believe [the people at the rallies]

were led by gambling interests or those who stood to benefit from gambling whether they are owners of the operations or the attorneys representing them.

"A grass-roots movement in a down economy is not going to be able to put together the type of funding required to launch that type of a campaign," he said.

Jackson, Sharpton appear

During the anniversary of Bloody Sunday in March, pro-gambling forces held marches and rallies to promote gambling — two of which were said to be for the sake of protecting jobs and voting rights and led by two nationally renowned civil rights activists, Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton.

According to *The Birmingham News*, the "pro-bingo campaign" was reportedly "organized by former Tuskegee Mayor Johnny Ford (who, afterward, lost his race for the Alabama Senate) and Montgomery businessman Greg Calhoun."

Jackson spoke to crowds gathered in front of Fairfield City Hall and on the steps of the Alabama Capitol. He also led a march in Montgomery.

According to *The News*, Jackson said, "We demand jobs and justice and voting rights."

The newspaper also reported that "marchers included employees from VictoryLand and Country Crossing."

According to the All American Talent and Celebrity Network, Jackson's booking fee is more than \$50,000. Neither Jackson nor Sharpton's offices responded to interview requests. ■

What the Bible says about gambling

By Pastor Gary Fenton

Dawson Memorial Baptist Church, Birmingham

Is gambling morally wrong since it is not specifically mentioned in the Bible?

There are many specific issues that are not mentioned by name in the Bible, yet we know, in principle, they are morally wrong. The words “computer hacking,” “infringement of copyright” and “prescription drug addiction” are not mentioned by name in the Bible. However, when we look at the overarching biblical principles, we know they are wrong. Gambling is a similar issue.

► Gambling does not promote character; in fact, gambling actually diminishes character. Gambling, by its very nature, is based on chance. Character, however, always involves choice. We work to make a living and to benefit others (see Eph. 2:10 and 1 Pet. 1:13–16).

► Gambling disproportionately impacts the poor. It appeals to desperate people and entices needy people with the promise of reward without labor. To take advantage of the poor and to exploit the needy is strongly condemned in the Bible (see Prov. 22:16, Prov. 31:8–9 and the book of Amos). Also once the state makes gambling a source of income, your political leaders then have a vested interest in promoting gambling. The more money you lose, the more money they have to spend. Legalized gambling inevitably becomes state-encouraged gambling. The more citizens lose, the greater the need they have to gamble thus enabling addiction.

► Gambling violates the Golden Rule in that gambling requires that someone loses. Taking financial risk is not the same as gambling. When you risk capital to start a new company, your potential for success increases if your customer benefits from your product or service. At its best, capitalism is win-win. But in gambling, the more people lose and the more money they lose increases the amount of money you are likely to win. In a gambling economy, the more others fail, the better your chance is to succeed. In a healthy and growing economy, the more others succeed, the more likely you are to benefit and succeed.

► Gambling historically brings corruption, crime and addiction. Gambling has not been good for society. If we are serious about applying the teaching of Jesus regarding “do unto others as you would have them do unto you,” it is difficult to imagine that we would endorse legalized gambling. Legalized gambling is legalized losing.

While it is accurate to say you cannot legislate morality, you can legislate behavior which is the very purpose of law. Keeping gambling illegal in our state does not force people to accept our moral values; it does limit the potential damage they can do to themselves, to others and to society in general.

State governments become ‘addicted to gambling dollars,’ facing negative returns in current economy

By Sondra Washington
The Alabama Baptist

People are not alone in their addiction to gambling. Recent trends show governments can also become addicted once they start depending on gambling for revenue. And numerous reports reveal that decreased betting at casinos and gambling establishments across the nation is leaving many states scrambling for ways to replace the revenue they’ve depended on for years.

According to the American Gaming Association (AGA), 48 states plus the District of Columbia have some form of legalized gambling. In 2007, gambling gross revenue exceeded \$92 billion, but the states need more money.

The Associated Press (AP) reports that many states are moving toward expanding

their gambling efforts to combat the “drop in gambling revenue” and “keep their cut of the profits rolling in.”

Although Iowa is said to receive about \$300 million from gambling each year, State Rep. Kraig Paulsen reportedly told AP, “Absolutely, we’re addicted to gambling dollars. The current budget couldn’t be close to being balanced without that money.”

‘Don’t want to give it up’

Birmingham attorney Eric Johnston said, “The economy gets addicted to the tax dollars they get from it. It’s a source of revenue they begin to get. Once you begin to get that tax, you don’t want to give it up.”

But experts have no way of knowing when or if the gambling climate will improve.

“As the United States grappled with the

worst recession in a generation during 2009, consumers cut back on their discretionary spending, and those shrinking travel and leisure budgets led to a decline in gross gaming revenues for the second consecutive year,” the AGA reported in its State of the States Survey of Casino Entertainment. “A majority of states followed the national trend and saw their gaming revenues diminish in 2009, and all markets were affected to some extent by the drop in consumer spending.”

Even though gambling has existed in many areas for years, evidence of its positive effects may be hard to find.

The AGA publication revealed that although Nevada has more casinos than all other states combined, other sources report that it leads the nation in unemployment, foreclosures, bankruptcy filings and credit card delinquency. And two of Nevada’s cities with the largest unemployment rates are Las Vegas and Reno.

Similarly, Mississippi, which has been mentioned numerous times as an example of successful gambling by Alabama’s pro-gambling politicians, has struggled to rise in state rankings, even with its gambling revenue.

According to *The Meridian Star*, “casino gaming was a \$2.4 billion industry in Mississippi in 2009,” but Mississippi has consistently had one of the highest poverty levels and lowest education levels among the states.

Mississippi ‘still at the bottom’

“Even with all the money coming from gambling each year, ... they (Mississippi) are still at the bottom of the heap,” Johnston said. “The big problem is the cost of the gambling industry goes way up to handle all of the problems that occur. ... You’ve got a lot of extra costs for the government that go with it.”

Alabama’s Greene County is no exception.

“Out of their own mouths (at the public hearing meeting for this year’s gambling expansion bill), they (Greene County residents and officials) talked about how poor they were and how they needed gambling for money,” Johnston said. “If it’s so good, why don’t they all have big fancy cars and new houses and nice streets and beautiful public buildings? But they don’t have any of that stuff. It’s still very economically depressed, and they’ve had gambling for years.”

Jefferson County District Attorney Brandon Falls added, “At least two municipalities (in Jefferson County) have expressed anger over the closings of the bingo parlors and stated that they needed that funding to operate the city. One was in my jurisdiction (Tarrant), and one was in the Bessemer jurisdiction (Fairfield). ... I think they were deceived by the gambling interests who led them to believe that their operations would be legal. ... and they were willing to do this because they needed the revenue.”

“I believe that the proponents of gambling were approaching the municipalities knowing that they were in need of revenue streams due to the downturn in the economy,” he said.

“They pitched the idea of opening bingo parlors saying it was legal for them to do so, many times quoting a letter written by Attorney General Troy King which purported to allow locations to hire employees and pay them a salary,” Falls said. “(They said) if you’ll pass an ordinance allowing us to do this, your city will benefit from having to pay the license fees and the public will benefit from having jobs all the time ignoring that the law did not allow them to operate as a for-profit business.”

Types of legalized gambling in each state and D.C.

	Slots	Pari-mutuel wagering	Lotteries	Commercial Casinos	Class II and III Indian Gaming Facilities	Racetrack Casinos	Charitable Gaming
Alabama	✓	✓			✓		✓
Alaska	✓				✓		✓
Arizona	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Arkansas		✓	✓				✓
California	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Colorado	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Connecticut	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Delaware	✓	✓				✓	✓
District of Columbia			✓				✓
Florida	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Georgia			✓				✓
Idaho	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Illinois	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Indiana	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Iowa	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kansas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Kentucky		✓	✓				✓
Louisiana	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maine	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Maryland		✓	✓				✓
Massachusetts		✓	✓				✓
Michigan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Minnesota	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Mississippi	✓			✓	✓		✓
Missouri	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Montana	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Nebraska	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Nevada	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
New Hampshire		✓	✓				✓
New Jersey	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
New Mexico	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
New York	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
North Carolina	✓		✓		✓		✓
North Dakota	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Ohio		✓	✓				✓
Oklahoma	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Oregon	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Pennsylvania	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Rhode Island	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
South Carolina			✓				✓
South Dakota	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Tennessee			✓				✓
Texas	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Vermont			✓				✓
Virginia		✓	✓				✓
Washington	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
West Virginia	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Wisconsin	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Wyoming	✓	✓			✓		✓

Hawaii and Utah are the only states without any form of legalized gambling.

Source: American Gaming Association, May 2009
www.americangaming.org/Industry/factsheets/general_info_detail.cfm?id=15

Across Alabama's Associations

AUTAUGA

► **Boone's Chapel Church, Prattville**, will hold a fall festival Oct. 31, 5-7 p.m. There will be inflatables, hayrides, hot dogs, games, a cake walk and candy carnival. Phil Winningham is interim pastor.

BALDWIN

► The Keenagers of **Baldwin Association** will meet Nov. 4, 10:30 a.m., at First Church, Foley. Brother Billy Bob Bohannon will be the special guest. Billy Nale is pastor of First, Foley. Rick Barnhart is director of missions for Baldwin Association.

BESSEMER

► **Edgewater Church, Birmingham**, will celebrate its 100th anniversary Nov. 14, 10:30 a.m. Former choir members are invited to sing. A covered-dish lunch will follow. Commemorative plates will be sold and can be pre-ordered by calling 205-781-2398 and leaving a message. Jon Killingsworth is pastor.

BIRMINGHAM



► **Joseph Hopkins** is the new minister of music for **McElwain Church, Birmingham**. He is dean of the school of the arts at Samford University in Birmingham. R. Joseph Tricquet Jr. is pastor. ► **NorthPark Church, Trussville**, will hold a fall festival Oct. 31, 5-8 p.m. There will be food and games. For information call 205-228-0030 or visit www.northparkbc.org. Bill Wilks is pastor.

BULLOCK-CENTENNIAL

► **Bullock-Centennial Association** will hold a fifth Sunday singing Oct. 31, 6 p.m., at Indian Creek Church, Banks. Church choirs in the association are encouraged to participate. Dinner will follow. Earl Ledbetter is pastor of Indian Creek. Gene Bridgeman is director of missions for Bullock-Centennial Association.

BUTLER

► **First Church, Greenville**, will hold a trunk or treat Oct. 31, 5-7 p.m. There will be a cake walk, inflatables, hayrides, face painting and hot dogs. Volunteers are needed for setup, parking, games, food preparation, clean up and to decorate trunks with non-secular themes (no ghosts, ghouls or goblins). Cake and candy donations also are needed. Tim Patton is pastor of the church.

COLBERT-LAUDERDALE

► **Adam Casey** is the new

student pastor for **CrossRoads Church, Rogersville**. He also

works for Life-Way Christian Store in Florence. He is a graduate of the University of North Alabama in Florence. Casey and his wife, Melissa, are natives of Pulaski, Tenn. David O. Cofield is pastor.



CASEY

COOSA RIVER

► **Bobby Freeman** is the new pastor of **Southside Church, Talladega**. He



FREEMAN

comes from El Bethel Church, Tampa, Fla., where he served as pastor for 10 years. He is a graduate of Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va. He and his wife, Sylvia, have four children.

DALE

► **Dennis Tew** is the new pastor of **Hillcrest Church, Ozark**. He comes from Smyrna Church, Dothan, where he served as pastor. He also has served other churches in Alabama and Florida. Tew holds a bachelor's degree from Luther Rice Seminary in Lithonia, Ga., and doctor of theology from International Bible College and Seminary in Independence, Mo. He and his wife, Cheryl, have one child.



TEW

ESCAMBIA

► **Michael Martin** is the new children and youth minister for



MARTIN

First Church, East Brewton. He served as a Southern Baptist representative in North Africa. A graduate of Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., he is engaged to Erin Snyder. Larry Watts is pastor.

MADISON

► **Hillwood Church, Huntsville**, will hold a fall festival Oct. 30, 6-8 p.m., in the family life center. There will be inflatables, games, prizes, food and candy. For

information call 256-883-1950 or visit www.hbchsv.com. Charles Freeman is pastor.

MARSHALL

► **First Church, Guntersville**, will hold a fall celebration with the children's ministry Oct. 31, 6:30 p.m. Chili and hot dogs will be served in the fellowship hall. Children should bring three small pumpkins with their names written on them and a flashlight. Costumes are optional. There will be a hayride and a trunk or treat. Bring your vehicle decorated and filled with candy. Joel Samuels is pastor.

MONTGOMERY

► **Open Acres Church, Montgomery**, will hold a fall festival Oct. 30, 5-7 p.m. There will be a cake walk, hot dogs and games. Ron Davis is pastor. ► **Trinity Memorial Church, Montgomery**, will host The Anchormen Quartet in concert Nov. 4, 7 p.m. Stan Holt is pastor.

MUD CREEK

► **Crossroad Church, Hueytown**, will hold a fall festival and trunk or treat Oct. 31, 5 p.m. There will be a chili cookoff, cakes, pies, games, candy and a youth costume contest and service for 6th-12th grade. Jimmy Bradford is pastor.

SALEM-TROY

► **Andrew Knick** is the new pastor of **Southside Church, Troy**. He previously served as the church's associate pastor/student minister. Knick is a graduate of The Baptist College of Florida in Graceville. He and his wife, Kelli, have one child. The church will hold a reception to welcome Knick and his family Oct. 31, 2-4 p.m., in the fellowship hall.

SARDIS

► **Sardis Association** will hold a fifth Saturday singing Oct. 30, 6-8:30 p.m. at the associational building. There will be congregational singing, special groups and soloists. James Preachers is director of missions. ► **Bethel Church, Opp**, will hold a trunk or treat Oct. 30, 4-9 p.m. There will be games, food and activities. Shawn Moore is pastor.

SIPSEY

► **Hopewell Church, Bankston**, will hold revival Nov. 1-5, nightly at 7, with Brad Miles, of Carriere, Miss. David Tunnell is pastor.

TUSCALOOSA

► **Rosedale Church, Tuscaloosa**, will hold a fifth Sunday night singing Oct. 31, 5 p.m., with the Tunnell Sisters. A finger food fellowship will follow in the gym. Ken Cheek is interim pastor.

Alabama updates

People, churches making news across the state

James Best retires after 60 years in ministry

Ty Parten, pastor of Thomasville Baptist Church in Clarke Baptist Association, has learned a lot about ministry from Associate Pastor James Best.

After all, Best has been at it for 60 years.

"Dr. Best's life and longevity in ministry has typified how Paul intended for us to finish well in Christian service when he said, 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith,'" Parten said. And Sept. 12, the church honored Best for his years in the ministry. He served as pastor of several churches and director of missions for Bethlehem and Pine Barren Baptist associations.

"Dr. Best has given himself to our church for the last five years at a time when his ministry was truly needed. For that, we will forever be grateful," Parten said, adding, "His heart for missions and his ministry to the homebound will never be matched at Thomasville Baptist."

It is missions that Best said he has enjoyed the most in his ministry. He worked as a summer missionary in college and has served overseas several times in places such as Guatemala, Thailand and Jamaica.

During the celebration, Best led the congregation in singing and was accompanied by his daughter, who played piano. Members he had ministered to over the years shared testimonies, and there was a money tree for those who wished to contribute a love offering.

"Thomasville Baptist is truly a great church. My wife and I have felt such an outpouring of love and appreciation. I can't speak enough for the pastor and the ministry," Best said.

Even though he retired Sept. 30, Best intends to continue serving the church through missions, visiting the homebound and nursing homes and encouraging others within the community.

Grand Bay's Friendship names Howard pastor emeritus

"I have a definite calling from the Lord in life to preach the gospel," Robbie Howard said. Members of Friendship Baptist Church, Grand Bay, can testify to that.



HOWARD

Howard spent nearly 20 of his 52 years of preaching as pastor of their Mobile Baptist Association church. Though he still preaches as a supply preacher and at revivals and is available to serve interim pastorates, Howard recently retired to Grand Bay.

And Sept. 26, Friendship Baptist honored him with the title "pastor emeritus."

Longtime friends and co-workers reminisced about his ministry at a service that evening. Howard's love for witnessing was highlighted when Pastor Teddie Turrentine asked those

who had been won to Christ through his ministry to stand.

"The Lord has used Robbie to impact the Friendship family in many ways but perhaps none greater than his leading in the area of evangelism — personal and corporate," Turrentine said. "He loves to witness and see folks accept Jesus as their personal Savior, follow Jesus in believer's baptism and be disciplined. ... We are delighted that he has chosen to spend his 'retirement' years in Grand Bay and as a part of the Friendship family as our pastor emeritus," Turrentine said.

Pollard celebrates 25 years as senior pastor of Pine Grove

Ricky Pollard preached his first sermon as senior pastor of Pine Grove Baptist Church, Centre, on Sept. 22, 1985. On Sept. 26, 2010, a large number of church members and friends came together to honor Pollard for 25 years of service at the Cherokee Baptist Association church.

He was recognized, along with wife Joan and daughter Jordyn, during a celebratory service that included a slideshow of his time with the church, a video skit prepared by the youth and his favorite music performed by the choir and his wife, who sang a solo. A plaque and love offering were presented on behalf of the church. All men who have served as deacons during Pollard's pastorate also were recognized.

Following the service, a meal was served in the fellowship hall. A wall was decorated with pictures, handprints and drawings done by the preschool and children's classes.

Pine Grove Baptist has experienced immense growth during Pollard's tenure as pastor. When he became pastor, there were 365 members; today there are 948. There have been 545 baptisms under his leadership.

Alabama Baptist Convention
State Board of Missions

FOCUS on ONE Mission

ALABAMA BAPTIST CONVENTION STATE BOARD OF MISSIONS

ONE MISSION:
The Great Commission
ONE PROGRAM:
The Cooperative Program
MANY MINISTRIES:
Great Commission Ministries

news and features
about missions and
ministries from the
Alabama Baptist State
Board of Missions
(800) 264-1225
www.alsbom.org

A Culture of Cooperation

Almost six years ago, I wrote an article in this space titled "A Culture of Cooperation," reprinted below. This text reflects your State Board's ongoing passion for Great Commission ministries, which began with a fresh recommitment in 1998 that persists to the present day.

As our denomination seeks a path forward amidst our nation's Great Recession, the fact is that state conventions have been sending higher percentages to the SBC in recent years. Until the recession, the total dollars were increasing as well. The Great Recession didn't change percentages, but it has reduced the amount of funds received and thus forwarded to the SBC.

Traditionally, state conventions and the SBC have been partners, not adversaries. The way forward is to be adversarial. Partnering for the gospel was Paul's way of doing missions. Others have chosen conflict/adversarial relationships, and the Kingdom suffered!

Alabama Baptists are proud to be one of 42 state conventions that support the SBC. We need to remember that only one state convention supports our beloved family of Alabama Baptist missions and ministries. Alabama Baptists are glad to be first in total dollars given through the Cooperative Program for SBC causes. Remarkably, we are also first in per-member CP giving to SBC causes as well!

Thanks for considering these thoughts. Thanks even more for your gifts through the Cooperative

Program and for praying for your state missionaries.

"Culture" is a buzz word used in the vernacular of our day. It is a general term that can be used in numerous ways. In the world of business there is talk of "corporate culture." Educators speak of an "academic culture." "Church culture" is a term applied to denominations and local churches alike.

Since 1925 Southern Baptists and Alabama Baptists have been champions of a "culture of cooperation" called the Cooperative Program. Despite our differences of opinion on some issues, the Cooperative Program has been the personification of this "culture of cooperation."

In writing to the church at Corinth in I Corinthians 1:10-17, the Apostle Paul was appealing to that community of faith to embody a "culture of cooperation." Recently I reflected upon these scriptural insights as a lens through which we as Alabama Baptists and Southern Baptists can continue to be champions of the Cooperative Program.

Corinth was a troubled church beset with an array of relational, doctrinal, and even moral concerns. The secular culture in which they lived often permeated the church. This, of course, is not unlike our day. The first century and the 21st centuries are more alike than we would like to admit. Therefore, the counsel of the Apostle Paul concerning the "culture of cooperation" is applicable to us in a most

meaningful way.

The "culture of cooperation" is built upon a concrete foundation. Paul declares, "Now, dear brothers and sisters, I appeal to you by the authority of the Lord Jesus..." (NLT). This affirmation emphasizes the concrete foundation on which we have built our sense of commitment to the cause of Christ as well as our "culture of cooperation." The Cooperative Program is a unified means of building upon our cooperative mission efforts.

Our "culture of cooperation" is blessed with a clear focus. The focus is upon the Great Commission. That is why your State Board of Missions has sought to take the lead in being Great Commission ministers as state missionaries. Empowering Kingdom Growth through Great Commission Ministries is our clear focus. Again, the Cooperative Program reflects that emphasis. Not everything can be included in the budget of the Cooperative Program, but it is an inclusive approach to funding mission efforts in our state, in North America and internationally.

Our "culture of cooperation" is broadened by a compassionate fellowship. Fellowship is one of those rich biblical terms that means more than having "chips and dip" after church on Sunday evening. It speaks of a shared experience and shared values. The Cooperative Program exemplifies our shared values of reaching the world for

Christ with a sense of collaboration.

Our "culture of cooperation" is brightened by a common future. As believers, we share a common future in Christ. Our challenge is to "work till Jesus comes." The Cooperative Program is an active agent for God's Kingdom because the ministries we have in common really never sleep. Every minute of the day the "culture of cooperation" is at work through the Cooperative Program.

In I Corinthians 1:10 Paul appealed to the Corinthians to experience and exemplify "real harmony." That sounds like a "culture of cooperation" to me. In 1925 our spiritual ancestors developed a "culture of cooperation" that birthed the Cooperative Program. The Kingdom of God is the bigger and the better for it. In



By Rick Lance
State Missionary
Executive Director-Treasurer

every generation Alabama Baptists and Southern Baptists must reemphasize the "culture of cooperation." Now is our time to do just that! I invite you and your church to touch the world and to make a kingdom difference by systematically supporting missions through the Cooperative Program.



Follow Rick Lance on Twitter www.twitter.com/RickLance

Friend him on Facebook www.facebook.com/RLance



KEYBOARD FESTIVALS

Students and teachers must register for the festival in their area. Cost is \$5 per student (money to be turned in by the teacher).

November 5, First Baptist Church, Huntsville, 2-6 p.m.

November 6, Meadow Brook Baptist Church, Birmingham, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

November 7, First Baptist Church, Gadsden, 2-5 p.m.

November 9, First Baptist Church, Enterprise, 3-6 p.m.

November 9, Government Street Baptist Church, Mobile, 2-6 p.m.

November 13, Parkview Baptist Church, Eufaula, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

November 14, Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Gordo. 2-4 p.m.

For more information or to register: www.alsbom.org/keyfest



NEWSONG 7TH AND 8TH GRADE HONOR CHOIR
Friday through Sunday, January 7-9, 2011

Deadline for audition forms and CDs is **November 12.**

For more information: www.alsbom.org/newsong

ALL-STATE CHILDREN'S HONOR CHOIR TOUR
Friday through Saturday, March 4-6, 2011

Older children in grades 4, 5 and 6 who are actively involved in a children's choir are eligible to audition. Other information and registration forms are available online. Audition CD and forms are due in the Office of Worship Leadership & Church Music no later than **November 1.**

For more information: www.alsbom.org/chc-tour



If you prefer to speak with someone about the above ministries, please call Ministry Assistant Susan Corley at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 279.

These ministries are made possible by the gifts of Alabama Baptists through the Cooperative Program.

CALLED TO COMMUNICATE

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4
9 A.M.—4 P.M.

Danny Wood,
pastor,
Shades Mountain
Baptist Church,
Birmingham



Frank Page, pastor,
president and chief
executive officer,
SBC Executive
Committee



Worship Leaders
Michael &
Linda Adler,
Shades Mountain
Baptist Church



Take Your Preaching • Speaking • Teaching to the Next Level of Effectiveness

Our annual "Called to Communicate" conference is expected to draw another capacity crowd to the Baptist Building, 2001 E. South Blvd., Montgomery, on November 4.

LEADERS:

- Danny Wood, pastor, Shades Mountain Baptist Church, Birmingham
- Frank Page, president and chief executive officer, SBC Executive Committee
- Michael and Linda Adler, Shades Mountain Baptist Church, Birmingham. Michael is SMBC's worship pastor, and both Michael and Linda are professional vocal coaches and former members of TRUTH.

COST: \$20 (covers all materials, lunch and breaks)

Some of the potential topics to be considered:

- Spiritual preparation for preaching, speaking, teaching.
- What style of preaching, speaking, teaching is truly effective in changing lives? Is one style more effective than another? Is "style" an appropriate consideration?
- What about the content of preaching, speaking, teaching? What tools do effective communicators use to prepare to preach, speak, teach?
- Why the truth of the Word of God continues to be the message we must deliver. Why we must continue to work diligently at the task due to the importance of it.

To register or for more information, please contact Ministry Assistant Jamie Allen at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 256, jallen@alsbom.org.

ONEMISSION:TheGreatCommissionONEPROGRAM:TheCooperativeProgramMANYMINISTRIES:GreatCommissionMinistries

FREE

order your 2010-2011 church **planning** guide

This 16-month calendar (Sept. 2010–Dec. 2011) has State Board of Missions events and emphases already printed with plenty of room for you to add your church's events.

Limit **12 COPIES** per church. To order, please **call**, **fax** or **e-mail** your request to Charleen Hobbs at 1.800.264.1225, ext. 231; 334.288.2693 (fax); chobbs@alsbom.org; or **order online** at www.alsbom.org/cpg.

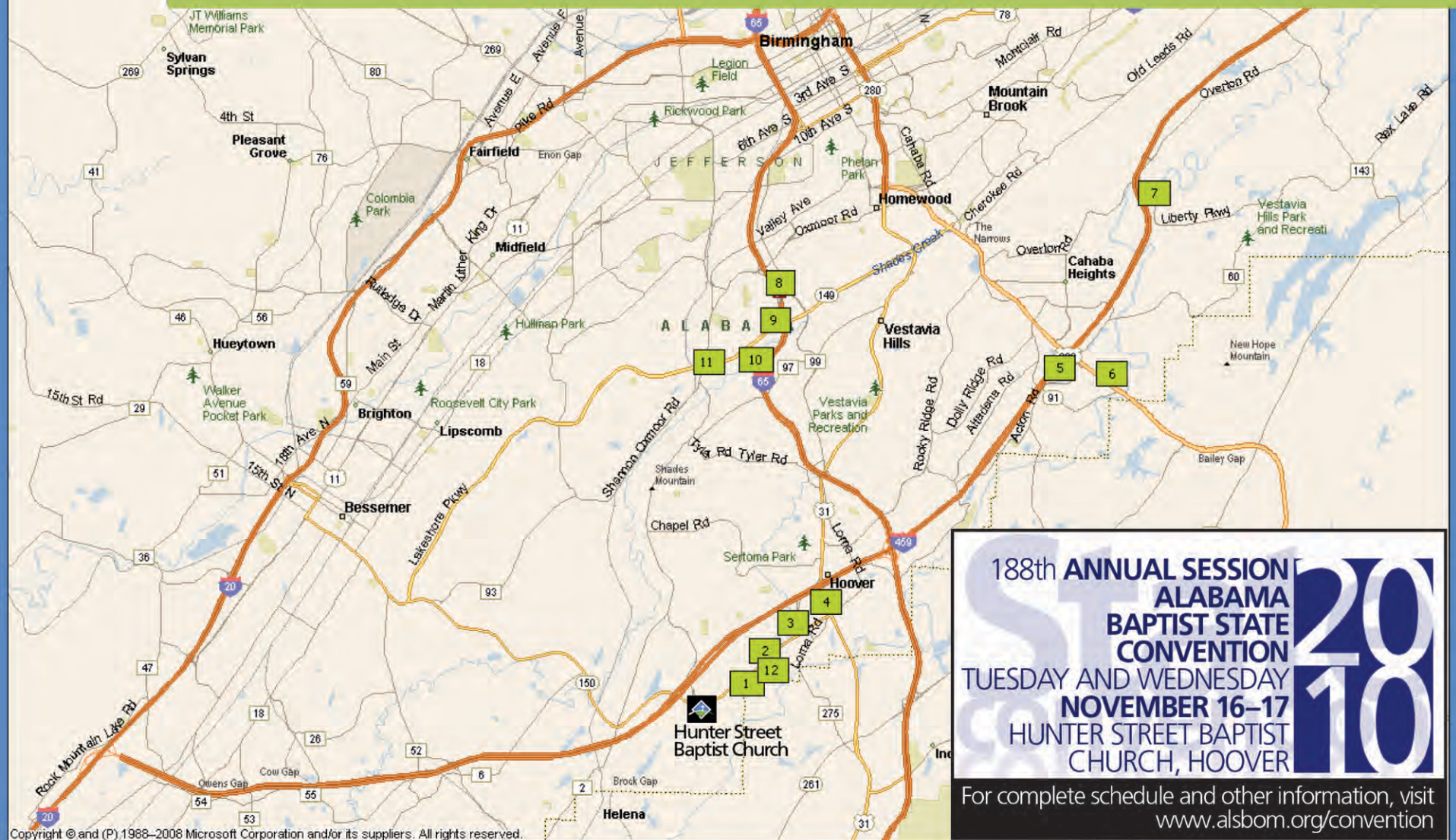
Be sure to **include** your name, church name, mailing address and number of church planning guides needed (up to 12).



Alabama Baptist Convention
State Board of Missions



Alabama Baptist State Convention Hotel Guide



Hotels Offering Special Rates

1. **Residence Inn Marriott**
2725 John Hawkins Pkwy
Hoover, AL 35244
205-733-1655
\$99-\$109
2. **Hyatt Place Hotel Hoover**
2980 John Hawkins Pkwy
Hoover, AL 35244
205-988-8444
\$89
3. **Hampton Inn & Suites**
4520 Galleria Blvd
Hoover, AL 35244
205-380-3300
\$110-\$155
4. **Wynfrey Hotel**
*Convention Hotel
1000 Riverchase Galleria
Hoover, AL 35244
205-987-1600
\$122

5. **Hilton Birmingham**
Perimeter Park Hotel
8 Perimeter Park South
Birmingham, AL 35243
205-967-2700
\$99
6. **Birmingham Marriott**
3590 Grandview Pkwy
Birmingham, AL 35243
205-968-3775
\$115
7. **Hilton Garden Inn**
BirminghamSE/Liberty Pk
2090 Urban Center Pkwy
Birmingham, AL 35242
\$99
8. **Hampton Inn**
Birmingham/Lakeshore
30 State Farm Parkway
Birmingham, AL 35209
205-313-2060
\$89

9. **Best Western Carlton**
Suites
140 State Farm Pkwy
Birmingham, AL 35209
205-940-9990
\$79-\$89
10. **Holiday Inn**
Birmingham/Homewood
492 Wildwood North Cir
Birmingham, AL 35209
205-942-6070
\$89
11. **Hilton Garden Inn**
Birmingham/Lakeshore
520 Wildwood North Cir
Birmingham, AL 35209
205-314-0274
\$109
12. **Embassy Suites**
Birmingham/Hoover
2960 John Hawkins Parkway
Hoover, AL 35244
205-985-9994
\$129

2010 ALABAMA BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION ANNUAL MEETING TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 16-17 HUNTER STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, HOOVER

Begins at 8:30 a.m. Tuesday and
concludes at 12:05 p.m.
Wednesday

For more information about the state convention meeting, visit www.alsbom.org/convention.

Other speakers include

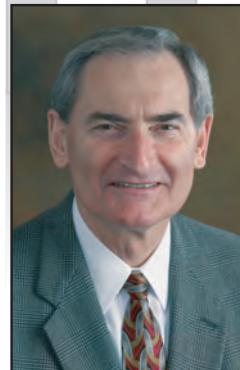


Travis Coleman,
pastor, First Baptist Church, Prattville,
will preach the Convention Sermon at
11:05 a.m. Wednesday.

John Brock,
pastor, Highland Baptist
Church, Florence, will share his
Across Alabama testimony on
Tuesday afternoon.



Steven H. Giles, pipe
major, Alabama Pipes
and Drums, will play
bagpipes during the
Memorial Service at
9:10 a.m. Tuesday.



Jimmy Jackson,
pastor, Whitesburg Baptist
Church, Huntsville, will deliver
the **President's Address** at
11:30 a.m. Tuesday.



Roger White,
pastor, Liberty Baptist Church,
Painter, will share his Across
Alabama testimony on Tuesday
morning.

EXHIBIT HALL with resources
to help you be more effective
in the Great Commission.



*"I SHALL LIFT UP THE
CUP OF MY SALVATION AND
CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD."*

PSALM 116:13 NIV

ALABAMA ASSOCIATION OF BAPTIST SECRETARIES CONFERENCE

SUNDAY THROUGH WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6-9, 2011
SHOCCO SPRINGS

GENERAL CONFERENCE LEADER:
JANIE WALTERS, MADISON, MISS.

DEVOTIONAL LEADER: AL SONANSTINE

WORSHIP LEADER: "SHACK ON A ROCK"

SAMPLE OF BREAKOUT SESSIONS BEING OFFERED: PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION MODULES, COMMUNICATION AND ADMINISTRATION, PERSONALITY PROFILE, FREE TO FORGIVE, THE POTTER'S WHEEL, "STAMPING UP," QUICKBOOKS, FINANCES AND TAXES, MEDIASHOUT, PUBLISHER, EXCEL, GENERATIONS, THE VALUE OF BIBLE STUDY, DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE, TIME MANAGEMENT, THE SECRETARY AS A WEDDING COORDINATOR, THE NEW/FIRST TIME SECRETARY, THE ASSOCIATIONAL SECRETARY AND MUCH MORE.

PLEASE CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE AT
WWW.ALABAMABAPTISTSECRETARIES.COM AND LOOK US UP ON
FACEBOOK.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT RENEE RIZZO, AABS
PRESIDENT, AT (334) 774-2071 OR (334) 237-0684,
RENEERIZZO@CHARTERINTERNET.COM.

COOPERATIVE PROGRAM



Three Important Facts About Cooperative Program Giving in Alabama

1. Alabama Baptists have sent more Cooperative Program money to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) than any other state convention for two consecutive years!
2. One out of every 10 Cooperative Program dollars given to the SBC comes from Alabama Baptists.
3. Alabama Baptists give more through the Cooperative Program per person than any other state convention.

Friday and Saturday, **January 14-15, 2011** «
WorldSong Missions Place, Cook Springs «
www.alabamawmu.org/camp

Theme: *DANGEROUS SURRENDER*
\$45 per person

Registration deadline: Tuesday, **January 4, 2011**

This awesome two-day event for students in grades 7-12 will expose students to missions through Bible study, worship and engaging the community with local mission projects. Students will hear personal stories from a young missionary who is answering God's call to serve Him. They will also participate in a variety of mission projects in the communities surrounding Cook Springs. SMW will encourage and challenge your students to dream big and allow God to lead them to do mighty works for Him!

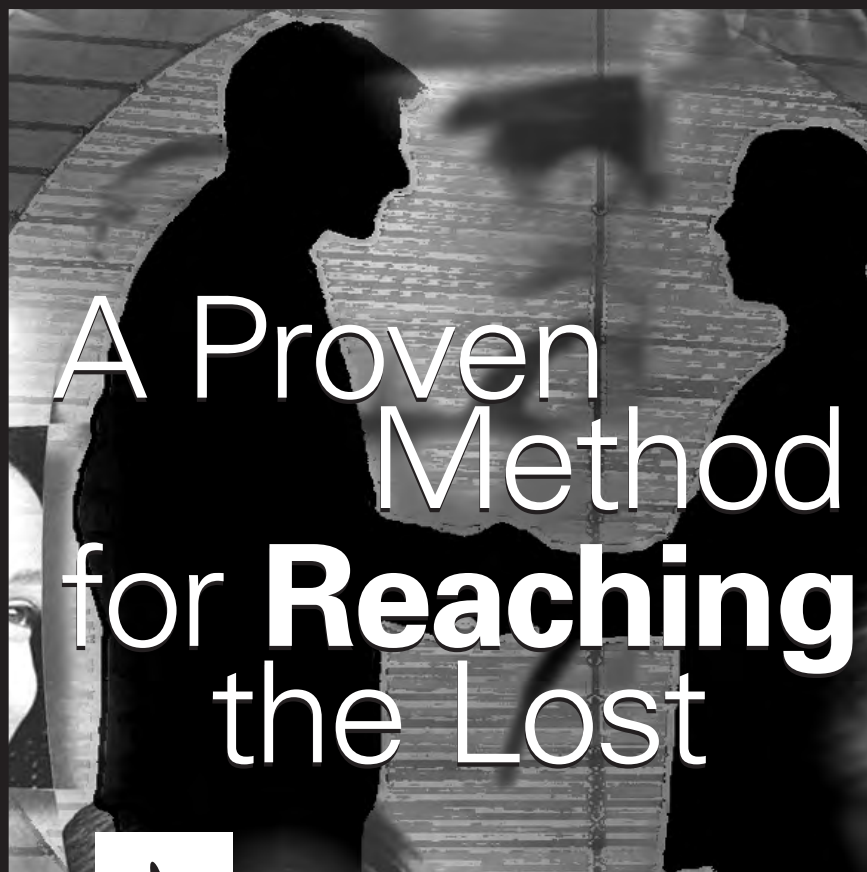


Student

Missions Weekend 2011

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2011 STATE EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

Monday and Tuesday, February 28-March 1
Gardendale First Baptist Church

Kicks off Monday with a lunch/Q&A session with James Merritt and Steve Gaines.



Booth Brothers

Concludes Tuesday evening with a Harvest Event featuring Will Graham, grandson of Billy Graham and son of Franklin, and premier Southern Gospel vocal group, the Booth Brothers.



Will Graham

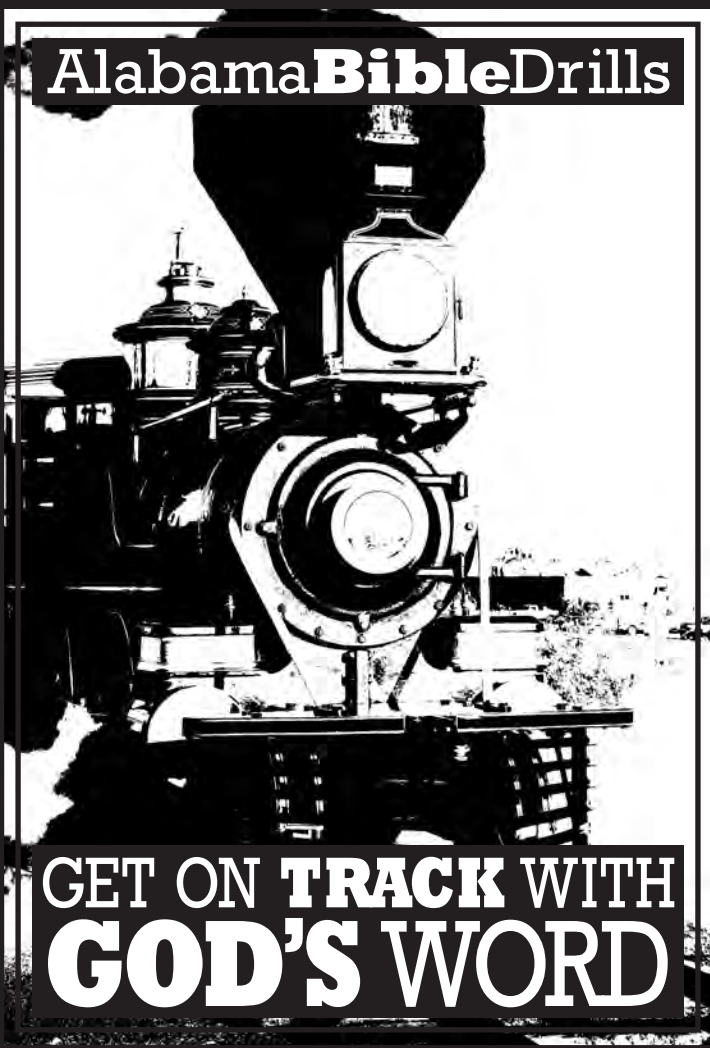
Other speakers during the two days include James Merritt, Steve Gaines, Kevin Hamm, Don Wilton, Reginald Calvert, Jay Wolf, Bob Pitman, Robert Smith and Nelson Price, with praise and worship led by Rick Stone and the Gardendale FBC choir and Hunter Street Baptist Church choir.

Monday's Q&A luncheon is \$5 per person with limited seating. Call 1-800-264-1225, ext. 245, or email Stephanie McClelland at smclelland@alsbom.org.

For a full schedule, visit www.alsbom.org/sec.

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Alabama **Bible** DrillsGET ON **TRACK** WITH
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www.ClickClackJack.com.**Reservations:** www.shocco.org/reser or **1-800-280-1105**For more information, please contact the Office of Sunday School & Discipleship at **1-800-264-1225**, ext. **313**, or visit our website at www.alsbom.org/bibledrills.

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Royal Ambassador Basketball Tournament

*Saturday - Sunday,
February 4-5, 2011***Leagues:**

- 4th-6th grade • 7th-9th grade • 10th-12th grade
- Sixteen slots are available in each age group so get your registration in early.*

Eligibility:

- Must be active in an RA or Challenger Missions Education Group.
- Completion of mission projects from the **Alabama Baptist Royal Ambassador Advancement Workbook for All Ages** or **Alabama Advancement Workbook for Challengers**.
- Receive and abide by the requirements of the "State RA/Challenger Guidebook."

Register your team by **Friday, January 14, 2011**
(Registration form is on the front of the guidebook.)*For a copy of the guidebook or other information, please contact State Missionary Steve Stephens at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 268, sstephens@alsbom.org.*

Historical Highlights

from previous issues of *The Alabama Baptist*

Compiled by Kathleen Prude

50 Years Ago October 1960

Chapel Named for Baptist Leader: The magnificent, inspiring new chapel at Howard College will be named for one of the outstanding Baptist leaders of our time, A. Hamilton Reid, executive secretary-treasurer of the Alabama Baptist State Convention executive board. Leslie S. Wright, Howard president, in announcing this action by the board of trustees, said the dedication ceremony will be held in the chapel Nov. 15 at 4:30 p.m. during the state convention annual meeting in Birmingham. Naming the chapel in Reid's honor was a spontaneous and unanimous decision by the board of trustees and the administration of the college.

40 Years Ago October 1970

Alabama Pastor Elected President of FMB: The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, at its annual meeting in Richmond, Va., elected a 37-year-old Alabama pastor as its president, adopted the largest budget in its 124-year history and appointed 15 new missionaries. Elected president was Drew J. Gunnells Jr., pastor of Eastern Hills Baptist Church, Montgomery. He had served as first vice president of the board since 1967. Gunnells is presently moderator of Montgomery Baptist Association, a member of the Montgomery

Hospital Board and a member of the Alabama Baptist State Convention executive board.

30 Years Ago October 1980

Two Inducted Into Women's Hall of Fame: Two women of many talents and interests will take their places in the Alabama Women's Hall of Fame on Oct. 23 at Judson College. They are Kathleen Mallory (1879-1954), national Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) executive from Dallas County, and Ruby Pickens Tartt (1880-1974), internationally known folklorist and writer from Livingston. They will be installed by Carolyn Weatherford, also a WMU executive, and Asa Green, president of Livingston College. Called "the sweetheart of Southern Baptists," Mallory broke tradition in 1916 by becoming the first woman ever to speak at an annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

20 Years Ago October 1990

College President Inaugurated: David E. Potts was inaugurated as president of Judson College on Oct. 13 in Alumnae Auditorium. Charles Carter, president of the Alabama Baptist State Convention and pastor of Shades Mountain Baptist Church, Vestavia Hills, delivered the address. Among those participating in

the program were the Judson Bell Choir; Arthur Walker, executive director of the Southern Baptist Convention Education Commission; Donald Cook, judge of probate for Perry County; and Wanda Baker Craft, president of the Judson College Alumnae Association.

10 Years Ago October 2000

Children's Homes' Leader Celebrates 30 Years: Paul Miller was serving in Vietnam with the U.S. Army when he accepted God's call to Christian child care. What followed has been 30 years as a faithful soldier of the Lord for needy children, youth and families throughout Alabama. A recent celebration of Miller's 30 years with the Alabama Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries (ABCH) included recognition of Oct. 1 as his 10th anniversary as executive director. His service with ABCH began during a summer break from graduate school when he served as a social worker on the former Troy campus. After graduation, he returned to the Troy campus as a full-time social worker and later served 15 years as an area director. He succeeded Tom Collier as executive director in 1990.

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CHURCH POSITIONS

PASTOR: Fairmount Baptist Church is currently seeking a full-time pastor. Please send resumés to: Fairmount Baptist Church, Pulpit Committee, P.O. Box 66, Red Level, AL 36474.

BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR: Mount Olive Baptist Church, Monroeville, is seeking a bivocational pastor for small country church. Please send resumés to: Pastor Search Committee, 1801 Sawyer Drive, Monroeville, AL 36460.

TWO POSITIONS AVAILABLE: Pates Chapel Baptist Church in Jemison, Ala., is now accepting applications for a bivocational minister of music and bivocational youth minister. Mail resumés to: Pates Chapel Baptist Church, 190 County Road 295, Jemison, AL 35085, or e-mail to: jbenson3388@gmail.com.

BIVOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC: Ebenezer Baptist Church is seeking a bivocational minister of music to lead in worship and develop our music ministry. Send resumés to ATTN: Music, P.O. Box 56, Stanton, AL 36790, or you may e-mail your resumé to: ebc1819@gmail.com. Phone: 334-366-2535.

BIVOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC: Lineville Baptist Church seeking a bivocational minister of music. Send resumé to: Lineville Baptist Church, P.O. Box 356, Lineville, AL 36266.

BIVOCATIONAL YOUTH PASTOR: Seeking bivocational youth pastor. Please send resumé to: Youth Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 437, Fulton, AL 36446.

CHILDREN'S MINISTER: First Baptist Church, Dothan, Ala., is seeking a full-time children's minister. The target group for this position is 1st-5th graders. Interested candidates please e-mail to: jfain@fbcdothan.org.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY DIRECTOR: Spring Valley Baptist Church is seeking a part-time children's ministry director with a heart to see children come to know and grow in Christ. Send resumés to: P.O. 978, Springville, AL 35146, or e-mail to: churchoffice@springvalleybaptistchurch.org.

PART-TIME CHILDREN'S MINISTER: East Highland Baptist Church in Hartselle is currently accepting resumés for a part-time children's minister. Mail to: EHBC, Children's Minister Search Committee, P.O. Box 888, Hartselle, AL 35640.

OTHER POSITIONS

DIRECTOR OF WEEKDAY EDUCATION MINISTRY: Camellia Baptist Church, Prattville, Ala., is currently seeking a director for their established weekday education ministry. Must have two years minimum teaching experience in a weekday preschool classroom along with a bachelor's degree in education and/or extensive training in the area of preschoolers and administration/financial matters. Send resumés to: Camellia Baptist Church, ATTN: Letitia Henson, 201 Woodvale Road, Prattville, AL 36067, or by e-mail to: hensfour@bellsouth.net.

CHURCH SECRETARY: Spring Valley Baptist Church, Springville, Ala. Immediate opening. 32 hours/week. E-mail re-

sumé and references to: churchoffice@springvalleybaptistchurch.org, or mail to: P.O. Box 978, Springville, AL 35146.

SECRETARY: Highland Gardens Baptist Church is seeking a secretary. General secretarial work, computer skills, creative and personable. Needs to become a part of the church as a faithful member. For more information, call 334-201-2537.

BUSINESS

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MISCELLANEOUS

JUDGEMENT DAY EVANGELISTIC DRAMA: Cottage Hill Baptist, Pleasant Grove, Ala. Oct. 23-24 and Oct. 27-31, 6-9 p.m. nightly. Information/reservations: 205-744-8521. "Behold, I am coming soon!" Rev 22:12.

Want to know God?

By Executive Pastor John Herring
NorthPark Baptist Church, Trussville

So you want to know God. Well, it is about time. You have tried everything else, and all this time, God has been waiting for you.

He has always been there, patiently waiting for you to give up on all your stuff and come to Him. Your very own actions are the reason that you cannot find God now.

You see God is a perfect being. In Him, there is no darkness, corruption or evil. On your own, you have chosen a path that has included lies, theft and evil thoughts about others. Your path has excluded you from the very relationship you desire most right now — a relationship with your heavenly Father.

Now that you know that side of the story, what comes next for you? Let's look at it logically. God has been waiting for you. Why? He must have some reason for waiting around for you to come to Him. What possible reason could He have?

The answer may surprise you. No, He doesn't have anything better to do. He loves you and has intended from the beginning of time to include you in His plan. Because He is perfection (holy), He cannot have anything to do with you in your present state. Something has to be done on your behalf for things to be made right between you.

Good news. God provided a way. He offered His very own Son, Jesus, to fill in the gaps for you. Jesus lived a perfect life, one that is impossible for you to live. He laid everything, even His own life, down for you so that things could be made right between you and God.

Now what? If you sincerely desire a relationship with God, then you must be willing to accept the sacrifice that Jesus made on your behalf. Confess your tendencies and actions that were and are evil. Move away from them in your heart and life. Accept this incredible love that God, through Jesus, offers you. Because of Jesus' goodness and God's desire for you to know Him better, you now can have what you have been seeking. Believe in the One who made this all possible. His name is Jesus. You can begin to know God right now.

God loves you. His Son, Jesus, died for you. Trust Him. Believe Him. Give yourself to Him.

Letters

(continued from page 2)

I think children should be taught the truths of the Bible and the gospel. Parents and Sunday School teachers should be wise as to when to confront them with the most important decision of their lives and then make sure that they understand the meaning of baptism. I don't like to see the statistics on those children who went to church all their lives, but as soon as they were exposed to different ideas in college, they just left their relationship with God because they did not understand what they were doing. It was just a tradition as in the Catholic church.

For my part, I don't baptize children.

Carlos E. Lemus

Hispanic missionary for Chilton and Autauga Baptist associations
Clanton, Ala.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Your article in the COMMENT section of *The Alabama Baptist* Aug. 19 is beyond any doubt the best article on Christian higher education I have ever read. Your research, personal comments and evaluation was beyond superb. The result and impact that Christian higher education has on the individual as well as the kingdom of God as explained in your article had to be Holy Spirit-inspired.

Fred Lackey

Special assistant to the president
for church relations
University of Mobile
Mobile, Ala.

GAMBLING COVERAGE

I receive *The Alabama Baptist* weekly through my church. I usually read it every week. I am so

tired of all of the information on gambling in Alabama. We would have gotten the message that this paper is against gambling in the first couple of issues where the topic was a major emphasis. We have definitely gotten the message after being inundated for months about this topic. How about a supplement on soulwinning? What about something to do with Christian service? Please stop with the gambling already. I do not support gambling; however, there is such a thing as being so totally absorbed with one topic (gambling) that other issues are ignored.

Ann Giles Perry
Trussville, Ala.

EDITOR'S NOTE — *The extensiveness of the current gambling coverage serves not to prove The Alabama Baptist is against gambling but as an educational resource for the state. This issue completes the eight-part series.*

GIVING AS WORSHIP

I wish to thank you for the wonderful article written in *The Alabama Baptist* on Sept. 30 titled "Giving — A Worship Experience." It was right on target and timely.

We have been discussing that very subject at our church council meetings. The question has been brought to us by some church members as to who is a "priest" and who is not.

We have searched the Scriptures to define the "priest" but also the need, or command, to tithe. Your commentary was a great help in pointing out the absolute command of God from the beginning.

Please know that many others will need to read and reread your discussion of a very important subject.

Buddy Waldron
Senior adult pastor
Palmetto Baptist Church
Palmetto, Ga.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For October 31

Explore the Bible

By Dale Younce

Professor of Christian Studies, School of Christian Studies, University of Mobile

BEING PURE

Ephesians 5:1-14

“How can I be like God? I’m human. Like all people, I am a sinner.” Many Christians think like this. They see the idea of being like God as either foreign or scary and perhaps both. Yet this concept can be traced back to Jesus and His teaching in Matthew 5:48 (“Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”) and even to Moses and what God said to him as found in Leviticus 19:2 (“You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.”). Reading such passages will handle the foreign part, but what about the scary part? Happily the New Testament has passages that give some specific details on meeting this standard. These passages call for living in morally upright ways.

Live in Love (1-2)

The apostle Paul stated a general principle for Christian living and then stated specific illustrations of how the principle works out in life. The principle is that children of God should imitate their heavenly Father by “walking in love.” Since we have trusted Christ, we have become children of God, partaking of His divine nature (1 Pet. 4:8). Consequently we should be people who love as our Savior loved us, with sacrificial love; “He gave Himself for us.” History’s supreme instance of love is Christ’s death on the cross. Jesus’ voluntary sacrifice was a pleasant aroma, pleasing to God. When we live in ways that express Christian love to others, we reflect God’s character.

Live Without Impurity (3-7)

Paul listed some specific unrighteous behaviors, all of which are inconsistent and inappropriate for people who belong to God’s kingdom. These are beneath the dignity of a child of God. We are saints, people set apart from the world and no longer chained by the darkness of sin. Paul warned us against sexual sins of fornication, adultery and moral pollution. He listed greed along with sexual sins because those sins spring from the same nature of fallen humanity, the overwhelming desire to satisfy one’s cravings by taking what

belongs to another. This type of playboy philosophy has no place in the attitude and actions of those who mimic God, who is holy and righteous. Nor does foolish, obscene talk find a place in Christian living. Paul was not talking about innocent humor but conversation that cheapens people and does nothing to minister grace to the hearers, senseless speech often veiled in innuendo or double meanings. Expressions of gratitude should be on the Christian’s tongue. When grace is in the heart, there will be grace on the lips. Paul reminded his readers that he had previously taught this truth in Ephesus. He made it very clear that God does not tolerate sin and people who deliberately and persistently practice disobeying the Lord will not be in His kingdom. He pointed out that Christians should not let empty words about these sins deceive them into thinking that God will not judge these sins. The followers of Christ, living God-honoring lives, are headed for God’s kingdom.

Live As Light (8-14)

Using the illustration of light and darkness, Paul intensified his instruction for Christians to live God-honoring lives. Darkness describes the life of the unbeliever as empty of virtue in moral matters. Light refers to God’s character and moral excellence of heart and will, truthfulness and righteous living. As believers live in the truth of God’s Word, the knowledge of God’s will becomes clearer and clearer; we learn what pleases the Lord. Believers are to live righteously and avoid the evil works and ways of unbelievers. Furthermore the Christian’s responsibility is greater than merely avoiding evil. He or she also is to expose and oppose darkness wherever it is found. The light of the positive proclamation of God’s Word exposes evil. What the apostle was describing here is a three-step process of growth into truth: (1) People are exposed by the Light when the gospel is shared; (2) they submit to the Light when they trust Christ; and (3) they become light by obeying God’s Word. Christians have been brought from darkness to Light through salvation; their lives are to reflect the Light, thereby exposing the darkness in other’s lives.

Bible Studies for Life

By Kenneth B.E. Roxburgh

Chair and Armstrong Professor of Religion, Department of Religion, Samford University

MAKING SENSE OF FAITH

Romans 4:1-3, 23-25; 10:9-13;

Hebrews 12:1-2

Christianity is centered on Christ, not only in our experience of God’s grace in conversion but also in terms of our continuing commitment to Christ as Lord of our lives. Christ calls us to express faith in who He is and what He has accomplished for us through His death and resurrection.

Faith’s Object (Rom. 4:1-3, 23-25)

Paul argued that our acceptance by God has never been on the basis of anything that we have accomplished but only on the basis of His grace, received by faith. This was as true of Abraham in the Old Testament as it is for any believer since the time of Christ’s Incarnation. God’s relationship with His people is never based on a contract, on some agreement that has conditions to be met. That is the basis of legalism. Our relationship with God is founded on a covenant, a gracious desire and intention that He has accomplished for us through the life, death and resurrection of our Savior. We enter into this covenant relationship by receiving God’s promise, believing that He is merciful toward us and living our life in joyful gratitude and obedience. On the basis of such grace, we are accepted as being righteous before God and adopted into His family. We have not achieved this relationship and cannot maintain it by anything we do. We are members of a family of forgiven sinners, celebrating the grace of God who welcomes the ungodly rather than the pious. As those who are astonished by God’s generosity, we are called to manifest this same attitude toward one another, but especially to those without faith at all.

Faith As an Act of the Will

(Rom. 10:9-13)

Faith is a response to God’s offer to all human beings. The response involves our whole personality, our minds, our hearts as well as our wills. Paul made this crystal clear when he declared that faith involves “confessing with our lips” and “believing in our hearts.” Faith involves a human response, a free deci-

sion of the will to the free offer of the gospel. It is at the very heart of human personality, in the heart that the transformation of God’s grace is active. When this occurs, the resurrection’s power is truly at work, changing us to be like Jesus. In this way, we truly believe in the resurrection, not merely as a dogmatic confession but commit our lives to live under His lordship.

Faith As a Way of Life (Heb. 12:1-2)

Faith is only, in one sense, the starting point of a life that is both a pilgrimage and a journey. It is a life that encounters many obstacles, experiences many trials and temptations and can only cope by continuous trust in the One who has pioneered the journey Himself — Jesus. The Book of Hebrews was specifically written to a group of Jewish Christians who was experiencing persecution and considering giving up and returning to Judaism. The unknown author of the book encouraged these Christians to press on, to keep going, to run the race with confidence “looking to Jesus.” The phrase suggests looking away from anything that is distracting their commitment and concentrating entirely on Him. The name “Jesus” reminded them of the fact that their Lord did not flinch from enduring the cross, even though it brought shame and scoffing into His experience. As He identified Himself with sinners, so those who have encountered His saving grace should identify themselves, without hesitation, with His cause. In our contemporary culture in which self-gratification is the order of the day, the terminology of Hebrews calling the Christian to a life of endurance may appear strange. Yet this is the heart of Christianity. The example and encouragement of our Lord is vital in this passage. He is the One who exercised faith “par excellence.” He is the “author and pioneer” of our faith. No one expressed such utter reliance on and humble confidence in God the Father as He did, and no one has been so empowered by the Holy Spirit to live a life in obedience to God’s will. As those who are united to Him by faith, who have received the same resources of the Holy Spirit, we, too, can remain committed and “not grow weary or lose heart.”

Christian Crossword

By N. Terri Grottkle Copyright 1994 ©Barbour Publishing Inc.

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Across

1. God told him to marry an unfaithful wife. (Ex. 15:25)

5. Law, ordinance. (Ex. 15:25)

10. Period of time. (1 Chron. 12:18)

11. Before Abraham was, _____. (John 8:58; 2 words)

12. Judah's oldest son. (Gen. 38:3)

13. Proverbs king. (Prov. 31:1)

15. Nimrod's city. (Gen. 10:10)

18. David's successor. (1 Chron. 29:23)

20. Son of Boaz. (Ruth 4:21)

22. For this _____ is mount Sinai in Arabia. (Gal. 4:25)

24. Even of _____ my people is risen up. (Mic. 2:8)

25. Next to him repaired _____ the son of Jeshua. (Neh. 3:19)

26. Mom.

28. Muppim, and Huppim, and _____. (Gen. 46:21)

30. Fifth son of Jacob. (Gen. 30:6)

32. The prophet to Hezekiah. (2 Kings 20:14)

35. A servant of Saul. (2 Sam. 9:9)

36. "A note to follow so." of water. (Josh. 9:23)

40. I _____ hath sent me. (Ex. 3:14)

42. Then the Spirit came upon _____. (1 Chron. 12:18)

44. If ye believe not that I am _____. (John 8:24)

45. Samuel's mentor. (1 Sam. 3:1)

47. King of Bashan. (Num. 21:33)

48. And _____ called the light Day. (Gen. 1:5)

49. And he built _____ in the wilderness. (2 Chron. 8:4)

51. A musical Levite. (1 Chron. 15:18)

52. An enlisted man. (1 Sam. 17:49)

54. Postscript. (abbr.)

55. He shewed himself alive after his _____. (Acts 1:3)

Down

1. A greeting.

2. Oregon. (abbr.)

3. He anointed David king over Israel. (1 Sam. 16:13)

4. Large monkeys. (1 Kings 10:22)

5. Spanish "yes."

6. _____ and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name. (Ps. 89:12)

7. _____, and Shema, and Moladah. (Josh. 15:26)

8. Telephone. (abbr.)

9. _____ was wicked in the sight of the Lord. (Gen. 38:7)

14. But to do justly, and to _____ mercy. (Mic. 6:8)

16. David's great-grandfather. (Ruth 4:21, 22)

17. The fishers shall stand upon it from _____. (Ezek. 47:10)

19. Either/_____.

21. He defeated Goliath. (1 Sam. 17:49)

23. Went down unto _____. (Josh. 18:18)

25. Education. (abbr.)

26. Type of grain. (Ezek. 4:9)

27. Solomon's great-grandson. (1 Chron. 3:10)

29. Like two young _____ that are twins. (Song of Sol. 4:5)

31. But by my _____ Jehovah was I not known. (Ex. 6:3)

33. Son of Jether. (1 Chron. 7:38)

34. And _____ communed with them. (Gen. 34:8)

38. Shall be astonished, and _____ his head. (Jer. 18:16)

39. Violent outbursts of temper.

41. Covers.

43. Electrically charged particles.

46. The lot is cast into the _____. (Prov. 16:33)

50. _____/OFF.

51. Bachelor of Arts.

52. Shall the shadow _____ forward ten degrees. (2 Kings 20:9)

53. Being warned of God _____ a dream. (Matt. 2:12)

NOISSIPANPS

IGENBOWT

GGOGGTL

HEIISAWAL

AWIIZOHAVIS

NVDADVAVM

DEZEDTAL

HAVARALDEBO

ONOWOLOSUL

LEBEBABUNEL

ERLAWPVERA

STAVESOH

World Religion

Compiled from Wire Services

Tree believed to be climbed by Zacchaeus on display

JERICHO, West Bank — A huge sycamore tree that some believe was climbed by Zacchaeus the tax collector to get a better view of Jesus is the centerpiece of a new tourism campaign by the Palestinian government.

The tree is located in Jericho, the first city conquered by Joshua when the Israelites crossed into Canaan. The city, sometimes touted as the world's oldest town, is a rich oasis of greenery in a desert landscape.

Once the winter home of the wealthy elite thanks to its balmy winter weather, Jericho has seen hard times in recent years, especially since the start of the first Palestinian uprising in the late 1980s.

The current Palestinian administration, which has brought greater economic stability and security to the troubled territory, is working to re-establish Jericho as a tourism destination. It is placing the Zacchaeus tree at the core of the town's 10,000 birthday celebrations, part of a yearlong series of events that Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas kicked off Oct. 10.

Tourism officials hope to take advantage of a sharp increase in tourism since the second Palestinian uprising ended about four years ago. Although Israeli citizens are prohibited from entering Palestinian-ruled areas over security concerns, about a million other tourists visited the West Bank in the past year.

Although no one can say for certain whether the gnarled old tree is the very one cited in the New Testament — the local Greek Orthodox church venerates the remnant of another ancient tree, for example — experts who have examined it say it may very well date back to the time of Jesus.

European bishops create Christian rights watchdog

VIENNA, Austria — Roman Catholic bishops from across Europe have set up an organization to defend the rights of Christians and monitor prejudice across the continent.

"Our first task will be to provide people around Europe with objective and reliable data about the anti-Christian discrimination which is taking place," Thierry Bonaventura, media officer of the Council of Catholic Bishops of Europe (CCEE), said.

Bonaventura was speaking after the formation of the Observatory on Intolerance and Discrimination Against Christians, headed in Vienna by Bishop Andras Veres of Hungary and Austrian lay director Gudrun Kugler.

The decision to set up the body had been made in 2009 by the CCEE, which is based in Switzerland and includes bishops conferences from 33 countries and Monaco and Cyprus.

"The cases we highlight will involve Christians throughout Europe, so the scope of the organization will be ecumenical," Bonaventura said.

"The cases of Christians who suffer some form of discrimination have seen a rapid increase in recent years in Europe. Although this often happens in a hidden manner, the discrimination is all too real," the statement added.

"The aim is to awaken public opinion to what is happening, so that such situations do not become habitual and run the risk of degenerating into real hatred."

Druidry recognized as an official religion in Britain

LONDON — Druidry, the pagan worship that has been practiced on the shores of Britain for thousands of years, gained recognition by the British government Oct. 1 as an official religion after a four-year legal battle.

The Charity Commission, established by Parliament to regulate charities in England and Wales, released a Sept. 21 decision that the worship by druids of spirits in the natural world could be viewed as a "religious activity."

The decision means druidry, often derided by some as the province of mystic crackpots, now has the status of a genuine faith in Britain, alongside more conventional religions such as Christianity, Judaism and Islam. The Charity Commission's 21-page decision concluded that the Druid Network is "established for exclusively charitable purposes for the advancement of religion for the public benefit."

Commission officials estimate that current members in the Druid Network total about 350 (each paying about \$15 a year in dues), although the British Broadcasting Corp. claimed in a report seven years ago that the ancient faith was practiced by as many as 10,000 worshippers across the land.

Druidry in Britain lists eight major festivals a year, including worshipping of the summer solstice amid the ancient stone monoliths at Stonehenge.

Campus News



University of Mobile

Urban Plunge to Impact Six U.S. Cities:

The University of Mobile will send out 12 student-led teams of a dozen students each to six states for Urban Plunge, a 48-hour inner-city missions trip.

Teams will work with local churches and ministries to impact urban cities with the love of Christ in service. Urban Plunge will be held Nov. 5-7 in the cities of Atlanta; Montgomery; Nashville; Baton Rouge, La.; Jackson, Miss.; and Tallahassee, Fla. For more information, visit the website at www.umobile.edu or call 251-442-2429.

WWII Vets to Speak at UMobile: In observance of Veteran's Day, the University of Mobile will host the third annual Patriots' Day with a lecture and book signing by World War II (WWII) veterans Col. Glenn Frazier and Dr. Sidney Phillips, accompanied by Phillips' sister, Katherine Phillips Singer.

These WWII veterans were featured in the PBS documentary "The War." They will speak Nov. 8 at 11 a.m. in Ram Hall on campus. There will be an intermission at 12 p.m. followed by an informal question and answer session and book signing at 1 p.m. It is open to the public. For information, contact Adele Hermann at 251-442-2317 or ahermann@umobile.edu.

UMobile to Present Christmas Spectacular: The University of Mobile (UMobile) will present Christmas Spectacular Nov. 17-19 at Dauphin Way Baptist Church, Mobile. The performanc-

es will start at 6:45 each evening.

More than 250 UMobile musicians and soloists will perform seasonal music in a variety of styles.

Tickets may be picked up in advance at Dauphin Way Baptist, the UMobile Center for Performing Arts office or LifeWay Christian Bookstore in Mobile. Doors will open to ticket holders at 6 p.m. and nonticket holders at 6:30 p.m. For more information, call the Center for Performing Arts at 251-442-2420.



Judson College

Judson Equestrian Western Team Places in Shows:

The Judson College Equestrian Western Team competed at its first set of shows for the new season at North Georgia College and State University in Dahlonega on Oct. 9.

During the first show, Heather Hodge, of Thomasville, placed second in both reining and open. She also was part of a three-way tie for high-point rider. Jordyn Blackwell, of Grand Bay, placed second in advanced. Andrea Luckie, of Alexander City, placed reserve in novice. Jana Davenport, of Jemison, placed fifth and Lindy Cowart, of Brandon, Miss., placed sixth in beginner.

In the second show, Hodge placed second in reining and fourth in open. She was again part of a three-way tie for reserve high point rider. Blackwell placed third in advanced. Samantha Marcella, of Cullman, placed third and Luckie placed reserve in novice. Corey Finlay, of Oxford, placed first in intermediate.

Brandy Colburn, of Brent, placed fourth, Davenport placed fifth and Cowart placed reserve in beginner.

Overall the Judson team placed fourth in the first show and third in the second show.

Internationally Acclaimed Pianist to Play at Judson: Judson College will present internationally acclaimed Australian pianist Simon Tedeschi as part of its annual Concert/Lecture Series on Nov. 4. He will be accompanied by his musical partner, violinist Mariia Gorkun.

The program will be on Nov. 4 at 7 p.m. in the Alumnae Auditorium and will feature selections from Rachmaninoff, Schubert, Liszt, Debussy and Gershwin. For more information, contact concert/lecture chair Thomas Wilson at 334-683-5179.



Samford University

Samford to Present Homecoming Cabaret:

Samford opera will present the homecoming cabaret Nov. 5 at 8:30 p.m. at Harry's Coffeehouse in Beeson University Center. For more information, call 205-726-2851.

Samford to Present Faculty Concert: Samford University school of the arts will present the faculty aria concert Nov. 9 at 7:30 p.m. in Brock Recital Hall. For more information, call 205-726-2851.

Samford to Present Bells of Buchanan in Concert: Samford University school of the arts will present Bells of Buchanan in concert Nov. 30 at 7:30 p.m. in Brock Recital Hall. For more information, call 205-726-2851.

B'ham, Huntsville rank high in religious survey

Cities in the Southeast have the highest percentage of churchgoers and self-identified Christians while cities in the Northeast and Northwest contain the greatest percentage of self-identified atheists and agnostics, according to a new Barna study that largely confirms perceptions of the nation's religiosity.

The data, released Oct. 11, is based on nearly 40,000 surveys conducted over the last seven years by the Christian research group.

Birmingham (67 percent); Baton Rouge, La. (62 percent); Salt Lake City (62 percent); and Huntsville (60 percent) have the highest percentage of churchgoers. Conversely, San Francisco has the highest percentage of unchurched people, with 44 percent saying they have not been to a religious service the last six months. Following San Francisco among unchurched cities are Portland, Maine (43 percent); Portland, Ore. (42 percent); Albany, N.Y. (42 percent); Boston

(40 percent); Sacramento, Calif. (40 percent); Seattle (40 percent); Spokane, Wash. (39 percent); New York (38 percent); Phoenix (38 percent); Tucson, Ariz. (37 percent); and West Palm Beach, Fla. (37 percent).

Portland, Maine, and Seattle lead the way with the highest percentage of atheists and agnostics (19 percent), trailed by Portland, Ore.; Sacramento; and Spokane, each at 16 percent.

Differences on doctrine

On doctrine, significant differences between cities also were evident. Nearly three-fourths of those who live in Charlotte, N.C. (73 percent) and Shreveport, La. (73 percent) agree with the statement that "the Bible is accurate in all of the principles it teaches." But few in Providence, R.I. (27 percent) and San Francisco (28 percent) agree with the statement.

Still, a large percentage of the country self-identifies as Christian,

with the highest percentage found in the South: Shreveport (98 percent) leads the way, followed by Birmingham (96 percent); Charlotte (96 percent); Nashville (95 percent); Greenville, S.C./Asheville, N.C. (94 percent); New Orleans (94 percent); Indianapolis (93 percent); Lexington, Ky. (93 percent); Roanoke-Lynchburg, Va. (93 percent); Little Rock, Ark. (92 percent); and Memphis (92 percent). The lowest percentage of self-identified Christians are found in San Francisco (68 percent); Portland, Ore. (71 percent); Portland, Maine (72 percent); Seattle (73 percent); Sacramento (73 percent); New York (73 percent); San Diego (75 percent); Los Angeles (75 percent); Boston (76 percent); Phoenix (78 percent); Miami (78 percent); Las Vegas (78 percent); and Denver (78 percent).

From an evangelical perspective, the "self-identified" category does not mean that a person is a Christian — only that he or she claims to be one. (BP)

Telling God's stories

Writer trades rodeo queen dream for life 'on mission'

By Ava Thomas
International Mission Board

I never would've told you I was made for this.

I was meant to be a rodeo queen.

I have a hot-pink lasso to prove it, not to mention an encyclopedic brain on horse-isms, thanks to "The Black Stallion" books and *Horse Illustrated* magazine.

For years I went to bed at night with barrel-racing dreams.

Thank goodness reading all those horse stories made me love words as much as horses. The dreams eventually turned to being a writer or editor, maybe for a magazine. Maybe of *Horse Illustrated*.

But absolutely, positively, not a missionary.

To me, missionaries had one definition — people who went to the other side of the world to evangelize on a grand scale, probably in front of large numbers of people.

And that was not me.

I'm a story lover, not a Billy Graham. I want the excuse of a newspaper interview to be able to meet people one-on-one and ask them to tell me their stories. Then I want to tell them to other people.

So I majored in journalism. I got a good job offer and felt my heart was content to stay indefinitely at my home state's major daily newspaper. It seemed an endless avenue of great stories, with a spread of good local churches and great ministries nearby to boot.

I was set.

But He found me anyway.

It wasn't long before I started realizing maybe I wasn't so set after all. Happy, yes. Content, no. Maybe He had in mind trimming away the stories on hospital picket lines, Paso Fino horses and mosquito conventions and instead asking of me a different kind of story.

The kind that had purpose.



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Soon I was working at a Southern Baptist publication, hearing and relaying the stories of how God was advancing the gospel around the world.

Well drilling. Goat herding. Coffee making. Football coaching. Bookkeeping.

All these were stories of how He was actively pursuing the lost through His workers on the other side of the world in dark places — places where I had never considered visiting, much less living.

All of those job descriptions — they were filled by missionaries.

Graham in the list, just normal people doing normal work.

Something else

I knew He had placed me at my desk at the publication where I was. But my own stories were getting to me. There was something else, something next that He was asking.

And it was to move myself. To go be a missionary — the journalist kind, not the Billy Graham kind. So I did.

I won't say it was easy. I was happy where I was, seasoned at my job after a number of years, one year of graduate studies under my belt with thoughts of maybe teaching college one day. I had an amaz-

ing church and amazing friends.

It didn't seem logical, but logic didn't cover the gnawing I felt inside.

So a year later, I fell on my face before Him and told Him that He could have it all. I'd even try to be Billy Graham if He wanted.

I meant it.

But He just asked me to be who I was — to tell His stories and to love people and their stories.

And to tell them His story in the process.

Now I live overseas, working as a writer for Southern Baptist missions, seeing firsthand how He's at work and telling the stories to Baptists back in the States — telling people about God's story of salvation in the process.

That way, Baptists can know how the darkness is being pushed back by the money they give through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Cooperative Program and by the people they send and the prayers they pray.

That way, they can see the faces and hear the voices of real people, redeemed people who have met Christ.

That way, hopefully they will see. And give. And go.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Ava Thomas recently arrived at her field of service after being appointed through the International Mission Board (IMB) earlier this year. She joins 5,200 missionaries currently serving overseas, supported by the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Cooperative Program. Though economic constraints have led the IMB to reduce the number of missionaries being sent, new missionaries continue to be appointed to fill the most strategic needs. The IMB's next appointment services for 57 missionaries are scheduled for Nov. 10 at Calvary Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, N.C., and Nov. 16 at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee. (BP)



BP photo

Religion In America

Compiled from Wire Services

Methodist public policy funding ruled less restrictive

WASHINGTON — The United Methodist Church's (UMC) public policy agency can advocate on causes beyond alcoholism and temperance without violating the terms of its endowment, a District of Columbia judge ruled Oct. 6.

Superior Court Judge Rhonda Reid Winston's decision is the latest twist in a long-running debate in the UMC about how its General Board of Church and Society is funded and the positions it takes on political issues.

The court case concerned funds donated by Methodists to erect the United Methodist Building on Capitol Hill and the approximately \$1 million in revenue generated each year by renting out its offices and apartments. The building, which was completed in 1923, occupies prime real estate between the Supreme Court and the Capitol. A coalition of Methodists contends that the money for the building — and any revenue generated by it — was intended solely to fight alcoholism and support temperance.

"I don't think the money should be used for any issue — liberal or conservative — not related to temperance or alcohol," said Rob Renfroe, a Houston-area pastor and former member of the Board of Church and Society. But Winston said evidence presented at the trial "clearly show that throughout the years, the boards were also authorized to, and did, perform substantial work on other 'public morals' issues." Renfroe, publisher of *Good News* magazine, a Methodist publication, said he and other conservatives are weighing whether to appeal Winston's ruling.

U.S. military suicide rate on the rise in recent years

WASHINGTON — The number of people in the U.S. military who have committed suicide has increased dramatically in recent years, with the Army alone battling a suicide rate that doubled between 2005 and 2009. At Fort Hood in Texas, officials have documented 14 confirmed suicides and six suspected suicides among soldiers so far this year, including four suspected suicides during one weekend at the end of September. Fort Hood had 11 suicides last year and 14 total in 2008.

Sara Horn, a military wife who founded a support network called Wives of Faith, said the suicides are directly related to a problem of the heart. "When the heart has no hope, it's very hard to see a future. This should serve only as one more wakeup call, one more plea to our local churches and believers to reach out to our military and their families," Horn said. "We know the hope we have in Jesus. We have to share that hope with others." More than 1,000 troops have killed themselves during the past five years, driving the Army suicide rate above the civilian rate for the first time since the Vietnam War.

Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, warned that the problem is going to get worse before it gets better as more soldiers return from war. An independent report ordered by Congress found the Pentagon's suicide prevention efforts inadequate, with fewer soldiers dying in combat than by their own actions, including suicides and accidental deaths brought on by high-risk behavior.

Crystal Cathedral files for Chapter 11 bankruptcy

GARDEN GROVE, Calif. — The Crystal Cathedral, the gleaming Southern California megachurch known for its "Hour of Power" television broadcast, has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection from creditors.

Senior Pastor Sheila Schuller Coleman said Oct. 18 in a statement that the decision came after some creditors chose to file lawsuits against the ministry. Church officials cited the economy as the main cause for its financial trouble. Revenue dropped 27 percent, to about \$22 million, in 2009. In the last year, its staff was reduced by 140 and now totals about 200 people.

The church owes creditors \$7.5 million, said spokesman John Charles, including the vendor who provided camels, sheep and horses for its annual "Glory of Christmas" pageant. Also unpaid are expenses for television equipment and bills for airtime on some TV stations. The ministry cut costs by reducing its airtime on domestic stations. It now airs on satellite and cable outlets such as Lifetime and the Trinity Network. It also sold its Rancho Capistrano retreat property to Rick Warren's Saddleback Church in May for \$22.5 million. But it remains about \$44 million in debt.

Despite the current financial picture, statements from church officials reflected the same positive-thinking mantra the Schullers have been preaching for half a century.

"We know we'll recover," Charles said. "We're very optimistic. This will allow us to get a new beginning."