



July 28, 2011  
Vol. 176, No. 29

Reporting. Connecting. Inspiring.

Toll free 1-800-803-5201  
www.thealabamabaptist.org

INSIDE



Christians seek refuge at Baptist church in Ivory Coast during battle for Abidjan

◆ Page 4



Cameron to lead marriage conferences in state

◆ Page 6



Don't miss National Back to Church Sunday, Sept. 18

◆ Page 15



Photo by Neisha Fuson

**LEAP OF FAITH** — Students in Embark Ministries' The Amazing Race: Extreme Faith Edition participated in several challenges including rappelling down the face of a small mountain at Little Rock City Park near Gadsden on July 16. The race comprised four 'obstacles' to overcome as a team.

## Gadsden-area youth participate in 'extreme' event

By Courtney Searcy  
The Alabama Baptist

**E**xtrême faith. That's what Vista McDuffie says Embark Ministries is all about, and the events his ministry hosts challenge students to both spiritual and physical extremes.

The Amazing Race: Extreme Faith Edition pitted eight youth groups against one another in a friendly competition July 16 as they raced across Etowah County. The youth group from CrossPoint Community Church, Gadsden, won a \$500 award toward a youth event such as rock climbing.

The other participating youth groups were from College Heights Baptist Church, Glencoe; Bellevue

Baptist Church, Gadsden; Fairview Baptist Church, Gadsden; North Glencoe Baptist Church; First Baptist Church, Glencoe; Nocalula Church of God, Gadsden; and The Church at Mercy Hill, Rainbow City.

The competition began when teams clocked in at Morange Park in Gadsden, where they received their first clue card. The card bore a Bible verse without a reference. Teams had to find the reference, which served as GPS coordinates for the next challenge location.

They punched the coordinates into their GPSes and rolled up a curvy county road to Little Rock City Park near Gadsden, where the challenge was to rappel down a rock formation.

One by one, team members leaned back into their harnesses and took the backward step over the edge of the rock. For many, it was a scary moment. As their stomachs churned and knees shook, their teammates encouraged them to face their fears.

"The first step is the hardest part," shouted one student waiting below. Others who made it down chimed in agreement.

Some students overcame their fears to the cheers of their teammates, while others declined to participate, resulting in a 10-minute penalty for their team.

The next clue card sent teams to Gadsden Mall, where a specific per-

son knew the secret phrase they needed to receive their next challenge.

To find out the phrase, teams approached shoppers, saying, "What seems to us as bitter trials is often blessings in (See 'Students,' page 3)



Photo by Neisha Fuson

**TOTAL RECALL** — At the finish line of The Amazing Race: Extreme Faith Edition, teams had to recall a certain memory verse that was shown to them at the sign-up table.

Youth participate in The Amazing Race: Extreme Faith Edition. See video coverage of the race. Click [here](#) to watch.

# COMMENT

## What Makes Up True Service to God?

Evangelical Christians love the Old Testament Book of Isaiah. They love the emphasis on personal faith that the prophet stressed. Though decades apart, Isaiah advised both King Ahaz (735 B.C.) and King Hezekiah (701 B.C.) that only faith in God could save Jerusalem from the threat of foreign invaders (Isa. 7:9; 28:16; 30:15). Perhaps more than any other writer, Isaiah presented personal faith as the only appropriate response to God.

And what Christian's heart does not soar while reading Isaiah's foretelling of a coming Messiah? The prophet wrote of the Messiah's birth in Chapter 7, His taking the throne in Chapter 9 and His rule in Chapter 11.

Isaiah 53 reads more like a news report of events surrounding Jesus' crucifixion — Isaiah's long-promised Messiah — rather than words penned almost 800 years before His death. Stated simply, Isaiah played a key role in developing the Jewish people's Messianic hope.

Isaiah developed another major theme, which is not as popular with many evangelical Christians today as his emphasis on personal faith and the coming Messiah. That theme is what makes up true service to God. Truthfully the people of Isaiah's day did not like that part of his message either.

Page Kelley made the point clearly in his book "Discovering Isaiah." He wrote, "Isaiah's contemporaries believed that the true service of God consisted of acts or worship performed at a central sanctuary with a duly ordained priesthood offering the prescribed sacrifices. They believed they were fully accepted by God because they participated in such services of worship."

### A different view

For those who do not know, Kelley was a native Alabamian and longtime professor of Old Testament at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Isaiah had a different view. To him, true service to God applied to acts of justice and mercy performed in behalf of the poor, the oppressed, the homeless, widows and orphans.

The tensions between popular religious understandings of Isaiah's day and his message are described graphically in the book's opening chapter. There the Lord recounted the "multitude of ... sacrifices" and "burnt offerings" (v. 11). God noted the people tried to worship Him through burning incense, keeping the feast days on the Jewish calendar and praying. God even acknowledged the



### THOUGHTS By Bob Terry

frequent worship services and holidays marked by New Moon festivals, Sabbaths and solemn assemblies.

The Jews of Judah were religious. Of that, there is no doubt. Like many Christians today, they attended worship. They prayed. They gave. They read the Scripture. Their personal piety was strong as they went through the rituals of the faith. These acts constituted true service to God, the people believed. And like many today, "they believed they were fully accepted by God because they participated in such services of worship."

Yet the first chapter of Isaiah is filled with denunciations of those in Judah and Jerusalem. Of their sacrifices, God asked, "What are they to me?" and of their offerings, He said, "I have no pleasure" in them (v. 11).

God called their worship through incense "detestable" and declared, "My soul hates" your festivals and feasts (v. 14). God even said He could not bear the people's solemn assemblies (v. 13) and warned that He would hide His eyes from their prayers (v. 15).

God lumped all these acts of personal piety together in verse 16 and practically screamed from the pages of Scripture, "Take your evil deeds out of my sight."

What God demanded, according to Isaiah, was for the people to "stop doing wrong, learn to do right" (v. 17). It was not participation in worship rituals, not sacrifices or offerings, not prayers or special services that God desired as true service.

Instead God commanded, "Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow" (v. 17).

Later in the chapter, Isaiah wrote, "The faithful city (Jerusalem) has become a harlot" because "your rulers are rebels, companions of thieves; they all love bribes and chase after gifts. They do not defend the cause of the fatherless; the widow's case does not come before them" (v. 23).

Because the people and their leaders did not offer true service to God through justice and righteousness, He decreed, "I will turn my hand against you" (v. 25).

It was not because of idolatry that God threatened to punish Judah. It was not because it aban-

doned worship or religious rituals. God turned His hand against Judah and Jerusalem because the people failed to live in justice and righteousness. This is what Isaiah taught was true service to God.

The theme of justice and righteousness being true service to God is not limited to the first chapter. The book's final section (Chapters 56-66) sees the nation restored following the Babylonian Captivity. As this great book neared its end, the writer returned to the first chapter's theme.

In Isaiah 58:5, God again pointed out the difference between a personally pious religious act and what He considers true service. This time, the topic was fasting. Beginning in verse 6, God outlined what He considers a true fast. God said, "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loosen the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?"

### Justice and righteousness

"Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter — when you see the naked, to clothe him and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?"

When this kind of true service was offered to God, the restored nation would see "your light break forth like the dawn and your healing will quickly appear" (v. 8).

From this great book's beginning to its end, Isaiah's hope was always in a coming Messiah. The prophet taught the only way to be rightly related to God is through personal faith. And for those who know God, the only way to offer Him true service is through deeds of justice and righteousness.

That is a lesson that must not be forgotten by Christians today.

**THE ALABAMA BAPTIST**

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

(ISSN 0738-7741; USPS 011-080)  
© The Alabama Baptist, Inc.

is published weekly except for one week in July and December by The Alabama Baptist, Inc., at 3310 Independence Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209. Phone: 205-870-4720. Statewide phone: 1-800-803-5201. Fax: 205-870-8957. **Web site:** www.thealabamabaptist.org. **E-mail:** news@thealabamabaptist.org or circulation@thealabamabaptist.org. Periodicals postage paid at Birmingham, Ala., and other locations.

Subscription Rates:  
Church Budget — \$12.50 (plus tax)  
Individual — \$20.95

**DR. BOBBY S. TERRY, EDITOR**  
Jennifer Davis Rash, Executive Editor  
Neisha Fuson, News Writer ..... Kathleen Penton, Copy Editor  
Lauren C. Grim, Designer ..... Wanda Bergeron, Local Editions  
Linda Harrison, Financial Admin. .... Brian Giles, Advertising Director  
Debbie Campbell, Director of Circulation and Public Relations

**NEWS SERVICES:** Baptist Press (BP), Associated Baptist Press (ABP), Religion News Service (RNS), Compass Direct News (CDN), Evangelical Press (EP), Forum 18 (F18).  
**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to The Alabama Baptist, 3310 Independence Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209.  
**ADDRESS CHANGE:** Send old and new addresses, and name of church to Circulation Department, 3310 Independence Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209. Allow two weeks.

Follow Bob Terry on

**twitter**

@drbobterry

## Someone You Should Know

By Julie M. Payne, Correspondent, TAB

### Watson Smith

Westwood Baptist Church, Forestdale  
Birmingham Baptist Association

**FAVORITE BIBLE VERSE:** John 3:16

**FAVORITE HYMN:** "Love Lifted Me"

**HOBBIES:** Reading and playing with grandchildren

**FAMILY STATUS:** Married to Margaret for 61 years; two children, Jan and Lisa; seven grandchildren; two great-grandchildren



SMITH

*Eighty-five-year-old Watson Smith has been employed by Westwood Baptist Church, Forestdale, for 26 years. As maintenance supervisor, Smith ensures that everything at the church runs smoothly by overseeing all aspects of the building, including lighting, water and furnaces. "It's just my life," he added with a laugh.*

#### Q: How did you come to know the Lord?

**A:** We (my family) went to church from babies on up. When the church had a revival in the summertime — it was always in July or August — we would go to those revivals. We had a young pastor that came down and led a revival. He preached morning and night for a whole week.

#### Q: What do you consider rewarding about your work at the church?

**A:** We had day care and Mothers Day Out for 30-something years here ... I have been "Poppa" to several hundred children. Several have since gone into the ministry (as adults).

#### Q: Why do you continue this work?

**A:** I feel like the Lord brought me here. I feel like He had a need for me here. And this [work] satisfies a need for me, too.

#### Q: What difference has Christ made in your life?

**A:** Knowing that I do have a Savior who loves me and that I love Him and that I have a place to go when I leave this place ... I feel like my whole family has been saved, and that just means a lot to me.

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

# Students challenged to share their faith, run life's race with passion, endurance

(continued from page 1)

disguise." Some shoppers nodded in agreement, while others stared in confusion or led them astray with fake phrases.

The key phrase "caramel Macchiato" allowed teams to advance to an obstacle course.

Each team member raced over and under a wooden obstacle, zigzagged through a creek and tromped through swamplike conditions — all while holding a cup full of water.

At the end of the course, team members dumped the contents of the cup into a bucket, hoping to quickly reach the "full" line.

Once the bucket was filled, a clue sent teams to the finish line, tucked away near a campground. They could recite a verse that had been displayed at the registration table for bonus points.

Working together to complete the race, the students completed the challenges much quicker than McDuffie expected.

"If all these kids could apply this to their Christian walk, how big of a change there could be," he said.

The suspense over who won was drawn out until the end of the rally held that night at Bellevue Baptist, where McDuffie challenged the students spiritually.

Comparing the Christian life to a physical race, he urged them to run the race with passion and endurance.

McDuffie explained that if they were going to school and never sharing their faith, then they were running halfheartedly.

"You're sitting on the sidelines, and you're watching your friends go to hell," he said.

McDuffie said he spoke from experience, having lived the party lifestyle when he was young. He turned his life over to Christ in a jail cell.

"I knew I was not being the father, husband or Christian I was called to be," McDuffie said.

At the end of the rally, he opened the altar to students to renew their commitment to run with endurance and passion or receive salvation.



Photo by Neisha Fuson

**WINNERS** — CrossPoint Community Church, Gadsden, won a \$500 gift certificate.

"It has nothing to do with your ability, but it has everything to do with God's ability," McDuffie said.

Students filled the altar as The Advice, who held a concert during the rally, played music.

One student said the night was a reminder "that God has faith in me." Another was encouraged "to not give up and keep going."

Everyone left with a prize to remember the day. For a team that got lost on the way to one challenge, it was a Dora the Explorer placemat; for a team that got muddy and messy, it was a sponge.

McDuffie emphasized that while the events are fun, seeing God work at the rallies is what he looks forward to most. The types of events

he plans are intended to draw those students who might not attend a church service.

McDuffie started Embark eight years ago after visiting an area school as a youth pastor. He knew there had to be a way to reach the hundreds of students in the area. So McDuffie collaborated with students.

He is no longer a youth pastor but pours into Embark in addition to working full time as an AT&T service technician.

While the race is the biggest event the ministry has hosted, McDuffie is already planning for next year, ready to push students to new extremes.

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



Photo by Neisha Fuson

**RALLY** — The Advice performs for the youth groups at The Amazing Race: Extreme Faith Edition rally July 16 at Bellevue Baptist Church, Gadsden.



Photo by Neisha Fuson

# 'Your family in Christ is eternal'

## Christians seek refuge at Baptist church in Ivory Coast during battle for Abidjan

The air is filled with a nauseating, thick, black smoke. Three months ago, the smoke came from gunpowder and vehicles set ablaze — along with horrific “necklacings,” modern-day lynchings in which a victim is burned alive when a gasoline-filled tire is placed around him and set on fire.

Today, however, the plumes of smoke are from dozens of dilapidated 16-passenger vans known as “gbakas,” each filled to capacity and speeding up and down streets that once were battlefields, laced with potholes, but now bustling with activity once again.

Street vendors mob vehicles stopped at red lights and press their wares against the windows. City workers in orange hazard vests busily sweep trash out of the roads with straw brooms. Bus stations are crammed with travelers bringing merchandise both into and out of the city.

Earlier in the year, commerce in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, came to a standstill and the streets were empty as people hid in their homes to escape the violence. A noon curfew was imposed, and even then only those most desperate for food and water came out in the mornings.

### Bloody urban warfare

The battle for Abidjan lasted for months between fighters supporting the winner of last November's presidential election, Alassane Ouattara, and government troops backing the former president, Laurent Gbagbo.

When Gbagbo refused to step down, bloody urban warfare spread across Abidjan's neighborhoods,



**PLACE OF SAFETY** — At the height of the political tensions in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, more than 60 displaced Christians took up residence in the Sunday School classrooms of this Baptist church.

taking the lives of at least 3,000 people. The fighting culminated with U.N. intervention on April 11 of this year when the presidential palace was bombarded and Gbagbo finally surrendered.

The months leading up to that fateful day were incredibly difficult for Abidjan's populace — no matter which (if any) political candidate they supported. The city's water supply was shut off and food prices tripled as a result of the siege.

Edith Vilquin, a resident who works as a house maid, spent her life's savings to feed her family

during the lockdown. “If my children had gone out in the streets they would have been shot,” she said. “I'm an old lady, so the militants left me alone.”

She raises her hands above her head and said, “This is how I walked. For a month, this is how we all walked.”

Like Vilquin, most residents of neighborhoods overrun with soldiers fled to areas with less direct violence, with a well-established Baptist church in one such neighborhood opening its doors to refugees from churches across town.

“At one point, we had over 60

people here at the church,” Joseph Armoo, the church's pastor, said. “They slept in our Sunday School rooms and we shared our meals.”

The refugees included other Baptist pastors and their families. “I can't stress how much of a blessing our brothers and sisters in Christ were,” Baptist pastor Kouame Pacome recounted.

His neighborhood saw some of the worst fighting during the crisis. His church facility closed after looters took all its furniture, musical instruments and even lighting fixtures.

Pacome and his wife hid in their home for weeks before finally fleeing to Armoo's church. During the month he spent at his newfound refuge, he never went without food.

### Displaced across city

“I had three meals a day, every day. It was amazing,” Pacome says. Although his church members were displaced across the city, they went to great lengths not only to telephone and check up on him, but also to send money and supplies.

Armoo credits God with providing for the people taking refuge at his church compound. “Every day, someone would show up to give us help. One day, a Christian woman showed up at the gate with a bunch of mattresses for us.”

On other days, believers would come by and give them money to buy food. “It was by the grace of God that we survived this!” he exclaimed.

The refugees came from neighborhoods and ethnic groups known to support opposing sides of the conflict. Yet they shared

their meals and lodging together.

“Your blood family is a gift from God. It's good, but it has its limits,” Pacome said. “There is death, there is old age, there is separation ... but your family in Christ is eternal.”

As the new government calls for reconciliation among the population, believers are seeing an opportunity to reach out.

“The church's message has always been one of reconciliation. A person who gives himself to the Lord becomes a new person,” Armoo said. “After all,” he continued, “we are supposed to be different. The time is now to show the difference between the Christian and the non-Christian.”

At times during the conflict, and even after the U.N. intervention, the fighting seemed on the verge of becoming religious. The U.N. Operation in Ivory Coast (UNOCI) reported heavily armed troops raided the premises of a Jesuit institution April 17. One of the soldiers reportedly stated they were attacking under the perception that the Catholic Church supported their opposition's forces and was being used to hide weapons. UNOCI noted that not a single weapon was found.

This prompted Muslim and Christian leaders to meet at Armoo's church to discuss how to ease such tensions and dispel harmful rumors.

Many neighborhoods selected both religious and ethnic leaders in their communities to form “reconciliation committees.” FranÁois Gico, another Baptist pastor who sought refuge with Armoo, is on one of these committees.

“I'm happy, even proud, to be a part of the community leadership with Muslim imams,” Gico said. “We have to work together to help keep the peace.”

Both Gico and Pacome have since returned to their respective neighborhoods and their churches are holding services once again, with attendance slowly returning to pre-conflict numbers as members return to the city.

“It's by the grace of God that we are alive,” said Gico, who had a brush with death when a stray bullet came through the church office roof and struck beside him.

It is with that realization that Gico and the other pastors have been emphasizing the importance of evangelism to their congregations. “Yes, we are hurting,” Gico said, “but in Jesus, people can still have hope.”

“After all,” Pacome said as he held up his Bible, “if God allowed us to live through this ordeal, then He has a mission for us.”

*EDITOR'S NOTE* — Some names changed for security purposes. (BP)



Photo courtesy of Gardendale First Baptist Church

### MORE THAN 1,800 BIBLES HANDED OUT AT DEER & TURKEY EXPO

Gardendale First Baptist Church handed out more than 1,800 Bibles at the Deer & Turkey Expo at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex July 15-17. Gardendale First had 65 volunteers serve during the weekend event. This was the fourth year the church ministered at the expo.



# BAPTISTS RESPOND

to areas devastated by April tornadoes

**B**ethel Baptist Church, Dora, partnered with Jasper-based Hope Missions July 17–21 to host 150 people from 12 churches in five states: Alabama, Tennessee, Texas, Ohio and South Carolina. The participants formed 10 construction teams and five ministry teams.

Some construction teams repaired tornado-damaged homes in Cordova. One team helped Antioch Baptist Church, Bremen, rebuild, while another team rebuilt a home in Sipsey.

The ministry teams visited nursing homes, hosted backyard Bible clubs in Dora and worked with Mission of Hope, a clothes closet and food pantry in Dora.

They handed out more than 1,200 tracts, and several team and community members made salvation decisions during the week.

The team members were there to help people and meet needs, but their primary focus was “to share the gospel [with] as many as possible,” said Shawn Doss, director of Hope Missions.

**T**he recovery effort in Tuscaloosa following the April 27 tornado has officially moved to the **rebuilding phase**. The first new house was framed in the Holt area July 12–16 by the **Northport Men’s Construction Team of Northport Baptist Church**.

Habitat for Humanity and Nick’s Kids Fund supplied the funding for materials while the men’s construction team went to work with 20 men from Northport Baptist and 20 men from Freedom Baptist Church, Ranburne.

The men constructed the 2,300-square-foot house at 4238 Fifth St. NE. Another Habitat team will work on the interior and plan to complete the project by Aug. 1.

Bill McDonald, leader for the Northport Men’s Construction Team, said the team has been going on international missions trips for 25 years but after the April tornadoes, it felt the need to stay local.

“[The team] thought it would be encouraging to the area,” McDonald said. “[I think it] tells the community, ‘We can build back, we should build back and there’s now capability to build back.’”

The team is prepared to help with more construction projects in the future.

For more information, call McDonald at 205-310-9550.

**T**he Reins of Life disaster relief group has been focusing on helping the tornado survivors since May 1.

“Now we are asking for help. We have a **benefit horse show** scheduled for July 30 in Sulligent at 6 p.m.,” said Frieda Palmer, who is with the group. It will be held at the Sulligent arena next to the railroad tracks, she said. “Tell your friends and come out if you can.”

For more information, contact Palmer at 205-546-0955.

**S**t. Clair Baptist Association reports the following **disaster relief projects needing assistance**:

- ▶ Cleanup and recovery of property in at least four locations
- ▶ Completion of building three houses
- ▶ Repair and restore the level and stability of one house
- ▶ Build a house from start to finish — or any part of it

For more information, contact Director of Missions Ben Chandler, at domstclairbapt@windstream.net.

**N**orthPark Baptist Church, Trussville, continues to host church groups who wish to come and serve in the Birmingham area. The most recent group was from First Baptist Church, Castor, La.

The church also hosts **Serving You Ministries** on its campus for additional support. The hotline is 205-908-7985.

**S**t. Clair Baptist Association’s **Greensport Baptist Church, Ashville**, will hold a **Bereaved Tornado Survivors Group Meeting** on July 31 from 2–4 p.m.

The informational meeting will serve as a support group and is for anyone who was affected by the recent tornadoes. Mental health professionals, bereavement professionals and pastors will attend the meeting to provide the group with helpful recovery information.

For more information, call the associational office at 205-594-5173.

Visit [www.sbdr.org](http://www.sbdr.org) for more disaster relief information.

## Alabama receives help NAMB sends \$950,000 to hard-hit states

**T**he North American Mission Board (NAMB) is sending \$950,000 to Baptist conventions in seven states hard-hit by tornadoes and storms this spring.

The funds have been distributed based on a formula prioritizing the states’ needs, NAMB President Kevin Ezell announced.

The amount of funds by state follows: Alabama, \$494,000 (52 percent of the \$950,000); Missouri and Tennessee, \$114,000 each (12 percent each); Mississippi, \$66,500 (7 percent); Arkansas and Oklahoma, \$57,000 each (6 percent each); and Georgia, \$47,500 (5 percent).

“We are disbursing all the funds we received for spring storm relief,” Ezell said. “We are grateful to Southern Baptists for their generosity and want them to know the money is going where it is most needed.” Funds received after the current distribution will go to North Dakota for flood relief, Ezell added.

### Disaster relief efforts

Through July 8, 1,719 donors had made 1,940 gifts totaling nearly \$1 million to support the disaster relief efforts of NAMB and the state conventions, reported Carlos Ferrer, NAMB vice president and chief financial officer. This amount is in addition to monies Southern Baptists gave directly to state convention disaster relief funds.

“It’s been an expensive year for disaster relief,” said Mickey Caison, NAMB’s disaster relief coordinator, “and we haven’t begun to get money for our upcoming North Dakota flood response yet.”

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief

(SBDR) currently is gearing up for a major response in Minot, N.D., where flooding of the local Souris River has impacted 4,000 homes, requiring extensive mud-out work.

Even with this year far from over and in the midst of the annual hurricane season that does not end until Nov. 30, SBDR in 2011 will be remembered as the year of deadly tornadoes, historic flooding, an unusual number of state wildfires, earthquakes and even a tsunami.

Except for 2005 — the year of Hurricane Katrina — SBDR staff and volunteers have seldom been so taxed and spread so thin, NAMB officials noted.

“We’ve had a lot of states involved in a lot of responses,” Caison said, adding that he thinks the SBDR network is continually gaining strength.

“Even though we’ve been stretched thin and involved in so many different states, our state leaders and volunteers continue to step up in ministry,” Caison said. “We’ve had the diversity of disasters in past years but not the diversity of disasters spread across so many states.”

Yet 2011 will go down as another successful year not just because of the thousands of SBDR volunteers who have worked across the United States and Canada, and not because of the 412,000 meals prepared, the 28,000 “volunteer days” served or the 4,000 mud-out and chain saw jobs completed.

Its success also will be measured in the 100-plus people who were led to Christ and 22,000 gospel presentations, ministry contacts and chaplaincy contacts made during the first seven months of the year. (BP)

## The Alabama Baptist website safe after security breach causes spam

**A** hacker recently accessed *The Alabama Baptist* website and used it in an e-mail spam campaign linked to Capital One. The e-mail campaign attempted to acquire credit card and other sensitive information, which is known as a phishing scheme.

The issue was noticed almost immediately and resolved quickly, said Bob Terry, resident and editor of *The Alabama Baptist*. The website is safe and available for use, he confirmed.

“We have always taken steps to ensure tight security measures with our website and are disappointed this happened,” Terry said. “We are sorry for any confusion or problems it caused and appreciate the many people who alerted us to the issue.”

“We’ve all received these scam e-mails noting a trusted business’s name in our inboxes from time to time, but we did not want our name attached to such a scheme,”

he said. “We acted immediately to determine how our site was targeted and how the security was breached.”

The paper’s web developer, Birmingham-based Direxion, and Internet provider, Gadsden-based Network Solutions, are both working to put extra measures in place to ensure it does not happen again.

And while the current site’s security levels have been re-evaluated and tightened, *The Alabama Baptist* will be rolling out an upgraded version of the website in August, which will have the latest security measures in place.

Be sure to continue using [www.thealabamabaptist.org](http://www.thealabamabaptist.org) to read about what Baptists are doing in Alabama and around the world, to find archives of articles printed in the paper over the past decade and as a resource for breaking news, subscribing online and learning about the local church edition.

(TAB)



# Across Alabama's Associations

## BESSEMER

► The Southcrest Gospel Singing ministry of **Southcrest Church, Bessemer**, will host Up Lifted and The McAdams Quartet Aug. 5, 7:30 p.m. The kitchen will open at 6:30 p.m. Scott Bush is pastor.

## BIRMINGHAM

► **Jeff James** is the new pastor of **Green Valley Church, Hoover**, effective July 31. He comes from Mount Vernon Church, Columbus, Miss., where he served as pastor for 12 years. He also served as pastor of Adaton Church, Starkville, Miss.; pastor of Summerland Church, Taylorsville, Miss.; and student pastor for First Church, Fayette. James holds a bachelor's degree in religion from Mississippi College in Clinton and master of divinity from New Orleans Seminary. He and his wife, Jo Ellen, have two children. ► Disciple-Making International (DMI) will hold Secret Church at **The Church at Brook Hills, Birmingham**, Nov. 4, 6 p.m.–midnight. DMI will partner with LifeWay Christian Resources to simulcast the gathering. Pastor David Platt will teach on Family, Marriage, Sex and the Gospel and will include insight to how God's Word addresses manhood, womanhood, marriage, parenting, singleness, sex, divorce, homosexuality, same-sex "marriage," polygamy, pornography, adoption and abortion. Tickets will go on sale in August, and simulcast registration will begin in September. For information visit [www.disciplemakingintl.org/secretchurch](http://www.disciplemakingintl.org/secretchurch).



JAMES

## COLUMBIA

► **Bay Springs Church, Dothan**, will hold a fifth Sunday night sing with Marcia Hudson July 31, 6 p.m. Scott E. Wyatt is pastor.

## ETOWAH

► **Macedonia Church, Gadsden**, will host Christian humorist/musician Brother Billy Bob Bohannon (Bill King) Aug. 7, 11 a.m. Jack Campbell is pastor.

## MADISON

► **First Church, Hazel Green**, and **First Church, Meridianville**, will hold Awesome August Nights at First, Hazel Green. Services will be at 7 p.m. Charles Lowery will speak Aug. 8, Scott Dawson Aug. 15, Kevin Hamm Aug. 22 and Jackie Kay Aug. 29. The choirs and praise bands from both churches will lead worship. Bobby Eads is pastor of First, Hazel Green. Tommy Bolan is pastor of First, Meridianville.

## PICKENS

► **David Blakney** has resigned as youth minister for **Carrollton Church** to become pastor of **Mineral Springs Church, Reform**.

## RUSSELL

► **Ladonia Church, Phenix City**, will host Another Day Closer to Heaven Ministry's Saturday night gospel sing Aug. 6, 6 p.m. EST., with singer/songwriter Denny Grimes, CJ Grimes, gospel trio Trinity, Bobby Ellis, Betty Ellis and Clyde Brooks. There will be giveaways from local businesses and eateries. David Howle is pastor.

► **Seale Church** will host Kingdom Express gospel group July 31 at 6 p.m. Roger Johns and Howard Givens also will sing. Refreshments will follow. For information call 334-614-0183 or 334-855-9377.

Sammy Turner is pastor.

## SHELBY

► **North Shelby Church, Birmingham**, will hold revival Aug. 7–10 with Evangelist Phil Glisson, of Memphis, Tenn. Allan Murphy is pastor.

## SIPSEY

► **Big Hill Church, Gordo**, will hold revival Aug. 7–12 with Evangelist Ted Sessoms. Services will be Sunday at 6 p.m. and weekdays at 7 p.m. Ralph Smith is pastor. ► **Mount Hebron Church, Northport**, will hold revival Aug. 7–11. Services will be Sunday at 6 p.m. and weekdays at 7 p.m. There will be different speakers each night. Steve Stamps is pastor.

## ST. CLAIR

► **Coosa Valley Church, Cropwell**, will hold revival Aug. 1–5 with Edwin Talley, pastor of First Church, Ragland. Services will begin at 7 p.m. Gordon Lee is pastor.

## TUSCALOOSA

► **Yellow Creek Church, Tuscaloosa**, will host Ryan Seaton in concert July 30, 6 p.m. Seaton is the former lead vocalist for Ernie Haas & Signature Sound. For information call 205-210-3676. Barry Holland is pastor.

## TUSKEGEE LEE

► **Pleasant Springs Church, Tuskegee**, will hold revival Aug. 12–13, nightly at 7. The church also will celebrate homecoming Aug. 14, 11 a.m. Bill King, director of missions for Tuskegee Lee Association, will speak at all services. A covered-dish lunch will follow. Ronald Summers is pastor.

# Cameron to lead marriage conferences in state

After starring in the blockbuster movie "Fireproof," actor Kirk Cameron was often asked to speak on relationships at events around the country. This prompted Cameron to create the Love Worth Fighting For conference, which emphasizes the need to apply biblical principles to sustain and strengthen marriages.

He is teaming with singer/songwriter Warren Barfield, whose song "Love Is Not a Fight" was the theme song for "Fireproof," for a 30-city nationwide tour.

The tour is coming to First Baptist Church, Opelika, on Aug. 12; Metropolitan Church of God in Birmingham on Aug. 13; and Decatur Baptist Church on Aug. 14.

Although this event primarily targets married couples, teenagers and single adults are attending as well. At the conference, Cameron challenges couples to seek godly mentors, not be afraid to ask for advice



Photo by Lynn Freeney

**BIBLICAL POINTS** — Kirk Cameron is set for August events.

and use the Bible as the instruction manual for marriage.

"Marriage comes with instructions from God," he said. "However, most people have never read the instruction manual. Through this conference, we're trying to show the way and help couples get out

of the wilderness and into the place of blessing. God does a perfect job when He designs something. What goes wrong is when people fail and stop trying.

"It's essential to have a strong relationship with God as the foundation of your marriage," Cameron said. "Then you learn the principles of dying to yourself and loving your spouse. When you begin to do that, it doesn't change your spouse as much as it changes you. When you change, your marriage begins to transform. Whether you've been married 20 years, 50 years or two weeks, the same principles can apply because they are ultimately rooted in God's Word.

"Warren Barfield and I are just a couple of guys who love our wives and have learned some things that helped our marriages," he said.

For more information, visit [www.feedyourfaith.org](http://www.feedyourfaith.org). (TAB)

# World Religion

Compiled from Wire Services

## Hungary's new religion law more restrictive

BUDAPEST, Hungary — Christian leaders in Hungary are divided over a restrictive new law on religion, with larger denominations welcoming its curbs on church activities and smaller groups voicing fears for their future.

"We wanted a new law to make it more difficult to establish churches here — and we're happy the present government has now done something," said Zoltan Tarr, general secretary of the Hungarian Reformed Church, which claims around a fifth of the country's 9.9 million inhabitants as members.

The new "Law on the Right to Freedom of Conscience and Religion, and on Churches, Religions and Religious Communities" was enacted July 12 with backing from Hungary's governing center-right Fidesz party.

Under the law, only 14 of 358 registered churches and religious associations will be granted legal recognition, while others will have to reapply for legal registration after two-thirds approval in parliament.

Under the law, religious groups will need at least 1,000 members and a 20-year presence in Hungary to be recognized. The Hungarian Methodist church and Islamic community were among those stripped of their previous legal status.

The law recognizes Hungary's predominant Reformed, Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Orthodox churches, as well as the Jewish community.

## Holy Land protection conference held in England

LONDON — Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams ended a conference July 19 on the plight of Christians in the Holy Land and said, "We cannot wait for politicians to sort things out. We have got to make a difference ourselves."

Williams hosted the two-day conference with Roman Catholic Archbishop Vincent Nichols, England's top Catholic leader, at his official London residence, Lambeth Palace.

The meeting attracted more than 60 Christian, Jewish and Muslim religious and political leaders from the Middle East, Europe and North America.

Williams called the meeting to consider the decline in the Christian population in the Holy Land and how these communities could be assisted to remain.

Williams urged support for the ecumenical charitable group Friends of the Holy Land, which finances projects to help the 200,000 Christians living mainly in Israel and the West Bank to stay in the region. The group also works on housing, microfinance, food and clothing, and host's pilgrimages for overseas visitors.

Nichols stressed that the young Palestinian Christians attending the conference did not want to be seen as victims but as actors in history with a strong sense of dignity.

## 'Abnormalities' cited as reason for some abortions

LONDON — More than 2,000 abortions were performed last year in England and Wales on babies with medical problems, including some whose conditions could have been corrected by surgery.

There were 2,290 such abortions in 2010, according to the Department of Health, which released the statistics after a British pro-life organization won a court battle to have the information made public. Of those, 147 were performed on babies after 24 weeks gestation, when a child is often considered able to survive outside the womb.

As reported July 5 by *The Daily Mail*, abortions for "abnormalities" included 482 for children diagnosed with Down syndrome and 128 for babies with spina bifida.

The lives of other unborn children were ended for problems that might have been alleviated by surgery — 181 abortions for musculoskeletal problems such as a club foot and seven for a cleft palate, according to the newspaper.

There were 26 abortions since 2002 for a cleft palate, it was reported.

There were 189,574 abortions in 2010 in England and Wales, according to LifeSiteNews.

Are you on  
facebook

Become a fan of  
The Alabama Baptist  
newspaper.

Alabama Baptist Convention State Board of Missions

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

# ONE MISSION

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

## Lessons Learned in the Literal Storms of Life

Months have passed since April 27, the day Alabama was hit with an unbelievable impact of devastation as a result of 61 tornadoes. These storms raged across our state with a force that even today few people can describe in adequate terms. History will record this as a disaster to remember.

Perhaps now is a good time for us to think about some observations or lessons to be learned from this horrendous experience of death and destruction. For several weeks, I have been musing over this topic with some hesitation.

My reluctance is born out of a genuine feeling of empathy for those who have been suffering and continue to do so to this very day. I certainly do not want to appear to be using this terrible experience as some case study to analyze to death.

Yet we have to learn from experience and, in that spirit, I offer these observations, knowing I am not an authority on the matter. Additionally, I realize I will not be offering an exhaustive kind of evaluation. Others are far better than I at doing such analysis. In fact, leaders at the State Board of Missions are busy doing just that right now.

My initial observation is that no one could have imagined how bad things were going to be across our state on April 27. In our state's history, we have few episodes which come near this level of disaster. The tornado which leveled Brent in 1973 was bad enough, but several towns

and cities received this kind of devastation on April 27. The outbreak of tornadoes in 1974 comes closer to this experience, but again it doesn't equal what happened to Alabama on April 27. The west Jefferson tornado in 1998 was a big one, but there were several of this type storms to hit the state in a 24-hour period.

Again, no one could have imagined the magnitude of this combination of storms. Some areas were hit twice in the same day. This is unimaginable, and it is therefore difficult to make suitable preparations for response. A hurricane offers some lead time in placing assets in position to respond. More than 60 tornadoes in one day does not offer that luxury.

A second observation I have to make relates to the quality of spirit generally demonstrated by Alabamians after the storms struck and left much of the state in rubble and ruin. Neighbors helped neighbors get by until relief came their way. Relief and recovery first responders testified to that fact over and over again.

Churches became relief centers for their communities. Even those congregations damaged by the storms turned their buildings into food service and emergency need centers. The images I have of this kind of ministry are still indelibly impressed upon my mind.

Our trained disaster relief workers were assigned to various

locations across the state. Some of them left their damaged homes to go assist others considered to be in worse condition. Twelve other state conventions were called into service doing numerous relief work assignments, which are so basic to the needs of the people in the impacted areas. I was proud of the myriad of yellow shirts that covered our state. Southern Baptists, through state conventions and associations, work well in this arena. We represent a team of trained people which constitute the third largest disaster relief force in the world.

Untrained and uncredentialed workers did

By Rick Lance  
State Missionary  
Executive Director-Treasurer



amazing work as well. This disaster was so big and the impacted area so large that people from all walks of life became Good Samaritans during the early days of the cleanup and recovery efforts. These folks are unsung heroes as well.

Directors of missions, disaster relief coordinators in associations and numerous pastors became strategic leaders during this time of need. During the past few weeks, we have had regional disaster debriefings with many of these DOMs and other leaders. This has been most helpful in evaluating the situation and going forward in recovery and rebuild.

Another salient observation is that, during a time of disaster, we all need to exemplify patience and perseverance. When a disaster strikes, patience with others, yourself and the situation is sorely needed. A disaster is disruptive, and it takes time to regain equilibrium. This is where perseverance comes into play. For all of us, a disaster is a call for looking down the road at the long haul. Patience in the initial stages and perseverance for continual efforts are an important combination.

Recently, off the cuff, I made the statement, "Christian ministry is not about perfection. We cannot do things perfectly. However, it is about compassion." Paul said, "The love of Christ compels us." During the months since our Katrina took place, I have reminded myself of this verse, which offers us our motivation. We are called

and compelled to serve because He loves us, and He loves through us.

We are now entering hurricane season. I must admit, I am holding my breath and hoping for the best. Yet, whatever comes our way, completely prepared or not, Alabama Baptists will do their part and then some. Second-mile Christianity is second nature to this faith family.

Connect with Rick Lance online by visiting [www.facebook.com/rlance](http://www.facebook.com/rlance) or [www.twitter.com/ricklance](http://www.twitter.com/ricklance).

# Why I Believe in the Cooperative Program

BY MIKE CHITWOOD  
Pastor, Cloverdale Baptist Church,  
Montgomery



Immediately the Cooperative Program makes me think of short-term mission trips. During three short-term international mission trips, the Lord has enhanced my faith, He allowed me to share the Gospel and I began to learn about the Cooperative Program.

Before I was able to go on the trips, I had to raise money to be able to afford to go. Once I raised the support and landed in the international countries God called me to, I then realized that I was only raising part of my cost. The other cost was paid for by the Cooperative Program through the full-time missionaries in each country.

I believe short-term mission trips taught me firsthand how our tithes support missionaries. I also believe those who have been on mission trips value tithing even more.

Another thing that has helped me value the Cooperative Program was a class I took at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

It was this class where I learned about the details of the Cooperative Program, which caused me to value its brilliance even more. This prompted me to teach a class in my local church on the Cooperative Program so individuals were able to learn more about how it works.

Through the class on the Cooperative Program, our church members were able to see that it is "Love in Action" for "One Sacred Effort." I believe the next generation of leaders desires to contribute something they believe in.

Therefore, the Cooperative Program formula should be taught so that Southern Baptists understand how their gifts are distributed through the State Board of Missions, North American Mission Board, International Mission Board and other

agencies within the Southern Baptist Convention.

This will help each church member embrace the importance of tithing for the benefit of the Cooperative Program and for their local churches.

Most recently the Alabama State Board of Missions has been a huge help for the ministry in the church I currently serve. This is my first pastorate, and I knew there would be many challenges, changes and adjustments. Little did I know there would be such a financial change concerning being an ordained minister.



The staff in Church Compensation Services spent hours with me in what otherwise would have taken

potentially weeks to understand. As a result, I am able to be a better steward for my family. They helped remove the financial concern from my life.

Now I am able to focus more of my energy on the ministry God has called me to at Cloverdale Baptist in Montgomery. I would encourage anyone who is beginning in full-time or bivocational ministry to use these services.

The Cooperative Program allows multiple agencies to win by being able to share the Gospel efficiently. Many people want to reach their community and world for Christ but do not know the best way to do it. Sadly, the answer is right in front of us for many churches.

Now that I know about the Cooperative Program, I have an even greater peace about following the biblical commandment to tithe. But also I get excited in knowing that I am helping others come to Christ even if I am unable to be there. Let's reclaim the need to teach this in our churches for the Great Commission's sake!

## MUSIC & WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES: COMING SOON

### Alabama Singing Men and Alabama Singing Women Retreats

Friday and Saturday,  
September 8-9, at  
Shocco Springs  
Registration:

1-800-280-1105  
[www.alsbom.org/asm-asw](http://www.alsbom.org/asm-asw)



### Fall Student Choir Kick-Off

September 25 at First Baptist Church,  
Montgomery

Information: State Missionary Keith Hibbs,  
1-800-264-1225, ext. 217,  
[khibbs@alsbom.org](mailto:khibbs@alsbom.org)

### Senior Adult Choir Festivals

October 20: Dawson Memorial Baptist Church, Birmingham, and Eastmont Baptist Church, Montgomery

October 21: First Baptist Church, Bay Minette, and Lakewood Baptist Church, Phenix City

Registration Form:  
[www.alsbom.org/seniorfest](http://www.alsbom.org/seniorfest)

### Keyboard Festivals (November)

To register online and get dates, times and locations go to [www.alsbom.org/keyfest](http://www.alsbom.org/keyfest)

For more information on these events, please contact Ministry Assistant Susan Corley at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 279, [scorley@alsbom.org](mailto:scorley@alsbom.org)



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

# Get Acquainted Day



At the Baptist Building, 2001 E. South Blvd. in Montgomery

Thursday, September 8, 10 am - 3:30 pm  
9:30 - 10 - Check-in and refreshments

Register by calling or emailing Charleen Hobbs, 1-800-264-1225, ext. 231, [chobbs@alsbom.org](mailto:chobbs@alsbom.org), or go online to [www.alsbom.org/gad](http://www.alsbom.org/gad).



# MISSIONS UNIVERSITY



## Thursday – Saturday, August 25-27 Shocco Springs

### BASIC TRAINING FOR CHURCH PLANTERS

Starting a new church is a great challenge and a great blessing. It is often the most difficult yet rewarding experience that a Christian leader will ever face. Some leaders will refuse the challenge and the blessing as well, believing that they are not equipped to plant a new church.

Your State Board of Missions believes that God doesn't just call the equipped but that He equips the called. That's why we are inviting church planters and their mentors to the Basic Training for Church Planters workshop, August 25-27, at Shocco Springs.

During this workshop, church planting teams are helped to explore the spiritual foundations for church planting, to cast a vision for the congregational identity of the new church, and to discover how to actually launch and grow a new church plant.

Basic Training for Church Planters is a chance to learn about the nuts and bolts of planting a new church. Even more, it is a time for church planters and their mentors to pray and think about the details of how this new congregation will reach new people for Christ's kingdom. It is also an opportunity to network with other church planting teams and discover how they have overcome similar challenges in their settings.

Because this event is supported by gifts of Alabama churches to missions through the Cooperative Program, the cost for this challenging training event is only \$25 per person.

For reservations, please call Shocco Springs at 1-800-280-1105 to pay the \$25 fee. Double-occupancy rooms are included in the fee. For a single room, you will be charged the difference.

To register for this event, go online to [www.alsbom.org/basictraining](http://www.alsbom.org/basictraining). For other information, please contact Ministry Assistant Brenda Niblett at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 244, [bniblett@alsbom.org](mailto:bniblett@alsbom.org).

For more information about training for church planters, please contact State Missionary Otis Corbitt at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 332, [ocorbitt@alsbom.org](mailto:ocorbitt@alsbom.org).

### LITERACY MISSIONS

Literacy Missions ministries involve Southern Baptist churches and associations meeting the needs of people who are adult nonreaders, low-level readers, adult non-English speakers, or children and youth who are at risk of failing in school, both English and non-English speakers.

Discover opportunities for intentional evangelism through Literacy Missions ministries. Explore ministries that teach Adult Reading and Writing, English as a Second Language, Tutoring Children and Youth, and Bible Storytelling. Learn how to:

- Organize a church or associational-based literacy missions outreach ministry.
- Understand students' needs and perspectives.
- Use language teaching techniques and resources.
- Share the Gospel with your students.
- Pray effectively for your students and yourself.

### We will be offering workshops in:

- ARW — Adult Reading and Writing
  - ESL — English as a Second Language
  - TCY — Tutoring Children and Youth
  - Bible Storytelling
- Each course is 14 hours in length.

To register, go online to [www.alsbom.org/literacymissions](http://www.alsbom.org/literacymissions) or contact Kristy Kennedy at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 311, [kkennedy@alsbom.org](mailto:kkennedy@alsbom.org).

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

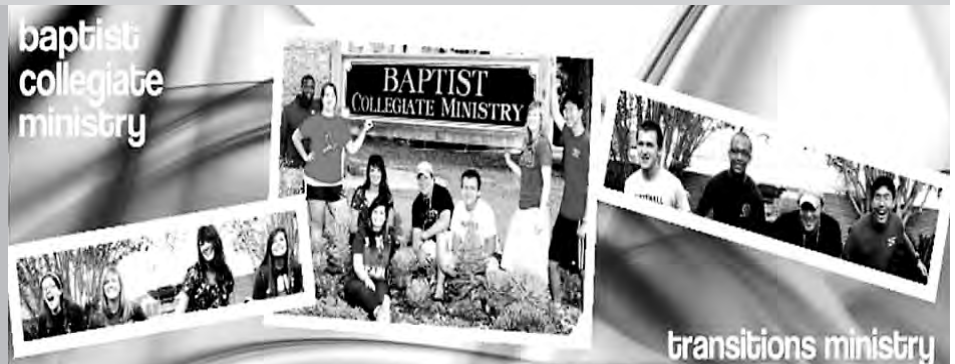
**Transitions** | Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions | **Collegiate and Student Ministries Office**  
1.800.264.1225, ext. 275 | [www.thestudenthub.org](http://www.thestudenthub.org)

What a student does during their first three weeks of college sets the pattern for their whole college career in the relationships they establish and the patterns they develop.

Help lay the groundwork for Christlike college experiences by connecting yourself or your students with collegiate ministers through this site.

Once you go to the web page, enter contact information for yourself or your student. It takes less than three minutes and it will be networked to the campus of your choice!

[www.sbccampusconnect.net](http://www.sbccampusconnect.net)





**Shocco Springs, Friday and Saturday, September 23-24, 2011**

**Begins with dinner on Friday and ends with lunch on Saturday.**

# PASTOR, DEACON/ SPOUSE RETREAT

**THEME:  
Take Up  
Your  
Towel**

**RETREAT LEADERS: Steve & Diana Davis. Steve is NAMB Vice President-Midwest Region. Diana is an author and speaker.**

**COST: \$69 per person (double occupancy)**

**RESERVATIONS: 1-800-280-1105**

**For other information, please call 1-800-264-1225: State Missionary Mike Jackson, ext. 210, [mjackson@alsbom.org](mailto:mjackson@alsbom.org) or Ministry Assistant Judy Duncan, ext. 218, [jduncan@alsbom.org](mailto:jduncan@alsbom.org).**

# NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

The Troy L. Morrison Leadership/Church Health Award will be given to individuals who have demonstrated evidence of leadership that has advanced the church in four key areas of kingdom growth-spiritual growth, ministry advancement, missions involvement and numerical growth.

## TROY L. MORRISON LEADERSHIP/CHURCH HEALTH AWARD

The award is given to three different pastors, one from each of the following categories: New Work, Established Work and Bivocational.

To nominate a pastor whom you feel has demonstrated Kingdom leadership, please contact Ministry Assistant Jamie Allen at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 256, jallen@alsbom.org.

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

**GREAT COMMISSION POSSIBLE**  
REACHING, TEACHING AND DISCIPLE MAKING

**THROUGH MOBILIZING**

**TRAINING LEADERS FOR TODAY'S CHURCH**

**LEADER TRAINING**  
**AUGUST 5-6, AUGUST 12-13**  
SHOCCO SPRINGS BAPTIST CONFERENCE CENTER, TALLADEGA

**TO REGISTER:**  
WWW.SHOCCO.ORG  
1-800-280-1105

THESE CONFERENCES ARE MADE POSSIBLE BY GIFTS OF ALABAMA BAPTISTS THROUGH THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM.

Sunday School & Discipleship

*... For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. . . Ephesians 4:12 (KJV)*

For several months you've been reading about the Reaching, Teaching and Disciple-Making Summits in the State Board's FOCUS section of *The Alabama Baptist*. Maybe you've thought about making reservations but just haven't done it. The time is upon us, so don't let your church miss this redesigned time of training for church leaders.

The training is not only for Sunday School leaders, but for discipleship leaders, pastors, men's leaders and deacons as well as other church leaders who work in missions, singles ministries, senior ministries, youth ministries, technology, evangelism and more. There will be more training than ever before at this annual conference with a new name and new design.

Monday - Wednesday, September 19-21  
Shocco Springs

# State Church **LIBRARY WORKSHOP**

Henry Ward Beecher noted, "Books are the windows through which the soul looks out. A home without books," Beecher used to say, "is like a room without windows."

## *Libraries: Windows to the Soul*

Make plans now to attend. Watch for more information about conference topics and a visiting author in the upcoming "Monitor" newsletter and on the web page at [www.alsbom.org/churchlibrary](http://www.alsbom.org/churchlibrary).

If you are currently not receiving the "Monitor" and would like to be on our email list, please contact us at [jallen@alsbom.org](mailto:jallen@alsbom.org).

**Overnight** (includes registration, lodging and meals): \$140 per person (double-occupancy) or \$180.00 per person (private room)

**Deposit:** \$40 per person

**Day Only:** \$6 registration per day + \$6.50 each meal per day, per person. (Prices may change. Please check with Shocco for the most current cost.)

**Day only/Tuesday Luncheon:** \$15.50

To make reservations call Shocco Springs Conference Center at 1-800-280-1105 or 256-761-1100.

**Online Information:** [www.alsbom.org/churchlibrary](http://www.alsbom.org/churchlibrary)

*For more information, please contact Ministry Assistant Jamie Allen at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 256, [jallen@alsbom.org](mailto:jallen@alsbom.org).*

ONEMISSION:TheGreatCommissionONEPROGRAM:TheCooperativeProgramMANYMINISTRIES:GreatCommissionMinistries

# Rescheduled: **LEADERS OF PROMISE FORUM**

**October 4, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Baptist Building, 2001 E.  
South Blvd., Montgomery**

You will gain insights about the way Jesus related to a wide variety of individuals. A fresh perspective on the people you lead and your leadership style will be discovered. As you grow in understanding, clear choices of response with wisdom and courage will emerge. You will be able to apply these concepts in your relationships in every sphere of life: with fellow ministers, employees, clients and vendors; with spouse and children; with parents and extended family; and with neighbors and friends.

## **LEADING BY DESIGN**

In all of our relationships, our goal is to honor God by treating individuals with love, integrity and respect. God's wisdom is needed to discern who and how much to trust. We need courage to speak the truth in love.

Sometimes we need to be a lamb, sometimes we need to be a lion.

**Guest Speaker: Jay Vineyard, Georgia Baptist Convention**

**Cost: \$20** (includes lunch and materials). Pre-registration is requested by contacting Ministry Assistant Jamie Allen at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 256, [jallen@alsbom.org](mailto:jallen@alsbom.org).

# REGIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL & DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING OFFERED IN AUGUST: THREE LOCATIONS

These conferences will be conducted on Saturdays 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m. There are three one-hour conference times at each location with choices of multiple topics for each age group.

There is training for Sunday School and discipleship leaders, teachers, workers, pastors and Sunday School and Discipleship directors.

Select the date and location that is best for your church, and then go online at [www.alsbom.org/sundayschool](http://www.alsbom.org/sundayschool), click on the "Sunday School & Discipleship Upcoming Events" link on the left side of the page, and select the conference you plan to attend to print a registration form.

Complete the form, and mail it with

your registration fee of \$5 per person to the address on the form. More information will be added to the website as it becomes available, so check back often.

## NORTH REGIONAL:

Lindsay Lane Baptist Church,  
Athens

August 20, 2011

[www.alsbom.org/llbc-sslt](http://www.alsbom.org/llbc-sslt)

## SOUTH REGIONAL:

Government Street Baptist  
Church, Mobile

August 20, 2011

[www.alsbom.org/south-sslt](http://www.alsbom.org/south-sslt)

## METRO REGIONAL:

Canaan Baptist Church,  
Bessemer

August 27, 2011

[www.alsbom.org/metro-sslt](http://www.alsbom.org/metro-sslt)

*For more information, please contact State Missionary Jamie Baldwin at*

*1-800-264-1225, ext. 240,  
[jbaldwin@alsbom.org](mailto:jbaldwin@alsbom.org).*

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

## NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR THE OUTSTANDING 2011 MISSION VOLUNTEER

The Office of Global Missions of the State Board of Missions would like to honor an Outstanding 2011 Mission Volunteer. Your help is needed.

Please think about laypeople you know whom you feel are worthy of such recognition, and let us hear from you. We realize that there are many who could fit this requirement. However, for this purpose only one individual (or couple) will be selected.

Your recommendation will make a difference! The following information is required if a person (or couple) is to be considered:

1. The name, address, and phone number of the person (or couple) being nominated.

2. The name of the pastor, church and association with address, and phone number to which



he/she/they belong.

3. A list of volunteer mission service: their Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and Uttermost that he/she/they have participated in during the past five years, including locations and dates. (Please don't nominate someone who hasn't served in at least three of the Acts 1:8 areas.)

4. Statements supporting your nomination as Outstanding 2011 Mission Volunteer (why you feel he/she/they should be recognized in this manner).

5. Your signature with address, phone, church, and association.

To request your Information Sheet and Nomination Application, please contact Ministry Assistant Virginia Gardner at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 238, [vgardner@alsbom.org](mailto:vgardner@alsbom.org) or write to: Office of Global Missions, P.O. Box 11870, Montgomery, AL 36111-0870.

Nominations must be received, not postmarked, no later than September 23, 2011.

# 2011 TRAINING CONFERENCE FOR MEN'S MINISTRIES/BROTHERHOOD & ROYAL AMBASSADOR LEADERS

**NORTHEAST ALABAMA** — Marshall Bapt. Retreat, Guntersville – Thursday, Oct. 20, 6:00 p.m. – Conferences: 1, 5, 9 – **Reservations call 1-800-264-1225, ext. 227.**

**SOUTHWEST ALABAMA** — Shadow Lawn BC, Eight Mile – Thursday, Aug. 25 – 6:30 p.m. – Conferences: 1, 5, 9 – **No reservations needed.**  
Gallion BC, Gallion – Thursday, Oct. 27 – 6:30 p.m. – Conferences: 1- 7 – **No reservations needed.**

**SOUTHEAST ALABAMA** — Ridgecrest BC, Ozark – Monday, Aug. 22 – 6:30 p.m. – Conferences: 1, 5, 9 – **No reservations needed.**

**EAST ALABAMA** — Parkway BC, Auburn – Tuesday, Nov. 1 – 6:30 p.m. – Conferences: 1-7 – **No reservations needed.**

**SOUTH ALABAMA** — Evergreen BC, Evergreen – Tuesday, Nov. 8 – 6:30 p.m. – Conferences: 1-7 – **No reservations needed.**

**CENTRAL ALABAMA** — Jemison FBC – Thursday, Sept. 22 – 7:00 p.m. – Conferences: 1, 5, 9 – **No reservations needed.**

**STATEWIDE** — Reaching, Teaching, Disciple-Making Summit, Shocco Springs; Friday & Saturday, Aug. 5-6 and Aug. 12-13; – evening to noon – Conferences: 8, 9, 10  
**Reservations:** 1-800-280-1105.

## Conference Titles:

1. Starting a New "Ministry to Men" Organization (small or medium to large size church)
2. Moving Beyond the Breakfast or Meal Gathering — Men's Ministry/Brotherhood
3. Developing a Risk Attitude in Mission Opportunities
4. Hosting a "Built for Significance" Retreat for Men
5. Starting "Men's Fraternity" Groups
6. Royal Ambassadors — How Interest Activities Draw Kids
7. Royal Ambassadors — Going Beyond the Basics
8. Men's Ministry/Brotherhood Director Training
9. Royal Ambassadors Leader Training
10. Royal Ambassadors Resources & Methods — a mini conference for pastors, ministers of education and children's ministers.

For more information, please contact State Missionary Steve Stephens at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 268, [ssstephens@alsbom.org](mailto:ssstephens@alsbom.org)

ONEMISSION:TheGreatCommissionONEPROGRAM:TheCooperativeProgramMANYMINISTRIES:GreatCommissionMinistries

## Fall Senior Adult Retreat October 17 - 19

Come and experience three days of worship, challenge, spiritual growth and laughter at this retreat designed especially for senior adults. State Missionary Dale Huff will deliver a message from God's Word each day to challenge. Mickey Dalrymple from Fairview Baptist Church, Columbus, Miss., will inspire as well as entertain. John Hall, minister of music from Parkview Baptist Church, Eufaula, will lead us in music as we worship. There will be multiple breakout sessions each day when conference leaders will encourage you.

"The fellowship of many believers and Bible study is a rejuvenating experience. You remember back to your younger years and mountaintop experiences, and that

same feeling comes over you once again. It is a delight and joy to be at Shocco. Wonderful, uplifting and refreshing." — Bernice Carter, FBC Montgomery

This conference will begin with lunch on Monday and conclude with lunch on Wednesday. The cost is \$148 per person (double-occupancy). You may register by contacting Shocco Springs at 1-800-280-1105

For more information, please contact State Missionary Eileen Mitchell at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 221, [emitchell@alsbom.org](mailto:emitchell@alsbom.org).

# HEART OF MISSIONS ...

In June, two groups from **First Baptist Church, Pell City**, in St. Clair Baptist Association went on missions trips to opposite ends of the United States. One went to the Gulf Coast, the other to Alaska.

Thirteen Girls in Action (GAs) took a Me, Mom and Missions trip to Dauphin Island. Also participating in the trip were 10 moms, four GA leaders, one Royal Ambassadors leader and a teenager. During the weekend trip, the group ministered through Dauphin Island Baptist Church in Mobile Baptist Association by performing acts of kindness in the community and holding outreach activities in a RV park and on the beach. Among the outreach activities were doing face art; making thumbprint art, sun visors and salvation bracelets; prayer walking; performing a musical skit; and handing out bottled water.

A group of 14 recent high school graduates, seven adults and a middle school student — led by Minister to Students Mark Walker — took a missions trip to Anchorage, Alaska. The group ministered through Graceworks Global Partnership Ministries, in addition to Calvary Baptist Church and Grandview Baptist Church, both in Anchor-

age. It assisted with a summer food program for children at housing communities, where it also held backyard Bible clubs and block parties. In addition, the group performed acts of service for Calvary Baptist, the community and nearby ministries. At times, group members got to minister alongside North American Mission Board missionary Butch Strickland.

A 21-member team from **First Baptist Church, Guin**, in Marion Baptist Association hosted medical clinics and completed construction projects June 25–July 2 in Jacmel, Haiti.

The team included two doctors and a nurse practitioner who treated around 1,100 patients, while others on the medical team worked registration or shared the gospel with patients. The team reported three professions of faith.

The construction team built beds and shelves for a home that will house missions teams who come to work in the area.

“We all said we have nothing to complain about. These people have nothing but their worship and joy touched all of us,” said Teresa Markham, who works with the college and career group at First, Guin.

A team of 44 members of **Cropwell Baptist Church** recent-

ly traveled to Guitton, Haiti.

A medical team, headed up by a doctor from the St. Clair Baptist Association church, treated almost 1,000 patients. A construction team built three homes for families affected by the 2010 earthquake, including one home sponsored entirely by funds from church members. Construction team members also did various improvement projects at a school, such as hanging ceiling fans and making an outdoor basketball court.

The team brought 152 dresses and 78 pairs of shorts provided by Cropwell Baptist’s Woman’s Missionary Union and distributed 300 bags of rice containing gospel tracts. One woman came to Christ as a result of one of the tracts.

“(The trip) made us open our eyes to see that God is working and that we need to be involved wherever He is working in the world, fulfilling the Great Commission,” Associate Pastor Bill Daniel said.

*EDITOR’S NOTE — Share your missions experience with us. E-mail trip details and contact information to [news@thealabamabaptist.org](mailto:news@thealabamabaptist.org).*

## Don't miss National Back to Church Sunday, Sept. 18

Churches of all denominations are expected to celebrate National Back to Church Sunday on Sept. 18 in an effort to reverse declining church attendance and encourage everyone to revisit congregational life.

Lending his voice to this year’s event is Texas Rangers all-star Josh Hamilton, the 2010 American League Championship Series’ MVP who credits his comeback from drug addiction and suspension from the game to his faith and church.

“God’s Word tells us to spur one another on toward love and good deeds and not give up meeting together,” Hamilton said. “We are to walk through life with other believers. My family and I have found that church is a wonderful way to do this, so I encourage you to join thousands of Americans as they go back to church on National Back to Church Sunday.”

Organizers of the event say it has become the single largest community outreach in the nation with 10,000 churches expected to participate in 2011. This year’s event will be held the second Sunday after Labor Day to accommodate more churches.

### Increased success

Since it began in 2009, National Back to Church Sunday has seen increased success with church members inviting more than 1.4 million family members, friends, neighbors and co-workers to special services last year. Some 3,800 churches participated in 2010 reporting an average 26 percent increase in weekly attendance.

This event was launched in response to a 2008 study by LifeWay Research and the North American Mission Board of 15,000 adults, which found that 67 percent of Americans say a personal invitation from a family member would

be effective in getting them to visit a church. Sixty-three percent said an invitation from a friend or neighbor likely would get them to respond.

“We found that the effectiveness of the invitation was often tied to its form: the more personal, the more effective,” said Philip Nation, ministry development director of LifeWay Christian Resources and National Back to Church Sunday spokesman.

### Outreach resources

“We were encouraged by the response and feedback from churches that participated in [the event] last year,” said Eric Abel, vice president of marketing for Outreach Inc., a church communication and marketing company. “Creating ways to empower church members to reach out to their friends and neighbors is exciting, and we are looking forward to this event continuing to gain momentum.”

Outreach Inc. has partnered with National Back to Church Sunday and is offering a 2011 church kit including an updated campaign planning guide, new suggested sermons, a promotional video, graphics and widgets for church websites or social media, invitations, posters, a preparedness assessment, suggested follow-up sermons and small group materials. These and other materials including church postcards, banners, bulletin shells and personal invitations are available at [www.backtochurch.com/store](http://www.backtochurch.com/store).

An interactive Facebook page is also available at [www.facebook.com/backtochurch](http://www.facebook.com/backtochurch), and a list of participating churches is available at [www.backtochurch.com/roster](http://www.backtochurch.com/roster). When churches register, their names and locations are added to the roster, allowing unchurched people to easily find a church to attend on that special Sunday. (EPA)



## A Beautiful Bath at a Heavenly Price

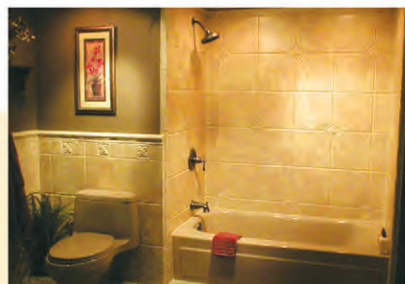
If you have a bathroom that has outdated tile, mold or mildew that you just cannot get rid of, tubs and showers that are stained and look old, call Charlie Thornton at Dream Baths today. We can turn that ugly bathroom into a beautiful one that you can afford in just one day. We are specialists in acrylic bathroom remodeling that is truly beautiful and very easy to maintain and keep clean at a price that nobody will beat. It will never be out-of-date, and there is a lifetime warranty on all work and products used. We give GOD THE GLORY for our success and being able to provide a high-quality product at an affordable price to our customers across the state. **So for that beautiful bathroom at a heavenly price, CALL Dream Baths TODAY for a FREE ESTIMATE. YOU WILL BE GLAD YOU DID.** Charlie and his family are longtime members of Camilla Baptist Church, Prattville, Ala.

**\$ Ask about our no money down, no interest 12 months same as cash program\***  
\*Approved credit through Enter Bank Corp.

**Dream Baths of Alabama**

Call 334-312-1825 or 1-855-849-5048 (toll-free) for a free estimate.

[www.dreambathsalabama.com](http://www.dreambathsalabama.com) • [www.alabamasafetybath.com](http://www.alabamasafetybath.com)





### Leeds Stained Glass

Where Art and Love of God Intersect

**Why purchase stained glass windows?**

- To share the vision of your church
- To beautify your church sanctuary
- To honor parents and family members
- To provide a lasting tribute to your love of God, church, and family

**For over 30 years . . .**

Leeds Stained Glass has provided southeast churches with a variety of beautiful and professionally crafted stained glass windows.

Best regards,  
**Terry Barnes, Owner**



**E-mail or call for a FREE, NO-OBLIGATION consultation on designs and pricing.**

[info@LeedsStainedGlass.com](mailto:info@LeedsStainedGlass.com) • 1-888-699-9679  
[www.LeadsStainedGlass.com](http://www.LeadsStainedGlass.com)

# Historical Highlights

from previous issues of *The Alabama Baptist*

Compiled by Kathleen Prude

## 50 Years Ago July 1961

Law School Acquired: President Leslie S. Wright of Howard College in Birmingham and President Ernest L. Stockton of Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tenn., announced the historic Cumberland Law School of Cumberland University, established in 1847, has been acquired by Howard College.

Wright said the Cumberland Law School of Howard College will open as a fully accredited school on Howard's campus in September 1961. Present at the signing were the two presidents and several members of the Howard board of trustees: Chairman Frank P. Samford, James A. Head, J. Orlando Ogle, L.E. Bashinsky and H. Hobart Grooms.

## 40 Years Ago July 1971

New State Sunday School Director Elected: Donald H. Watterson a native of Decatur and pastor of the 3,200-member Cottage Hill Baptist Church, Mobile, has been elected director of the Alabama Baptist Sunday School department.

Watterson, had been pastor of Cottage Hill Baptist for seven years. He succeeds Ellis Bush, who is now serving as director of the church development division of the Executive Board.

## 30 Years Ago July 1981

TBFA President Delivers 40th Anniversary Report: The Baptist Foundation of Alabama has nearly tripled the assets it manages in the last six years.

As of April 10, the funds held by the Foundation were \$11,114,002.16. Earnings of \$861,167 (average of 9.4 percent) were distributed to the various individuals and/or causes designated by the donors for the fiscal year ended Aug. 8, 1980. The Foundation was chartered by the state of Alabama on Dec. 9, 1940. W.B. Crumpton, during his tenure as executive secretary of the State Mission Board — now the Executive Board, urged Alabama Baptists to set up such an agency. His suggestions in this matter were later championed by such men as L.L. Gwaltney, edi-

tor of *The Alabama Baptist*, and A.H. Reid, then pastor of Avondale Baptist Church, Birmingham.

## 20 Years Ago July 1991

Alabamians Added to Faculty: New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has added two Alabamians to its faculty: Thomas S. Roote Jr. and Paula A. Stringer.

Roote has been named associate professor of church administration in the division of Christian education ministries. He was director of missions for Birmingham Baptist Association from 1974 to 1985.


Stringer has been named assistant professor of early childhood education in the division of Christian education ministries.

## 10 Years Ago July 2001

Volunteers Help With Flood Re-

lief in W.Va.: Alabama Baptists were among the first on the scene helping with relief efforts following recent flooding in West Virginia. Jerry Butler, state coordinator for Alabama Baptists' cleanup and recovery teams, led a three-man team that included himself and one man each from Etowah and Calhoun Baptist associations. Butler said his team cleaned out five houses during its time in Whitesville, W.Va., July 15-19. In addition, Tommy Puckett, director of men's ministries for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, said five volunteers from Baldwin Baptist Association assisted with recovery efforts in Mullens, W.Va. A team from East Cullman Baptist Association also left Alabama for West Virginia on July 23, Puckett added. Alabama volunteers shoveled mud from homes, cleaned floors and tore out walls, he said. ☞

### Fund Raising



Your Church, Youth Group, Club, School or Team will work directly with the manufacturer to make **40% profit**.


Our proven Fund Raising system guarantees your success.

Request your **FREE** catalog and information packet!

1-800-311-9691

or [www.RadaCutlery.com](http://www.RadaCutlery.com)

NOTE: Dept **A11ABA**



"A Cut Above The Rest!"

Lifetime **GUARANTEE**

Find out why our Fund Raisers say that "Rada knives sell themselves!"

Made in the **USA**

## MRS. WILLIE RUTH THOMPSON

Born 7/28/21. Died 6/23/11. Baptized at Bellview Baptist Church 6/10/51. Served tirelessly in many capacities. Church library named "Willie Ruth Thompson Library" on 9/28/97. She was loved, respected and will be greatly missed. Come help us honor her on 7/31/11.

— Paid Advertising —

## MARKET PLACE

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT PLACING A CLASSIFIED AD, CALL THE ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT OF *THE ALABAMA BAPTIST*, 205-870-4720, EXT. 102, OR E-MAIL ADS@THEALABAMABAPTIST.ORG. COPY DEADLINE IS TWO WEEKS BEFORE PUBLICATION.

### CHURCH POSITIONS

**SENIOR PASTOR:** Tate Springs Baptist Church, located in Arlington, Texas, is a multi-generational, conservative Southern Baptist church looking for a senior pastor who can operate in a team approach with pastoral staff. Our total Sunday morning attendance is 600-650. Please forward resumé to: Terry Jeffries, pastor of administration, at [terry@tatesprings.com](mailto:terry@tatesprings.com) or directly to the pulpit committee at [pastorsearch@tatesprings.com](mailto:pastorsearch@tatesprings.com).

**PASTOR:** McClendon Baptist Church of West Monroe, Louisiana, is seeking a pastor. We desire a man of God to lead our church and give spiritual and administrative leadership. Resumés can be sent to: McClendon Baptist Church, Attention Pastor Search Committee, 206 Downing Pines Road, West Monroe, LA 71292 or [jrgardner@me.com](mailto:jrgardner@me.com).

**MINISTER OF YOUTH AND RECREATION:** Traditional, conservative, growing Southern Baptist church in Memphis, Tenn., metropolitan area seeks minister of youth and recreation. Send resumé by July 31 to: Personnel, Covenant Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1165, Collierville, TN 38027-1165.

**MINISTER OF EDUCATION/ADMINISTRATION:** Deerfoot Baptist Church, Trussville, is accepting resumés for this position. Please send resumés to: Deerfoot Baptist Church, 5450 Mt. Olive Church Road, Trussville, AL 35173 or to [phall@deerfootbaptist.org](mailto:phall@deerfootbaptist.org). Attention: Personnel Committee.

**TWO POSITIONS: MINISTER OF MU-**

**SIC & STUDENT MINISTER:** Two Positions Needed: Ozark Baptist Church is accepting resumés for two positions, a minister of music and student minister. Mail resumés to: Ozark Baptist Church, 282 S. Union Ave., Ozark, AL 36360. Please specify what position you are applying for.

**YOUTH DIRECTOR:** Someone who loves the Lord and is bivocational. Send resumé to: Pineywood Baptist Church, 498 Pineywood Road, Gardendale, AL 35071 or call 205-631-3832.

**YOUTH PASTOR:** Concord Baptist, Bessemer, is seeking part-time youth pastor. Send resumés with references to: [concordbaptist@bham.rr.com](mailto:concordbaptist@bham.rr.com) or 5951 Warrior River Road, Bessemer, AL 35023.

**BIVOCATIONAL YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS MINISTER:** We are prayerfully seeking God's person to lead our youth and young adults. Please send resumés to: Barfield Baptist Church, 74 East Mill Road, Lineville, AL 36266. Att. Search Committee.

### OTHER POSITIONS

**PIANIST NEEDED:** Oak Bowery Baptist Church, Ohatchee, is accepting applications for the position of pianist. Please contact church office at 256-892-3711 or e-mail at [oakbowerybaptist@att.net](mailto:oakbowerybaptist@att.net).

### BUSINESS

**FOR SALE NEW & USED:** Lift chairs, stair lifts, car lifts, scooters, \$500 and up and power wheelchairs. We service Alabama. 1-800-682-0658.

**CHURCH SIGNS:** Reliable Signs offers design, fabrication, installation and service. All types of signs from electronic messaging to traditional. Statewide coverage. Christian-owned. Many church references available. [www.reliablesigns.com](http://www.reliablesigns.com). 800-729-6844, 205-664-0955.

### CONFERENCES/RETREATS

**CHRISTIAN RETREAT:** Stoney Creek, new 52-acre, Christian-based retreat facility perfect for family reunion rentals, church gatherings, weddings and receptions. Amenities galore. Reservations: 256-338-5583. [www.stoney-creekalabama.com](http://www.stoney-creekalabama.com). Vinemont, Ala.

### CONSTRUCTION

**CHURCH BUILDING PROJECTS:** Let Webb Builders help your church expand its facilities. Large or small projects. Your plans or use our custom-design building services. State licensed with 25+ years experience. Call Webb Builders, Inc., 334-285-9302. Millbrook, Ala. Numerous church references available.

### TRAVEL/VACATION

**N.C. MOUNTAIN COTTAGE:** Hayesville, Western N.C. — Lovely, almost new mountain cottage for rent — April-October. Weekly/monthly. All conveniences. 2BR/2BA on beautiful Hiwassee River. Low price \$500 weekly, plus tax. Sleeps five. Children welcome. No pets. Call 828-389-3302.

**ORLANDO VACATION HOME:** 4 BRs, 2 1/2 BAs and pool. 10 minutes to Disney. 20 minutes to Universal and Sea World.

\$150/night. [www.orlandovaca.com](http://www.orlandovaca.com). 303-808-2978. Robert.

**GEORGIA MOUNTAIN CABIN:** 2 BRs, 2 BAs furnished cabin. Wheelchair accessible. \$125/night with 3-night minimum. 6 nights @ \$125/night with 1 night free. Located in mountains of Blue Ridge, Ga. Call 941-755-3655.

**AFFORDABLE BEACHSIDE VACATION CONDOS:** Gulf Shores and Orange Beach. Rent direct-Christian family owners. Lowest prices on the beach. Early Fall Special: 4 nights efficiency unit (2 adults and kids) \$444 includes everything (1, 2, 3 bedroom units also available). Even lower prices for those in the ministry. 205-556-0368, 205-752-1231, [www.gulfshorescondos.com](http://www.gulfshorescondos.com).

**LOG CABIN:** Lake Guntersville area, beautiful view and fully furnished. Discounts to ministers. Log onto [www.paradisevista.net](http://www.paradisevista.net) to see pictures. Call for reservations at 205-540-3600.

**FAMILY RAFTING:** Easy whitewater. Hiwassee River 5 mile trip through Cherokee National Forest. Funyak, tube and raft rentals daily 9-4. Webb Brothers 877-932-7238, [info@webbros.com](mailto:info@webbros.com), [www.webbros.com](http://www.webbros.com).

### FOR RENT

**FOR RENT/SALE:** Rent: Resort condo in Orlando close to Disney World. For Sale: Timeshare and a camper/travel trailer. Call 334-413-8433 for more information.

## Want to know God?

By Pastor Jamie Lay  
Stave Creek Baptist Church, Jackson

An individual called me at home late one Sunday evening after church. This person had been attending church for many, many years. There were not many services or opportunities to serve (singing in the choir, visiting, etc.) this person had missed.

Anyway, when I answered the phone, I heard this question "Guess who got saved tonight?" To which I responded by spouting off numerous names of people who I thought would have been good candidates. Every time, the reply was "Nope, nope and guess again." Finally I told the person that I just didn't know.

Then I heard a reply that has stayed with me through the years. This person said, "I did." With an excited voice, the person went on to say, "Before tonight, I never understood that I was lost. When I was a young child, I made a decision that someone talked me into and I didn't comprehend what I was doing. I just did what I was told. Then tonight God helped me to realize that the reason a person places faith in (Jesus) Christ for salvation is because all people are sinners and without the ability to do enough good things to be right with God. Tonight God spoke to me through His Word, helped me to understand that I needed to be saved not just from the world, the devil and hell but from myself. I am the reason Jesus had to die. Tonight no individual talked me into something; God drew me to Himself (and) made me to know He loved me and wanted to set me free from my guilt by faith in His Son and I received salvation."

Friend, if one person can talk you into something, then someone else may very well talk you out of it. But when God has spoken to you through His Word and will, it's settled. If God is drawing you to Himself now, then receive salvation and be baptized. ☞

FOLLOW US ON  
**twitter**  
@  
AlabamaBaptist

# Defense of Marriage Act debated in historic Senate hearing

A historic Senate hearing on a possible repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) revealed a large divide on beliefs about the definition of marriage but also showcased opposing arguments on a subject traditionalists say is often misunderstood — the purpose of marriage and government's role in it.

The June 20 hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee marked the first time any Senate or House committee ever held a hearing on overturning the 1996 law, which defines marriage for federal purposes as between a man and a woman and gives states the option of not recognizing another state's gay "marriages." Gay groups view its reversal as the first step toward redefining marriage in all 50 states.

The Respect for Marriage Act (S. 598), endorsed by President Obama, would overturn the 15-year-old-law DOMA. It has very little chance of passing in the current Congress.

"I think what we have is a situation where a lot of folks simply don't understand what marriage is," said Edward Whelan, president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

Whelan, who supports the '96 law, said marriage logically is tied to procreation and childrearing, which can only lead to a traditional definition. Austin R. Nimocks, an attorney with the Alliance Defense Fund, a Christian legal group, made a similar argument. Nimocks' group also supports DOMA.

## 'Necessary' roles

"Entrance to marry has never been conditioned upon a couple's actual ability and desire to find happiness together, their level of financial entanglement or their actual personal dedication to each other," Nimocks said, refuting common arguments for redefining marriage. "Rather marriage laws stem from the fact that children are the product of the sexual relationships between men and woman, and that both fathers and mothers are viewed to be necessary for children."

The government has an interest in defining marriage as between a man and a woman, Nimocks said, because it has an interest in the future generation and it recognizes the unique and complementary differences of mothers and fathers. He

quoted the 1996 Senate Judiciary Committee report which argued that society has a "deep and abiding interest in encouraging responsible procreation and childrearing."

"While some may argue that times have changed, they cannot credibly argue that humanity, as a gendered species, has changed," Nimocks said. "Men and women still compose the two great halves of humanity, men and women are uniquely different, and men and women still play important and irreplaceable roles in the family."

Opponents of DOMA, though, argued that the law has prevented same-sex couples from receiving the federal legal benefits of marriage. The federal government does not recognize the "marriages" from the five states — soon to be six —

where gay "marriage" is legal. Several gay individuals testified before the Senate committee.

"Those who are lucky enough to live in states that do permit them to marry, they still face a federal government that treats their marriages as if they do not exist," said Joe Solmonese, president of the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest homosexual organization. "So on behalf of the tens of thousands of married same-sex couples in this country — including myself and my husband — I urge Congress to pass the Respect for Marriage Act and to end the federal government's disrespect for and discrimination against lawfully married same-sex couples."

Whelan added that the Respect for Marriage Act, as written, would

force the federal government to recognize polygamous relationships in a state where they were legalized.

"Under the bill, any polyamorous union recognized as a marriage under state law would have to be recognized by the federal government as a marriage for purposes of federal law," Whelan said, using the term for group relationships. "Thus, the foreseeable effect of the bill would be to have the federal government validate any state's adoption of polyamory and to require taxpayers ... to subsidize [these] unions."

The hearing allowed each side to highlight different sections of DOMA. Opponents said it should be overturned so same-sex couples could receive federal benefits, while supporters said the law is needed to protect states' rights. (BP)

# Rice to speak at UMobile Leadership Banquet

Former U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice will be the keynote speaker Nov. 10 at the seventh annual University of Mobile (UMobile) Leadership Banquet at the Arthur R. Outlaw Convention Center in Mobile.

Rice, a native of Birmingham, served as the 66th secretary of state from January 2005 to 2009. Before serving as America's chief

diplomat, she served as assistant to the president for national security affairs (national security adviser) from January 2001 to 2005.

The leadership banquet raises financial support for the school's annual academic scholarship fund while bringing a speaker of national prominence to the Mobile area. Previous speakers have been former President George W. Bush, former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Newt Gingrich, former Georgia Gov. and retired U.S. Sen. Zell Miller, former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush and best-selling author and motivational speaker Andy Andrews.

The gala event highlights themes of faith, leadership and patriotism. This year's event also will celebrate the university's 50th anniversary.

Entertainment includes several of the 22 performing ensembles from the UMobile Center for Performing Arts, which has presented concerts in such diverse settings as Carnegie Hall, the White House, European cathedrals and at concert halls, churches and schools throughout the region.

For information on tickets and sponsorships, visit [www.umobile.edu/banquet](http://www.umobile.edu/banquet), call the UMobile development office at 251-442-2212 or e-mail [banquet2011@umobile.edu](mailto:banquet2011@umobile.edu). (UMobile)



SERVICE | SELECTION | PRICING  
**WE'VE GOT IT ALL!**

**CHURCH BusCenter.com**

Just a few clicks and you'll find the right bus for your needs AND your budget!

- Special Financing Offers
- Exceptional Service Facilities
- Dedicated Warranty Personnel
- Full Inventory of Replacement Parts

**800-367-9463**  
A DIVISION OF TRANSPORTATION SOUTH

To the best of our knowledge, all of the ads in *The Alabama Baptist* represent legitimate companies and offerings. However, one should always exercise normal business caution in responding to ads.

**BELHAVEN UNIVERSITY**  
Our Standard is Christ

**BEYOND YOUR BEST**



Excel beyond your highest goals. At Belhaven University, you will find yourself in a place where top-rated faculty and a nurturing environment converge to bring you to your best... then propel you beyond what you believe is achievable.

Nationally recognized academics. Vibrant campus life. Christ-centered worldview. The faith-affirming support to become more. Aim for excellence from God's perspective. Visit Belhaven University...your place to discover your purpose.

**belhaven.edu**  
Schedule a personal visit to Belhaven University or attend our next Discover Day on September 9th 2011.

**"DON'T LET YOUR FAMILY MISS THIS!"** —Jeanna Wolf, *PARADE*

**BASED ON THE INCREDIBLE TRUE STORY OF BETHANY HAMILTON**



**ON BLU-RAY™/DVD COMBO PACK AND DVD NOW**  
**FIND OUT WHERE TO GET IT AT SOULSURFERWAVE.COM**

SCREEN STORY BY SEAN McNAMARA & DEBORAH SCHWARTZ & DOUGLAS SCHWARTZ & MICHAEL BERK AND MATT R. ALLEN & CALES WILSON & BRAD GANN  
SCREENPLAY BY SEAN McNAMARA & DEBORAH SCHWARTZ & DOUGLAS SCHWARTZ & MICHAEL BERK DIRECTED BY SEAN McNAMARA

SOULSURFERMOVIE.COM

FILMDISTRICT ENTICING mandalay AFFIRM FILMS TRISTAR STAR

# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For July 31

## Explore the Bible By Douglas K. Wilson Professor of Christian Studies, School of Christian Studies, University of Mobile

### CHECK YOUR DIRECTION Jeremiah 31:27-34

Jesus told His disciples that the new covenant in His blood was symbolized by the cup from which they drank at the Last Supper. The writer of Hebrews explained that the new covenant superseded the old one. So what was this new covenant?

To answer this question, we must review the major Old Testament covenants. The first is the Noachic covenant, fully expressed in Genesis 9, that God would never again destroy all of humanity with a flood. Next is the Abrahamic covenant, initiated in Genesis 12 and reaffirmed in Chapter 22, that God would bless all nations through Abraham and his seed. Third is the Mosaic covenant in which God established a conditional covenant with the Israelites that He would be their God and they would be His people. The Davidic covenant is next in which God promised a royal lineage through David, including the Everlasting King (2 Sam. 7:16). Finally the fifth is God's promise to initiate a new covenantal relationship with the descendants of Israel and Judah, one in which His laws were written in flesh (Jesus) rather than on stone (the commandment tablets).

### A Prophecy of Restoration (27-28)

"The days are coming" is a general reference to the Messianic age. In these verses, they are promises of provision for Israel and Judah. In those days, God will restore the people and the livestock to the land. Instead of warfare, God's peace will reign. The promises in this section are in keeping with Jeremiah's calling to prophesy: "to uproot and tear down, to destroy and demolish, to build and plant" (Jer. 1:10).

Judgment comes as the result of sin. God judged Israel by means of the Assyrians and Judah by the Babylonians. After facing the consequences of their rebellion, God was offering the promise of restoration.

### A Problem With Rebellion (29-30)

"The apple doesn't fall far from the tree" is a common proverb that observes that children behave like their parents. A similar proverb

was popular in the kingdom of Judah's last days: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." In essence, people cannot be held accountable for their faults. After all, they simply do what they saw their fathers do. God said the time was coming when this will no longer be an excuse, because each generation is accountable for its rebellious behavior.

You cannot blame your parents for your bad behavior. Psychologists and sociologists will be quick to point out that statistical analysis indicates that children often follow the patterns of their parents. Poor behavior in one generation is not an excuse for the choices made by the following one. God told the prophet Ezekiel never to quote this proverb again (Ezek. 18:1-3). Ezekiel 18 offers clear instruction that each person is accountable to God for sins he or she commits.

### A Promise of Regeneration (31-33)

The Messianic age is again implied by "the days are coming." The new covenant, though promised in Jeremiah, was not ratified until Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. When believers participate in the Lord's Supper, they are making a public declaration that they have received Jesus' body and blood by faith as the sign of the new covenant.

The promise was that rather than a conditional covenant, dependent upon obedience, the new covenant was unconditional, based upon the finished work of Jesus in His death, burial and resurrection.

As a result of God's law written on the heart, the teacher is God Himself. Jesus explained that the Holy Spirit is the One who teaches, the Spirit of truth who brings all things to remembrance concerning Christ.

### A Personal Relationship (34)

What does the phrase "know the Lord" mean? Does it mean that you simply believe that Jesus was conceived by a virgin, lived a sinless life, died as the substitute for sinners, rose again on the third day, ascended to heaven and will return? No, even Satan knows all these things to be true. To "know the Lord" is to live in intimate fellowship with Him. ❏

## Bible Studies for Life By James R. Strange Assistant Professor of Religion, Department of Religion, Samford University

### PERSONAL SERVICE

#### Galatians 5:13-16, 22-26; 6:7-10

In this letter Paul was fighting a message that some people were preaching: People who have turned to Christ must keep the Torah; in particular, they should circumcise their men. Paul argued at length and with some ire that this idea nullifies what God has achieved, namely justification accomplished through Christ's death and resurrection and activated through faith. Having begun harshly, Paul ended in a more conciliatory mode, and near the end of the letter, he wrote one of the best-known passages in the New Testament.

#### The Heart of Service (5:13-15)

In this passage, Paul picked up on a theme he had been touching on since Galatians 3:23 and that he made explicit in Galatians 5:1. Remember the July 3 lesson? In English, "freedom" carries the idea of full participation in a family or clan. That is the kind of freedom that Paul was talking about. The people who are freed from sin's power by Christ's death and resurrection are not at liberty to live as they please but become "slaves to one another." That sounds like a contradiction, doesn't it? When Christ sets us free from sin, we are freed to serve Him completely, and one of the ways we serve Him is to serve one another (see Galatians 6:2).

This is not entirely good news. Certainly Paul was expressing that wonderful unity of purpose and love that many churches experience. But becoming slaves to one another also means serving those people in our church (and elsewhere) whom we just don't like. We should come clean: As much as we hate to admit it, there are some brothers and sisters in Christ with whom we simply struggle to get along. Too bad for us, Paul's admonition doesn't leave them out.

When Paul said, "The whole law is summed up in a single commandment," he was repeating an idea Jesus expressed (Mark 12:28-34). To love God and to love our neighbor both require action, not (merely) sentiment.

#### The Power of Service (5:16, 22-26)

Southern Baptists learn to recite the "Fruit

of the Spirit" in Sunday School, Mission Friends, Royal Ambassadors and Girls in Action and — in the olden days — Training Union. Paul's admonition has become central to our understanding of the moral life. Notice how every fruit listed is an attitude. The implication is that once these attitudes and others like them are in place (given to us by God's Holy Spirit), right actions result.

We should point out that when he listed bad behaviors and attitudes ("vices") and good ones ("virtues"), Paul was using a type of moral exhortation typical of Greek and Roman philosophers. However, Paul disagreed with his contemporaries about how to avoid the one and take up the other. Remember under the power of sin (see the July 24 lesson), we cannot help but do the "works of the flesh" (flesh = this world and the self that are under sin's sway). In the same way, under the power of the Spirit, the Spirit's fruit grows naturally. The ability to do what is right is a gift from God through the Holy Spirit.

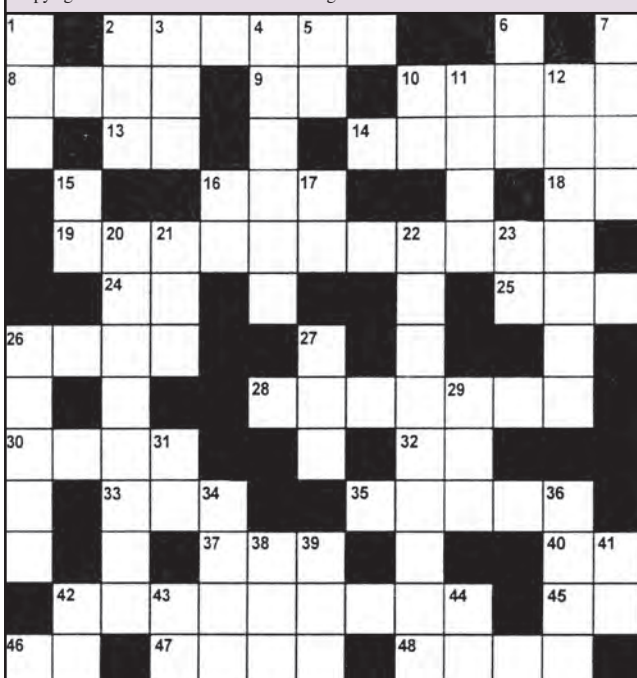
#### The Reward of Service (6:7-10)

Note Paul's "reality check." Why must he encourage us to "not grow weary in doing what is right?" Because one does grow weary of doing the right thing. Why? For any number of reasons: Our work goes unnoticed and underappreciated; someone else gets credit; it's a pain in the neck, quite frankly; it puts us out, makes us work harder than we want to; and in the end, there's apparently so little return for all our effort. We are reminded of the complaints lodged in many Psalms and the books of Job and Ecclesiastes.

Paul knew this full well. In verse 7, he might have been alluding to Scripture (see Job 4:8; Proverbs 22:8). What does this agricultural metaphor refer to? By doing good, one does not gain a worldly reward ("corruption from the flesh": prosperity, good health, admiration, etc.). Instead one is living "eternal life": a quality of life granted by God alone — life lived, no longer alienated from Him but unified with His purpose in the world. Such a life does not depend on our economic status, health, how our peers regard us or any other worldly thing. ❏

## Christian Crossword

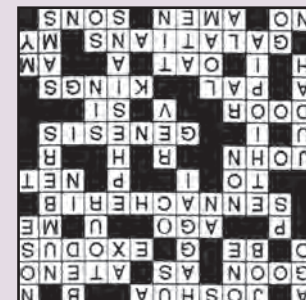
Copyright 1994 ©Barbour Publishing Inc.



### Across

2. Charge \_\_\_\_, and encourage him. (Deut. 3:28)
8. Terrorist.
9. Ye shall be \_\_\_\_ gods. (Gen. 3:5)
10. I \_\_\_\_ pleasant bread. (Dan. 10:3; 2 words)
13. To \_\_\_\_ or not to \_\_\_\_.
14. Second book of the Bible.
16. Past.
18. He shall cry unto \_\_\_\_\_. (Ps. 89:26)
19. The Lord saved Hezekiah ... from \_\_\_\_\_. (2 Chron. 32:22)
24. Ascending up \_\_\_\_ Jerusalem.
25. I will let down the \_\_\_\_\_. (Luke 5:5)
26. \_\_\_\_ the Baptist.
28. First book of the Bible.
30. Rolled back the stone from the \_\_\_\_\_. (Matt. 28:2)
32. Yes. (Spanish)

33. Buddy.
35. O.T. books of the Bible.
37. A grain often used for cereal.
40. I \_\_\_\_ that I \_\_\_\_.
42. O foolish \_\_\_\_\_. (Gal. 3:1)
45. \_\_\_\_ Lord and \_\_\_\_ God.
46. Made himself of \_\_\_\_ reputation. (Phil. 2:7)
47. So be it.
48. These are the three \_\_\_\_ of Noah. (Gen. 9:19)
11. Organized travel.
12. Fourth book of the Bible.
15. Postscript. (abbr.)
16. \_\_\_\_ angel of the Lord. (Luke 1:11)
17. Ocean. (abbr.)
20. Behold, a man of \_\_\_\_\_. (Acts 8:27)
21. Prefix for *not*.
22. Tenth book of the New Testament.
23. That I am \_\_\_\_ the Father. (John 14:10)
26. A son of Leah. (Gen. 35:23)
27. Last book of the Bible. (abbr.)
29. \_\_\_\_ no more. (John 5:14)
31. Egyptian sun god.
34. Rich soil.
36. Belonging to Sam.
38. They ... \_\_\_\_ the sacrifices of the dead. (Ps. 106:28)
39. A metal.
41. \_\_\_\_ name is Legion.



## PERSECUTED CHURCH

Compiled from Wire Services



### Sudanese military agents, militants kill Christians

KADUGLI, Sudan — Military intelligence agents killed one Christian, and Islamic militants sympathetic to the government slaughtered another in June after attacking churches in Sudan's embattled South Kordofan state. Christian sources said a Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) Intelligence unit detained Nimeri Philip Kalo, a student at St. Paul Major Seminary, on June 8 near the gate of the United Nations Mission in Sudan in Kadugli's al-Shaer area and shot him in front of bystanders.

Kalo and other Christians were fleeing the town after Muslim militias loyal to the SAF attacked and looted at least three church buildings in Kadugli, they said. Armed conflict in Kadugli broke out between southern and northern militaries June 6 after northern forces seized Abyei in May. On June 8, Islamic militants loyal to the SAF slaughtered a young Christian man by sword in Kadugli Market, the sources said. Adeeb Gismalla Aksam, 33, was a bus driver whose father is an elder with the Evangelical Church in Kadugli. The Islamic militias were heard shouting "Allahu akbar" (God is great) as they began shooting at a Roman Catholic church building the same day. No one was hit by the bullets shot at the building from the outside, but SAF agents arrested Pastor Abraham James Lual in front of his congregation.

Authorities took him to an unknown location and tortured him for two days, a priest said. On June 8, the SAF and Islamic militias also set fire to buildings of the Episcopal Church of Sudan and the Sudanese Church of Christ in Kadugli, sources said. "The churches and pastors were directly targeted," Anglican Bishop Anudu Adam Elnail said.

### Families flee after Christian accused of blasphemy

LAHORE, Pakistan — At least 10 Christian families in a village in Pakistan's Punjab province have fled their homes after a throng of area Muslims accused a Christian of blaspheming Islam on June 10.

Yousaf Masih of village No. 68 AR Farmwala, in Khanewal district's Mian Channu area, said his brother Yaqub's grandson, 8-year-old Ihtesham (also known as Sunny) had gone out to fetch ice when Muslim boys from a nearby religious school started harassing him. Masih said his son Dildar Masih, a 26-year-old father of two boys ages 3 and 2, was going to his work as a painter when he saw the Muslim boys thrashing his nephew. "Dildar rushed toward them and rescued Sunny from their attack," Yousaf Masih said. "Sunny told him that the boys were beating him because he would not recite their 'Kalma,' (Islamic prayer), at which Dildar rebuked the boys for forcing Sunny to renounce his religion. He then asked Sunny to return home and left for his workplace."

Some 60 Muslims led by village prayer leader Qari Hasnain claimed Dildar Masih had blasphemed Islam by abusing the Kalma. The village's mosque loudspeakers began urging "all the faithful to find the blasphemer and punish him," but Dildar Masih was caught unaware when the Islamic throng arrived at the house he was painting. "They pounced on him like tigers," his elderly father said. "They slapped him, kicked him, and my poor son didn't even know why he was being tortured."

### Uzbek police officers assault, threaten locals

TASHKENT, Uzbekistan — Police officers assaulted a woman at her home while her parents were being interrogated at the local police station about their religious activity. Officers "kicked the woman and hit her on the head, giving her a severe concussion." Police refused to discuss the incident.

A Tashkent police officer threatened to kill local Protestant Anvar Rajapov if he continued to challenge a fine of 80 times the minimum monthly wage handed down to punish him for his religious activity. "I have prepared an axe for you, which will be flying after you, observing you and if need be, kill you," sources quoted Maj. Zufar Rashidov as telling him. Police refused to discuss the threats.

Tashkent investigator Aleksandr Ten threatened the son of a Baptist church member that he would "beat him up and put him in prison for three months" if he did not sign statements against the church's pastor and bookkeeper who Ten is seeking to prosecute. ☞

## CAMPUS News



### UNIVERSITY OF MOBILE

► **New Graphic Design Concentration Begins Fall Semester:** The University of Mobile (UMobile) is offering a new concentration in graphic design, and the first course begins fall semester.

Introduction to Computer Graphics (AR 226) is open to students in all majors and years. The introductory course will be taught by award-winning graphic designer Jason Thomas, of Fairhope. Additional courses will be offered each semester, with plans ultimately to expand the program into a graphic design major.

"Our goal is to produce students who combine a cross-disciplinary perspective with excellent skills in studio art, research, writing and a high level of visual literacy. The program will prepare students for design jobs within the advertising market and successful careers in a wide range of fields, including web design and developmental computer graphics," said Phillip Counselman, assistant professor of art and chair of the UMobile department of art.

Students will use new Apple

iMac computers, Wacom tablets and Xante graphics printers in courses that will provide hands-on experience.

Students may register now for the introductory course. For more information about the graphic design concentration, contact Counselman at pcounsel@umobile.edu or 251-442-2283.

► **Award-winning Columnist Joins UMobile as Writer-in-residence:** National award-winning columnist Quin Hillyer, whose sharp insights into American politics have made him a "must-read" for politicians, policy makers and political observers, has been named writer-in-residence at the University of Mobile (UMobile).

Hillyer joins the university's Center for Leadership and the Twelve23 Movement, a grass-roots project to transform the nation through revitalizing Christian faith and character in America. The movement is bringing national attention to the goal of helping leaders in a variety of professions fulfill their responsibility to God as American citizens.

Hillyer will write a weekly column, "Current Events with Quin Hillyer," which will address important issues facing the nation. To re-

ceive the e-mail column, go to [www.twelve23.org](http://www.twelve23.org) and click on "sign up."

In addition, Hillyer will serve as a guest lecturer at UMobile.

### SAMFORD UNIVERSITY

► **Samford Increases Minister Dependent Scholarship:** Samford University is increasing the amount of scholarship funding that dependents of Baptist ministers may receive.

An increase from \$3,200 to \$3,450 per year will be effective with the 2011-12 academic year, according to R. Philip Kimrey, Samford vice president for student affairs and enrollment management.

The grant was increased to \$1,725 per semester because of the financial needs of families across the country, Kimrey said.

"We realize the important impact our ministers have on their congregations and communities. This is another way we support ministry and those leading the efforts," Kimrey said, adding that Samford generally has about 100 dependents of ministers enrolled each year. "We count it a privilege to help them financially."

Scholarship recipients must be enrolled as full-time Samford students and maintain a certain grade point average. During the 2010-11 academic year, 99 Samford students received minister dependent grants, totaling \$298,743.

The deadline to apply for a scholarship for the 2011 fall semester is the first day of classes, Aug. 29. For information, contact the Samford office of financial aid at 205-726-2905 or [www.samford.edu/admin/finaid](http://www.samford.edu/admin/finaid).

### JUDSON COLLEGE

► **Volleyball Camp Held:** The Judson College athletic department hosted a summer volleyball camp for local students July 11-15 at Marion Academy.

Fourteen campers were coached by Judson volleyball players Sarah Kendrick, of Ocean Springs, Miss.; Meagan Weaver, of Guntersville; and Heather Howell, of Dora.

Each day began with stretching and a few fun games to get everyone awake and moving. Participants drilled the remainder of the day in passing, hitting, serving, defense and team exercises.

The Judson students also conducted drills, games and one-on-one time with players who wanted specialized instruction.

"We saw incredible improvement throughout the week from the ladies participating," Judson volleyball and tennis coach Anna Wood said. ☞

## Life-changing. Faith-strengthening.



## Holy Land Spiritual Pilgrimage

March 16-25, 2012

Join Dr. Bob Terry,  
editor of *The Alabama Baptist* newspaper,  
on a spiritual pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Tour holy places, meet national Christians  
and visit Baptist representatives.

For information, write to:  
Holy Land Tour, 3310 Independence Drive, Birmingham AL 35209;  
e-mail: [HolyLand@TheAlabamaBaptist.org](mailto:HolyLand@TheAlabamaBaptist.org);  
or call 1-800-803-5201, Ext. 103.

# Former Biscuits catcher

## 'I can't imagine not having the Lord,' Spring says

By Bill Sorrell  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

**M**att Spring doesn't always think about baseball when he hears the word "sacrifice." Faith comes to mind.

A catcher for the Montgomery Biscuits from 2007 to 2010, Spring said Jesus dying on the cross was the "ultimate sacrifice."

"He came into my life and saved me from my sins," said Spring, who became a Christian at age 12 while growing up in Phoenix. "Trying to describe what He means to me and what He does for us is almost impossible."

Through a middle school and high school program at his evangelical church, Spring "got on fire for the Lord." He learned how to apply Scripture that hits home today.

"It's a tough game. I can't imagine not having the Lord on my side every day," Spring said.

He has played with two teams in 2011 after being traded from the Tampa Bay Rays organization to the Boston Red Sox organization. Spring started the season with the Salem (Va.) Red Sox in the A-plus Carolina League and was promoted June 17 to the Portland (Maine) Sea Dogs of the Double-A Eastern League. In his first four games with Portland, he hit two home runs and was batting .267.

Spring's best batting average in his four seasons with Montgomery came during the 2008 season, when he hit .248 with nine home runs.

Staying grounded in the Bible, Spring practices a daily quiet time and reads numerous devotional books. "Without that (God's Word), I feel lost sometimes."

One of his favorite Scriptures is Ephesians 3:20: "Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us."

Spring translates the verse this way: "The Lord wants more for us than we can ever imagine. We all want to get four hits or throw a complete game shutout every day, but that may not necessarily be God's plan for us to do. He wants better for us than we could imagine for ourselves. That kind of truth is beyond belief for me."

Philippians 4 and Romans 8 also provide motivation and make Spring realize, "The deeper you get (in the Word), the more you rely on Him and less on yourself."

### Being a good example

Spring has looked to the Lord to help him deal with character flaws that he has had to work on. He knows teammates are ever present.

"(It's) not that people are looking at me to fail; people are looking at me to see how I will react in different situations. Whenever you have times of trials and tribulations, I think being strong and being a good



Photo courtesy of the Montgomery Biscuits

**UP TO BAT** — Matt Spring, former Montgomery Biscuits catcher and now part of the Red Sox organization, became a Christian at age 12. He is known for his faith, 'good attitude' and strong work ethic.

example is the biggest witness you can have," Spring said.

He has been in professional baseball since June 2004, when he was selected by the Rays out of Dixie (Utah) State College in the fourth round (105th overall) in the first-year players draft.

Current Montgomery catcher Stephen Vogt (pronounced Vote) called him a "great man of God" with "great faith."

They have read the Bible and prayed together as well as sharpened each other's game.

"He is a good friend of mine," Vogt said. "Matt is a great leader who has got a lot of tools. He's a good catcher. I learned a lot from him. He is a very smart player."

Montgomery first baseman Matthew Sweeney admires Spring's attitude. "The thing about Matt that was cool, he came every day with a good attitude. He was fun to be around and hard-working. He played the game the right way."

Billy Gardner Jr., Montgomery manager, said Spring's leadership evolved from "real good character."

"Matt has a tremendous work ethic," Gardner said. "He does a good job in leading the pitching staff. He is very focused and puts everything he has into baseball. He is highly self-motivated. He is a real good person and a real good teammate. Those are two important

things to have in the game and in life in general."

In 2008, Spring won the Erik Walker Community Champion award. One player was nominated from each of the Rays' six minor league teams. The award honors the player who exemplifies sportsmanship, reaches out to the community and is a quality teammate.

### 'Most special award'

"That was the most special award," Spring said.

The award is named for Walker, who died in October 2006 in a canoeing accident. He had just completed his first season with the Hudson Valley Renegades in the New York-Penn League. He was 23.

Spring won a trophy and received a check for \$2,500, which he donated to a charity.

His community involvement included reading to children in the Alabama Summer Reading program in Prattville, leading baseball camps and signing autographs in the *Montgomery Advertiser* Autograph area.

Because Spring accepted Christ when he was young, he said he is "not one of those guys who have a huge, elaborate testimony."

"My testimony is special because I never had to go through some things that others did. I am lucky the Lord was looking out for me, not that He wasn't looking out for them. It wasn't His path for me." ❧

## Religion In America

Compiled from Wire Services

### Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) allows gay clergy

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Presbyterians who support gay rights prepped sanctuaries July 10 to celebrate the passage of a new church policy that allows gay pastors to serve openly for the first time in the denomination's history.

As the new policy for the Presbyterian Church (PC) (U.S.A.) became official that day, several left-leaning churches "[marked] the moment with prayer and rejoicing" in their Sunday services, according to a press release from More Light Presbyterians, which advocates for gay rights in the church.

"The Presbyterian Church [entered] a new era of equality," said Michael Adey, the group's executive director. "It is a historic moment. It returns us to ordination standards that focus on faith and character rather than one's marital status or sexual orientation."

The new policy removes language from the denomination's constitution that barred homosexuals from serving as church ministers, elders and deacons. It allows each presbytery — or regional governing body — to decide what sexual standards to place on ordination. The resolution, which had failed in different forms in recent years, needed approval from both the PC (U.S.A.) General Assembly as well as from presbyteries; 97 of the denomination's 173 presbyteries voted to approve the new policy.

"In passing (the policy), the denomination removed all sexual behavior standards from its constitution," said Pastor Parker T. Williamson, editor emeritus of the conservative publication *The Layman*, which actively opposed the change. "Scripture is very clear that there are standards relating to our sexual behavior ... but this denomination has decided it doesn't have any standards."

### UCC constitution uses gender-neutral terms for God

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — A conservative group in the United Church of Christ (UCC) called foul when the church's main legislative body replaced the term "Heavenly Father" with "triune God" in its constitution. The controversy was reported by religion writer Peter Smith of *The Courier-Journal*.

"Rejecting God as Father in an age of fatherlessness is unthinkable," said David Runnion-Bareford, executive director of Biblical Witness Fellowship, about the General Synod's decision.

The change made in early July by the primarily liberal denomination shows a shift toward talking about God in gender-neutral terms instead of traditional masculine expressions. The decision still awaits regional ratification.

However, not all male references to God have been taken out of the UCC. The same synod that struck "Heavenly Father" from its constitution voted separately to continue using the traditional language — "Father, Son and Holy Spirit" — for baptisms.

### Campus Crusade for Christ simplifies name to Cru

FORT COLLINS, Colo. — Campus Crusade for Christ announced that it is ditching its name in the United States for a new, simplified one — Cru.

The old name is being shirked because the ministry hopes to "overcome existing barriers and perceptions inherent in the original name," according to a press release.

One contention with the old name is the word "crusade," which no longer carries the same reputation it did when the organization was founded by Bill and Vonette Bright in 1951. For some, in a post-9/11 world "crusade" conjures up thoughts of jihad.

Although "Cru" may not seem far from "crusade," Campus Crusade for Christ has field tested the new name since the 1990s. In contrast, the old name has caused some people to lose interest in the ministry's message. Twenty percent of people who were willing to consider the gospel turned away when they heard the organization's name, according to the Campus Crusade website.

### Schuller loses voting position at Crystal Cathedral

GARDEN GROVE, Calif. — Crystal Cathedral founder Robert H. Schuller has been removed from a voting position on the board of the iconic glass megachurch he started in Southern California five decades ago. He is now honorary chairman of the board emeritus, according to a July 4 news release from the church in Garden Grove, Calif.

The Crystal Cathedral statement noted that the elder Schuller will continue to speak in the church's pulpit and on its "Hour of Power" television broadcast and participate in "creative and vision-casting meetings" with staffers. The transition comes after the cathedral put its campus up for sale after filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. ❧