

THE ALABAMA BAPTIST



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Changing lives

Students meet unreached people groups in US through Project 52

By Grace Thornton
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

For students wanting to spend a summer living among an unreached people group, grab your backpack, Chris Townson said — this is your invite.

And it's right here in the United States.

"The world is coming to our doorstep, and many people don't even realize it," he said. "Many who move here are refugees from hard-to-reach countries, and most of them have never even been introduced to Jesus Christ. They're hungry for freedom and they're hungry for the Word."

And students are meeting them with the gospel through Project 52, an organization that links students with unreached people groups living in the United States.

Last summer, Project 52 teams worked among people from more than 60 countries living in Nashville. Those teams saw people come to Christ and Bible studies started in multiple homes, said Townson, coordinator of Project 52.

"This is not their home, and they are looking for help and freedom here," he said.

Teams of students ages 16–29 met refugees at the airport, took them to Wal-Mart and showed them how to use a stove instead of cooking in the middle of the floor. They did outreach events from block parties to soccer clinics.

This coming summer, teams will expand to Atlanta; New York; Winston-Salem, N.C.; Baton Rouge, La.; and possibly Indianapolis.

"Some of our students will reach people that could never be reached otherwise, and then they may eventually take the gospel back to their country into places we can't be," Townson



Photo by Jordan Hendricks

SACRIFICE — Marianna Fountain (center), a senior at Mississippi College in Clinton, ministers in the Woodbine community in Nashville. She and other Project 52 team members lived and interacted with refugees this past summer.

said. "Our goal is to change North America but also to see these groups go back to Burma, Nepal, wherever, with the freedom found in Christ. We will see that difference in eternity."

At the start of the summer, students spend five to eight days in orientation at Nazareth Baptist Church, Rainsville, training specifically for their city and work.

"Students are trained extensively during orientation in evangelism, team building, interpersonal communication, culture, religion and more," Townson said. "The bar is raised really high so the students will be for the most part

prepared to serve when they arrive on the mission site."

Students are approved through the North American Mission Board and International Mission Board student departments. The teams are linked with churches and/or North American missionaries to help with local strategies for reaching unreached people groups in the cities where they serve.

"Churches send, students serve, churches and missionaries are helped, the gospel is shared, lives are changed," Townson said.

And as they serve, students grow in their relationship with God, become a

"world Christian" and take ownership in the Great Commission, he said.

It's not a new concept — it's something that's seen fruit for years overseas, said Jess Jennings, who birthed the idea for Project 52 out of an organization called Nehemiah Teams in Asia.

"Since 2008, (my wife) Wendy and I had been praying about starting Nehemiah Teams in the States working among unreached people groups," said Jennings, a Southern Baptist representative living in the Philippines who coordinates Nehemiah Teams worldwide.

At the same time, he had a conversation with a state-level student leader back in the United States.

Praying for opportunities

"She mentioned how low the numbers were for college students staying in America to do summer missions. I asked her if maybe the reason was because many of the positions being offered were not seen as strategic. She thought that was part of the problem," Jennings said.

So he and his wife prayed. And when they met with Townson and his wife, Melissa, they felt the Townsons would be great coordinators for Nehemiah Teams in the United States.

"Project 52 is Nehemiah Teams in North America. It is not a new ministry, but it is an expansion of what was already being done overseas," Jennings said. "The students have the

(See 'Project,' page 7)

Samford's Stephen Chew named US Professor of the Year

Samford University psychology professor and department chair Stephen Chew has been named the 2011 U.S. Professor of the Year for Outstanding Master's Universities and Colleges by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Chew was recognized by the foundation at the annual U.S. Professors of the Year Awards Program in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 17. The Carnegie program salutes the most outstanding undergraduate instructors in the country and is the only national program to recognize excellence in undergraduate teaching and mentoring.

Samford President Andrew Westmoreland described the award as "the most prestigious teaching designation in American higher education."

The Council for the Advancement and Support of Education began the program in 1981.

"Once you adopt the attitude that the measure of teaching effectiveness is student learning, a lot of teaching's most difficult conundrums become solvable," Chew said during his comments at the awards ceremony held at the Newseum in Washington.

Effective teaching

"You learn the difference between teaching that makes it easy for students to learn and teaching that makes it easy for students to make a good grade; you give up moving from teaching fad to teaching fad and start to develop knowledge that will move the whole teaching enterprise forward; you give up the idea that good students make for good classes; and you realize that great teachers can create great students and great students, like Amy Fineburg (a former Chew student), can inspire and create great teachers.

"Finally," Chew said, "you realize that great teaching is a selfless act. Student learning comes before your own ego and convenience, and you rely heavily on the support of family, colleagues and the school's administration."

"After a few years of teaching," he said, "I confronted the question that I think all faculty face at some point — a question that marks a critical juncture in their career — 'I wonder what my students are learning?'"

From Dallas, Chew has been at Samford since 1993. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Texas and doctorate from the University of Minnesota. (SU)

COMMENT

The Two Feet of Ministry

Do you know why the reports of the Alabama Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries (ABCH) and Alabama Citizens Action Program (ALCAP) usually follow one another on most associational programs?" asked Joe Godfrey, executive director of ALCAP. "It is because we both deal with the same problems. The Children's Homes deals with the results of bad situations, and ALCAP works to prevent those situations."

Messengers to this particular associational meeting had just heard a report of ways the ABCH intervenes in children's lives with hands-on ministry. Godfrey followed by describing how ALCAP works with the state Legislature to craft public policies that protect families and laws that build community.

It was a perfect example of what some have referred to as the "two feet of ministry."

The first foot is direct ministry. That is the ABCH's primary role. Again and again, Jesus commended direct ministry. In Luke 10:25-37, Jesus illustrated the importance of helping the hurting with the story of the good Samaritan. In Matthew 25:45, our Lord taught that how we respond to hungry, hurting people reveals whether God's love is in us because what is done to the "least of these" is done also to God Himself.

The second foot is institutional change. This is ALCAP's work. The goal is to influence policies and laws adopted by the state Legislature in ways that are helpful to families and to change those structures and systems that are harmful.

Both the foot of direct ministry and the foot of institutional change are based on Christian love. It is God's love that causes the believer to reach a helping hand toward a hurting child through the ABCH. It is that same love that causes ALCAP and its volunteers to work for policies and laws that help people or oppose policies and laws that tear down family values.

In Alabama, of all places, the relationship between love, justice and laws should be obvious to all. That lesson is an important part of our history.

Overlooked sometimes is the need each foot has for the other. On the positive side, direct ministry informs institutional change about the impact of policies and laws on people. Without this information, institutional change can be as erratic and ineffective as trying to follow a lightening bug. Institutional change, on the other hand, provides hope for



THOUGHTS By Bob Terry

direct ministry so that the future will not always be just like the present. Change is possible.

On the negative side, if only direct ministry is provided, then one can create a dependency that reinforces a pattern of brokenness for an individual or a generation. On the other hand, if only institutional change is offered, then policies and laws may have little relationship to the realities with which people live.

Maintaining balance

Everyone understands that to walk, one needs two feet. Similarly, to work effectively with human hurts and maintain balance for the ministry journey, both feet of ministry are necessary.

While both are necessary, both are not equally attractive in terms of personal involvement. Direct ministry provides immediate fulfillment. One can see the impact of his or her effort. Institutional change provides only delayed rewards. Changing a policy or adopting a law can take years. Direct ministry provides personal involvement with the recipient. Institutional change provides relationship to an idea to be incorporated into a policy or law. For these and other reasons, direct ministry wins most every time.

Who would not prefer to help a child through the ABCH rather than talk to a lawmaker about some public policy related to foster care being worked by ALCAP?

Helping balance the attractiveness of direct ministry is the impact of institutional change. Direct ministry usually impacts one situation at a time. Institutional change impacts everyone.

In the next few weeks, the attractiveness of direct involvement will be illustrated as Alabama Baptists minister to others during the Christmas season. Practically every church will adopt at least one family in its community who needs a help-

ing hand. Children will receive presents instead of finding the Christmas tree bare. Families will have a special Christmas meal instead of doing without. Joy will replace gloom during the season of our Savior's birth because Alabama Baptists will be involved in direct ministry to families in need.

This is good and should be celebrated. These are modern-day examples of the principles Jesus taught in Luke 10 and Matthew 25.

But when the Christmas season is past, how many Alabama Baptist churches will encourage members to help shape policies related to the state's food banks that provide resources for hurting families year-round? How many Alabama Baptists will pay attention to the congressional debate on the upcoming farm bill even though it will have more impact on the nation's food policies than any other single piece of legislation?

According to an August report by the Food Research and Action Center titled Food Hardship in America, 32 percent of Alabama households with children said they were unable to afford enough food for the family during 2010. That is the second-highest percentage among the 50 states. Considering all Alabama households, 25.2 percent lacked funds to provide adequate food for members of the household sometime during 2010, the report found.

Responding to this kind of need requires the two feet of ministry. It requires emergency help through direct ministry and institutional change to alter the circumstances that resulted in this situation.

Godfrey was right when he pointed out the ABCH and ALCAP work from different ends on the same type of problems. One works through direct ministry. The other works for institutional change. Together they provide Alabama Baptists an example of the importance of the two feet of ministry.

Maybe the day will come in our churches when members are as involved and supportive of the foot of institutional change as they are of the foot of direct ministry because both are necessary.

Letters to the Editor

SBC NAME CHANGE

You hit the nail solidly on the head with your recent article concerning the proposed name change for Southern Baptists (see "Time for a Name Change?," Nov. 10 issue). I am tired of

folks saying they are ashamed of our name.

I'm tired of those who say our name is associated with prejudice. If one is tired of being called a Southern Baptist, he has other options available

other than trying to change our name.

Our name is synonymous with loving, giving and caring for others. Our name reflects our history of maintaining a consistent belief in the Bible as (See 'Letters,' page 10)



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

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Someone You Should Know

By Julie Payne, Correspondent, TAB

Bernice Mitchell Bailey

Piney Grove Baptist Church, Ardmore
Limestone Baptist Association

FAVORITE BIBLE VERSE: John 3:16

FAVORITE HYMN: "Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine" and "It Is Well With My Soul"

HOBBIES: Weaving, crocheting and activities at the assisted living facility where she resides

FAMILY STATUS: Widowed after 59 years of marriage to Roylee; four children, John, Carol, Tommy and Donna; nine grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild



BAILEY

Bernice Mitchell Bailey taught Sunday School for 54 years — 30 years at Piney Grove Baptist Church, Ardmore, and 24 years at Highlands Baptist Church, Huntsville. She primarily taught Sunday School classes for adults, but at one time, she taught a college/career Sunday School class. Bailey also has been very involved in Woman's Missionary Union as both a member and leader.

Q: How did you come to know the Lord?

A: I joined the church as a child, but I didn't realize I was a sinner without salvation until I was 25. I knelt down by my bed and asked the Lord into my life ... in 1950. Shortly after that, I started teaching adult women.

Q: What were some other ministries you were involved in?

A: I taught Training Union [for] adults, juniors and intermediates. I taught study course books, those big books for ... the church and different things. I worked in Vacation Bible School in the summertime.

Q: What is your primary ministry now?

A: I do have a ministry here (at the assisted living facility). Some [residents] ... do not see well. I ... read the Bible to them and have prayer with them most every day.

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

A: First He gave me a joy, peace, love and assurance of life everlasting that I did not have. And that's a wonderful life. He put a love in my heart for people.

Meeting needs

Fairhope's Hope Center provides care for 'body, mind, spirit'

By Anna Keller

Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

For nearly a decade, the Hope Center was just what its name implies: a hope of Church on the Eastern Shore, Fairhope.

Senior Pastor Mark Price saw a similar ministry in Florida and envisioned bringing the concept to his Baldwin County community.

Nearly seven years later, he shared his dream with Dana Smith.

"We prayed about it for a little over two years, and then things were set into motion," said Smith, director of the center. "This is not your average place. We offer dental, medical and counseling services, and we also share the gospel with every single patient."

The center was created as a place for the uninsured or underinsured to receive quality health care. Though there are fees (for those who can afford them), no one is ever turned away because he or she is unable to pay.

Since opening its doors in the fall of 2009, the center has treated more than 2,300 patients, and its numbers continue to increase. In fact, it is quickly outgrowing its space and is looking for alternative locations.

As for medical professionals, the center has partnered with several local physicians and dentists who volunteer their time — perhaps a few days a month or one day a week — to offer care. There are also several nurses who volunteer, including Lisa Field.

"When I became aware of the organization about a year and a half ago, I had an overwhelming feeling that I needed to be involved," Field said. "I hadn't practiced in awhile, but Dana said that was fine. She explained to me that caring for the needs in our own community was a holistic approach to health care: body, mind and spirit. What I didn't realize was that I was the one who was spiritually in need."

Smith and others at the center recognized her needs and began to minister to her. Soon



Photo courtesy of the Hope Center

GIVING HOPE — Dr. T.J. Morris (right) and his wife, Mandy, work on a dental patient at the Hope Center in Fairhope. The center provides dental, medical and counseling services for the uninsured or underinsured in the area.

she started attending Eastern Shore and was baptized in the summer of 2010.

"This entity has turned my life upside down and around, and it has broadened my nursing perspective," Field said. "It's humbling to be there, to see the hope offered these patients. We are providing them with hope in their lives, with options and with resources so they can help themselves."

Volunteer staff

The center relies completely upon donations and operates exclusively with a volunteer staff.

It has an active relationship with Eastern Shore as well as Thomas Hospital in Fairhope, which helps out with radiology and lab tests, but it is always looking for

additional support — particularly as its outreach continues to expand.

Russell Creel, Eastern Shore's discipleship pastor and a member of the center's board of directors, envisions the center growing to encompass even more ministry outlets. It is currently in conversations to partner with a women's facility and would like to open a transitional housing component at some point.

"We want the Hope Center to meet any need God puts before us," Creel said. "It's sort of cliché but the center really does reflect its name: hope. We constantly come into contact with people who have lost hope, and we can offer that and hope to be able to offer it in even more ways in the coming years."

Americans more open to church invitation at Christmas

LifeWay Research explored nine seasons or life moments in December 2008, asking in a survey: "Have you been more open to considering matters of faith during any of the following times in your life?"

Among the nine occasions tested, "during the Christmas holiday season" earned the highest response with 47 percent of respondents citing it as a time they were more open to considering matters of faith.

"Our research shows that people are open during the Christmas season," said Ed Stetzer, president of LifeWay Research. "When someone says, 'Happy Holidays,' I'm not sure the response should be snarling 'Merry Christmas.' Instead I'd suggest seizing the opportunity the season provides. Christians should be as bold in their witness as some are in protest."

In the 2008 study, LifeWay Research found that 67 percent of Americans say a personal invitation from a churchgoing family member would be the most effective method a local congregation or faith community could use to invite them to attend. Invitations to attend church from a friend or neighbor are almost as effective, with 63 percent of Americans indicating this variety of invitation would be effective.

"Americans celebrate Christmas but are often disconnected from the birth of a personal Savior," Stetzer said. "There's a gap between practice and belief — and Christians need to step into that gap and share why Jesus was born." (BP)



Graphic by Lauren C. Grim/istockphoto.com

NAMB's Evangelism Response Center launches online chat feature

By Anna Keller
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

For years, the Evangelism Response Center (ERC), a ministry of the North American Mission Board (NAMB), has reached out to people seeking spiritual encouragement through phone calls. As of September, however, there is a new channel of communication available: an online chat.

Elbert Charpie, pastor of First Baptist Church, Citronelle, has been instrumental in bringing this feature to fruition.

Charpie took the phone training course about two and a half years ago and felt ERC was missing an opportunity by not offering a chat feature. Since then, he's been working with developers and server companies to help bring the concept to life.

More opportunities

"With the chat option, you're going to be talking to people that are very different from you and probably more so than with the telephone evangelism," Charpie said. "So far, I've chatted with people from India and London. The phone has limited us to the U.S., but that's not an issue with chat."

For Thomas Wright, executive director of missions for Mobile Baptist Association, the chat feature builds upon something he put into place a few years ago.

"As director of materials development for the evangelism section

of the Home Mission Board (now NAMB), we created the first website, outreach chat rooms, online training for online evangelists and the first edition of www.thegoodnews.org," Wright said. "The technology limitations at that time have been resolved through the excellent system Dr. Charpie has designed."

Since the chat feature was formally rolled out in September, 42 operators have been trained to chat and the feature has been included on a handful of websites. Whenever someone logs onto a website containing the chat feature, any operator logged into the system is notified by a knocking sound. At that point, the operator can either wait to see if the website visitor will initiate a chat or send a message to gauge the visitor's interest in a conversation.

One website that includes the chat feature is mobilebaptists.org, and Wright described its placement as "self-explanatory and unobtrusive." An invitation to chat appears when a visitor first logs on to the website's home page.

"It's important for people to note that the ERC chat button does not interfere with your personal website or the information posted," said Beau Brewer, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary ERC intern. "It only gives the viewer the opportunity to click and begin chatting with a caring follower of Jesus."

For those interested in adding

the chat feature to their websites, the HTML code is available via numberchat.com. In addition to the code, the site contains a news page with relevant updates as well as elements to help with the training process.

According to Brewer, who was trained as a telephone encourager a few years ago and has since become a chat operator as well, the feature is a natural next step for ERC.

Impacting people

"I believe that there are a growing number of Christian men and women that are making more use of the Internet," he said. "This is seen by the scores of people using smart phones and Facebook alike. I believe that, in time, chat evangelism is going to draw many more people into conversations that eternally impact people."

Looking forward, Charpie has high hopes for the chat feature and would like to see it embedded on at least 50 to 75 sites within a year. Recruiting more operators will be essential as the feature grows, and Brewer said his experience as an operator has been a fulfilling one, even in just a few short weeks.

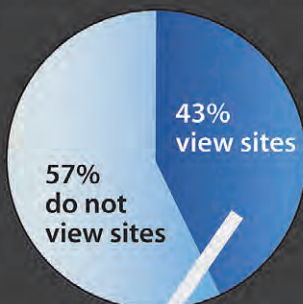
"Sharing our faith in Jesus is a Christian essential. Every believer has a testimony, and every believer has a basic responsibility to share with others," he said. "With that in mind, the Evangelism Response Center is such an easy ministry."

Pornography is a problem among church members

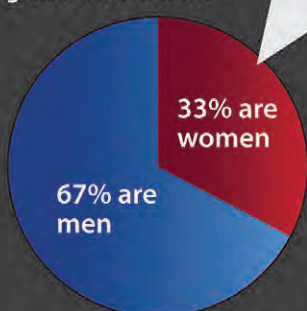
Total internet users

Number of people who visit pornographic websites:

Some 40 million Americans are regular visitors to porn sites, which is 43% of the people who use the internet.*



Of the 40 million regular viewers, here is the gender breakdown:



* According to Education Database Online.

LifeWay
RESEARCH

BP graphic

Most pastors believe pornography has adversely impacted the lives of their church members, but almost half cannot estimate what percentage of their congregation views porn.

That is the finding of a newly released survey by LifeWay Research of 1,000 American Protestant pastors.

When presented with the statement, "Pornography has adversely affected the lives of our church members," 69 percent of pastors surveyed agree. That includes 42 percent who strongly agree and 27 percent who somewhat agree. Nine percent somewhat disagree and 8 percent strongly disagree. Fourteen percent do not know or preferred not to answer.

"[Pastors] have seen (pornography) destroy marriages, wreck lives and warp America's moral compass when it comes to sexuality," LifeWay Research President Ed Stetzer said.

When asked to estimate the percentage of men in their congregations who view pornography on a weekly basis, 43 percent are unable or unwilling to respond. Of those able and willing to estimate, a majority (62 percent) say less than 10 percent, 24 percent say 10-24 percent, 10 percent say 25-49 percent and 4 percent say 50 percent or more.

The results are similar when pastors are asked about the women in their churches.

According to data compiled by the Education Database Online, 43 percent of people who use the Internet visit pornographic websites. Some 40 million Americans are regular visitors to porn sites. Of the 40 million regular visitors, 33 percent are women. A full 70 percent of men age 18-24 visit porn sites monthly.

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BRIAN C. BREWER, EDITOR

"A useful primer on Baptist basics and a showcase of good doctrinal preaching."

—Ken Camp, managing editor,
Baptist Standard, 10/20/2011

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Cahaba, Hale associations partner to help rebuild homes

By Joseph Rhea
The Alabama Baptist

In the wake of the April tornadoes, Willa Dean Cook and two of her children had to start their lives over.

Fortunately they've been able to do so together and with more help from their community than they ever expected.

When a tornado ripped through Hale County, it severely damaged not only Willa Dean's house but also the houses of Butch and Sue Hardy and Kenny and Carol Leavelle. Sue and Carol are Willa Dean's daughters.

All of them moved into the house of Darrell Cook, one of Willa Dean's sons, and began working to repair or rebuild their houses.

In a demonstration of love, Willa Dean's children — including sons Kenneth and Wade — focused on rebuilding their 90-year-old mother's house first.

'Completely restarted'

"[Her house] was damaged to the extent that it could not be [repaired], so it was pushed off [its foundation] and completely restarted," Butch Hardy said.

Though Willa Dean's insurance allowed her to purchase most of the materials for rebuilding, her family was unsure



Photo by Donnie Coffee

REBUILDING EFFORT — (L to r) Burt Baxter, Bill Aultman and Randy Harper of Harper Bros. Construction Co. work on rebuilding one of the houses after the April tornadoes.

of how to go about the project.

While it was deciding how to move forward, the Church reached out to it.

"My wife and I were driving in the area (after the tornado hit)," said Bill Wallace, director of mis-

sions for Cahaba and Hale Baptist associations. When they saw what had happened to Willa Dean's home, he knew they had to help, he said.

Willa Dean and her family attend New Hope Baptist Church,

Moundville, a Hale Association church.

Wallace spread word of the family's need to churches in Cahaba and Hale associations.

Hale Association churches began fundraising and send-

ing volunteers to help rebuild.

Wallace asked Glynward Coley, a contractor and member of Siloam Baptist Church, Marion, to garner help from Cahaba Association churches. Coley mentioned the project to Grady Monk, a retired contractor and member of Pine Grove Baptist Church, Brent, who immediately took on the responsibility.

Working overtime

In addition to coordinating volunteers from both associations in the rebuilding effort, Monk worked overtime and weekends on Willa Dean's house.

"When I asked him about it, he told me, 'Doesn't the Bible tell us to take care of widows and orphans?'" Coley said.

The efforts of Monk and so many others resulted in the work being nearly complete in roughly three months.

The foundation was laid Aug. 9, and Willa Dean was able to move in Nov. 5 with only some small painting and trim work remaining.

"It's been such a blessing," she repeated again and again.

The Leavelles moved back into their house Oct. 28.

The Hardys expect to have their home fully repaired in early 2012.

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Across Alabama's Associations

BESSEMER

► **Canaan Church, Bessemer**, will hold a dinner theater Dec. 10-11, 6 p.m. "I'll Be Home for Christmas" will be presented. For tickets call 205-425-4381. Morgan Bailey is pastor.

BETHLEHEM

► **First Church, Frisco City, Oak Grove Church, Frisco City**, along with other area churches and civic groups will present the drive-through live nativity "Christmas Comes Alive in Frisco City" Dec. 16-17, 6-8 p.m., at the Frisco City High School practice field. There will be a CD narrative by David Stuart of the Monroeville radio station WMFC. There will be ten stations with live animals, Biblical characters and background scenes that tell the story of Jesus' birth. There also will be a hayride through the nativity beginning at Jones Park if you want to park your car. There will be a hospitality tent with light refreshments and a prayer tent with area pastors. Mark McCullough is pastor of First, Frisco City. Billy Hodges is pastor of Oak Grove.

BIBB

► **First Church, Woodstock**, will host the Blackwood Brothers Quartet Dec. 6, 7 p.m. Ben Corley is pastor.

BIRMINGHAM

► The Women on Mission of **First Church, Birmingham**, will host Rosalie Hunt Dec. 6, 10:30 a.m., in the fellowship hall. Hunt is a former international missionary, past president of Alabama Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) and current recording secretary for national

WMU. She will speak about the importance of international missions. Lunch will follow. For reservations call 205-870-3888. Stan Lewis is pastor.

CHILTON

► **Providence Church, Clanton**, will host the southern gospel group The Whisnants in concert Dec. 7, 7 p.m. For information call 205-755-4126. Glenn Bonds is pastor.

CHOCTAW

► **Calvary Church, Butler**, will celebrate its 50th anniversary Dec. 4, 10 a.m. Lunch will follow. The first portion of the service will be dedicated to "Celebrating Our Past." The final portion of the service will be dedicated to "Committing to Our Future." For information call 205-459-3335 or email cbc@tds.net. Scott Harrell is pastor.

ELMORE

► **First Church, Eclectic**, will present "An Eclectic Christmas" called "Christmas Begins with Christ" Dec. 7 and 9-11, beginning at 6 p.m., at 1733 Claud Road, Eclectic, AL 36024, south of Eclectic on Highway 63. The outdoor walk through is set during the Roman empire. Walk through the streets to Bethlehem, visit the field where the shepherds received the angel's message and news of the Messiah and visit the wise men as they journey in search of the newborn King. The 6 and 8 p.m. time slots will be handicap accessible. Notify the church when registering if assistance is needed. For reservations call 256-794-7789 or visit www.fbcelectic.org/#/eclectic

christmas. For volunteer information email vnummy@elmore.rr.com. Britt Green is pastor. ► **Mount Hebron West Church, Elmore**, will host Brother Billy Bob Bohannon Dec. 15, 10:30 a.m.

GENEVA

► The 39er's C.L.U.B. of **Maple Avenue Church, Geneva**, will hold a luncheon meeting Dec. 13, 11 a.m. The Slocumb High School Singers under the direction of Amy Hendrix will present a musical program. For reservations call 334-684-9617 by Dec. 6. Mike Shirah is pastor.

LIMESTONE

► **Leah Owens** is a new counselor for Pathways Professional Counseling in **Limestone Association**. She is a graduate student in the professional counseling program at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va. Robert Fullerton is director of missions.

MADISON

► **Curtis Eason** will celebrate his 40th anniversary as pastor of **Antioch Church, Huntsville**. There will be a celebration service Dec. 4, 10:30 a.m. A reception will be held from 1-3 p.m. Under Eason's leadership the church was instrumental in founding the Downtown Rescue Mission. ► **First Church, Huntsville**, will present its 27th annual Living Christmas Tree Dec. 15-16, 7:30 p.m.; Dec. 17, 4:30 and 7:30 p.m.; and Dec. 18, 3 p.m. (abbreviated for children) and 5:30 p.m. For tickets call 256-428-9400 or visit www.fbchsv.org/lct. The theme will be "My Heart Shall Sing of the Day You Bring." Staff Sergeant Alvy Powell, a bass-baritone with the U.S. Army chorus, will be guest vocalist. The choir of more than 170 singers and orchestra are directed by Billy Orton. David Hull is pastor.

SARDIS

► **Sardis Association** will hold a senior adult banquet at First Church, Kinston, Dec. 3, 6 p.m., with Brother Billy Bob Bohannon. Ben Posey is pastor of First, Kinston. James Preachers is director of missions for Sardis Association.

ST. CLAIR

► **Cropwell Church** will present "Back to Bethlehem" Dec. 2-4, beginning at 6 p.m. The guided tour and walk through will take you through the streets of Bethlehem the night of Jesus' birth. Experience the sights and sounds of the city, visit the marketplace and see soldiers, the inn keeper, animals, the beggar, shepherds and the stable where Jesus was born. Tours will be handicap accessible. For information visit www.cropwellbaptist.org. For reservations for groups of 20 or more call 205-338-7995. Phillip Burden is pastor.

Alabama updates

People, churches making news across the state

Northwood Hills Pastor George Shaddix retires

George Shaddix, pastor of Northwood Hills Baptist Church, Northport, is retiring Dec. 31 after almost 30 years of service.

Shaddix was raised in Lanett and attended New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, where he received his master of divinity. During seminary, he served as pastor of two churches: one in Louisiana and one in Mississippi.

He later served as pastor of Vernant Park Baptist Church, Foley, for almost five years before moving to Northwood Hills Baptist.

Shaddix and his wife, Diane, raised their two sons, Greg and Jonathan, in Northport, a place that "has really become home to us," he said.

He added Northwood Hills has been "a real blessing" to his family. During Shaddix's time as pastor, he has seen a lot of spiritual growth and maturity within the church.

Highlights from his ministry at Northwood Hills include the new family life center built about three years ago and the remodel of the sanctuary. The remodeling project took place over several years and included modifying the choir and podium areas, installing new carpet, reupholstering the pews and purchasing a new piano.

Shaddix noted the church also began Northwood Hills Baptist Daycare in August 2010.

"It has certainly been a blessing to know that we are touching the lives of those boys and girls with the story of Jesus Christ ... and providing a safe environment for those children," he said.

Billy Gray, interim director of missions for Tuscaloosa Baptist Association, said Shaddix is "a great guy, one of the most thoughtful and congenial people I've ever met."

"He has this ability to look at everything in a positive light," Gray added.

Of his upcoming retirement, Shaddix said, "I'm not going to sit down; I'm just changing gears."

He added that he hopes to do some supply or interim preaching and is looking forward to spending more time with his grandson, Garrett.

Northwood Hills is planning a reception for Shaddix on Dec. 11 from 2-4 p.m. in the family life center.

Pleasant Grove's Bethel receives Reeve grant

Bethel Baptist Church, Pleasant Grove, received a \$5,540 Quality of Life grant from the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation. It was one of 74 grants totaling almost \$500,000 awarded by the Reeve Foundation to nonprofit organizations nationwide that aid in providing more opportunities for individuals living with paralysis and their families and caregivers.

The Bessemer Baptist Association church used the funds to install a wheelchair lift that provides access to the sanctuary's choir loft and stage area.

The immediate goal was to help longtime church member Scott Sartain, who has been singing in the choir for the last seven years. Sartain has used a wheelchair since he was injured in a water skiing accident in 1982.

The new lift allows him to get to his place in the choir loft more independently.

Bethel Baptist also hopes to serve others with this equipment, such as community members and school groups who use the sanctuary and any individuals not able to access the stage by way of the steps.



Photo by Chris Mills

PASTORS CONFERENCE OFFERING ASSISTS ALABAMA PASTOR

Alabama Baptists gave \$1,132 in a spontaneous offering taken at the Alabama Baptist Pastors Conference on Nov. 14. The money will be channeled through Cherokee Baptist Association to assist Pastor Steve Tierce of Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church in the Rock Run community near Spring Garden, who was injured in an automobile accident. Pictured here are John Copeland (right), outgoing pastors conference president and pastor of First Baptist Church, Fulton, and Mel Johnson, disaster relief strategist for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions.

Want to see your news in The Alabama Baptist?

E-mail your information to news@thealabamabaptist.org; fax it to 205-870-8957 or call 1-800-803-5201. Church announcements should arrive three weeks prior to the event.



'We thank God'

Families trapped in Horn of Africa famine receive SBC World Hunger Fund relief

Barefoot children run giggling through the center of the village. The girls squeal in delight as a group of boys give chase.

Sarah Salesa watches her grandchildren play from her spot under a tree. Her tired eyes smile at the joyful sounds. It's a relief to see them act like normal kids. Three days ago, she wasn't sure any would survive the worst Horn of Africa drought and famine of her lifetime. Now, she sees a glimmer of hope.

The grandmother of 11 explains that just days ago, everyone was desperate for food or water.

"When you are hungry and thirsty, you just sit. You can't do anything. The hunger just eats away at your body," the 56-year-old explained. "You can't work. All you can do is sleep. The children don't even have energy to cry."

A small shipment of food provided the lift the family needed, but under the smiles and tattered clothing, signs of malnutrition are still here — protruding stomachs, orange-tinted hair or missing patches of hair and large, glassy eyes.

Salesa is stick thin. She routinely gives part of her own food ration to the children, contending that they are growing and she is old. She worries how she will feed them today, though. She is out of food again.

"We never know if we will eat or not. When the [aid agencies] see the rains have come, I think they will definitely stop helping," she said of the day's weather. In many areas around the Horn of Africa, this is

the first rain in two years. "We don't have seeds to plant crops. If they stop their assistance now, we could starve."

What Salesa knows is that families don't turn on a dime. Bodies are depleted by months of malnutrition and stress. Before crops will grow, diseases will bloom. The United Nations warns there will be a second wave of deaths across Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia and Djibouti as a result of this famine. At the moment 176 deaths are registered every day. The U.N. estimates the death toll may top 750,000 by the time the famine is under control.

This year's extreme drought, combined with skyrocketing food prices and violent political strife, created what aid workers say is the worst food crisis in decades for the Horn of Africa. More than 800,000 Somalis left their

homes and walked to refugee camps in Kenya or Ethiopia to receive help. However, an estimated 12.5 million people who remain in their villages, like Salesa and her family, still are in dire need of food assistance.

Keeping people at home

A key goal of aid efforts is to keep people in their homes. If they move to camps for more than six months, they are statistically unlikely ever to return to their communities. Christian aid worker Don Sullivan takes food relief provided by the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund directly into the villages.

"What we've found is that while



BP photo

MALNUTRITION — Sarah Salesa (left) visits with her daughter and grandson in the hospital where the 20-month-old toddler was being treated for severe malnutrition, weighing just 14 pounds.

the government and the larger aid agencies have food distribution points, people often can't get to them," Sullivan explained. "The distribution is too far away to get to and walk back home with a 40-pound bag of food. Or they have to cross tribal conflicts and fighting.

"The reality is that the aid doesn't always get to where it's supposed to go," he added. "We decided if we wanted to make a difference, we had to start at the grass-roots level — in the village."

When Sullivan found Salesa's village, all the families were in dire need. The aid worker shuttled several of the children to a hospital for treatment. One was Salesa's 20-month-old grandson Abdu who weighed only 14 pounds after his mother walked for days to find help.

Salesa's daughter, Elizabeth Qalicha, and her husband roamed with their animals, searching for water. They had gone without food for a long time. When all the animals died, Elizabeth's husband ran away, depressed over losing the family fortune. Elizabeth knew the only way for them to survive was to get to her mother's house. Salesa welcomed them with open arms, but she didn't have any food either.

"We are family. The only way we will get through this hard time is if we stick together," Salesa said. "Even if I have nothing to give, they are my children and I will care for them."

The grandmother said the women put the children to bed at night, telling stories of how God supports and encourages them "even in times of hunger." It was the only way to get through the days — lying listlessly, the hunger eating away at every-



BP photo

NOTHING WASTED — Every morsel of food is important, even if it's dropped in the dirt during distribution of supplies provided through Southern Baptists' World Hunger Fund.

one's bodies. Salesa told the children each night that she would be with them until the very last minute.

A few days later, Sullivan drove into the village.

Distributing food

Sullivan doesn't just offer a ride to the hospital — he brings food. Through Southern Baptists' World Hunger Fund, his national partners distribute maize, beans and oil in an effort coordinated by Baptist Global Response. It's enough to feed a family of six for two weeks — or in Salesa's case, one week.

The aid worker also brings a special maize seed that matures in only three months' time. The villagers who did not make the trek to the relief camps can start planting to take advantage of the rare rains. It still will be sometime in 2012, however, before they harvest any type of yield. In the meantime, the food relief helps bridge the gap.

When the gunnysacks of food are unloaded from the truck, you don't hear the usual celebration — whooping, singing and dancing — that surrounds most aid projects in Africa. Everyone has been hungry far too long.

Salesa stands in line and watches as the village elder doles out the food, meticulously counting each scoop per family.

When a kernel of maize drops in the dirt, a mother in the crowd instructs one of the kids to pick it up and put it back in the sack. Nothing is wasted.

It isn't until a pot of beans is boiling on an open fire, however, that Salesa smiles again. Her grandchildren will eat tonight.

"I never thought we would reach this time and still be alive," Salesa said. "We thank God."

EDITOR'S NOTE — Names changed for security purposes. (BP)

Project 52 challenges students to finish Great Commission

(continued from page 1)

same goal, use the same discipleship materials and attend the same orientation."

He met Townson at Nazareth Baptist, where Townson served as director of youth ministries for nine years and recently felt the call to mobilize students full time to work with internationals.

"The more we worked with Jess and Wendy and the more we helped students prepare to serve in sacrificial ways, our hearts melted not only for the opportunity to serve but it began to melt for the people our students would reach with the gospel," Townson said. "We were hooked, sold, whatever you want to call it, but we knew we were

to be helping students finish the Great Commission."

He encourages students to sacrifice and offer their whole summer to God — to accept God's best for them.

"A good thing becomes a bad thing when it's not the best thing," Townson said. "There are many good things that students can participate in. We challenge them to move past good and do something great, for them to hear from Him and find their place in finishing the Great Commission. We want to help them do that."

For more information, visit www.nehemiahteams.com/Where/whereamerican.html and click on the link for North America.

Hard times

Southern Baptist worker makes impact in Chinese factories

The taxi races down the elevated 10-lane highway. There's not much to look at on this journey. Endless rows of blank-faced factories barricaded behind 6-foot metal fences line both sides of the road. Off in the distance, high-rise apartment buildings and unfinished construction projects create a snaggle-toothed skyline.

The view is disappointing. When entering a city nicknamed, "The World's Workshop," you expect something grand. Instead Dongguan is practically invisible. There are no tourist attractions — just factories.

Factories are the bus stops and the monuments and the landmarks. Everything exists to serve them.

The city is divided into 32 districts, each one specializing in a different kind of manufacturing. Cang-an produces electronic components, Humen is famous for high-dollar fashion

and Houjie makes shoes. The list goes on and on with more than 3,000 factories crammed into one city.

Every district looks the same: construction sites, cheap restaurants, factories, factories and more factories. Southern Baptist representative David Rice sees this city through different eyes. His mental map of Dongguan is a labyrinth of ministry possibilities — a medical clinic here, management training classes over there and maybe a Christian coffee shop in the heart of a red light district.

The possibilities are endless. The impact on China is immeasurable. Rice believes that by reaching the factories with the gospel an entire generation of migrant workers will

take the message back to their villages — often so remote that they are not even on a map, let alone on the radar of Christian strategists.

"People come here from all over the country looking for a job," Rice said, noting in one year's time he had met at least one person from all 34 provinces.

The name used for migrants — liudong renkou or floating population — implies an aimless mob, but Rice sees a potential army of church planters. The Southern Baptist representative and his ministry partners see this group primed for making major changes in their lives. They are away from the strongholds of their culture back home. They are lonely and searching for meaning.

Lanying Wu openly admits she has no objectives or goals in her life. The 19-year-old factory worker deftly snips away at her sterile workstation, cutting the outline of a garment.

A pile of hot-pink satin sits at her right while a crate of her finished work sits on the left.

'Floating population'

She left her village to make money for her family and to experience something different. Wu is a second-generation factory worker and part of the largest migration in human history. For the past three decades, Chinese migrants flocked from remote villages and farms to factories in an effort to make money and to better themselves. The government estimates nearly 210 million migrants work in various "boomtowns" throughout the country.

When the economy is good, these migrant workers push Dongguan's

that otherwise would never have opportunity to hear the gospel.

► Pray the young women involved in the sex industry in Dongguan will turn from the desire for physical wealth and seek spiritual wealth in Christ. Pray for the men dominated by greed and lust that breed in hearts empty of Christ. Pray God will give Christian businessmen the strength to stand firm against the city's two biggest temptations and remain faithful to Him and their wives. (BP)



IMB photo

LIVING AND WORKING TOGETHER — Many of the factory workers live in dormitory-style housing on the factory grounds, which creates opportunities for the gospel to spread rapidly among workers.

population above 10 million. When times are bad, it can dip below 6 million. The only constant number in this city is the 1.7 million local residents. To put Dongguan's "floating population" into perspective, imagine the entire city of Los Angeles packing up and fanning out across rural America while a new set of 17- to 35-year-olds replaces them.

A government system of internal passports, or hukou, prevents migrant workers from settling formally in the city without losing their family plot back home. Most return after two years. Nearly all return by the time they are 35, an age considered "ancient" in the nimble-fingered factory world.

This constant turnover makes Delun Kao, a factory counselor and mentor, feels like he's always starting over and constantly training new leaders. In the past 12 years, Kao has watched more than 600 migrants come to Christ. He works with Rice to disciple the new believers and train them to start churches.

"We know they won't stay here forever," Kao said. "So the goal is to train them to be a catalyst for a new church."

Through the years, Kao has seen the training model work as migrants return to their villages and start new fellowships. Still others switch factories and start churches in their new workplaces. Lately it's been hard finding someone who will commit.

"We are sharing the gospel in the hardest time — when hearts are not as pure or open," Kao said. "We have to pray and open their hearts so they will hear and receive."

Wu, like most migrants, scoffs at the thought of any type of religion — her parents' Buddhist beliefs or any other. She attended a birthday party at her factory where she heard Jesus' name for the first time. The stories piqued her interest but not enough to give up overtime hours to go hear more.

For now, she depends only on herself and concentrates on earning as much money as she can.

Whether you are a poor migrant worker or a rich factory owner, the measurement for success is the same in this city — money.

"This city is all about money," an American factory owner said while sitting in the lobby of a lush, five-star hotel. "Things are cheap here — cheap production costs, cheap labor, even the girls are cheap."

A young woman walks across the lobby wearing a stylish T-shirt with glittery, gold letters proclaiming, "I'm expensive." With vacant eyes and a plastered smile, the black-haired beauty clings to a businessman three times her age.

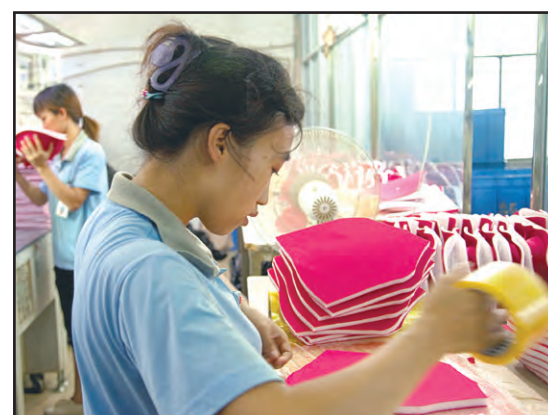
Sex is part of the business climate in this factory town. Deals are brokered in the private rooms of saunas and karaoke bars as scantily clad women parade past.

To the casual observer, the prostitutes look like businesswomen, not the typical hookers you see in movies. Most of these young women left the factories to earn more money and work fewer hours.

No religion

"I think the men and women here are more open about greed and lust because they don't have religion," the 72-year-old American said with a sly smile as his "girl" comes to escort him to a business meeting. "They don't have to hassle with the guilt of sin."

Rice sadly confirmed the American's description. The city is known not only for the endless number of factories, but for its sex trade as well. The American is also correct about religion. Dongguan's evangelical population is listed in the Urban Demographic Profile as less



IMB photo

LONG HOURS — Factory workers in Dongguan work long hours each day hoping to make enough money to send home to their families.

than 1 percent. More specifically, less than 43,000 in a city of millions claim Christ as their Savior.

"This is a never-ending task," Rice sighs and leans back against the taxi's bucket seat. His dreamy optimism about sending Chinese missionaries back to remote villages wavers, but only for a second as he spies something new out the window.

"Look over there!" the Southern Baptist worker exclaimed. "That would make a great spot for some volunteers to cut and style hair for the factory girls. The volunteers could tell the girls Bible stories while they get pampered."

Everywhere you look, there are still factories, construction sites and, of course, more factories. A closer look, though, reveals an old section of town in the process of being reduced to rubble and replaced with modern high-rise apartments. On another stretch of road, people pour out of the factory gates after work, hitting the streets in search of meaning. That's when it hits. Dongguan isn't invisible. It's unfinished, a city where everything — and everyone — is in the process of becoming something else.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Names changed for security reasons. (BP)

Prayer requests for people of Dongguan

► Pray for Wu's heart to open. Pray that in the process of recreating herself in the city, she becomes a new creation in Christ. Pray that other migrant workers will hear and receive the gospel message.

► Pray for those returning to villages with the gospel message. Pray for resolve and spirit-filled words as they seek to bring abundant life to friends and family. Pray that as migrants return home, new communities of believers will be planted in villages



IMB photo

LOST IN THE CROWD — Uniforms of factory workers line the small porches of a dorm-style building on a street in Dongguan. The factories are home to people from across China, mostly rural farmers.

‘Witness by example’

‘Tentmaker’ reaches factory workers by living, working among them

Everything about Fa Hsing is quiet. His voice. His countenance. His strength. He is a man of few words. His actions speak for him.

He puts in no less than 12 hours a day, six days a week, on the factory floor in Dongguan, China. It’s physically and emotionally draining work, yet he perseveres so he can accomplish his real task — sharing Christ with fellow workers.

Hsing is a “tentmaker.” He lives and works among the people God called him to serve.

“The idea is to work inside the factory and witness by example and lifestyle,” Hsing quietly explained.

Southern Baptist representatives believe that by reaching the factories with the gospel, an entire gen-

eration of migrant workers will take the message back to their remote villages.

Sharing the gospel “cold turkey” in this factory environment doesn’t always work. Most have never even heard the name of Jesus. Sometimes, it’s better to slowly introduce the gospel. Hsing does this by gaining trust and respect through experiencing the same daily challenges.

Not an easy life

Life in a factory is not easy. The pay is low, around \$175 or less a month, and the hours are long. It’s easy to get lost in the crowd when there are hundreds with identical backgrounds: born in the village, badly educated, poor. Most workers live on the factory grounds in

dormitories, often 12 to a room.

The tentmaker explained that new workers who don’t make a close friend will pack up and move on to another factory. He tries to make friends with the new workers, but admits that what ultimately keeps them from going back to their villages is pride. They want to change their fate ... strike their fortune.

Most believe the quickest route is to trust no one and make money fast. The assembly line pays by the piece; working faster during busy times means a bigger paycheck.

This is when it’s hardest for Hsing’s ministry. Everyone, including the tentmaker, is so busy, there’s no time for anything but work and sleep. Often the only time to squeeze in Bible study groups is during a 45-minute lunch break.

Hsing savors “slow season” when he has time to visit and share — a chance to get to know people outside of work. Gaining the trust and respect of fellow workers is a slow process. The tentmaker contends that sharing the gospel here is not about a time schedule but about breaking barriers to hearts — one at a time. When this happens, Hsing is certain the gospel will make it back to the villages via the factory floor.

Southern Baptists’ gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Cooperative Program help Southern Baptist workers around the world share the gospel. Give to the offering through your local Southern Baptist church or online at imb.org/offering, where there are resources for church leaders to promote the offering. Download related videos at imb.org/entire-churchvideo.

EDITOR’S NOTE — Names have been changed for security reasons. (BP)

Southern Baptist representative challenges churches to adopt factory district in China

They’ve already impacted your life. Now it’s time to touch theirs.

The influence of Dongguan’s factories is all over your house. You don’t have to look much farther than your cell phone or computer. Most likely, your favorite knit shirt was made here, even the shoes you wear.

Southern Baptist representative David Rice challenges you to make an eternal impact on this city that “supplies the world.”

He’s looking for partners to adopt each of the 32 districts in Dongguan, China.

“I’m looking for long-term volunteer partners. The idea is to establish relationships,” Rice said. “This city is too big

for just me. I need some help.”

Rice sees teams cutting the factory workers’ hair. Middle management-level classes based on biblical morals taught in factories. Men playing golf with factory owners. Medical teams offering clinics in the factories.

The list of ideas is endless. All lead to the common goal of sharing the gospel message.

So, as you pick up that toy off the floor, think about where it originated. When you sit in your favorite chair, labeled “Made in China,” pray about how you and your church can impact Dongguan.

For information on how you can adopt a district in Dongguan, contact truelife@me.com. (BP)

Baptist News Briefs

Compiled from Wire Services

African Baptists elect new leadership in Nigeria

LAGOS, Nigeria — A new slate of leadership was elected by the All Africa Baptist Fellowship (AABF) during its 7th Assembly in Lagos, Nigeria, Nov. 16–20.

Isaac Durosinsjesu Ayanrinola, director of the Missionary Organization Department of the Nigerian Baptist Convention (NBC), was elected AABF general secretary to succeed Harrison Olan’g, vice chancellor of Mount Meru University in Tanzania. Olan’g served as acting general secretary since 2007, following the death of AABF General Secretary Frank Adams of Ghana in December 2006.

Ayanrinola holds bachelor’s degrees from the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary in Ogbomoso, American Baptist College in Nashville and master of divinity and doctor of missiology degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Michael Okwakol, senior pastor of Agape Baptist Church in Kampala, Uganda, founder and president of African Church Empowerment Ministries and immediate-past chairman of the eastern subregion of the AABF, was elected AABF president.

Two vice presidents were elected, Enoch B. Dusingizimana, president and general secretary of the Community of Christian Churches in Africa, based in Rwanda, and Angelo Scheepers, general secretary of the Baptist Union of Southern Africa. Moses Adebayo, treasurer of the NBC, was elected to chair for the Southern Africa subregion of the AABF.

Wells Fargo donates building to Georgia church

TUCKER, Ga. — Thanksgiving will come a little early this year for First Baptist Church, Tucker, Ga., with a Nov. 12 ribbon-cutting and grand opening of a new community ministry center made possible by the generosity of Wells Fargo Bank.

After San Francisco-based Wells Fargo acquired Wachovia in 2008, a Wachovia branch next door to the church was closed and its operations moved to other locations.

Late in 2008, First, Tucker, pastor Randy Shepley and Pastor Dave Kivett of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church caught a vision. What if the former Wachovia bank building could become a place to house the local cooperative ministry group and other non-profit groups in the Tucker area?

From that idea, the Tucker Community Center at First, Tucker, was born.

Wells Fargo offered to donate the property if the transaction could be closed by the end of 2010.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony included a welcome to the center’s first two tenants: Habitat for Humanity Dekalb County and NET-Works Cooperative Ministries, a group of churches, groups, businesses and individuals committed to assist in meeting urgent needs related especially to housing and utilities in the Northlake-Embry Hills-Tucker area northeast of Atlanta.

Baptist Times of British Baptists to cease publication

DIDCOT, England — The *Baptist Times*, an award-winning newspaper published weekly for British Baptists for 156 years, will cease both print and digital editions at the end of the year.

Bill Johnston, chairman of the *Baptist Times* board of directors, said due to declining circulation and advertising sales, the newspaper has increasingly had to depend on subsidies from the Baptist Union of Great Britain to operate. In July the Baptist union’s trustees voted to end financial support for the newspaper next spring.

Amanda Allchorn, head of communications at the Baptist Union of Great Britain, said the *Baptist Times* brand would continue in a new online service to be launched next spring. The resource, www.baptisttimes.co.uk, will offer news, commentary, features and a digest of weekly news for churches to download and print out.

Virginia Baptists elect Croston as first black president

RICHMOND — For the first time in 188 years, the predominantly white Baptist General Association of Virginia (BGAV) has a black president.

Suffolk, Va., pastor Mark Croston was elected to the top spot during the BGAV’s annual meeting Nov. 8–9 in Richmond, Va.

Croston’s election continues a more than 50-year-old pattern of rotating the one-year, non-renewable presidency between ministers and laypersons.

Croston has been pastor of the Suffolk church since 1987 and long active in BGAV life, serving as its second vice president in 2005 and as president of the Virginia Baptist Pastors Conference from 2006–2008. He has been a trustee of Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond.

Randolph's Union Springs reaches men, boys through hunting

By Gary Hardin
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

The dense deer population, along with the popularity of deer hunting in Chilton County, prompted Union Springs Baptist Church, Randolph, to begin a hunting-focused outreach to men and boys.

On Nov. 12, more than 450 men and boys, many wearing camouflage apparel, gathered at the Chilton Baptist Association church's fourth annual Hunting Season Kickoff outreach dinner.

"It gets bigger every year," said church member Heedy Hayes, whose famous chicken was the featured menu item for this year's dinner.

The men and boys were jam-packed into Union Springs Bap-

tist's activities building, eager to enjoy a good meal, hear a Bible message and win a door prize.

Tommy McCoy, a member of First Baptist Church, Columbiana, came with a group from his church. "I love this event. It's good food, fellowship and a boatload of door prizes," McCoy said.

The door prizes are made available through private donations, and every person who registers walks away with one.

This year, more than \$6,000 of door prizes were given away, including the top prize, a pair of tickets to the Iron Bowl. Other prizes included gift cards, chain saws, rifles, televisions, tool sets, small appliances, camping gear, knives, fishing rods and backpacks.

Of course, the event's pri-

mary purpose was outreach. "We follow up and make contacts to those who registered and to those who make decisions," Union Springs member Vernon Lee said.

And this year, almost 40 salvation and 150 rededication decisions were made.

Tom Whitsett, a Southern Baptist evangelist based in Chickamauga, Ga., brought the evening message.

Using John 13:10 as his text, Whitsett reminded the audience, "Jesus forgives you by washing your sins away. Every person God

saves, He changes into a new creation."

The vision for the dinner came from Union Springs member Kacy Mims.

Intentional evangelism

"About five years ago, I read a book on intentional evangelism," Mims said.

"I was praying about an outreach idea for our church, and the hunting season kickoff dinner came to mind. It's a lot of hard work but we enjoy it."

Pastor Steve Johnson said, "We don't skimp on the event. We serve

a delicious meal, and we give away thousands of dollars of door prizes. The event is quality. Churches from as far away as Louisiana have called wanting to know what we do and how we do it."

But the dinner is just a part of Union Springs' outreach mindset.

"In four years, our church has shown a 50 percent increase in attendance. Last year, we gave more than \$100,000 — the equivalent of 20 percent of our budget — to some aspect of missions," Johnson said.

"Those are great numbers for a rural church out in the woods." ■



Photo by Gary Hardin

OUTREACH — Evangelist Tom Whitsett speaks from John 13:10 at the Hunting Season Kickoff outreach dinner Nov. 12.

Letters

(continued from page 2)

the inspired word of God. Our name is associated with missionaries around the world. Our name is associated with the fight against injustices. Our name is associated with our love for all people, regardless of race, sex or national origin. Our name is respected throughout the world. The president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) should not be trying to get the name changed by appointing a committee to rubber-stamp his preconceived desire for such.

The SBC has spoken decisively to this issue on several different occasions, but some folks will not let it die. It's like they want their way in spite of the voice of the people down through the years. It seems to me to be a waste of time and energy for the appointment of another committee to study a subject we have already addressed.

Charles Ballew
Winfield, Ala.

MORMONISM

Thank you for the excellent editorial about Mormonism in the Nov. 3 issue.

Once the true doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is exposed, there is little debate.

Having been a pastor in Arizona for nearly 25 years before retiring, there is little doubt to me that it is not the biblical Christianity that we believe.

A brief study of the life of Joseph Smith (the founder and first president of the Mormon church) and Brigham Young (the second president of the church) leaves no doubt either.

Paul referred to accepting "another Jesus or another spirit" (2 Cor. 11:1-7, especially verse 4), which is exactly what Mormonism does.

Ernest Bailey
Enterprise, Ala.

CORRECTION

In the "Great Commission Task Force continues research, evaluation" article in the Nov. 24 issue of *The Alabama Baptist*, the percentage increase of CP gifts to SBC causes in 2012 was incorrectly printed as 0.05 percent. The correct percentage is 0.5.

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Embrace opportunities

Hagans encourages community ministers to 'keep on going'

By Neisha Fuson
The Alabama Baptist

About 80 percent of the people Harvest Evangelism in Opelika ministers to come out of the church — staff members, pastors' wives and those from a "good" Christian family — said Rick Hagans.

Hagans, founder and president of Harvest Evangelism (a Christian ministry to drug addicts, alcoholics and the homeless), was the main speaker for the annual meeting of the Alabama Network of Christian Community Ministers (CCM), held Nov. 14 at the Mobile Baptist Association office.

While in 2005 there were 349,000 people in the state with drug addictions and about 200 people died each day that year because of drug related issues, the church as a whole has "stuck their head in the sand like the ostrich does," Hagans said.

As addiction issues continue to infiltrate into the Christian community, something must be done, Hagans said. "Keep on going, don't give up. A lot of (Christians) don't go where you go (as community ministers)," he said.



Photo by Neisha Fuson

ELECTED OFFICERS — The 2012 officers for the Alabama Network of Christian Community Ministers are (l to r) First Vice President Donna McCullough, President Leroy Cole and Treasurer Keith Brown. Not pictured are Second Vice President Lou Ann Raughton and Secretary Karen Lee.

"Don't take (the opportunity) for granted. (The lost) just want a friend, someone they can look up to and know that you care about them."

In other business:

► Linda Pair, church and community ministries director for Birmingham Baptist Association and the 2011 CCM president, recognized those who worked tirelessly and sacrificially after the April 27 tornadoes.

► The 2012 officers elected were: President Leroy Cole, Covington Baptist Association; First Vice President Donna McCullough, Etowah Baptist Association; Second Vice President Lou Ann Raughton, director of Community of Hope and member of Dalraida Baptist Church, Montgomery; Secretary Karen Lee, Etowah Baptist Association; and Treasurer Keith Brown, Shelby Baptist Association.

► Members nominated and elected a 2012 nominating committee. Jane Ferguson, Diane Lowe and Lisa Rose, all from Montgomery Baptist Association, will serve as the new nominating committee.



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Reverse Mortgage News

By Jimmy Dixon

Wow! Can you believe Christmas is almost here? Personally, I'm ready for it. I look forward to going to the mall with my wife, Pat, of over 41 years. It will be quality time indeed to get a cup of fancy coffee and sit as we listen to music about God's wonderful gift — His Son! We've found Jesus is not only the reason for the season, but He is the very Giver, Creator and Sustainer of life.

That leads me to say we had a great day at Valley Creek Baptist Church, Hueytown, on Nov. 20. The service started with two teens being baptized and ended with several folks being saved and others joining our fellowship. What a joy to be in a church where God is blessing.

This year has seen a lot of new regulations for those of us in the mortgage business,

but as I was looking over the list of 2011 customers, I give thanks for all the wonderful people I've gotten to know across the state. We've helped many of you pay off



Jimmy Dixon

your mortgages so you never will have another house payment. We've helped others set up a growing line of credit so they can access funds anytime they choose. And at present, I'm talking with someone who's planning on purchasing a home with a reverse.

There are several ways a reverse mortgage may benefit you, but you'll never know unless you investigate, so give me a call or shoot me an email and I'll be glad to send you a free brochure or quote. Call 205-567-4800 or email jdixon@mcgowinking.net. Merry Christmas!



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My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

James 1:19

Look through circumstances to goal

I think I have a new mantra. At least, this seems to be the statement I am repeating to myself over and over again these days: "Jean, keep your eye on the prize."

Here's how it all began.

God moved in my life and convicted me that I needed to change something.

It really was a wonderful time of conviction, if there is such a thing.

Seriously God really revealed some unpleasant things about my nature and spoke to me through several people, showing me that I needed to change.

So I decided to change and what I was going to do to make that change.

God loved me

Most of all, I knew that God loved me and was with me as I sought to be different. I knew this was pleasing to God.

Then it happened. Life.

As I am trying to change, suddenly my children need more than usual from me.

A Thought for Women

By Jean Roberson
jroberson@wmu.org



Nothing too big, just more car-pools, activities and school projects.

Wonderful things, but unexpected things.

Then projects at work suddenly take more time than usual and require more attention.

There are unexpected expenses. There are some conflicts with friends that require time and attention to set relationships right. It all cycles together until I discover that I am just ... tired. Too tired to make changes.

Does that happen to you? Is there a personal change you are trying to make?

Is there something you want to do as a family? Is there a new direction at work?

Why is it that once a change is identified, everything seems to war against it?

I am reminded of Paul's words in Philippians, "But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (3:13-14).

I think there are times when we really do have to be singularly focused.

Avoid getting caught up

There really are times when we have to avoid getting caught up in the details and circumstances that arise.

There really are times when we have to guard our energy as we move toward the goals set before us.

As leaders in our work, churches, homes and communities, it becomes our responsibility to see through to the goal.

If we get so caught up in the circumstances that war against us, then no one sees things through to the goal, because the call to change is our call, not someone else's.

Think with me.

What are you trying to accomplish? What distractions have risen up? What focus do you need to regain?

A Takeaway Value . . .
Keep your eye on the prize.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Jean Roberson, MSW, LCSW, is a ministry consultant for national Woman's Missionary Union. She serves as team leader for the adult team and director of Christian Women's Job Corps/Christian Men's Job Corps and International Initiatives.

Want to know God?

By Pastor Dennis Culbreth
First Baptist Church, Jasper

I met Geoff Perdue through our Upward basketball ministry here at First Baptist Church, Jasper. Geoff loved to coach and share his faith with the young boys and girls on his team. He worked all year on being a better coach, took the game of basketball seriously and desired to be the best coach he could be. He worked hard and expected his team to do the same. Yet he was always fair and a good Christian witness to his young team.

In talking to Geoff, I learned that the main reason he loved this game and coaching was that he was introduced to Jesus through a Christian basketball coach when he was a young person. It changed his life forever, and he wanted to make sure that other young people had the same opportunity. If he could make an eternal difference in one child's life, then it was worth the time and energy he put into coaching.

It's been about 10 months now since I preached Geoff's funeral. This young 43-year-old was cut down in the prime of life by a pulmonary embolism that resulted from an auto accident. He left behind his loving wife and two wonderful children. He left behind a loving set of parents who never dreamed that they would bury one of their children. He left behind a grieving church and basketball team. But he left with us a legacy of being a Christian witness as a coach. He left behind a legacy in the hearts of the young men and women who had the privilege to play on his team. Who knows how many hearts have been changed because of the witness of this young coach?

Several months later, we instituted an annual award to be given to the coach who exemplifies a strong Christian witness in our Upward program. It is the Geoff Perdue award.

Geoff Perdue's life is an example of how a person can make an eternal difference in others' lives through his or her witness of the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. You don't have to be a preacher or evangelist to lead someone to Jesus. Use the opportunities that come your way. You never know what a difference you can make in someone's life.

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MINISTER OF MUSIC/EDUCATION: FBC Haleyville is seeking minister for worship and congregational discipleship for a strong, active church family. Contact 205-486-3762 or jcooley@fbchaleyville.org.

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YOUTH MINISTER: Full- or part-time youth minister (7-12) needed at Mount Pisgah Baptist Church, 100 Mount Pisgah Drive, Cropwell, AL 35054. We are seeking God's direction for a new minister to our students. Please send resume to the church, ATTN: James Blair or email: marybroadwater@centurytel.net. Email: jamesblair@centurytel.net.

PART-TIME YOUTH MINISTER: Nazareth Baptist Church, Rainsville, Ala., is currently seeking a part-time youth

minister. Resumes may be mailed to the following: Nazareth Baptist Church, P.O. Box 541, Rainsville, AL 35986.

PART-TIME YOUTH MINISTER: Maple Avenue Baptist Church is seeking a part-time youth minister to work with 6th-12th grade students. Please mail resumes to: Maple Avenue Baptist Church, ATTN: Mr. Jacky Bradley, Search Committee, 1009 W. Maple Avenue, Geneva, AL 36340. Resumes deadline: Dec. 30.

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Family Matters

CELEBRATING 120 YEARS

Christmas PROVISION

It was two days before Christmas when I met Shane and Sissy, accompanied by their grandmother whom I had met during the summer. Mrs. Smith had walked into our Oxford office as a new resident to our community and expressed a desire to help the Children's Homes. Each time she moved to a new community, she sought out places of service.

Periodically, she would stop by to leave personal or snack items or maybe even paper goods. She explained that she would pick up one or two items when she shopped and set them aside until she was coming our way. Doing it this way, the expense was hardly noticeable and she enjoyed doing it.

The trip that day, however, was not about her but about her grandchildren. She wanted to teach Shane and Sissy to think about the needs of others. They each had been given \$25.00 to spend on a child's Christmas. She marveled at how cautious they were in purchasing items that would be age-appropriate and reflect Christian values.

What Mrs. Smith, Shane and Sissy did not know was that just the day before I had learned of two children in need for Christmas. The gifts selected perfectly fit the children in need.

I'm not sure why, but I continue to be amazed at God's ability to meet our needs.

A new generation is capturing the vision of how to best respond to the needs of others. With God's infinite wisdom the future looks bright.

Ted Embry
Area Director, Northeastern Alabama

Congratulations to Rod Marshall, Incoming President

We'd like to congratulate our own Rod Marshall, who was chosen to succeed our current President/CEO Paul Miller. Rod will become President/CEO effective Feb. 1, 2012. He currently serves as our VP of Counseling and Director of Pathways Professional Counseling.



Look for a full-length feature on Rod in our February 2012 Family Matters. But in the meantime, go to www.alabamachild.org/news/ or scan the QR code below for an exclusive Q&A on our website.



2011 ANNUAL OFFERING



Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6

The 2011 goal for the Annual Children's Homes Offering is \$2.55 million. Please encourage your church to give.

* Graphic represents giving totals as of press time.



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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For December 4

Explore the Bible

By Dale Younce

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

STAY TRUE TO YOUR COMMITMENTS

Numbers 6:1-15

One would like to think most adults start off intending to keep all the commitments they make. Experience shows, however, that far too often and for a multitude of reasons, adults fail to stay true to their commitments. Christians who make commitments to serving God through the church are not immune from challenges to completing their commitments. When Christians make commitments to serve the Lord, He is pleased. When they stay true to those commitments, God is honored. An Old Testament example of honoring God by keeping one's commitments is found in the Nazirite vow.

Take Your Commitments Seriously

(1-8)

Moses taught, as part of the Mosaic Law, the keeping of the Nazirite vow. Nazirite, from a verb meaning "to separate" or "abstain," referred to anyone, male or female, who would bind himself or herself with a specific vow of consecration in order to be set apart for God's service. This obligation was either for life (Samson — Judges 13:4-5, Samuel — 1 Samuel 1:11; John the Baptizer — Luke 1:15) or a specific period of time.

During the period of his or her vow, the Nazirite was obligated to abstain from wine, grapes, raisins — every product of the vine (including the grape's seeds and skin) — and every kind of intoxicating drink. This abstinence was not merely a way to maintain sobriety as a necessary component of one's service to the Lord, but it served as a symbol of the renunciation of those weaknesses of the flesh that tend to subvert dedication to the Lord.

Furthermore the Nazirite was forbidden to cut his or her hair during the days of consecration. Since female Nazirites would already have long hair, perhaps they left it loose and unkempt to indicate their devotion. The male Nazirite's long, uncut hair was a symbol of strength and abundant vitality worn in honor of the Lord as a sign that he belonged to God and had devoted himself to the Lord with all his vital power.

The Nazirite vow was voluntary, open to both men and women and intended to stimulate, above all else, total devotion to God. Like Nazirites, Christians demonstrate they are serious about their commitments to serve the Lord when they understand and willingly adopt lifestyle demands that honor Him.

Rededicate Yourself When Needed

(9-12)

The Nazirite could not approach a dead body, even if it were that of a close relative. If a Nazirite did touch a dead person accidentally, then he or she would be defiled and required to undergo certain rituals and recommence the full period of the vow. On the seventh day after defilement, the Nazirite would shave his or her head. Hair, the outward symbol of dedication, was defiled. This defiled hair was not burned as a sacrifice as would be done by a Nazirite who did complete the vow undefiled. On the eighth day, the defiled Nazirite met the priest at the altar of burnt offerings and there offered specified sacrifices: a pigeon as a sin offering, a pigeon as a burnt offering and a lamb as a trespass offering. An Israelite who took a Nazirite vow and unintentionally became defiled could offer appropriate sacrifices and be rededicated to the vow. Because the Lord is gracious and desires that His people serve Him faithfully, Christians who falter in their commitments of service also can seek His forgiveness and rededicate themselves to Him.

Honor God From Start to Finish

(13-15)

When the Nazirite had successfully completed a period of dedication, he or she brought to the priest the appropriate offerings, part of which became a fellowship meal at the tabernacle with friends. One of the more important aspects of the offerings was the Nazirite's head being shaved at the end of the service period and the hair placed on the altar and burned. Whether in short-term service commitments or lifelong vocational ministry, Christians, like Nazirites, keep as their paramount goal that of honoring God from start to finish.

Bible Studies for Life

By Joseph F. Scrivner

Assistant Professor of Religion, Department of Religion, Samford University

RECOGNIZE GOD'S GIFT

John 1:1-4, 10-18

Mark's Gospel begins with Jesus as an adult. Matthew and Luke start earlier with the birth of Jesus. John goes back even further, so to speak, as he initiates his narrative by describing Jesus in terms of a relationship that precedes time.

Jesus Is Completely God (1-4)

The first words repeat the opening of Genesis 1:1. Yet John uses "in the beginning" to refer to a reality outside of creation. John does not begin with a reference to "Jesus." Instead he refers to "the Word" as existent before time, as "with God," and yet at the same time "was God." This divine Word is also the source and light of all creation. Further the Word did not maintain exclusive transcendence. Rather "The Word became flesh and took up residence among us" (14). This Word is the "One and Only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth" (14b) This is Jesus Christ (17).

This belief about Jesus is a key reason for the animosity of His opponents. Jesus is considered worthy of execution because "He was even calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God" (John 5:18). Later Jesus is nearly stoned after He asserts, "The Father and I are one" (John 10:30).

John's statements are notable because they are explicit regarding Jesus as God. Yet there are comparable claims in other New Testament books.

For instance, when Paul calls on his readers to follow Christ's example, he cites a hymn that refers to Jesus as equal with God (Phil. 2:5-8). Similarly Colossians contains striking statements about Jesus as fully God (Col. 1:15-20; 2:9-10).

This claim that Jesus is God is a defining belief of Christianity. Indeed John's central message is evident in this early, ecumenical confession: "We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through

Him all things were made" (Council of Nicaea).

Jesus Is Completely Man

(10-11, 14-15)

This conviction is remarkable because it holds that God became a finite human. This is the meaning of the Incarnation. While Christians are generally unified on this point, there has been little agreement regarding the implications of this extraordinary proposition. For instance, if humans by definition lack omniscience (before and after the fall), then does this mean Jesus did not exercise omniscience before His resurrection? Is this implied when Paul says Jesus "emptied Himself" (Phil. 2:7)? Is this why Jesus said the Son does not know when this world will end (Mark 13:32)?

Likewise did Jesus have the ability to sin but lived a sinless life by the power of the Holy Spirit? One Christian theologian reportedly said, "What is not assumed is not redeemed." Does this mean Jesus assumed the ability to sin so He could fully redeem humanity from sin? Is this the meaning of the statement in Hebrews that Jesus was "tested in every way as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15)? What about Paul's statement that God "made the One who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21)? These questions are not idle speculation. Rather they help Christians avoid the dangers of an ancient heresy called "Docetism," the belief that Jesus only seemed to be human.

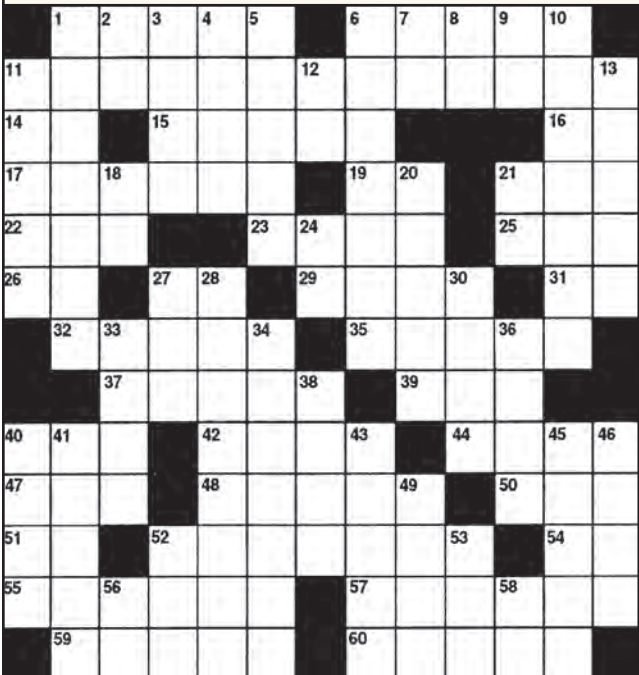
Jesus Is Completely Necessary

(12-13, 16-18)

Finally the Christian belief in the Incarnation is most important because of what it says about God's faithful love for humanity. God has not abandoned humanity to its fallen, sinful plight. Instead God loved the world so much that He gave His one and only Son, Jesus Christ, so that those who believe in Him will be saved (John 3:16). As we reflect on and share this magnificent truth, let each of us meditate deeply on how we can best imitate God's love in every area of our lives, with believers and unbelievers.

Christian Crossword

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Across

- Like a flying _____. (Rev. 4:7)
- Boards of fir trees of _____. (Ezek. 27:5)
- Treatise have I made, _____, all that Jesus began. (Acts 1:1; 3 words)
- Ye shall be witnesses unto _____. (Acts 1:8)
- Descended to the stone of _____. (Josh. 18:17)
- Peter and John about to _____ into the temple. (Acts 3:3)
- Took a wife _____ whose _____ was Tamar. (Gen. 38:6; 2 words)
- California. (abbr.)
- I will punish _____ in Babylon. (Jer. 51:44)
- Animal that sounds like *new*.
- Earth shall _____ to an fro. (Isa. 24:20)
- Close relative to reindeer.
- Alcoholics Anonymous. (abbr.)
- Why look ye _____ earnestly on us? (Acts 3:12)
- To _____ away disciples. (Acts 20:30)
- It _____ not for you to know. (Acts 1:7)
- The son of Jair slew _____. (1 Chron. 20:5)
- _____, Judah's firstborn _____ and the Lord slew _____. (Gen. 38:7; 2 words)

- Shilshah, and Ithran, and _____. (1 Chron. 7:37)
- Ye _____ of Galilee. (Acts 1:11)
- Adam was first formed, then _____. (1 Tim. 2:13)
- _____, it, raise it. (Ps. 137:7)
- The troops of _____ looked. (Job 6:19)
- _____ boweth down, Nebo stoopeth. (Isa. 46:1)
- An odour of a sweet _____. (Phil. 4:18)
- And in the _____ sea. (Acts 7:36)
- Until _____ offering _____ should be offered. (Acts 21:26)
- _____, the son of Azariah. (Ezra 7:3)
- North American. (abbr.)
- The _____ said unto me _____ I have given _____ unto the children of Lot. (Deut. 2:9; 2 words)
- _____, and Ramah, and Hazor. (Josh. 19:36)
- Then were assembled unto _____ every _____ that trembled at the words of the God of Israel. (Ezra 9:4; 2 words)
- People of an ancient Asian country.

Down

- As many as were ordained to _____ life believed. (Acts 13:48)
- Saying, _____ thou that destroyest the temple.

- From _____ to Rimmon. (Zech. 14:10)
- Machine for weaving.
- The sons of Midian; Ephah, and _____. (Gen. 25:4)
- Desire the _____ milk of the word. (1 Pet. 2:2)
- Erected an altar, and called it _____-elohe Israel. (Gen. 33:20)
- Name unknown. (abbr.)
- This _____ that which was spoken. (Acts 2:16)
- Barzillai the Gileadite of _____. (2 Sam. 17:27)
- I am Alpha and _____. (Rev. 1:8)
- _____, ha. (Job 39:25)
- Bringing sick _____. (Acts 5:16)
- Name unknown. (abbr.)
- Sound an _____. (Joel 2:1)
- Why should it _____ thought a thing incredible? (Acts 26:8)
- Called the altar _____. (Josh. 22:34)
- And _____ opened her eyes. (Acts 9:40)
- Two _____ for one _____. (Ex. 16:22; 2 words)
- I _____ my glittering sword. (Deut. 32:41)
- _____ offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice. (Heb. 11:4)
- Duke _____. These _____ the dukes of Edom. (1 Chron. 1:54; 2 words)
- Went _____ unto her _____ called

- his name _____. (Gen. 38:2,3; 2 words)
- Of the tribe of _____. (Rev. 7:6)
- An altar _____ in mount _____. (Josh. 8:30)
- The cruel _____ of asps. (Deut. 32:33)
- Bath-sheba, the daughter of _____. (2 Sam. 11:3)
- Parted them to all _____, every man had need. (Acts 2:45; 2 words)
- _____ bare to Esau Eliphaz. (Gen. 36:4)
- Ye _____ men with burdens. (Luke 11:46)
- Why make ye this _____? (Mark 5:39)
- When the angels _____ left them _____ (Luke 2:15 NIV)
- Do _____ Me.
- Take it from _____.



PERSECUTED CHURCH

Compiled from Wire Services



Somali Christian refugees feel danger in Kenya

NAIROBI, Kenya — One Christian left his native Somalia 10 years ago, and another fled as Muslim extremists were bombing his house earlier this year, but both Somali converts from Islam feel they are still in danger in Kenya.

In February, Islamic extremists from the al-Shabaab militia fighting for control of Somalia reduced Mohammed Abdi Mose's house in Mogadishu to ashes as he evacuated his family, the 54-year-old father of seven told Compass Direct News. His head bears a scar where shrapnel struck and he requires medicine to limit the injury's damage to his memory.

About 150 people died that night in military fighting, but Mose said it was no accident that his house was targeted.

Another Somali convert from Islam arrived in Kenya in 2001, but he and his family also are seeking a third country after Muslims in Nairobi recently posted his photo in a mosque, accusing him of being a threat to Islam.

The Muslims of Nairobi's Somali enclave in Eastleigh found out that Adam Musse Othman, 60, had translated biblical portions into Maay, one of the Somali dialects, and they also got hold of a copy of the "JESUS" film that Othman had translated into Maay; they were able to identify the voice-over in the film as his, he said.

Othman said he has received threats. "I cannot take such threats lightly, hence my request for resettlement on security grounds where we can live peacefully, decently and freely — also, to save ourselves from death and violence," he said.

Violence in Nigeria aimed mainly at Christians

DAMATURU, Nigeria — Islamic extremists stormed Damaturu in Yobe state, northern Nigeria like a swarm of bees, and at the end of their four-hour rampage, some 150 people had been killed — at least 130 of them Christians, according to church sources. Hundreds of people are still missing, and the destruction included the bombing of at least 10 church buildings.

More than 200 members of the Islamic extremist Boko Haram sect stormed the Yobe state capital at 5 p.m. on Nov. 4, and soon the terrorists had blocked all four major highways leading into town. Having successfully dislodged security agencies after a series of gun battles and the detonation of explosives, the terrorists then led other area Muslims to the only Christian ward in town, New Jerusalem in Damaturu, home to more than 15,000 Christians, church leaders said.

When the Muslim extremists went to New Jerusalem, they said, any Christian they met who could not recite the Islamic creed was instantly shot and killed or slaughtered like a lamb. "The trauma my 10-year-old son had as a result of sounds from guns and explosions has not left him, as he has refused to eat ever since the attack," said Pastor Idris Garba, the 41-year-old chairman of the Yobe state chapter of the Christian Association of Nigeria.

Bomb blasts the previous day in Maiduguri, Borno state about 80 miles east killed four people, with one of the explosions coming from a triple suicide bombing of a military base.

Vietnamese Christians denied medical attention

HANOI, Vietnam — Three Christians seriously injured during a savage attack near Hanoi on Nov. 13 have been evacuated to an undisclosed hospital in Ho Chi Minh City after several hospitals in the region refused to examine and treat them.

The attack on a church leaders' worship service of an Agape Baptist Church (ABC) house church in Lai Tao village, Bot Xuyen commune, My Duc district, left one woman, evangelist Nguyen Thi Lan, with her pelvis broken in two places and with badly damaged internal organs, according to doctors who recommended emergency surgery.

Yet previously doctors at three area hospitals had told her and two other seriously injured Christians that they were fine and dismissed them, said Pastor Nguyen Cong Thanh, head of the ABC.

When doctors in Vietnam learn that religious motives play a role in violence, commonly they do not dare to treat or even examine the victims of persecution. Nguyen Thi Lan is a recently retired Communist Party official who converted to Christianity only last year. Within that short time she had led some 50 people to the Christian faith.

Nguyen Thi Tac, who had been hit with a steel shovel on her chest and stomach as well as her back, was also still in considerable pain but was not admitted for hospital treatment.

CAMPUS News



JUDSON COLLEGE

► **Judson Choir Invited to Sing at National Cathedral:** The Judson College Singers have been invited to perform the choral prelude for the evensong service on May 20 at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C.

The choral prelude consists of a 25-minute program of sacred a cappella music sung just prior to the 4 p.m. service. The prelude itself is regarded as an integral part of the liturgical offering, and the prelude choir also remains for the service.

The cathedral visit will be a cornerstone event for the 2012 choir tour, which begins May 18.

For more information, call the Judson development office at 334-683-5109.

► **Judson Recognizes Employees on Work Anniversaries:** Judson College held its annual Employee Recognition Convocation on Nov. 1.

Five-year honorees were computer support employee Paula Arnold, facilities staffer Alexander Mims, business instructor and staff accountant Jo Ann Morina and artist-in-residence Billie Jean Young.

Ten-year honorees were athletic director Lee Jones and head of security Lue Gene Wright.

Equine director Jennifer Hoggle was honored for 15 years of service. Hoggle is a Judson alumna. Professor of music Betty Campbell was honored for 35 years of service. Forty-five-year honorees were chemistry professor George Williams and facilities staffer Eva Lou Cannon.

UNIVERSITY OF MOBILE

► **UMobile Presents Prichard Children's Choir in Several Concerts:** The University of Mobile (UMobile) Center for Leadership and Music in Action program will present the Prichard Children's Choir, featuring more than 200 students from Prichard elementary schools, in several upcoming concerts.

The program's theme this year is "Music, Leadership and Faith," designed to encourage kids to use their talents, along with hard work and self-discipline, to succeed.

Concerts will be held

- Dec. 1–2, UMobile Christmas Spectacular, 6:30 p.m., Dauphin Way Baptist Church, Mobile;
- Dec. 4, 6 p.m., Robertsdale Baptist Church;
- Dec. 5 with the Baldwin County Youth Orchestra, 7 p.m., Fairhope Civic Center; and
- Dec. 10, Christmas Extravagan-

za, 7 p.m., Mount Hebron Baptist Church, Prichard.

For more information, contact Nikeland Nichols at 251-442-2701 or nnichols@umobile.edu.

SAMFORD UNIVERSITY

► **Samford Planetarium Presents 'Star of Bethlehem':** The multimedia presentation "The Star of Bethlehem" will be shown four times during December at Samford University's Christenberry Planetarium in Propst Hall. The hourlong show will begin at 7 p.m. Dec. 12, 13, 15 and 16.

The show addresses questions that historians and scientists have long pondered about the star that appeared in the east, as described in the New Testament Gospel of Matthew, said planetarium director and "Star of Bethlehem" host George Atchley.

The presentation's virtual journey to Jerusalem and Persia will present some of the strongest candidates for answers, Atchley said. The show contains material that may be more appreciated by ages 8 and up.

For more information or to schedule a special showing for a group of 10 or more, contact Atchley at geatchle@samford.edu or 205-726-4139.

Movie Review

By Rick and Martine Sharp

Have a Little Faith

Hallmark Hall of Fame Productions

"Have a Little Faith" is based on events in the life of best-selling author Mitch Albom ("Tuesdays With Morrie"). As a successful sports writer for a Detroit newspaper, Albom is asked to write the eulogy for his elderly, but very much alive, childhood rabbi.

Uncertain but wanting to please the older man, Albom begins making visits to his hometown temple in New Jersey to gather material for the eulogy.

Through these visits, he begins a renewed journey of faith based on Rabbi Albert Lewis' gentle prodding.

This journey leads him to an interest in Detroit's homeless and homeless shelters and introduces him to Henry Covington, an ex-con, ex-drug dealer and former addict who serves as pastor of a run-down old church that provides meals and shelter to Detroit's homeless. Albom is struck by the great need and eventually writes a story chronicling the church's difficulties.

Through his association with these two clergymen, the unsuspect-

ing author slowly, but in a profound way, begins to experience changes in his awareness of his own spiritual needs and self-centered lifestyle.

Why would the average Alabama Baptist be interested in this movie?

Despite the regional, cultural and religious differences, there is a commonality among those of us

who earnestly seek the truth, and especially among those of us who are ambushed and changed by its unexpected appearance.

"Have a Little Faith" presents a compelling journey of building faith through everyday living, no matter our circumstances — and no matter our background.

SBOM retiree Duck dies at 85

Robert "Bob" Duck, retired director of public relations at the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions (SBOM), died Nov. 21. He was 85.

An Alabama native, Duck served the SBOM for 23 years, retiring in 1991.

A graduate of the University of Alabama, Duck received his master's in religious education from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

After his undergraduate studies, he spent time spinning rhythm and blues as a disc jockey and program director at Sylacauga and Andalusia radio

stations. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1944 until 1946 and was awarded the American Area Ribbon, Asiatic-Pacific Ribbon and the Victory Ribbon.

Duck was a lifetime member of the Baptist Communicators Association and served for eight years on the board of directors for *The Alabama Baptist*.

At the time of his death, he was a member of First Baptist Church, Montgomery.

Duck is survived by his niece, one great-nephew, one great-niece, two great-great-nieces and one great-great-nephew.

(TAB)



Photo by Lil Brooks

'NEED FOR THE SAVIOR' — A young girl with plastic bag in hand awaits the slaughter of the bull for the Festival of Sacrifice in Van, Turkey. They are hoping for the kindness of strangers as they wait in near freezing temperatures and steady rain for fresh meat to feed their families.

Greatly shaken

Earthquake survivors fearful, desperate, aid workers say

By Ava Thomas
Special to The Alabama Baptist

As the room buzzed around her, Lynn Meadows sat on the floor rocking the infant in her arms, silently praying over the tiny baby boy.

At 20 days old, he was already fatherless — his twin sister, too. Their father didn't make it out of the shop where he was drinking tea when a 7.2-magnitude earthquake shook Erçis, Turkey, on Oct. 23.

Their uncle, however, took a dive hands-first toward the door of his pizza place, and 10 hours later, rescuers saw his fingers sticking out and pulled him alive from the rubble.

It came down to seconds. Many lived. Some weren't so lucky.

More than 600 people died and one-third of Erçis' buildings were lost that day. Multiple-story buildings collapsed to piles of rubble, and an aftershock Nov. 9 brought down dozens more damaged buildings in the area, killing more.

About 50 "micro" to "minor" quakes happen there daily.

'Afraid and desperate'

"The people are afraid and desperate," Meadows said. "They don't know what the future holds."

The twins' family lives in a climate of constant fear. They drink tea with mourners in their stove-heated house during the day, but after the sun sets and the temperature drops well below freezing, they huddle into tents in the backyard to sleep.

"The people here are in serious danger of illness, from the cold and from burning fires in their tents and

breathing the smoke," said Paula, a Christian and retired nurse living in Turkey.

According to Baptist Global Response (BGR), quake victims are "on the brink of great suffering" because of their conditions. BGR, through trained aid personnel in Istanbul, is providing trained local people with clothes, food, shelter and medicine for distribution.

"We do what we can to help — pray with them, provide better tents, give medicines, food and socks," Paula said. "But the needs are so great."

It's a crushing burden on a people already buckling under the weight of poverty.

"They are scared they will lose everything as the winter approaches," Meadows said. "One man I spoke with fears that all their animals will freeze to death without shelter. Without those animals, they will starve without help."

Many are starving already.

Two weeks to the day of the first quake, on the first day of Muslims' Kurban sacrifice holiday, children stood on bloodstained streets, holding empty plastic bags in hopes of taking meat home to their families.

"Some people couldn't afford to celebrate the holiday this year. But people buy what they can, a sheep or a bull, or go in together with other families to buy them for the sacrifice.

People then give the meat away to the poor," said Mehdi, who went in with six other people to have a bull killed for Kurban. "We're hoping that because of the blood of these sacrifices, there won't be any more earthquakes."

That day, the twins' family used some of their Kurban meat to feed their guests — Meadows and others who had come to bring help and hope. As they visited and ate, tears dripped from the face of the twins' grandmother, who wore a black dress and veil and clutched prayer beads.

"Thank you for making us laugh," she said.

As the group prayed over the family, Meadows prayed for more than laughter for the family — she asked that they would know Christ's salvation.

'Need for a Savior'

"As I held that little baby boy, I prayed fervently that his generation would be one that seeks the face of God," Meadows said. "Despite their desperation for shelter and protection, they have an even greater need for the Savior. Only in Christ can they find the peace and true shelter from any tragedy."

The babies' father likely never had a chance to hear the gospel, she said.

"I prayed his children would not follow in his steps. I prayed they would one day have a chance to hear and that they would respond in faith."

Christians are meeting the needs of quake victims. There is a need for doctors and nurses in eastern Turkey, as well as financial support to shelter and feed families. For more information about how you can help, visit gobgr.com.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Names have been changed for security reasons. (IMB)

Religion In America

Compiled from Wire Services

N.C. Catholic college sues over contraception mandate

BELMONT, N.C. — A small Catholic college has sued the Department of Health and Human Services, saying a new requirement to provide contraceptives contradicts the school's religious beliefs.

Belmont Abbey College in Belmont, N.C., said Nov. 10 that the mandate, ordered in the health care bill passed last year, is unconstitutional because it violates the school's freedoms of religion and speech.

The suit comes as some religious groups, including the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, say that the mandate violates the conscience of organizations that oppose contraception on moral or ethical grounds.

The 26-page complaint filed in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia said the legislation does not treat religious groups neutrally and "runs roughshod" over the college's beliefs, forcing it to either violate them or pay significant penalties.

"Having to pay a fine to the taxing authorities for the privilege of practicing one's religion or controlling one's own speech is un-American, unprecedented, and flagrantly unconstitutional," the suit says.

NAE approves resolution on nuclear weapon precautions

WASHINGTON — The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) on Nov. 8 called for greater precautions with nuclear weapons and a renewed effort toward disarmament.

"The rules have changed in the past 25 years," NAE President Leith Anderson said. "Nuclear weapons don't serve as a deterrent to the dangers of our post-Cold War era, which include rogue nations and terrorist groups."

The resolution calls for taking a look at the Cold War doctrine of deterrence in light of shifting global politics, and challenges the U.S. to pursue new negotiations with Russia and other nuclear countries.

It does not, however, call for unilateral disarmament.

The resolution also challenges the Senate to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, which would create significant impediments for countries to develop new, usable nuclear weapons. The U.S. is one of only nine remaining nations that must ratify the treaty for it to come into force.

The board of directors of NAE, which represents more than 45,000 churches from over 40 evangelical denominations, approved the resolution at its semiannual meeting in October.

N.Y. town clerk against Marriage Equality Act, re-elected

LEDYARD, N.Y. — The town clerk in Ledyard, N.Y., who drew national attention after refusing to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples, won re-election Nov. 8.

Incumbent Rose Marie Belforti, a Republican, defeated Ed Easter, of Aurora, who launched a write-in candidacy about six weeks ago after learning of his opponent's stance against New York's new Marriage Equality Act.

The unofficial results gave Belforti a 305-to-186 victory — her sixth straight two-year term as the town's part-time clerk. Belforti thanked supporters and said they "chose religious freedom over religious intolerance."

Her position polarized residents in this mostly rural town of about 1,900 residents on the east side of Cayuga Lake.

Belforti, 57, unsuspectingly found herself in the middle of an emerging test case after she told the town board in August that her Christian beliefs prevented her from issuing a same-sex marriage license to a Florida lesbian couple that owns a farm in nearby Springport.

46% of children grow up in intact home, survey says

WASHINGTON — Only 46 percent of children in the United States will reach age 17 having grown up in a home with biological parents who are married — a figure that has a significant impact on the nation's graduation, poverty and teenage birth rates, according to a new report.

Compiled by Family Research Council's Pat Fagan and psychologist Nicholas Zill and released by the Family Research Council's Marriage & Religion Research Institute, the data shows that:

► The intact family rate is highest in the Northeast (49.6 percent) and lowest in the South (41.8).

► Minnesota (57) and Utah (56.5) have the highest intact family rate among all 50 states, with Mississippi (34 percent) the lowest.

► Asians (65.8) have the highest rate among ethnic and racial classes, blacks (16.7) the lowest.