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Photo by Grace Thornton

Pastor Danny Lovett (in photo) says the Church at Chelsea Westover, which he planted with the help of businessman David Wilson, could be a model for Christian businessmen across the state. Lovett came to Alabama after Wilson, owner of central Alabama's six Servpro franchises, felt the Lord lay it on his heart to start a church. He offered Lovett the large empty building at his headquarters, which he was only using about four times a year. 'We don't have to build buildings — the buildings are already there,' Lovett says. The Church at Chelsea Westover has grown from three couples to more than 80 people attending.

# 'Multiply the Kingdom'

By Grace Thornton  
The Alabama Baptist

## New church plant in Shelby County has 'pretty big missions field'

David Wilson was a businessman, not a church planter. At least that's what he thought. But Wilson, owner of central Alabama's six Servpro franchises, felt the prodding of the Lord keep coming, especially every time he passed that large empty building at his Servpro headquarters.

"The Lord laid it on David's heart to start a church in his training building, which he was only using about four times a year," said Danny Lovett, Wilson's friend and former pastor. "He called me and said, 'I want you

to come down here and talk to me about starting a church.'"

So Lovett did. And in August, after a long career as a Baptist pastor and 20 years in higher academics, Lovett became pastor of the new Church at Chelsea Westover.

"As a retirement-age pastor, this has re-energized me," he said. "Church planting is perfect for seasoned pastors looking to start new work — they have a financial base from their retirement and they have a career of experience to pull from."

And they can take the plunge, follow Christ and start from scratch, Lovett said.

After taking a class with Shelby Baptist Association he recruited some interns, and they hit the pavements knocking on doors and getting to know the community. By the end of October the church had grown from three couples to more than 80 people attending, he said.

Many of those have been baptized at Chelsea Westover.

"Our vision is to love God and love people, at home and abroad," he said. "We're here to reach the lost, the unchurched and the unfulfilled."

Lovett said he hopes what Wilson started at Servpro can become

a model for businessmen all over Alabama.

"If we can get some businessmen to catch this vision, we can jump-start church plants all over the place," Lovett said. "We don't have to build buildings — the buildings are already there. And if new

(See 'Big,' page 6)

## Baptists respond to Sandy's fury

As needs kept rolling in, Fritz Wilson said he only knew one thing to do.

He called for all large-capacity mobile kitchens east of the Rocky Mountains to come and feed victims of "post-tropical" cyclone Sandy — an unprecedented move for Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDR). A group of 80 Alabama Baptists was set to join the ranks in New York on Nov. 3.

"As we worked through the plan-

ning and continued to receive reports about the need, the conviction came on me that Southern Baptists need to step out in faith and mobilize now," said Wilson, executive director of North American Mission Board (NAMB) Disaster Relief. "I contacted [NAMB] President Kevin Ezell and shared the conviction of our area command team and he agreed."

The goal was to begin preparing a minimum of 400,000 meals a day (See 'A time,' page 7)

# COMMENT

## Remaining Faithful Ministry Partners

For two years state Baptist leaders have wrestled with how the Alabama Baptist State Convention (ABSC) could remain a faithful ministry partner for cooperating churches and associations and at the same time achieve the goals of the Great Commission Resurgence (GCR) report adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in 2010.

To many, the state convention seemed caught on the horns of a dilemma. If the ABSC maintained its responsibility to work with cooperating churches and associations to help reach the lost, disciple believers and strengthen churches in Alabama, then the state convention could not meet the financial goals called for by the SBC in its GCR report.

On the other hand, if the ABSC supported the financial goals of the GCR report, then it could not continue as a faithful ministry partner for Alabama churches and associations.

Thankfully the leaders grappling with this problem found a way out of the dilemma and will recommend to the upcoming state convention a proposal that allows the ABSC to remain a faithful ministry partner for churches, associations and the SBC.

The Great Commission Ministries FutureFocus Task Force will recommend five strategic initiatives for consideration and action by convention messengers (see pages 8–9 in the Nov. 1, 2012, issue of *The Alabama Baptist*). Four of the initiatives relate to the work of the convention. The fifth relates to finances.

In each initiative related to the work of the convention, the ABSC will remain a faithful partner with cooperating churches and associations. For example, the report calls for the state convention to work with churches and associations to plant a minimum of 32 churches a year in Alabama to help reach the state for Christ.

The recommendation is important at two points. First it expresses the commitment that church plants should be done by churches and associations rather than by a denominational entity. Second the recommendation calls for a variety of church plants to reach Alabama's changing demographics, with more internationals calling Alabama home as well as micro-focused works such as deaf or cowboy churches.

ABSC's leader Rick Lance said he liked Alabama's way of doing church planting better than other approaches because five years after the start of a new work 90 percent of the state's intentional church starts are still functioning.



### THOUGHTS By Bob Terry

Other methods have almost a 50 percent failure rate.

Partnership with churches and associations is also reflected in the strategic initiative of revitalizing existing churches. Instead of inviting pastors and other church leaders to a conference, the state convention proposes to provide mentoring relationships and resources to work with churches over a long period of time to help the 70 percent of Alabama Baptist churches that are plateaued or declining.

The Great Commission Ministries FutureFocus Task Force report reconfirms the Acts 1:8 strategy for global missions approved at last year's annual meeting. Instead of missions partnerships with geographical regions such as the nation of Ukraine or the state of Michigan, Alabama Baptists will partner with the more than 400 SBC-appointed missionaries serving throughout the United States and the world. Again, Alabama Baptists will be faithful ministry partners with missionaries from our state.

### No wholesale changes

These strategic initiatives may necessitate tweaking the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions (SBOM) structure, SBOM executive director Lance pointed out, but wholesale changes should not be expected. He said that during his 14 years as executive director there had been almost continuous tweaking resulting in a 29 percent reduction in staff over that time period.

Going forward the SBOM will continue to provide the resources churches and associations have come to expect as well as focus on the recommended strategic initiatives, he added.

The financial recommendation also reflects the state convention's commitment to be a faithful ministry partner. For example, the plan provides a way for the state convention to continue supporting more than \$1 million in shared ministry costs in Alabama previously provided by SBC entities. The validity of these ministries never changed. Only SBC priorities changed, resulting in the funds being directed elsewhere.

By adopting a methodology that has been part of the Cooperative Program (CP) structure since its earliest days, the Great Commission Minis-

tries FutureFocus Task Force report outlines how Alabama Baptists can reach the goal of evenly dividing CP receipts between state and SBC causes. That methodology is shared ministries.

The shared ministries category — referred to in SBC documents by different terms over the years — acknowledges that some costs paid by state conventions benefit both the state and national conventions. CP promotion, which now rests primarily with state conventions, is one example. So are the insurance benefits paid by state conventions on behalf of pastors and church staff members. Those benefits allow a pastor to move from one state to another without penalty.

By categorizing these and other such costs in the shared ministries category, the benefits to both state and national conventions are recognized. The FutureFocus report specifies that no more than 10 percent of any annual budget will be placed in the shared ministries category.

### Benefits to state, national conventions

The goal would then be to divide the remaining 90 percent of the budget equally between state and national causes.

But that will take a change in church behavior. The report also asks Alabama Baptist churches to be faithful ministry partners by increasing by 1 percent over four years the percentage of undesignated funds given to missions and ministries through CP. That is one-quarter of 1 percent per year for four years. Recently the average percentage of undesignated receipts from churches given through CP has been declining. That must stop for the FutureFocus Task Force recommendations to work.

As churches respond the SBC will receive about 60 percent of the growth in receipts, the report says. That will allow the SBC portion of CP receipts to grow until equally divided by 2023, the state convention's 200th birthday. Stronger responses by the churches could cause that goal to be met earlier.

Being a faithful ministry partner requires cooperation by all involved. In this case, the ABSC continues its commitment to work with churches and associations to reach Alabama for Christ while upholding its dedication to the Great Commission. The SBC cooperates by providing a tool — the shared ministries category — to help states reach the financial goal of equally dividing receipts between state and national causes. Churches cooperate by raising the priority of missions beyond themselves by increasing CP receipts by one-quarter of 1 percent for four years. That is a win-win-win situation for everyone.

In our judgment, the Great Commission Ministries FutureFocus Task Force report merits the support of every messenger to the upcoming state convention and the cooperation of every Alabama Baptist church.

**Letters to the Editor**

See page 12



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

(ISSN 0738-7741;  
USPS 011-080)

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

**PRINT  
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Church Budget — \$13  
Individual — \$20.95

**ONLINE  
SUBSCRIPTION RATES**

Church Budget — \$8.50  
Individual — \$14.95

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Baptist Press (BP), Associated Baptist Press (ABP), Religion News Service (RNS), Compass Direct News (CDN), Evangelical Press (EP), Forum 18 (F18).

**POSTMASTER**

Send address changes to:  
*The Alabama Baptist*  
3310 Independence Drive  
Birmingham, AL 35209

**ADDRESS CHANGE**

Send old and new addresses, and name of church to:  
Circulation Department  
3310 Independence Drive  
Birmingham, AL 35209  
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Christian newspaper'**

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Photo courtesy of Sulphur Springs Baptist Church  
Don Minyard (center) spends time with children in Uganda.



Photo courtesy of Sulphur Springs Baptist Church  
Ugandans stand in line to receive eyeglasses, some of which were donated by Sulphur Springs Baptist Church, Trussville.

# Hands-on help

By Grace Thornton  
The Alabama Baptist

## Sulphur Springs Baptist helps Ugandan nurse meet needs

A few years back, Betty Ogwang quit her job at the hospital in Uganda, drove her motorcycle into the bush and stayed there. She opened a little clinic and takes chickens, corn and beans as payment when the people can afford it. And when they can't, she treats them anyway.

Thanks to Sulphur Springs Baptist Church, Trussville, in St. Clair Baptist Association.

"We were able to help pay for her to get training as a nurse aid, and now we help fund her work," said Don Minyard, a member of Sulphur Springs Baptist. "Once when we were there on a trip, we found her outside saving a man's life who was dying of malaria. She had him hooked up to an IV that she'd bought with her own money."

So Minyard asked her — if we bought you a motorcycle and gave you \$400 a month, what could you do? How many times could you go into the bush?

She decided to go and stay.

"And thanks to people giving generously, we support her," Minyard said.

The church supports a lot in Uganda.

It started before Minyard and Sulphur Springs Baptist even knew each other.

"Back before I joined the church in 2007, I was part of a group supporting seminary work in India," he said.

Then he found out that the seminary had gotten so self-sufficient it was sending the money on to help war-torn Uganda.

"We thought, 'Whoa, where's our money going?' So we decided to do due diligence and find out," Minyard said.

And what they found was Anthony Ogwang — Betty's father — who was helping hundreds of fellow Ugandans, winning them to the Lord and grouping them into churches.

"People were coming in and living around the city where he was, and he was using the money to feed them," Minyard said. "We were excited about how the funds had been used to do the Lord's work."

So he decided to keep on helping. And then he joined Sulphur Springs Baptist, led by Pastor Bobby Shipp. "It's a little church — only

about a hundred people — but it's a little church that does a lot," Minyard said. "We rival some of the bigger churches with shoeboxes (Operation Christmas Child) and have strong gifts to Lottie Moon (Christmas Offering)."

So when Minyard introduced the church to the work in Uganda, they immediately got on board and fell in love, said church secretary Cindy Roper.

### Sparking interest

"You can give money all the time, but when you have a hands-on way to help, it sparks the congregation's interest in a big way," Roper said.

Since 2007, Sulphur Springs has helped to collect thousands of dollars, shoes, eyeglasses and toys for the people of Uganda.

Minyard takes a team every year with a dentist, a doctor and others who can help out in a place where war victims have had their teeth broken off by the enemy, where children have never worn shoes and people die from simple infections.

He and his teammates also have set up a

way for people in the United States to sponsor orphans there, as well as the families who take them in.

"Seventy orphans and families are being fed and clothed and are going to school thanks to these sponsorships. It's a privilege that we get to be a part," he said. "It's really Third World there, and we can see our money go a long way to help. But most of all, we want to see people come to the Lord."

And it seems they are, Minyard said.

Anthony Ogwang — who is supported in part by Sulphur Springs Baptist and came to Trussville to meet the church recently — has seen 38 churches come from the first one he planted. Some meet under trees, seven meet in adobe buildings and one — named after Sulphur Springs Baptist — meets in a brick building.

More than 150 people meet at the Ugandan Sulphur Springs church — a larger congregation than its namesake.

"A small church can do a lot, can give a lot and see a lot happen," Minyard said. "You just have to know where your blessings come from." ❧



Photo courtesy of Sulphur Springs Baptist Church  
Ugandans line up for medical care during one of Don Minyard's trips to the area.

# 'Alabama's moral compass'

By **Sondra Washington**  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

## ALCAP continues 75-year history of influencing lives, creating community awareness

**W**hether walking the halls of the Alabama State House, crisscrossing the state for community awareness meetings or developing curriculum to influence students' lives, Alabama Citizens Action Program (ALCAP) leaders have worked relentlessly over the past 75 years to promote high ethical, moral and biblical standards throughout the state. So diligent are their efforts that both those who support and those who oppose their stances on various issues consider ALCAP "Alabama's moral compass."

"In 1978, when I became executive director, I got to wondering if anybody was speaking up for the churches and the Lord's work in Montgomery," said Dan Ireland, director emeritus of ALCAP who served 30 years as executive director. "So I went down to the Capitol and did a little investigation. I found that no one was making any kind of inroads as far as the faith community was concerned. So I decided I would do it. That's when I started working with the Legislature. ... Some of the legislators, especially the ones who sided with me and appreciated what I was doing, said, 'You are the moral spokesman for Alabama.' So it went from that."

ALCAP began its work in 1937 as an interdenominational program called the Alabama Temperance Alliance, which was organized to stop the growing legalization of alcohol sales across the state at that time. Over time its name was changed to the Alabama Council on Alcohol Problems, and as more moral and social concerns became prevalent the name was changed to ALCAP.

Through the years the ministry began sponsoring weekly prayer breakfasts during legislative sessions. These events have grown over the past 31 years from five or six attendees to more than 80 attendees from every branch of government, at times including legislators, judges, lieutenant governors and even the governor.

Now, Ireland and current executive director Joe Godfrey send out prayer sheets to elected officials and invite local legislators when they visit churches across the state informing resi-

*"I want people to see ALCAP and American Character Builders as resources to help them make a difference in their own communities for Christ."*

**Joe Godfrey, executive director  
Alabama Citizens Action Program**



dents of various moral issues facing Alabama. Ireland said he was asked twice to serve as the Legislature's honorary chaplain and he is often consulted when moral issues are addressed in proposed legislation.

"We are a voice for all of the faith communities in Alabama based on the Word of God," he said.

Ireland noted that the changing times have affected ALCAP's ministry, but the ministry to promote the moral issues pointed out in the Word of God is unchanging.

"I think people are more tolerant of their views of certain drug issues than they ever have been," he said. "The Bible says we are to abstain from any appearance of evil. ... I am of the old school that sin is wrong and what was sin then is sin today concerning the things that we are to abstain from. Those

things which are destroying lives, wrecking marriages, destroying families and sending people to early graves are moral issues that must be addressed, and the faith community is the only community that is dedicated to the preaching and teaching of the Bible and the preservation of life, marriage, parenthood and childhood. We'll go by the Word of God in standing for these things."

Also under the ALCAP umbrella is the American Character Builders program, which provides awareness of alcohol and drug

abuse, bullying and other character development studies in hundreds of Alabama schools. This involvement helps to achieve ALCAP's purpose to protect children "from the dangers associated with immoral behaviors and the temptations they face in life" through "education, legislation and consultation."

"We began to expand our area of focus beyond just alcohol to include other addictive drugs, behavior and character in general," Godfrey said. "Evidence is piling up that bullying and substance abuse or use are intrinsically tied to one another. ... The culture has dramatically shifted in that alcohol has become more and more acceptable and now we are beginning to see the acceptance of other drugs nationwide. It is beginning to affect our culture by destroying lives and breaking up families. That's why ALCAP and American Character Builders are more needed than ever before."

Through the years ALCAP has remained an interdenominational ministry effort with board members currently from Nazarene, Free Will Baptist, Southern Baptist, United Methodist, Wesleyan, Presbyterian, National Baptist and Assembly of God churches.

### Ministry funding

Funding for the ministry comes from all these denominations and from individuals and churches.

"We receive a small amount of our funding through the Cooperative Program (CP) and we are very grateful for that, but it is not enough to keep the ministry alive," Godfrey

said, noting that CP gifts account for about 15 percent of ALCAP's income.

The remaining 85 percent comes from donations given by churches and a few individuals, he said.

"We need for Alabama Baptist church leaders to see ALCAP and American Character Builders as ministries and missions opportunities to the Alabama Legislature and to the schools of Alabama. As a result of that understanding, we need for the churches to provide for this important ministry in their annual budgets and/or collect a special offering each year," he added.

Part of Godfrey's responsibilities includes fundraising and raising awareness of the ministry, and he shares every chance he gets because he considers it a privilege to be a part of this ministry.

"I felt a definite call to this ministry five and a half years ago and I am more committed to the mission of this ministry than ever before," he said. "There are other ministries that pick up the pieces of broken lives, but ALCAP and American Character Builders are on the front end trying to head off these destructive behaviors before they take root in people's lives. I am humbled by the trust that the churches of Alabama have put in me. I feel like I am in the center of God's will for my life and I am excited about accomplishing His plan and purpose for my life and ministry."

### Get involved

In the future, Godfrey hopes churches will become more involved with this ministry.

"I want people to see ALCAP and American Character Builders as resources to help them make a difference in their own communities for Christ," he said. "During the legislative session, we send out email alerts and keep the website updated about the status of important bills. For issues related to students and schools, American Character Builders kits help educate students, parents and teachers about the dangers of addictive behaviors and bullying. They can head it off before it becomes a problem if they will take advantage of the resources we have available."

For more information on ALCAP, call 205-985-9062 or visit [www.alcap.com](http://www.alcap.com). To find out more about American Character Builders, call 205-985-9529 or visit [www.american-characterbuilders.org](http://www.american-characterbuilders.org). ☛

**ALCAP  
Sunday  
is  
Nov. 11.**

## Sen. Gerald Allen, R-Tuscaloosa

One of the things that's so important for any legislator is to have someone [they] can always turn to if they have a question about certain issues. With ALCAP, anytime there is a question concerning moral issues, it is always good to know that we have someone there. That is one thing that I can say about ALCAP and Bro. Dan and Bro. Joe and the board members. They've always been very visible during session. You don't have to wonder where they are. They've always been available and present and straightforward on issues that matter to the families of Alabama and that's one thing I appreciate. ... It's a great advocate for the citizens of Alabama to know that we have someone like ALCAP in Montgomery. They are very faithful to the task."



## Sen. Roger Bedford, D-Russellville

I appreciate Bro. Dan's leadership over these many decades helping inform the Legislature about the church's views on different pieces of legislation that come before us. I have always found them very informative and truthful. I also enjoy Mrs. Polly's cookies that she makes for the ALCAP reception. They are legendary. I think Bro. Joe is carrying on Bro. Dan's tradition, and I think they play an important role in helping to keep Alabama's moral compass pointed in the right direction.



## Sen. Jabo Waggoner, R-Vestavia Hills

I've known Bro. Dan for years and years. In fact he went to my local high school six or seven years before me ... . Everybody in Montgomery respects Bro. Dan whether you vote with him or not. Whether you are a Democrat or a Republican, you respect Bro. Dan because of the way he has handled himself over the years. I shudder to think where we would be in this state if it was not for Bro. Dan Ireland. He has been the moral conscience of the state Legislature. He does not win every battle on every issue on every vote, but he has a real good batting average on moral-type issues ... and Joe Godfrey will be the same way. He is very well respected and he's got big shoes to fill, but Joe handles himself very well.



## Rep. DuWayne Bridges, R-Valley

I have served 13 years in the House of Representatives, and ALCAP has stood at the forefront fighting for families and for Christian principles unlike any organization that is out there in Alabama. ALCAP has kept the legislators informed about issues that would affect the families and churches in this state. They — especially Dan Ireland and Bro. Joe — have both been in the battle. I've seen them late at night when we were in the battle trying to protect the families and protect the Christian principles that Alabama is so strong on. Without them fighting the attacks on families and Christian principles, I shudder to think of where Alabama would be today. ... They have also been so supportive of the legislators. They have also been there to console legislators who have lost family members. ... I thank God every day for them and for what they mean to the state of Alabama. ... I would love to see increased funding across the state to support their efforts and hold up their arms. They need the help financially and spiritually. They need the people to come to their aid.



## Sen. Marc Keahey, D-Grove Hill

My experiences in dealing with Joe and Bro. Dan have been extremely pleasant and supportive. What I appreciate most about ALCAP is that they don't see party affiliations when they converse with legislators. I think that is a testament of the work that they do and the mission that their work supports. That's contrary to how many other nonprofits in this day and time are perceived by someone in my shoes. My wife, Laura, and I always receive a birthday card from Joe with a Bible verse in it each year and that's something that I've appreciated. It's always something that relates to me as a legislator and politician. It's helpful. I appreciate what they do. They reach out to every legislator the same regardless of race, color, wealth or region of the state that they may represent, and I think that's what we are all called to do.



## Rep. Richard Laird, D-Roanoke

My association with ALCAP and Dan Ireland ... the last 34 years dealing with Dan. He is known as the moral compass of the Alabama Legislature and ALCAP has taken on that mantle. Joe is trying to fill Dan's shoes and he's doing a pretty good job of growing into them. I don't know what kind of shape this state would be in if it had not been for ALCAP. I can't say enough nice things about ALCAP and the Baptist associations and convention that support them. We really appreciate them.



## Shelby Association church plants

Ever since 2005, Shelby Association has been “gaining momentum” with church plants, said Bob Brown, church planting strategist for the association.

“We aim to start two to three new churches a year,” Brown said.

In the last seven years, Shelby Association has helped start:

▶ **The Church at Chelsea Westover**  
Meets at Servpro on Highway 280  
(See story, page 1)

▶ **New Life Community Church, Calera**  
Meets at Calera Middle School

▶ **Celebration Church, Hoover**  
Meets at the Rave Theater in Patton Creek Shopping Center

▶ **Mountainview Church, Chelsea**  
Meets in a building formerly belonging to another church

▶ **Fellowship Church, Alabaster**  
Meets at Thompson Middle School

▶ **CrossWay Baptist Fellowship, Pelham**  
Meets in Pelham YMCA Children’s Gym

▶ **North Shelby Vietnamese Baptist Church, Birmingham**  
Meets at North Shelby Baptist Church

▶ **Double Oak Community Church, Birmingham**  
Meets in newly constructed building in Mount Laurel

▶ **Chelsea Village Baptist Church, Chelsea**  
Started meeting in a dance studio, now meets in units near an outdoor store

▶ **Mountain Valley Baptist Church, Montevallo**  
Now a satellite campus of Westwood Baptist Church, Alabaster  
Meets in Parnell Memorial Library

▶ **Clearwater Community Church, Hoover**  
Meets in a building formerly belonging to another church

▶ **Seven Springs Baptist Church, Calera**  
Meets at a former karate dojo

Source: Shelby Association

## ‘Big missions field’ Shelby Association helps train church planters

(continued from page 1)  
churches have places to meet without having a lot of overhead, they can put the funds they have toward helping people and serving the community.”

Bob Brown, church planting strategist for Shelby Association, said not having a mortgage also frees up money to “multiply the Kingdom” by hiring interns to help lead the new church plant.

“Those interns can then learn how to start more churches,” he said.

“It’s a blessing that comes from using a building already owned by a business, a business that

opens its doors to bless others.”

Meeting at a neutral location can also make people feel more comfortable giving church a try, Lovett said.

### Reaching the community

“We want to do our best to reach the people around us,” he said. “There are 15,000 people in a seven- or eight-mile radius around us, and statistics say that roughly 80 percent of those are not in church. I’d say that’s a pretty big missions field.”

Lovett said the church planting class offered by Shelby Association helped him and others draw

up a vision statement for Chelsea Westover and begin to flesh out its purpose at Servpro.

“It was phenomenal,” he said. “This is pioneer country for us. We are learning as we go, and it was great having a solid place to start.”

Brown and others travel all over the state helping churches and associations train church planters. To learn more about church planting or to schedule a class, email Brown at [bbrown0109@aol.com](mailto:bbrown0109@aol.com) or call him at 205-602-7218.

For more information about the Church at Chelsea Westover, visit [thechurchatcw.com](http://thechurchatcw.com). ☛

## Illegal machines, cash seized at Southern Star

More than 350 machines were seized from Southern Star Entertainment Center in White Hall after a search warrant was served Nov. 2. The machines, along with an undisclosed amount of cash, will be held as evidence and will be subject to a forfeiture procedure in the Circuit Court of Lowndes County, according to a press release from Attorney General Luther Strange.

The search warrant, issued in response to illegal gambling operations, was served by law enforcement agents from the attorney general’s office and the Alabama Department of Public Safety. The Lowndes County

sheriff also provided security for the execution of the search warrant.

“Today’s actions are the culmination of an investigative process over the last several months,” Strange said Nov. 2. “From my first day in office I have worked to ensure that illegal gambling laws are enforced consistently across the state.”

Southern Star Entertainment recently re-opened in August with so-called “electronic bingo” machines that state law enforcement agents determined were illegal. Southern Star Entertainment had shut its doors again in September. “Until the Alabama Legislature

acts to create an effective deterrent for large-scale illegal gambling, individuals will continue to engage in illegal gambling activity and openly defy the law,” Strange said.

“Law enforcement will continue to be forced to expend valuable resources to deal with the statewide problem, as we have recently seen in Walker County and Etowah County. The Legislature must change that weakness in our law and create a badly needed deterrent for large-scale illegal gambling by increasing the penalty for operating an illegal slot machine casino to a felony,” Strange concluded. (TAB)

## in Loving Memory

of Alabama Baptist leaders

### Frederick Hurst Anderton

#### Former Alabama pastor, missionary Anderton dies

A servant in ministry for more than 50 years, Frederick Hurst Anderton passed away Oct. 25. He was 82.

Born in Sheffield, Anderton and his wife, Mollie Ellen, married in 1950. The next year Anderton graduated from Howard College in Birmingham (now Samford University). He began to serve as pastor to one “half time” church and two “quarter time” churches in 1952 while teaching math at Ider High School. Anderton later earned a master of divinity degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., in 1955.

He served churches in Indiana and Kentucky from 1953 to 1958 and then returned to Alabama to serve as pastor of Mount Carmel Baptist Church, Gadsden, 1958–1961 and Eutaw Baptist Church, 1961–1964.

Anderton and Mollie Ellen were appointed Foreign Mission Board (now International Mission Board) missionaries in 1964 and served in Italy until 1979. Anderton earned a language, literature and Italian history degree from the University for Foreigners in Perugia, Italy, in 1965.

After returning from the missions field, Anderton served as pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Hokes Bluff, 1979–1986; director of missions for Friendship Baptist Association, 1986–1996; and pastor of Village Springs Baptist Church, ReMAP, 1996–2003, when he retired.

Anderton and Mollie Ellen returned to Italy twice, took one missions trip to Germany and traveled to Azerbaijan during their retirement.

Anderton was a member of First Baptist Church, Oneonta, at the time of his death.

He is survived by his wife, five children and 15 grandchildren. (Neisha Fuson)

### Ray H. Batemon

#### Former Alabama pastor Batemon dies at 79

Retired Alabama Pastor Ray H. Batemon died Sept. 14. He was 79.

Batemon was born in Pleasant Grove on July 5, 1933.

He became a Christian at a revival service at Harmony Baptist Church (now First Baptist Church, Pleasant Grove) and felt called to preach at a young age — he preached his first sermon in high school.

Batemon received a bachelor of arts degree from Mississippi College in 1956 and a master of divinity from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., in 1961. He served as pastor of churches in Kentucky and Florida before serving as pastor of Rainbow City Baptist Church in Alabama.

While in ministry Batemon was heavily involved in disaster relief work. He was part of the initial team that crossed Alabama teaching chain saw skills and safety to disaster relief volunteers.

After his retirement Batemon served as interim pastor for 34 churches. He was a member of Twelfth Street Baptist Church, Gadsden, at the time of his death.

Batemon is survived by his wife of 53 years, Beverly; three children; and three grandchildren. (Joseph Rhea)



ANDERTON



BATEMON

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BP photo

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers prepare a meal for victims of 'post-tropical' cyclone Sandy at the North Carolina Baptist convention's feeding kitchen on the campus of Rutgers University.

# A time of need

## Alabama Baptists deploy to Northeast in response to devastating superstorm

(continued from page 1)

by Nov. 5. During the height of SBDR response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005, volunteers prepared 425,000 meals per day.

It is expected that Alabama's feeding unit will provide between 20,000 and 25,000 meals a day for victims and volunteers. Of the 80 Alabama Baptists set to go to New York, 50 were to work in the feeding unit. The others were set to serve in assessment, chain saw and cleanup, mud out, shower, laundry, child care and chaplaincy.

"When Alabama was devastated by tornadoes last year, teams from a dozen states came to our aid," said Mel Johnson, Alabama Baptist disaster relief strategist. "Likewise we want to be there for our neighbors in the Northeast in their time of greatest need."

With winds spanning 1,100 miles, Sandy was the largest Atlantic hurricane on record before it made landfall. Nearly 90 people have been confirmed dead as a result of the storm, which slammed into New Jersey on Oct. 29 after making landfall in parts of the Caribbean.

In eastern Cuba, 11 people were killed when Hurricane Sandy hit on Oct. 25. The storm devastated the city of Santiago, affecting nearly 70 percent of the area, news reports

said. The storm destroyed 15,000 homes and damaged some 115,000 others. Many of the 150 churches and 200 house churches affiliated with the Baptist Convention of Eastern Cuba were damaged; some were destroyed. The convention's seminary and home for the elderly sustained damage.

Cuban Baptists began working to meet needs as soon as the storm subsided, according to the International Mission Board.

In the northeast United States, the number of people who remain unaccounted for is unknown. Tensions were rising Nov. 1 as electricity remained off for nearly 5 million customers and access to basic necessities grew more difficult.

On Nov. 1, SBDR volunteers from Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina and South Carolina were serving in New York and New Jersey, along with volunteers from the affected states. SBDR volunteers from those states and the Baptist General Convention of Virginia, Maryland-Delaware, New England, Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia and West Virginia were preparing up to 150,000 meals and were working with chain saw and recovery units.

To stay up-to-date on the work of Alabama Baptist disaster relief volunteers in the Northeast and to donate funds to the effort, visit [www.SBDR.org/sandy](http://www.SBDR.org/sandy). (SBOM, BP)



BP photo

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers from North Carolina, in response to the storm, work into the night setting up the state Baptist convention's feeding unit on the campus of Rutgers University.

## New Orleans Seminary to open extension center in northeast Alabama

By **Sondra Washington**  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS) will soon expand its outreach to northeast Alabama with a new accredited certificate extension center in Crossville.

Beginning Jan. 22, Union Grove Baptist Church in DeKalb Baptist Association will offer certificates in biblical teaching and pastoral ministry as a first step toward one day offering a full extension center with bachelor's and master's degree programs.

Zach Richards, director of the new center and pastor of Union Grove Baptist, says he began looking into this type of program after several men in his church "surrendered to the call of ministry."

"I was convicted over the need to do more to help these guys prepare for ministry," Richards said. "I was blessed with being able to go to seminary, but I was also blessed to be mentored by a good pastor. There is nothing like having the hands-on opportunities and the theological training at the same time. That's really what I wanted to offer. I want to give these guys some

basic tools to help them to make their transition as smoothly as possible and bear the most fruit for whatever church God calls them to and also for the kingdom of God."

Richards believes the convenience of the program makes it a great opportunity for bivocational ministers, but says the program is open to anyone regardless of his or her educational background.

### Opportunity to grow

"The beauty of this is that it is not just for pastors and preachers," he said. "It is for anyone who would like to grow deeper in their understanding of God. If there are lay preachers or Sunday School teachers who would like to go deeper in the Word and get some college credit for it, this is the perfect program."

Rick Lance, executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, said Richards is passionate about this ministry and is doing an outstanding job of making it a reality.

"This may be a trend for the future in theological education for pastors and other church leaders," Lance said. "I am very

supportive of Zach Richards and his innovative ideas about helping people with theological education in a church based fashion. I pray it will be an effective tool to train leaders for the future."

Crossville classes will be held every Tuesday, 6-8 p.m., with two classes each costing \$100 plus books offered per semester. There is also a one-time \$25 application fee; however, the first 20 to commit to the program will receive a scholarship covering half the price of their first class. Up to 16 hours may be transferred toward a bachelor's degree at Leavell College at NOBTS.

According to Richards, the biblical teaching certificate will focus on digging deeper into the Word of God and will include classes such as the life of Christ, the life and letters of Paul, the early church and both Old and New Testament book studies. The pastoral ministry certificate will cover many issues pastors will face in their ministry including homiletics, evangelism, discipling church members and Baptist doctrine.

"I want to see God glorified," he said. "I

want to see men and women of God who are serving their churches faithfully have an opportunity follow God's call on their lives and pursue theological education. I want to see the churches benefit by the quality of ministers that I have seen New Orleans produce. It's a win-win for everybody. It's a win for ministers and lay people and a win for the church as well because they are going to be getting people serving in their churches who are better equipped for the ministry and service that God is calling them to."

### Other locations

Similar NOBTS extension centers are located at Heritage Baptist Church, Montgomery, and at First Baptist Church, Athens. A full extension center is located in Birmingham at The Church at Brook Hills.

Currently, the Crossville extension center needs teachers with at least a master's degree from an accredited seminary. For more information on classes, scholarships or teaching opportunities, contact Zach Richards at 256-706-2478 or [br.zrichards@gmail.com](mailto:br.zrichards@gmail.com).



Photo courtesy of Dennis Smith

People gather for prayer during the invitation at the West Jefferson Horse Whisperer event Oct. 7.

# God... showed up

Julie Payne  
The Alabama Baptist

## West Jefferson Horse Whisperer event brings area churches together, unites community

A few weeks have passed since the West Jefferson Horse Whisperer event Oct. 7, but people in the community are still talking. In fact, while he was changing his church's outdoor sign recently about 10 different people spotted Dennis Smith, pastor of Snowtown Baptist Church, Dora, and stopped their cars to get out and talk to him about it. "That's how excited folks were — they were excited about what happened," he said.

Four and a half years ago Smith was called to be the pastor of Snowtown Baptist in Mud Creek Baptist Association. It was not long before he realized the community was "splintered" because the 11 area churches representing five denominations did not associate with each other, he said.

Burdened about this division, Smith turned his concerns over to God and was inspired to bring the area churches together. He consulted with Doug O'Brien, interim pastor of West Jefferson Baptist Church, Quinton. "He (O'Brien) gave me the guidance" on how to go about it, Smith said. What resulted was a Thanksgiving dinner for the churches held in 2011 at the former West Jefferson High School, a renovated building that is now used as an event center.

Other events to bring the community together followed, and Oct. 7 marked a significant milestone when massive crowds flocked to the West Jefferson Horse Whisperer event that area churches helped to organize.

### Coming together

Smith and O'Brien began planning for the horse whisperer event many months in advance. O'Brien contacted Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions (SBOM) office of evangelism director Sammy Gilbreath and began working to secure commitments from the churches.

The goal was to attract 2,000 unchurched people, and it required an "all hands on deck" effort from dedicated volunteers to pull it off.

According to Smith, many blessings leading up to the event occurred throughout the planning and implementation phases. Those blessings came in all forms like the 2,200 hot dogs donated by New Providence Baptist Church, Adger.

Three billboards about the event were displayed along Highway 78, banners were donated and approximately 2,000 flyers were distributed. "The word started really

getting around [about the event]," Smith noted. In all 11 churches — many located within the community and even some from outside of the area — contributed their assistance.

And while a unified spirit among area churches had already begun to develop before the horse whisperer event, resulting in what is now known as the West Jefferson Alliance, this event marked the first evangelistic effort among the churches, O'Brien explained.

The free event was held at the former West Jefferson High School stadium, where volunteers worked diligently beforehand to pressure wash and prepare the stadium. As a crew put up the corral and teams made final preparations, Smith found himself a bit overwhelmed with emotion. "I got teary-eyed when I saw everything," he remarked.

The gates were slated to open by 4 p.m., but people of all ages began arriving early and in droves. By 4 p.m. all the bleachers were filled, Smith said. By 5 p.m. many more had secured places to sit on the stadium lawns for their opportunity to watch the horse whisperer in action.

That horse whisperer was 21-year-old Chance Hill, who heads up SPURS (Submit, Peace, Understanding, Respect and Serve) Ministries.

In a two-hour period Hill gently worked with an untrained horse and related the horse's struggle to man and man's relationship with God. For instance, when the horse demonstrated stubbornness, Hill used parallels to share about man's nature.

Smith explained that in order for Hill to receive the horse's trust, the horse had to realize Hill was going to help him.

At the end of the event Hill placed the saddle on the horse and began riding around the corral. "They (the au-

dience) were completely awed," Smith said.

Following Hill's demonstration, Gilbreath offered a gospel invitation to the crowd that reached somewhere between 2,000 and 3,000 attendees. "People came pouring out of [the] stands," Smith said. The corral was "packed with people wanting prayer, wanting to receive Christ, wanting to rededicate [their lives]," he recalled. "I couldn't believe everything I saw down there."

Volunteers collected information from about 50 people that day and it is estimated between 60 and 80 people came forward with decisions, Smith said.

"I was surprised, I really was," O'Brien said of the number in attendance Oct. 7. "I thought 700-800 would be the best we would ... get."

He added that the event was "great for the area" and that "God really showed up."

Smith said for those interested in planning an evangelistic event, one thing is certain. "The number one thing [is] you've got to bathe it in prayer," he noted.

A prayer committee for the West Jefferson Horse Whisperer event was in place and pastors opened their sermons with prayer for the event three months ahead of time, he said.

"It takes a lot of coordination with a lot of people," he added. "No one has given more support than the evangelism office at [SBOM]."

When Smith first shared his heart to see the different denominations in the area come together under the umbrella of Jesus Christ, there were people who told him there were too many differences and it could not be done.

"Never say 'can't,'" he concluded. "God is a God of 'can.'"

For more information about events like this, contact Gilbreath at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 320. ☞



Photo courtesy of Erica Daniel

Chance Hill works with a horse at an earlier horse whisperer event.

## Thank you, Alabama Baptists

*This will be the last letter I write to you while serving as president of the Alabama Baptist State Convention. It has been an honor, privilege and joy to serve as your president.*

*We will meet Nov. 13 and 14 at Vaughn Forest Baptist Church, Montgomery. The theme for this year's convention is "FutureFocus." We will do God's business God's way and everything will be done "decently and in order."*

*On Tuesday night we will meet for worship with a great mass choir and hear a message from Phil Waldrep, one of God's anointed evangelists. My president's message Tuesday morning will be "The Debts We Never Can Pay" from Romans 1:14-17. We will elect officers on Wednesday morning and hear a powerful message from Lawrence Phipps, the dynamic pastor at Vaughn Forest.*

*It has been a delight to get to know all of the people who serve the Lord as our state missionaries, entity board members and staff and faculty members and employees.*

*We are wonderfully led in Alabama by the greatest state convention executive director, Rick Lance, and his entire staff. My job as president has been blessed with the assistance of Bobby DuBois, Mary Sue Bennett and Debbie Oliver, who are all dedicated and tireless workers for our Lord and His Kingdom.*

*The members and staff at First Baptist, Pelham, have helped me tremendously and I would never have been able to serve as president without them. Pat MacKay has helped keep me on track and on target, and I appreciate her going above and beyond the call of duty as my ministry assistant.*

*My vice presidents, John Killian and Travis Coleman, have made themselves available and have been effective leaders these last two years.*

*My lovely and precious wife, Mary, has been a gracious and Christlike first lady, and she is glad (I think) to have her husband be able to stay home more after Nov. 14.*

*Thank you, thank you, thank you for the last two years. I will be an advocate for Christ, for Alabama Baptists and for the Cooperative Program the rest of my life. I love you, I love you, I love you.*

**Mike Shaw**

# 'Servant leadership'

## Shaw sees struggles, storms, service during years as convention president

By **Carrie Brown McWhorter**  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

**W**hen Mike Shaw reflects on his two years as president of the Alabama Baptist State Convention (ABSC), three words sum up his observations: struggles, storms and service.

Shaw began the first of his two one-year terms as the country was still reeling from the U.S. economic crisis. From the members in the pews of local churches to the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions (SBOM), Alabama Baptists faced lingering financial uncertainty.

"We were struggling with some of the worst economic times since the Great Depression," Shaw said. "In the past, every year's budget was bigger than the year before and we could give everyone what they needed. But with the economic slide, the budget had to come down."

### Following Christ

Then the storms of 2011 hit, and disaster relief teams in the state were called into action like never before. At every level of state Baptist life, people got involved and demonstrated what it truly means to follow Christ, Shaw said.

"We are never more like Jesus than when we are serving, and I believe Alabama Baptists have learned what it truly means to be a servant through the trials of the last two years," Shaw said.

According to SBOM Executive Director Rick Lance, Shaw's own history of "servant leadership" at First Baptist Church, Pelham, and his work in state and national Baptist

life over the last 30 years prepared him for leading Alabama Baptists through the challenges of the last two years. Lance described Shaw as "gifted with a keen intellect, a warm heart and a kind spirit," adding that Shaw "epitomizes the very best in Alabama Baptist life."

Lance also praised Shaw's "dedication to the ministry of the local church and to missions in Alabama and around the world," which Shaw has sought to keep at the forefront of Alabama Baptist efforts during his time as president.

Shaw commends Alabama Baptists for maintaining their focus on the Great Commission. He sees the Great Commission Ministries FutureFocus Task Force report (see pages 8-9 of the Nov. 1 issue of *The Alabama Baptist*) as proof of a shared commitment at all levels of Alabama Baptist life to spreading the gospel across the state and throughout the world.

"A lot of people have put a lot of time and prayer into this report," Shaw said. "It represents a good plan that won't require us to make dire cuts in order to reach Alabama and the world for Christ."

While Shaw does not question the need to go into the world for Christ, he does want to see Alabama Baptist churches reach their communities with the gospel.

"Jesus said, 'You will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' People in Alabama are dying without Christ, and we need to consider what we are doing to reach them," Shaw said.

Recently, Shaw was sidelined by emergency eye surgery to repair a detached retina. As part of his recovery, he had to keep his head down, chin to chest, in a position of prayer. Though his physical limitations were very frustrating at first, Shaw said his recuperation



Photo courtesy of The Birmingham News/Bernard Troncale

**Mike Shaw**

has given him an unusual opportunity to pray at a critical point in the life of our state and nation.

"I've spent a lot of time praying for the election, for my convention message, for my church and for all our churches," Shaw said.

"This has been the worst 10 days of vision I've had in my life," he said. "But I've been reminded that through prayer, God grants us a spiritual vision. In the midst of our busy lives, we all have to ask ourselves, 'Have I applied all the prayer to this situation I need to?'"

### Intentional efforts

Shaw wants pastors and leaders throughout the state to make intentional efforts to share Christ in their communities. In his convention sermon, Shaw will challenge Alabama Baptist pastors to prayerfully seek a vision for their communities that "reaches people, teaches people and disciples people."

"In the Great Commission, Jesus told us to 'go and make disciples.' We are good at preaching the gospel, but we also must help converts grow as disciples of Christ. It's not 'either-or' — it's both," Shaw said.

As he completes his service as ABSC president, Shaw is looking forward to directing his focus back to his pastoral duties at First, Pelham, and to his newly elected position as a member of the board of trustees at his alma mater, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. However, he said he will be more supportive of Baptist work as a former state convention president than as president.

"I can honestly say that our Baptist entities don't vie with each other. They work with each other and share with each other, and I will take every opportunity I get to talk about how the Cooperative Program benefits Baptist life and the work of reaching the lost with the gospel of Jesus Christ," Shaw said. ■

## Two nominees for convention officers withdraw from race

**R**oy Hill, pastor of FBC Summa, and Dusty McLemore, pastor of Lindsay Lane Baptist Church, Athens, have withdrawn their names from the upcoming Alabama Baptist State Convention officers' race.

Hill had agreed to be nominated for president and McLemore for second vice president.

"My desire is to see those of us who make up this state convention work together to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ," Hill said. "I encourage all Alabama Baptists to join me in taking this time to pray for and support John Killian."

Killian, pastor of Maytown Bap-

tist Church and current first vice president of the convention, is the remaining announced nominee for president.

Being nominated for second vice president are Jim Cooley, pastor of FBC Haleyville, and Lawrence Phipps, pastor of Vaughn Forest Baptist Church, Montgomery.

"Lawrence Phipps and Jim Cooley ... are both good friends of mine," McLemore said. "Now is not a good time to have three of us in the election.

"I also have a lot going on with my church, and I felt God speaking to my heart to wait," he noted.

(TAB)

Get live updates from the Alabama Baptist Pastors Conference on Nov. 12 and the Alabama Baptist State Convention annual meeting Nov. 13-14.

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# Search your soul, face God in hardships

We had not planned on meeting there. It was all coincidence. I had to smile to myself as he drove up and parked the car. He got out and came to stand behind me. I did not say hello or anything, and neither did he.

After a few minutes of standing there silently he said, "Jean, you cannot allow your anger and pain to cause you to run away from who God has made you to be. Have the courage to turn around and face God. Deal honestly with God because loving God is the most important thing you will ever do."

A couple years after her death, my father and I were standing at the cemetery where my mother was buried.

These were the words my fa-

*A Thought  
for Women*

By Jean Roberson  
jroberson@wmu.org



ther spoke to me that day, and I do not know if he has ever said anything more important to me. I thank God for that moment, and I thank God for his honesty.

If you and I were sitting together over coffee, this is the moment when I would sigh, look you in the eye and say that so many things in life can cause us to run

away from who God has created us to be.

It certainly can be sickness and death, but it can also be broken relationships, hurt feelings, bitter disappointment and deep fatigue. We all have something: something that sits in our soul and pulls us away from honesty before God and deeper into ourselves. And for some reason, running always seems easier than facing the aftermath of hardship.

Can you relate?

But when we allow disappointment and pain to be our guide in life, how is that better? What kind of person do I become? How does that bring peace? Eventually it just makes me tired.

Though dealing honestly with our feelings before God can be so very painful, it is the correct path. We know that with our minds, but we often fail to embrace that with our hearts.

As my father said, it is the most

important thing we ever do. It defines who you are.

Though this is not new to you, can I take this moment to remind us and ground us in the truth?

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matt. 11:28-29).

*A Takeaway Value . . .*

Search your soul, and come honestly to face God.

**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.

## Terrorism added to list of charges for FRC shooter

A federal grand jury added terrorism to the list of charges faced by the Virginia man who was indicted in the shooting of a security guard at the conservative Family Research Council's (FRC) Washington offices.

Floyd Lee Corkins II, 28, of Herndon, Va., was arrested Aug. 15, shortly after police say he opened fire in the lobby of the FRC's downtown headquarters, injuring an unarmed security guard.

Before he opened fire, Corkins reportedly was carrying a bag of Chick-fil-A sandwiches and told security guard Leo Johnson he disagreed with the FRC's politics; the

FRC had supported the fast-food chain's donations to groups that oppose same-sex "marriage."

The U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia said Oct. 24 that a federal grand jury added six District of Columbia charges, including attempted murder while armed; aggravated assault while armed; second-degree burglary while armed; and three counts of possession of a firearm during a crime of violence.

Corkins is the first defendant to be charged with committing an act of terror under the District of Columbia's 2002 Anti-Terrorism Act, a charge that carries up to 30 years in prison. (RNS)

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**YOUTH PASTOR:** Grace Baptist Church, Oxford, Ala., has an opening for a full-time youth pastor. If interested, please contact Chris Cross at cpcross1@yahoo.com.

**STUDENT MINISTER:** Aliceville First Baptist Church in Aliceville, Ala., is searching for a minister of students. This is a full-time position. Please send resumes to: AFBC, 323 Broad Street NW, Aliceville, AL 35442, ATTN: Charlie Wilson, or to: therev11@centurytel.net.

**PART-TIME MINISTER OF YOUTH:** First Baptist Hoover is seeking a part-time leader to work with students and their families. Bible study, retreats, overall church ministry, time in schools and youth activities. Vacation Bible School, Youth recreation, etc. Contact 205-823-3472 or fbchoover@bellsouth.net.

**BIVOCATIONAL YOUTH DIRECTOR:** Mount Joy Baptist Church in Curry, Ala., is seeking a bivocational youth director to begin Jan. 1, 2013. Send resumes to: Ronnie Hays, 5640 Smith Lake Dam Road, Jasper, AL 35504.

### OTHER POSITIONS

**ASSOCIATIONAL MISSIONARY:** Baldwin Baptist Association is seeking a new associational missionary. Please submit resumes to: Baldwin Baptist Association, P.O. Box 459, Silverhill, AL 36576, or email to: bbaoffice@gulftel.com no later than Dec. 31.

**CHURCH PIANIST:** Valley View Baptist Church in Leeds, Ala., is currently seeking a pianist. This position includes playing with an accomplished praise band, worship choir and special events. Worship style is blended and includes contemporary praise and worship music, upgraded and traditional hymns, contemporary Christian music, various choral anthems and other styles of music. Please send resume to: Andrew Lewis at andrew.lewis@valleyviewbaptist.com.

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**CHURCH FURNITURE:** Two platform chairs, one pulpit, one communion table, fourteen 12-foot pews, five 9-foot pews and one 7-foot pew. Oak finish, pews padded in seat only. Friendship Baptist Church, Killen, Ala. 256-757-1373 or Rev. Joe Cook, 256-710-6972. All reasonable offers accepted.

**BAPTISTWAY PRESS \$1 SALE:** 46 books are \$1 each. Sale ends Dec. 7 or while supplies last. For more information, contact toll free 1-866-249-1799, [www.baptistwaypress.org](http://www.baptistwaypress.org), [baptistway@texasbaptists.org](mailto:baptistway@texasbaptists.org).

## Want to know God?

By Pastor Herb Thomas  
Circlewood Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa

Great and mighty is our God. In Psalm 147 the psalmist extols the mighty power of God. He is abundant in power. He heals the brokenhearted, binds up their wounds and lifts up the humble.

In Hebrews 7:25 it says, "He (Jesus) is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."

First John 1:7 says, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin." Jesus has power to save all who will come to Him. Saul was a great sinner. He hated Christ and Christians. He persecuted believers. But one day on the Damascus Road, God stopped him, convicted him of his sin and saved him (Acts 9). The chief of sinners became the chief of saints.

A man in the Bible by the name of Nicodemus was a good, religious man — but lost. He came to Jesus and asked how he could go to heaven. In John 3:7 Jesus said, "You must be born again."

How can a person be saved? First admit you are a sinner (Rom. 3:23). Your sins separate you from God. The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). Second believe in Jesus. Believe that He is the only way to God, the only way to heaven. Believe that He died for your sin and rose from the grave. Believe that He will give you eternal life if you repent of sin.

Third confess your sin to Him. Ask Him to forgive you. He will forgive you and cleanse you from all sin (Rom. 10:9-10). To delay is dangerous and it can be deadly.

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# Legacy

ALABAMA BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOMES & FAMILY MINISTRIES

NOVEMBER 2012

## Make Planned Gifts Before Year's End

By Bob Dewhurst, ABCHVP, Ministry Development

As the end of the year approaches, the giving pace picks up. This is true not only for charities and churches, but for ministries in general. Many people simply wait for the closing of the tax year – and the barrage of financial appeals – to make their major gifts.

If you fall into this category, you may want to consider the following suggestions. They might help you avoid making a “planned” gift you could live to regret.

### Hurried Gifts

With the hectic lives many of us lead, we may tend to put off certain things until “we have the time.” But then, before we know it, the calendar runs out and we’re staring at December 31. We rush to complete the year-end gift.

In our haste, we can make serious mistakes, mistakes that we may regret. A planned gift, by definition, requires planning. Gifts of real estate, stock or other non-cash assets should be made carefully and in consideration of overall estate plans.

So, if you expect to make a planned gift before the end of the year, allow plenty of time. Avoid the rush. Start now by visiting the planned giving section of our website, [www.abchlegacy.org/pg](http://www.abchlegacy.org/pg).

### Impulse Gifts

Beware of knee-jerk gift decisions. With all the crisis-related appeals we receive at the end of the year, it’s easy to get caught up in the emotion of the moment and respond with a generous gift. Were we to back off a bit and think through such a decision, we might do something entirely different. We might give less, or more, or maybe not all. But at least we would have considered our decisions carefully.

As stewards of our resources, we do well to temper our emotions with prudence and plan our giving in a way that accomplishes the greatest good for all concerned. Impulse giving may be fine for pocket change, but not for the major assets that comprise our estates.

### Tax-Informed Gifts

The opposite of a tax-informed gift is a tax-uninformed gift. The latter is a gift that fails to use the tax code to maximize our charitable giving. For example, let’s say you have \$10,000 in long-term appreciated stock and you want to make a year-end gift of \$10,000 to the charity of your choice. You could either give them the stock or sell it and give them the cash. If you sold the stock, you’d have to pay tax on the gain, thus leaving less money to give to further God’s Kingdom.

On the other hand, you could make a tax-informed gift and transfer the stock directly to the charity. By doing this, you would not have to pay taxes on the appreciation of the stock. Because charities are qualified non-profit organizations, they can sell the stock without incurring tax on the capital gains and distribute the proceeds directly to meet the charity’s needs.

As we approach the end of the year, we want your giving to be fully satisfying to you, both in what you give and how you give it. For more information, please visit the giving page on our website at [www.abchlegacy.org/pg](http://www.abchlegacy.org/pg).

## GraceGifts

### MEMORIALS

(Memorialized person’s name is bolded.)

**Dusty Andrews**, Ozark: Rusty Andrews  
**Evelyn G. Andrews**, Ozark: Rusty Andrews  
**Jewel Baugh**, Fairhope: Mr. & Mrs. T. L. Haskew, Jr.  
**Lucille Broadhead**, Trussville: Marjorie Kay Nix  
**Rob & Truitt Broadway**, Clayton: Ginger Russell  
**James Cartwright**, Georgiana: Brushy Creek BC  
**Muriel Cash**, Tuscumbia: Thomas & Peggy Sanders  
**Fredia Collins**, Pine Hill: Phyllis & Joe Hicks; Oak Grove BC  
**Willie Mae Dickson**, Gallion: Progressive SSC; Providence BC  
**Marcia Durden**, Jackson: Grace Ludeman  
**Beth Gibson**, Butler: Sarah A. Gibson  
**Jesse James Glenn**, Wetumpka: Mr. & Mrs. John H. Hogg, Jr.

**Ralph Harper**, Pine Hill: Mr. & Mrs. Joe Hicks  
**Jack Ingram**, Anniston: Pleasant Hill BC, Jemison  
**Michael Grady Martin**, Gilbertown: Mary Jo McKee  
**Ruby McCauley**, Albertville: The Ralph Patterson Family  
**James L. Parker**, Opelika: Pleasant Grove BC, Salem  
**Brice & Linda Paul**, Enterprise: Marjorie Kay Nix  
**Geraldine Roulaine**, Centreville: Centreville BC  
**Jimmy Warr**, Stevenson: Joe & Phyllis Hicks  
**Johnnie Mae Whitten**, Oxford: William D. & Jean Reynolds  
**Maxine Wilson**, Dubach, LA: Lafayette & Carolyn Peters  
**Carolyn Winsett**, Hamilton: Lela Rae Shotts  
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# Across Alabama's Associations

## BALDWIN

► **Jerry L. Buzzard** is the new pastor of **Daphne Church**. He holds a degree in business, a degree in Christian ministry from Covington Seminary in Fort Oglethorpe, Ga., and is currently attending New Orleans Seminary. He previously served as associate pastor of Hollinger's Island Church, Mobile, and youth pastor of Azalea Church, Mobile. He is married to Melissa and they have one daughter.



**BUZZARD**

## BESSEMER

► **Maytown Church** will host Gaither Homecoming recording artist Allison Speer in concert Nov. 18 during the 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. worship services. John Killian is pastor.

## BLOUNT

► **Pleasant View Church, Holly Pond**, will hold a third Sunday night singing Nov. 18, 6 p.m. with "Canaan's Crossing." For information call 256-796-5986. Randy Burtram is pastor.

## FAYETTE

► **Southside Church, Fayette**, reported that 23 decisions were made during revival Oct. 7-10. Steve Hale from Atlanta spoke. The church also reported 87 decisions were made during "The Final Decision" youth drama Oct. 28-30. Robert Parrish is pastor.

## SALEM-TROY

► **Henderson Church, Goshen**, will hold Harvest Sunday Nov. 18. Sunday School will be at 10 a.m. and the service will be at 11 a.m. Lunch will follow. Chase Clower is pastor.

## SHELBY

► **Tom Minor** has retired from the pulpit of **South Shelby**

**Church** effective Dec. 30, 2012. He has served as South Shelby's only pastor since its beginning 11 years ago. Minor will be available for supply work, interim, revivals and Bible study effective Jan. 1, 2013. He can be reached at 205-337-8474 or [minorwt@bellsouth.net](mailto:minorwt@bellsouth.net). ► **First Church, Pelham**, will host Mark Foley, president of the University of Mobile, on Nov. 11. Foley will speak in all three morning services: 8 a.m., 9:15 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. Austin Foster will sing. Mike Shaw is pastor.

## TUSKEGEE LEE

► **Liberty Church, Opelika**, will host Christian humorist/musician Brother Billy Bob Bohannon Nov. 18, 6:30 p.m. Tommy Wilson is pastor.

## WEST CULLMAN

► **Central Church, Cullman**, will hold revival Nov. 11-14, 6 p.m. Sunday and 7 p.m. Monday-Wednesday. Jerry Lake will speak. John McKoy is pastor. ☪

# Letters to the Editor

## PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church is Sunday, Nov. 11. This is something that has been recently put on my heart very heavily.

From reading the stories in your paper, to the news and on the website of One With Them, Christians in other parts of the world are not experiencing what we here in the U.S. take for granted every day. Literally they are being abused, jailed or killed for proclaiming Jesus. I can't even fathom that.

I don't think many believers are aware of how often this occurs and what a mounting crisis this is. Please share with your readers and all churches in the SBC to go to the One With Them website where you can obtain all types of information to share with the church about this upcoming day.

I ask all churches and believers to set aside an appointed time on Nov. 11 and specifically pray for these brothers and sisters in Christ. I know with so many voices, God will move in a mighty way for them. Thank you so much.

Andrea Camper  
Birmingham, Ala.

## THANKS TO LUTER

I wish to thank Dr. Fred Luter for his comments in the article "Impact Birmingham" in the Oct. 4 issue of *The Alabama Baptist*.

He said in the article, "If you want to see change, preach the gospel of Jesus Christ ... the transforming power of the gospel." His question was, "What's it go-

ing to take to change America?" "You heard, you believed and you trusted," Luter said. It (the gospel) is personal, it is powerful, it is practical. "You don't have to fix it up, dress it up or sugarcoat it. Just preach the word of God."

I am framing this front page and posting it in my house.

Marilyn Gentry  
West Blocton, Ala.

## THREE WISE MEN?

Well it's that time of the year again when we all start gearing up for the Christmas season. Our churches are already practicing for their musicals and the kids are trying to memorize their lines for the Christmas play.

In all the wonder of this time of the season how is it that the Church has let the evil one get his hand into the Christmas story?

We Southern Baptists especially pride ourselves as a people who teach and believe in the inerrancy of God's Word. We quickly rise up, and rightfully so, when error is taught — except at Christmas! Every time we have the "wise men" at the birth of Jesus we teach an error.

I have had good people get very angry with me over this — good Christian people. But when they take a moment and re-read the "Christmas" story, they usually apologize.

Read it for yourself: Luke 2: 8-16 — no house, but a stable; no wise men, only shepherds.

Now here comes the problem. What are you — especially our pastors and teachers — going to

do? Remember — the truth will set you free! So what about all the nativity scenes with all of those wise men? May I make a suggestion? Place them somewhere else in the room or across the room. Someone will certainly ask, "Where are the wise men?" or, "Why aren't the wise men at the manger?" To which you will respond with the truth. What a teaching moment that will be. Someone is bound to say — aren't you just nit-picking? This is tradition you're messing with!

Paul the apostle said, "a little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump" (1 Cor. 5:6). After all it's only a little lie — yeah right?

Tony L. Fisher  
Birmingham, Ala. ☪

## — Correction —

In the Oct. 18 editorial — "Is There a Lesson to be Learned from Our History?" — Enon Baptist Church, now First Baptist Church, Huntsville, was credited with being the oldest continuously existing Baptist church in Alabama. First, Huntsville, is the oldest church associated with the Alabama Baptist State Convention. Flint River Baptist Church, the first Baptist church founded on Alabama soil, withdrew from convention life in 1838 and became an anti-missionary primitive Baptist church and continues to function.



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— Bro. Justin Salter  
Smithville Baptist Church

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Across Alabama's Associations will not print in the Nov. 22 issue due to convention coverage.

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

# 'Coming together'

By Timothy George  
Beeson Divinity School

## Timothy George shares his experience at Catholic synod

**E**arlier this fall, from Oct. 7–28, I was privileged to participate as a fraternal delegate in the synod of bishops convened at the Vatican by Pope Benedict XVI to consider “The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith.” The word “synod” derives from two Greek words: *syn*, meaning “together,” and *hodos*, meaning “road” or “way.” It literally means a “coming together.”

For Catholics the highest form of church authority is a gathering of bishops, believed to be the successors to the apostles, under the leadership of the pope who is the bishop of Rome. To be a Catholic is to be in fellowship with a bishop who is in fellowship with the bishop of Rome. For Baptists the gathering of a local congregation of baptized, covenanted believers led by the Spirit and guided by the Bible

is the highest level of ecclesial authority.

Fifty years ago, Pope John XXIII called together all of the Catholic bishops in the world for a general church council, Vatican II. The synod of 2012 was a smaller gathering of some 300 persons including a select group of cardinals (who are charged with electing a new pope), bishops from many countries, theological experts and fraternal delegates. Representing the Baptist World Alliance, I was the only Baptist among the dozen or so fraternal delegates.

The fraternal delegates were asked to make a brief presentation to the synod, offer written comments on the proceedings and participate in small working groups that helped to draft the final documents. Given the distant and even hostile relations between Catholics and evangelicals in the past, this represents a remarkable degree of openness on

the part of the Catholic Church.

What is the “New Evangelization” and why are Catholics interested in it? “Initial evangelization” refers to the first bringing of the message of Jesus Christ to a given country or territory. “New Evangelization” speaks to the need to declare the gospel afresh in the light of present challenges. One of these is the problem of nominalism. Many people have some church affiliation but no relationship with Jesus Christ. The Pope has described the Christian faith as “a true encounter and relationship with Jesus Christ, not simply teachings, wise sayings, a code of morality or tradition.”

Secularism and relativism also are major concerns. The result is a denial of God and the loss of basic values of decency and respect for life. Through the process of globalization this spiritual virus has spread throughout the world. In addition, violent attacks against Christians have made it difficult and dangerous for missions and witness. Even during the synod we heard reports of the slaughter of Christians in Syria and of church bombings in Nigeria.

These concerns affect not only Catholics but all Christians everywhere. At the synod I spoke of our historic Baptist commitment to religious freedom. Before religious freedom is a right, it is a gift — a gift rooted in the character of God Himself and in the kind



Photo courtesy of Samford University

Timothy George, founding dean of Beeson Divinity School at Samford University in Birmingham, greets Pope Benedict XVI at the synod of bishops at the Vatican in October.

of relationship to which He calls all persons. Christians who take seriously Jesus’ call to evangelize also must stand and work together for the protection and flourishing of universal religious freedom, for individuals and institutions of faith alike.

### The Reformation

Several years ago I was asked to endorse a book by my friend, Mark Noll, called “Is the Reformation Over?” I responded by saying that the Reformation is over only to the extent that it has succeeded. In fact, in some measure, the Reformation has succeeded, and more within the Catholic Church than in certain sectors of the Protestant world. The Reformation came about when a Catholic monk, Martin Luther, troubled in his soul about salvation, began poring over the text of the Bible. When he came to Romans 1:17, “The just shall live by faith,” he realized that all his efforts to justify himself before a holy and righteous God were futile.

Amazingly Luther’s voice has entered, perhaps through the side door, into the realm of Catholic thought. In 1999, Catholic and Protestant believers were able to say: “We confess together: By grace alone, in faith and Christ’s saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works.”

One of my most vivid memories from the synod was a visit to the Basilica of St. Bartholomew, an ancient church located on an island in the Tiber River. There I was shown a beautiful painting of 20th and 21st century Christian martyrs from East and West, North

and South, Protestants and Catholics alike. I was moved to see there the likenesses of two Baptist Christians: one a humble believer imprisoned and then killed by the Communists in Romania; the other Martin Luther King Jr., a Baptist pastor from our own country.

After seeing this painting I read again the words of Jesus in John 17:20–21: “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through the Word, that they may all be one, just as You, Father, are in me, and I in You, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that You have sent me.” Jesus’ prayer to the heavenly Father leads us to an unavoidable conclusion: there is an intrinsic connection between Christian unity and the Great Commission. Christian unity is not an end in itself but is always in the service of missions and evangelism. Where our witness is fractured, our message is unpersuasive if not inaudible. As of old the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church, so now the blood of today’s martyrs is the seed of the church’s unity.

Baptists and Catholics still differ on important theological issues and we must not sweep these under the rug. But the way forward is to seek together a unity in the truth based on God’s written Word, the Holy Scriptures.

**EDITOR’S NOTE** — Timothy George is the founding dean of Beeson Divinity School at Samford University and chairs the Doctrine and Christian Unity Commission of the Baptist World Alliance. For the full text of George’s remarks at the synod of bishops, see <http://www.beesondivinity.com/fromthedeans/posts/vatican>. ☞

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# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For November 11

## Explore the Bible By Jay T. Robertson Assistant Professor of Christian Ministries, University of Mobile

### LIVING WITH TRUTH 2 Peter 1:3-4, 10-21

#### Display Your Relationship (3-4, 10-11)

Peter began his second epistle by reminding the Christians what Jesus had done for them through justification (1:1-2). Christians are declared righteous in the sight of God because of Jesus' sacrificial death for them. That is what Martin Luther called "the great exchange." When you stand before Jesus, there is only one correct answer as to your righteousness: You do not have any. But in Christ you have been declared righteous.

Peter then reminded the believers what the Holy Spirit does in them through regeneration (1:3-4). We are all sinners by nature (Ps. 51:5; Eph. 2:3), dead and blind to the Spirit and knowledge of God. God changes our hearts, our very nature. No one ever meets Jesus and stays the same.

Peter shows us four things in vv. 3-4 that accompany regeneration. First we receive a new power to flee sin and pursue righteousness. In Christ we lack nothing needed to live a godly life. Second we receive a new understanding to see what Jesus has done and who He is. You will have a hunger to know God. Third we receive a new nature. As a Christian you are not perfect or sinless, but something in you has changed. Do you wrestle with sinful desires rather than just give in to them? Fourth we receive new desires. Namely, Christians long for God Himself and His desires. You receive a passion to live a life for Christ.

Christianity has a personal, private dimension to it. Christians need to spend time with Jesus in the Word of God, pray and enjoy His presence in their lives. But Christianity also has a public, practical dimension to it. Christian, your relationship with Jesus should radically change you so that others will see Jesus in you. Christ in you transforms your mind, emotions, body, will, relationships and mission for life. That amount of Christ-produced change cannot be kept a secret.

### Defend Your Testimony (12-18)

Peter wrote to remind the believers of Christian truth they already knew. We should desire to teach in such a way that the people we teach will remember the truth long after we are gone. Christian, stop collecting knowledge of the truth and doing nothing with it. Act on the knowledge you already have. Do not just sit there. Do something for heaven's sake!

In vv. 16-18 we have the testimony concerning Jesus, God's Son. Peter wrote declaring that he was not following cleverly devised myths. He was an eyewitness of events in the life of Jesus, including the revelation of His glory at the transfiguration. We have earthly eyewitnesses of His majesty. Think about the writers of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Jude and Peter. These writers were either Jesus' apostles or a close associate of an apostle. Peter was saying, "Trust the authors of Scripture." Who will you trust?

Not only do we have earthly eyewitnesses of His majesty; we also have a heavenly exalted witness of His glory. There cannot be a better testimony than God Himself. Peter wrote that while they were on the holy mountain with Jesus they had heard the very voice of Father God declare that Jesus was His Son.

### Depend on Inspired Scripture (19-21)

We have the truth of God's Scriptures. The Bible was written by divine inspiration. The Holy Spirit breathed out the very words of God through human personalities. The Bible is accurate and true. If you want to hear from God, read the Bible. The Scripture illuminates our souls as a lamp shining in a dark place. We do well to pay attention to it.

Since Scripture was inspired by the Holy Spirit, He guides in the interpretation of Scripture. He also governed the production of Scripture. No Scripture ever originated within the heart of man. The Bible, properly interpreted in context, teaches us the truth about God, life, sin, Jesus and salvation. You can depend on the inspired Scripture. ❏

## Bible Studies for Life By David Hogg Academic Dean at Beeson Divinity School, Samford University

### DO LIFE TOGETHER Acts 4:32-35; 5:1-6; 6:1-7

#### Commit To One Another (4:32-35)

During the period of Roman rule the church was continually faced with the prospect of people who tried to join the church (or remain in the church) despite being unbelievers. But why should anyone wish to join a group that suffered persecution? The answer, in part, is that the church was often a place where people cared for each other and met one another's needs. Who wouldn't want to be part of a group where the poor never doubted the prospect of another meal or a widow found brothers and sisters who became a second family?

The picture we have in Acts 4 describes exactly this situation, but there is more here than a simple window into life in the early church. This description provides a prescription against selfishness and self-centeredness.

Here is a community of the redeemed whose daily living showed a commitment to one another that transcended economic divides and gave evidence that loving God with all of one's heart, soul and strength necessarily results in loving our neighbor as ourself. When God is our first love we do not confuse the Giver and the gift, and when we can keep those two separate we properly appreciate that what we have is not our own and what we give is not our loss.

#### Value the Relationship (5:1-6)

Now when we say that what we have is not our own, that does not mean that others have a claim on what God has given us. There is a balance to be struck here. God entrusts gifts to us, and as His servants it is our responsibility to make sure that what has been entrusted to us is cared for appropriately.

Just as it would be wrong for me to withhold food I can afford to give to a brother who cannot feed himself, so it would be wrong for that same brother to saunter into my house and raid my cupboards in the

name of helping me be a good steward of what I possess. The responsibility of right stewardship before God rests with the giver, not the receiver.

This is what we see in Acts 5. Ananias owned some property. It was his to do with as he pleased. He did not have to sell it. He did not have to give all the money to the church.

No one was responsible for that piece of property but he and his wife. The Bible does not tell us exactly why Ananias lied about his giving, but it is crystal clear that God takes sin very seriously and judgment, even if not final condemnation, will fall on those who willfully and knowingly seek to deceive the Holy Spirit.

Let us be wise with what we have been given and careful to act with integrity with respect to our resources before both God and others.

#### Raise Up Servant Leaders (6:1-7)

In Acts 6 we move from a focus on the people in the congregation to the leaders of the congregation. It appears that as the church expanded numerically, the opportunity for problems expanded with them. The apostles needed to make sure that the widows throughout the church were being treated equitably, but such a task would have distracted them from their primary responsibility of preaching and prayer. Who could lead this important ministry?

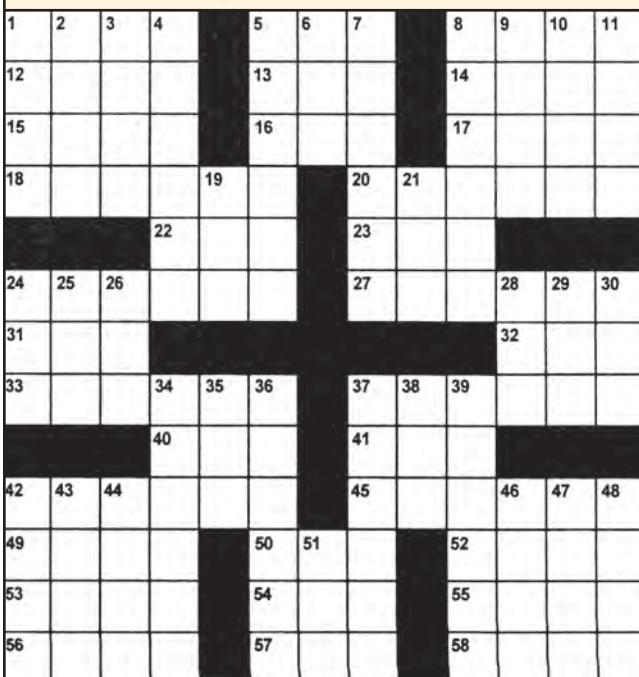
It is striking that the apostles did not instruct the church to choose the most practically minded or those with experience or those with a long-standing history of membership in the church. Instead what mattered most for those who would oversee serving tables and dividing rations to the poor was that they were filled with the Holy Spirit and wisdom.

What matters more than what we can do is who we are.

The Lord's words to Samuel when he was instructed to anoint Saul's successor remain true for the church: that God does not look at the outward appearance but the heart. ❏

## Christian Crossword

By Janet W. Adkins Copyright 1994 ©Barbour Publishing Inc.



### Across

1. \_\_\_-a-brac.
5. Type of lettuce.
8. Canadian Indian tribe.
12. Sons of Benjamin ... Ehi and \_\_\_\_\_. (Gen. 46:21)
13. Mouth.
14. \_\_\_ avis; rarity.
15. Vapor. (prefix)
16. Prominent sea. (abbr.)
17. Company that tries harder.
18. The \_\_\_ of the righteous is only good. (Prov. 11:23)
20. And mine hand shall be upon the prophets ... that \_\_\_ lies. (Ezek. 13:9)
22. West Coast state. (abbr.)
23. Greek letter.
24. \_\_\_ of errors.
27. That ye might be partakers of the divine \_\_\_\_\_. (2 Pet. 1:4)
31. Onassis.
32. Uncooked.
33. Orthodontist's product.
37. Death, and mourning, and \_\_\_\_\_. (Rev. 18:8)

40. The name of the wicked shall \_\_\_\_\_. (Prov. 10:7)
41. Compass direction.
42. See that ye \_\_\_ not him that speaketh. (Heb. 12:25)
45. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath \_\_\_\_ (d) me. (1 Tim. 1:12)
49. Ammihud, the son of \_\_\_\_\_. (1 Chron. 9:4)
50. Priest's robe.
52. Platform.
53. Render therefore to all their \_\_\_\_\_. (Rom. 13:7)
54. Bad. (prefix)
55. Margarine.
56. This. (Spanish)
57. South by east. (abbr.)
58. A thready fragment.
5. Thy cheeks are \_\_\_ with rows of jewels. (Song of Sol. 1:10)
6. Mine product.
7. To cause dejection.
8. Tie.
9. River in India.
10. Ireland.
11. Take thine \_\_\_, eat, drink. (Luke 12:19)
19. Radiation measure.
21. \_\_\_'s \_\_\_ boy!
24. The fourth part of a \_\_\_ of dove's dung. (2 Kings 6:25, KJV)
25. Hockey name Bobby \_\_\_\_\_.  
26. \_\_\_ Farrow.
28. Geber the son of \_\_\_ was in the country of Gilead. (1 Kings 4:19)
29. His father saw him \_\_\_, and fell on his neck. (Luke 15:20)
30. Poor man had nothing, save one little \_\_\_ lamb. (2 Sam. 12:3)
34. Ocean trip.
35. Greek goddess of the dawn.
36. Cooks vegetables.
37. Lift up the hands ... and the \_\_\_ knees. (Heb. 12:12)
38. Girl's name.
39. A grassy field.
42. Past tense of ride.
43. Australian flightless birds.
44. They shall \_\_\_ themselves, and curse their king. (Isa. 8:21)
46. Indonesian island.
47. Ye have eaten the fruit of \_\_\_\_\_. (Hos. 10:13)
48. Employee stock ownership plan.
51. Experiment room.



# Baptist News Briefs

Compiled from Wire Services

## CP contributions down from same time last year

NASHVILLE — Contributions to Southern Baptist national and international missions and ministries received by the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee in October were 6.72 percent below the same month last year, according to a news release from SBC Executive Committee President Frank Page. The total includes receipts from state conventions and fellowships, churches and individuals for distribution according to the 2012–13 SBC Cooperative Program (CP) Allocation Budget.

As of Oct. 31, gifts received by the Executive Committee for distribution through the CP totaled \$13,602,300.64, or \$979,228.28 below the \$14,581,528.92 received in October 2011.

“This shortfall in the opening month of the fiscal year follows a historical pattern when both August and October are four-Sunday months,” Page said. State conventions typically receive their August church contributions in early September and forward their September gifts to the SBC in early October.

“This is the fifth time in the past nine years that the opening month of the new fiscal year followed this pattern,” Page said. “When we compare these October-to-October giving patterns from other four-Sunday years, the decline averaged 8.8 percent, so this is a slight improvement. Thankfully, in each instance we have also seen a significant rebound through the first quarter of the fiscal year. We anticipate we will see the same thing this year.”

## World Series used as evangelism opportunity

DETROIT — Volunteers from Michigan Baptist churches distributed some 5,000 packets with evangelistic materials prior to a World Series game at the Detroit Tigers’ Comerica Park on Oct. 27.

The Oct. 27 game was the third game in the World Series between the Tigers and the San Francisco Giants. The Giants ended up sweeping the series with a win Oct. 28.

Michigan Baptists compiled the outreach packets that included materials from the North American Mission Board’s “Find It Here” campaign as well as trading cards of current and former Detroit Tigers with their testimonies on the back. About 20 volunteers participated in the packet assembly and distribution.

“Mobilizing churches in evangelism is one of our top priorities,” said Bobby Gilstrap, lead state missionary and executive director of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan. “When we saw this great opportunity open up to share Christ with thousands of fans, we just had to be a part.”

## Arizona university declines free 217-acre campus

PHOENIX — In late October, Grand Canyon University (GCU) in Phoenix, Ariz., backed out of a deal to accept a free 217-acre campus in Massachusetts, saying millions of dollars in unanticipated costs made the project too risky.

In September, Steve Green, whose family owns the Hobby Lobby craft store chain, awarded GCU the campus after determining the school’s financial strength, growth and vibrant Christian life made it a great choice.

But GCU President Brian Mueller said closer examination revealed that an additional \$30 million worth of renovations would be necessary to make the campus functional. He also concluded that the campus’ remote location would eventually be a liability.

“We didn’t want to accept a free gift in a very bad location and try to fight that for the next 30 years,” Mueller said.



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## Veterans Day offers unique ministry opportunities

**T**his Veterans Day churches throughout the United States are seeing a rise in the number of military veterans returning home after deployment. Many say it is an opportunity for churches to serve and help meet the needs of transitioning soldiers.

Gary Sanders, founder of the Military Missions Network, refers to the simple but far-from-easy task of being the church to returning military personnel.

“Don’t try to be some sort of a therapeutic organization. Just be the church,” Sanders said. “The best thing we can do is do what we do best and that’s community and everything that comes out of that.”

Chuck Ashley, minister to adults at First Baptist Church, Montgomery, agreed.

“We want to be an Acts 2:42 community for them, where we are all one and give to each other — where we are Jesus to each other,” said Ashley, who served 27 years in the Air Force before going into full-time ministry. “We want to do that for everyone, but there’s a special understanding when it’s military — the needs are different.”

And First, Montgomery’s close proximity to Maxwell Air Force Base ups the chances that the church might be able to help meet those needs, he said.

“We actively pursue military folks in the community, and when they come to our church I always try to reach out,” Ashley said.

He also works the church’s welcome desk, and when military personnel arrive, he said he “does a tad bit extra.”

“Many times they will only have a short time here before another assignment, so we want to help them feel involved as quickly as we can,” Ashley said.

The needs of returning veterans range from home repair to financial and family strain to the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. Though a local congregation is not typically equipped to handle clinical needs, they are equipped to provide a support community.

First Baptist Church, Woodbridge, Va., just started its second year of military ministry, and the military community is responding. Through its “Welcome Home” team, the church celebrates returning military on their first Sunday after their return.

“We post a ‘Welcome Home Hero’ banner in our lobby and throw a party,” said Chris Ford, director of Military Ministry at First, Woodbridge.

This includes bringing the family down front to a standing ovation, a time of prayer and a gift package including a book on reintegration, a gift card for a family dinner, a free hotel stay and a coupon for three free hours of babysitting.

“We want to do anything we can to help with re-

integration of the military person with their church, their spouse, their family and their community,” Ford said.

This is part of what Sanders calls “missional military ministry.”

“Just as you would apply the gospel and gospel community to any people group, churches can address the needs and context of military culture,” Sanders said. “This applies to discipling military before they deploy, addressing their needs and reintegrating them when they return. And it also applies to outreach within the military community.”

First, Norfolk, does this through simple acts of hospitality. The church provides space and refreshments for pre-deployment family briefings. They also reach out online through [militarybeliever.com](http://militarybeliever.com), where service members can find resources for encouragement before they ever make personal contact with the church.

The church also reaches out in a significant way to military who aren’t married — a segment of the population who may not have a family support network back home. This outreach recently included assembling and sending 129 care packages to the single service members aboard the USS Normandy.

“Many of them don’t ever hear from anybody, especially if they come from broken homes,” Sanders said. “We’re very proactive in outreach and in speaking their language, and we want to connect with them very fast.”

“Hospitality is so important for military ministry,” Sanders added. “They move around and it takes too long to connect with people. If they’re in our area, we host monthly dinners for new military in the area. Through social networking we connect with them before they ever get to us. Sometimes they end up not coming to our church, and that’s OK. The point is to make a significant contact for the sake of the gospel.”

## Importance of local churches

Doug Carver, executive director of chaplaincy at the North American Mission Board (NAMB) and former Army Chief of Chaplains, said it’s through the local church that the greatest change can happen among the U.S. military. NAMB is the endorsing entity for 1,425 U.S. military chaplains serving throughout the world.

“All of our veterans returning home from war require some level of reintegration,” Carver said. “That is where the local church can offer a powerful ministry to veterans and their families. When they step into a local Baptist church, veterans should be able to say, ‘I’m home with my brothers and sisters in the Lord.’ I want the local church to be the champion of change in the lives of our returning troops.” (BP, TAB)

## Veteran’s Day is Nov. 11.

## Want to see your news in The Alabama Baptist?

Email your information to [news@thealabamabaptist.org](mailto: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.



*"The gospel, the Bible, is big enough for our deepest fears and questions. ... We have to let go of some of the black and white things if we are going to do life with the broken."*

**Emily Mills**  
co-director, Jesus Said Love



ABP photo

# 'Jesus said love'

## Waco-based ministry reaches out to strippers

**J**esus loves strippers too, but fear of the unknown often hinders Christians from reaching out to women trapped in the sex industry, a leader in an outreach ministry to exotic dancers said at a recent conference on empowering marginalized communities in Waco, Texas.

"The common denominator between the church and women staying where they are is fear," said Emily Mills, co-director of Jesus Said Love (JSL), a Waco-based ministry that she and her husband launched in 2005, at the Oct. 18-20 No Need Among You community development conference. The conference was sponsored by groups including several Texas Baptist organizations.

Mills said the need to reach out to dancers is great. Many times people think the sex industry is larger outside the U.S. But 80 percent of the world's pornography is made in Silicon Valley, and the U.S. is the No. 1 destination for sex tourism.

JSL seeks to build trusting relationships with the dancers, club managers and owners, showing them they are loved by Christ and valued by the JSL team. The team prays that life transformation will take place through these relationships.

"Our calling is to build healthy relationships with women in the strip clubs," Mills said. "Through these relationships we want to share God's love. And then when they are ready to get out, we can be there for them."

The JSL team visits the strip clubs monthly, taking the women gift bags filled with soap, shampoo and baked treats typically provided by local churches.

### Lives are changed

Because of the bonds that develop between managers and their dancers, Mills said, managers are open to the ministry team connecting with the women.

"The managers do try to take care of their girls," Mills said. "Even though they are exploiting them, they do feel it is part of their role to take care of them. One said that a stripper is not a stripper forever, so it's nice to know they can call Jesus Said Love."

In the process lives are changed for dancers and volunteers. Lori Warren, coordinator of JSL Dallas, said she met a stripper named Kathleen through a club ministry and they formed a close friendship.

"I believe that the Lord used Kathleen to change me," Warren said. "She ministered to me in a huge

way. I will never be the same because of that woman."

Kathleen decided she wanted out of the stripping business, and Warren and her church were there to support her.

"She came to the Lord, and she called me one day freaking out — 'I don't have money, I don't want to go back to sex work,'" Warren said. "I sent out a text asking people to pray for Kathleen." Within a couple of hours, women at the church gathered more than \$700 to help Kathleen and let her know she was not alone in her journey.

### A marginalized community

The ministry's roots began in the winter of 2002, when Brett and Emily Mills were worship leaders for a conference focused on ministry to sex workers. Moved by the stories of former sex workers, Emily Mills returned home with a burden for the marginalized in Waco.

Within two weeks the first Easter outreach was organized, and women armed with gift bags ventured into two Waco strip clubs. Both club managers gave the women open invitations to return any time, and the group returned to the clubs every Easter and Christmas for the next few years.

In 2005 the idea grew to the point that the couple decided to branch off of their established worship ministry and created Jesus Said Love. The group moved to monthly outreaches in the summer of 2007. Ministry teams now function in Waco, Dallas, College Station and San Antonio, all located in Texas.

Emily Mills said three main efforts are needed to start a ministry to exotic dancers: a team that will cover the ministry efforts with prayer, a hospitality team to bake cookies and prepare gifts for the dancers, and a club team that goes once a month to deliver the gifts and build relationships with the dancers at the clubs.

Ministry volunteers also should be willing to wrestle with their own walk with God through the journey of ministering to strippers. Mills shared that one way the church can build bridges to strippers is to leave room for questions.

"The gospel, the Bible, is big enough for our deepest fears and questions," Emily Mills said. "We have to let some of our fear go. We have to let go of some of the black and white things if we are going to do life with the broken." (ABP)

## World of Religion

Compiled from Wire Services

### Jews protest arrest of woman praying at Western Wall

JERUSALEM — Jews from Manhattan to Mozambique held prayer vigils Oct. 22 to protest the arrest and incarceration of an Israeli feminist as she was leading 250 American Jewish women in prayer at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, Israel.

The Oct. 16 arrest of Anat Hoffman, who co-founded Women of the Wall to enable Jewish women to pray together at the wall, has elicited outrage — especially from American Jews, the vast majority of whom do not practice Orthodox Judaism.

The wall has segregated prayer sections for men and women. Israeli regulations on holy sites forbid "conducting a religious ceremony contrary to accepted practice" and "wearing unfit attire."

Hoffman was officially arrested on charges of "disturbing public order."

Police have recently begun to arrest women praying at the wall for wearing black and white prayer shawls, the type traditionally worn by men. Hoffman was wearing a brightly colored shawl worn by many Women of the Wall members.

Hoffman said she was handcuffed, strip-searched, dragged on the floor and forced to spend the night on the floor of her cell, wrapped in her prayer shawl.

The police deny that Hoffman was mistreated.

The arrest comes against the backdrop of growing tensions between non-ultra-Orthodox Israelis and government authorities who, critics say, are increasingly caving into demands by religious extremists to segregate and marginalize women in the public sphere.

### Beijing urged to revoke 'one-child' policy

BEIJING — A Chinese government institute has recommended Beijing revoke its "one-child" policy that has forced abortion and sterilization upon millions of its citizens during the last three decades.

The recommendation offered by the China Development Research Foundation called for phasing in termination of the coercive population control program, according to The Associated Press. The foundation recommended:

- ▶ An immediate two-child policy in some provinces.
- ▶ A national two-child policy by 2015.
- ▶ An end to all birth limits by 2020.

China's population control program, which began officially in 1980, generally limits couples in urban areas to one child and those in rural areas to two if the first is a girl. Parents in cities may have second babies if the husband and wife are both only children. Couples who violate the policy face the threat of large fines, job loss and imprisonment.

The policy also has resulted in many accounts of authorities carrying out forced abortions — even in the last three months of pregnancy — and sterilizations.

The foundation issued the recommendation Oct. 26, saying declining economic growth and social problems — including the gender imbalance and aging workforce — in the world's most populous country have replaced population growth in significance, according to the state-run Xinhua News Agency.

### Jews, Christians gather for national day of prayer

GALILEE, Israel — Recent tensions in Israel and the Middle East found local believers gathering for a national day of fasting and prayer Oct. 27.

Messianic Jews and Arab Christians came together in the Lavi Forest in western Galilee to cry out to God for nearly five hours. The main topics for prayer were Iran's nuclear capabilities, the continuing bombardment of Israel's southern cities and the upcoming elections in Israel and the U.S.

Organized by pastors in Galilee, the event brought together Arab and Jewish believers from Dan in the north to Beersheva in the south.

An estimated 1,500 participants and pastors from a variety of congregations across the land explained the need to come before God with "clean hands and a right spirit."

Unity between Arabs and Jews was one of the highlights of the event. Arab and Hebrew music provided a worshipful atmosphere. Prayers for Iran centered around crying out for salvation for the Iranian people.

A number of Gentile Christians joined the local believers, including a television crew from Yeshua's Harvest Ministries. Director Matthew Wilson filmed the event, hoping to get more Christians involved in supporting the local believers by giving them an inside look at the Messianic body in Israel.