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A visit, call or card 'truly does matter'

How to make a hospital visit beneficial to patients' recovery

By Anna Keller
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

It's an all too common announcement from the pulpit: hearing that a fellow church member has been hospitalized. The reasons can differ — sometimes it's a planned surgical procedure, other times it's the result of an accident, occasionally it can be due to the flare-

up of a chronic condition — but in all cases a hospital visit would be an appropriate response. However, there are a few things to consider before embarking on a hospital visit that can help make both the visitor and the patient's experiences more fulfilling.

Self-evaluation

First of all, start with a little self-evaluation, advised Gary Yarbrough, director of pastoral care at Shelby Baptist Medical Center, who has been in hospital chaplaincy since 1996.

"Take a spiritual, emotional and mental check as a visitor before entering the patient's room," Yarbrough said. "Just as you don't want to spread physical germs, you don't want to spread spiritual or emotional germs that might interfere with a patient's recovery.

Don't talk about what went wrong with the worship service or things like that. Leave those germs outside the room so when you meet the patient everything is clear and open and you can acknowledge God."

One thing to keep in mind as a visitor is bravery, he added. Don't pry, but also don't be afraid to ask someone how he or she is truly feeling. Observe nonverbal messages — such as tears — and ask

about the cause. Inquire about specific prayer requests. And if conversation doesn't flow naturally, it's OK to just be there.

Regina Yarbrough, chief nursing officer at Princeton Baptist Medical Center, added, "Touch is very powerful, and sometimes people are more comfortable picking up someone's hand and saying, 'Can I pray for you?'"

(See 'Giving,' page 3)

"Just as you don't want to spread physical germs, you don't want to spread spiritual or emotional germs."

Gary Yarbrough
director of pastoral care, Shelby Baptist Medical Center

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COMMENT

For Whose Sins Did Jesus Die?

Pope Francis, the new leader of the Roman Catholic Church, astonished many Catholic theologians and others when he declared that everyone was bound for heaven, even atheists. At least that is what some observers thought they heard him say.

Speaking during an informal Mass on May 22, he said, “The Lord has redeemed all of us, all of us, with the blood of Christ: all of us, not just Catholics. Everyone! ‘Father, the atheists?’ Even the atheists,” he said, answering his own question.

“Everyone! And this blood makes us children of God of the first class! We are created children in the likeness of God and the blood of Christ has redeemed us all,” he continued.

That certainly sounds like universalism, the idea that all people have been saved by the work of God through Jesus Christ and the role of the church is to announce that salvation.

If that is what Pope Francis meant to teach, he is not alone in the belief that all mankind will ultimately be saved. The famous 20th century theologian Karl Barth embraced universalism. So did the popular Anglican writer Bishop John A.T. Robinson. In fact, some trace the teaching of universalism back to the second century and attribute it to Origen of Alexandria.

When now retired Anglican Bishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa visited Alabama about a decade ago he preached that all humankind had been saved. He explained he came to this belief by taking the words of the Bible seriously. He quoted Jesus as saying, “I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself” (John 12:23) and the apostle Paul writing in 1 Corinthians 15:21, “so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

Is universalism spreading?

To Bishop Tutu, the word “all” was his guide. Countless Baptist pastors have warned that universalism is spreading among Southern Baptists and other evangelical groups. Universalism is not preached from many (if any) Southern Baptist pulpits but many church members



THOUGHTS By Bob Terry

live as if everyone is going to heaven and the idea of hell is just a cosmic bluff of some type.

Ironically, Francis’ predecessor, Pope Benedict XVI, went out of his way to stomp out the idea that salvation was available beyond the Roman Catholic Church.

In 2007 he reaffirmed his belief that other Christian denominations cannot be called true churches and do not have the means of salvation.

Benedict believed and taught that Christ established only one church on earth and that was the Roman Catholic Church.

After the May 22 Mass, Roman Catholic officials quickly began clarifying what Pope Francis had said. Catholics believe God can save anyone — Christian, atheist or member of another faith — though always through Jesus, explained Thomas Rosica, a Vatican spokesman.

That clarification is good news to non-Roman Catholics. Evidently Rome now functions under a leadership that believes other Christian groups such as Baptists can be instruments of God’s salvation. Baptist believers also can be “first-class children of God,” the Pope now says. Rome may be interested to know that some Baptists believe God can work through the Roman Catholic Church too.

Baptist theology teaches “there is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord” (Baptist Faith and Message, Article IV). That means universalism is foreign to Baptist understanding of the Bible.

To proof texting like that of Bishop Tutu, Baptists call for placing verses in context. In John 3, Jesus also talked about being “lifted up,” (v. 14), and there He added, “That everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life.”

The apostle Paul also wrote in Romans 2:8 ff, “But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger ... but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good.”

In Romans 10:9–10, he said salvation comes to those who “confess with your mouth ‘Jesus is Lord’ and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead.”

Both Jesus and the apostle Paul linked personal salvation with personal belief. That gives no room for the idea that all people will ultimately be saved.

Still Baptists debate for whose sins Jesus died. Some contend that Jesus died only for the elect. That belief holds that God foreordained who would be saved (the elect) and died for their sins alone.

A lasting debate

Such verses as Romans 8:30 are important to this belief. There the Bible teaches, “And those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified.”

Other Baptists believe Jesus died for the sins of the whole world and offers salvation to “everyone who believes in Him” (John 3:15). Baptists of this persuasion say God’s desire for all to come to saving faith is affirmed by verses like 2 Peter 3:9, which says, “The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. Instead He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

Not all people will accept God’s offer of salvation, but Jesus died for the sins of “all who call upon the name of the Lord” (Roman 10:13).

The debate about for whose sins Jesus died will not end soon. It has gone on for hundreds of years. Still the Baptist Faith and Message offers guidance. Its article titled “Salvation” states, “Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer.”

The teachings are clear. Salvation is God’s act, not our own. Salvation is offered to all who accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, and apart from Jesus there is no salvation.

God can save the atheist as Pope Francis said. He can save those of other religions. He can save the child of Christian parents. But there is no salvation apart from Jesus Christ as Lord. That rules out the idea of universalism.

There really is a heaven to gain and a hell to shun. The decision is yours to make.

LETTERS

TO THE EDITOR

SEEKING CATOMA ALUM

Catoma Baptist Church, Montgomery, will celebrate its 50th anniversary Sept. 8 at 10:15 a.m. with Tommy Lee (the church’s first pastor) speaking and Jimmy Veazey leading music. Lunch will follow. Addresses of former members are needed as soon as possible. We hope you will “Save the Date” and RSVP either on Facebook (Catoma Baptist Church Friends), email (tere-

sapitts@catomabaptist.com) or drop a card to 4300 Old Selma Rd., Montgomery, AL 36108.

Delores Cork
Montgomery, Ala.

EXCELLENT EDITORIALS

I write to commend you highly for your editorial of May 23, 2013. In fact, I continue to marvel at the superb editorials in every issue of *The Alabama*

Baptist. Your facts are correct; your style of writing is excellent, and for these reasons and more, I look forward to each issue of the finest Baptist publication in our entire convention.

Melvin G. Cooper
Prattville, Ala.





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

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Moral issue

Immigration reform will be ERLC priority

The new head of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission said May 30 that immigration reform will take a high priority in his new role.

"Just and fair immigration reform ... will be a major, major touchstone of my administration," Russell Moore told reporters in a conference call. He officially began June 1 as America's second-largest faith group's top spokesman for moral and policy concerns.

"We plan to stand with our brothers and sisters in Christ in calling for justice, compassion and fairness for the sojourners among us and for just and fair immigration reform," said Moore, who leaves a post as vice president and dean at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Moore is featured in a quarter-million-dollar radio and billboard ad campaign paid for by the Evangelical Immigration Table, a coalition of diverse evangelical leaders from across the political spectrum launched in June 2012.

Moore — who served on an SBC resolu-



BP photo

Russell Moore, the new president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC), says a broken immigration system is a moral issue and calling for reform will be a high priority for him in his new role at ERLC.

tions committee in 2011 that drafted a historic resolution supporting "a just and compassionate path to legal status" for undocumented immigrants — said he believes the reason for such wide diversity and acting now is because evangelicals are coming to understand that a broken immigration system is in fact a moral issue.

During the last attempt to overhaul the nation's immigration laws in 2007, the SBC never fully embraced a bipartisan bill that died in the face of conservative opposition.

A new immigration bill has now cleared the Senate Judiciary Committee. The full Senate

is expected to start debating the bill in early June, just as a bipartisan group of members of the House are trying to finalize their own version of an immigration bill.

Moore said evangelicals are more aggressive this time around because more immigrants have joined their congregations, giving members a better understanding of who they are.

And he said it reflects a broader acceptance of granting citizenship to unauthorized immigrants among conservative Americans that should be embraced by Republican critics in Congress. (ABP, RNS)

Giving cards, cutting grass, other things help recovery

(continued from page 1)

"You have to look at the whole person and try to meet all of their needs, but it's important to just be honest and if you can't think of anything to say, you don't have to say anything," she said. "Sometimes just being with a patient for five minutes is all it takes."

Timing in general is critical to keep in mind, Regina Yarbrough noted. Though visits can be immensely therapeutic, patients also tend to tire quite quickly, so don't stay too long.

"Call ahead and see if it's a good time to visit," she suggested. "You don't want to interfere with the patient's plan of care. Patients will usually try to entertain guests and be hospitable even if they're tired, so it's always good to call in advance and not overstay your welcome."

Chaplain Jim Williams, head of chaplaincy for Baptist Health in Montgomery, added, "Be aware of how you're getting ready to go to the hospital, and remember that it's not like you'd prepare to go to a typical social event.

"Strong scents — aftershave and perfumes — can also be unpleasant to patients," he said.

The prevalence of technology — and especially social media — has added another layer to hospital visitation, Williams said.

Now people can update statuses or send emails quickly and easily, but it's important to remember that the patient may not want his or her medical issues to be shared through these outlets.

Be sure to ask what a patient is comfort-

able with others knowing before releasing their personal information in any form or fashion.

And for those who can't visit patients while they're in the hospital?

Cards and phone calls go a long way and mean a lot when received both in the hospital and once a patient has been released to go home, Regina Yarbrough said.

Once a patient has been sent home, it can be quite helpful to provide meals to patients and their families but also to think of additional ways to assist.

"These days, people are in and out of the hospital so quickly, and so people leave the hospital sicker than they used to," Williams said. "Offering to provide necessities like tissues during these times can help, or even offer to help out with something like cutting the patient's grass while they're not able to do that themselves."

Power of support

Most importantly, remember that a visit (or a card, phone call, etc.) truly does matter.

During his decade in the hospital ministry field, Gary Yarbrough said he continues to be amazed at the power of support when it comes to a patient's healing. Whether it's through a physical visit or via an outlet such as a phone call or card, knowing people care goes a long way.

"There's no substitute for someone's family of faith," he said. "From time to time I'll ask a patient what's getting them through, and without fail they tell me, 'Faith, family and friends,' almost like it's a primal script." ❧

Visitation TIPS

Going to the hospital to visit a friend or loved one? Here are some tips:

1. Plan ahead. Call the patient or a family member to determine the most convenient time for you to visit. Surprises typically aren't a good idea in these instances.

2. Follow hospital guidelines. Be aware of regulations that are in place. If you see a sign instructing visitors to wear gloves, be sure to do so before your visit.

3. Don't share information. Keep privacy and confidentiality in mind, and don't share any medical information unless you've received specific permission from the patient to do so.

4. Listen up. This visit is about the patient — not you — so pay attention to what he or she is sharing with you.

5. Be aware of the whole person. True, you're visiting the patient because of a physical ailment, but don't neglect his or her emotional, mental or spiritual needs in the process.

6. Help out. Before you leave, ask the patient if there's anything you can do for him or her before you go.

(Anna Keller)

Truth, trust and testimony in a time of tension

A Statement from the Calvinism Advisory Committee

A 19-member advisory team on Calvinism has concluded its work and issued a report called “Truth, Trust and Testimony in a Time of Tension.” (See report, this page.)

The advisory team — “not an official committee” of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) — was assembled by Frank S. Page, president of the

SBC Executive Committee, in August 2012 to craft a statement outlining “a strategy whereby people of various theological persuasions can purposely work together in missions and evangelism.” The team met as a full body twice and pulled together a draft report. The final draft (below) was approved via email response in mid-May.

Southern Baptists are Great Commission people. We are also a doctrinal people, and those doctrinal convictions undergird our Great Commission vision and passion. We are a confessional people who stand together upon the doctrines most vital to us all, confessed together in the Baptist Faith and Message.

Within this common confession, we sometimes disagree over certain theological issues that should not threaten our Great Commission cooperation. We recognize that significant theological disagreement on such issues has occurred with respect to Calvinism. It is, therefore, our responsibility to come together with open hearts and minds in order to speak truthfully, honestly and respectfully about these theological and doctrinal issues that concern us, threaten to divide us and compel us into conversation. Such engagement is appropriate at every level of Southern Baptist life including local congregations, associations, state conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention.

This spirit of conversation has been the hallmark of the meetings of the Calvinism Advisory Committee. We have spent hours together in fruitful, respectful and candid conversation. We entered these conversations as brothers and sisters in Christ and as faithful and thankful Southern Baptists. Our purpose was neither to resolve centuries of doctrinal disagreement nor to consume ourselves with doctrinal debate. Our purpose was to suggest a course for moving forward together while taking seriously and representing fairly the theological diversity that exists in and has been the strength of Southern Baptist life.

Four central issues have become clear to us as we have met together. We affirm together that Southern Baptists must stand without apology upon truth; that we do indeed have

some challenging but not insurmountable points of tension; that we must work together with trust; and that we must encourage one another to testimony.

TRUTH

The Bible

We affirm that the Holy Scriptures are the inerrant, infallible and totally trustworthy Word of God and our supreme authority on all matters of truth. We affirm that the gospel of Jesus Christ is the great theme of all Scripture and that the Bible is sufficient to reveal all we need to know concerning God’s purpose to save sinners.

We deny that any human system of thought or any theological tradition can assume supreme authority or be allowed to supplant dependence upon the Bible and all that it reveals. Neither Calvinism nor non-Calvinism ought to be equated exclusively with sound Southern Baptist doctrine nor be considered inconsistent with it.

The Lostness of Humanity

We affirm that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and that the universal condition of humanity is lostness, as every single human being, Jesus alone excepted, is a sinner whose only hope of salvation is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We deny that any human being is without need of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, and we deny any teaching that minimizes the truth about sin and the need of all persons to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Power of the Gospel

We affirm that our Lord is mighty to save and that He saves to the uttermost. We affirm the power of the gospel to redeem every single human being through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, whom the

Father has now declared to be both Lord and Christ, the Savior of the world.

We deny that the gospel is without power to save anyone who repents and believes in Jesus Christ. We also deny that the gospel as revealed in Scripture lacks anything needful for our salvation.

The Offer of the Gospel

We affirm that the gospel is to be made known freely to all in the good faith offer that if anyone confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord and believes in his heart that God has raised Christ from the dead, he will be saved.

We deny that the gospel lacks any power to save anyone who believes in Christ and receives him as Savior and Lord. Anyone who understands the gospel through the power of the Holy Spirit may, in prayer and petition, trust Christ through repentance and faith, and we should plead with all sinners to do so.

The Exclusivity of the Gospel

We affirm that salvation is found in the name of Christ and in no other name. We affirm that Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life and that no one can come to the Father but by Him. We affirm the exclusivity of the gospel of Christ as the only message of salvation.

We deny that salvation can come to any sinner by any other gospel, any other system of faith and practice, or by any name other than Jesus Christ.

The Atonement of Jesus Christ

We affirm that the death of Jesus Christ on the cross was both penal and substitutionary and that the atonement He accomplished was sufficient for the sins of the entire world.

We deny that there is anything lacking in the atonement of Christ to provide for the salvation of anyone.

The Reality of Heaven and Hell

We affirm that all who come to Christ by faith will be with Him forever in heaven, which He has prepared for the saints. We affirm that all who reject Christ and do not come to him by faith will spend eternity in hell, a place of eternal punishment.

We deny that there is any opportunity for salvation after the point of death, when all humanity will face the judgment of God.

The Necessity of Conversion

We affirm that salvation involves the conversion of the sinner, whereby the sinner consciously clings to Christ by faith, repents of sin, believes the promises of the gospel and publicly professes faith in Christ. We affirm the necessity of conversion and the truth that conversion involves the will of the believer as well as the will of God.

We deny that salvation comes to anyone who has not experienced conversion. We also deny that salvation comes to any sinner who does not will to believe and receive Christ.

The Great Commission

We affirm the church’s duty to obey Christ by preaching the gospel to all the nations and by making disciples who obey all that Christ has commanded. We affirm every believer’s responsibility to tell anyone and everyone about Jesus and the responsibility of every congregation to be a sending, going and giving assembly of believers.

We deny that missions and evangelism can be neglected without denying the power of the gospel, that any church can be faithful without a missionary urgency and that any believer can be obedient without telling others about Jesus. We deny that evangelism can exist apart from the call to make disciples. Every sinner should be implored to trust Christ by calling on Him through repentance and faith, and every convert should be disciplined toward maturity, commitment to the church and passion for the lost.

TENSIONS

Although we are committed to these central truths, we recognize that within them there are tensions: God desires for all to come to repentance, yet not all do; humans are ruined by the Fall yet required to respond in faith; God is sovereign in salvation, yet individuals are still held responsible for their reception or rejection of the gospel; Southern Baptist identity has often been connected to Calvinism yet has often significantly modified it. These are just a few of the dynamics at work in Southern Baptist faith and practice. While these tensions can be a source of frustration, especially when we are unchari-

Our purpose was to suggest a course for moving forward together while taking seriously and representing fairly the theological diversity that exists in and has been the strength of Southern Baptist life.

table toward those with whom we disagree, they have also been a great benefit to us, reminding us that God's ways are higher than ours, that no systematic construct can ever contain the fullness of Scriptural truth, that it is we and not the Bible who are subject to error, that we should approach the Word with both fidelity to the past and readiness for further reformation and that it is better to live in the tensions of unanswered questions than to ignore or adjust some part of the whole counsel of God.

With a full recognition of the limitless wisdom of God's Word and the limited wisdom of ourselves, we urge Southern Baptists to grant one another liberty in those areas within the Baptist Faith and Message where differences in interpretation cause us to disagree. For instance, we agree that God loves everyone and desires to save everyone, but we differ as to why only some are ultimately saved. While we all heartily affirm the article on election in the Baptist Faith and Message, we differ as to whether the response of faith plays a role in one's election. We agree that the penal and substitutionary death of Christ was sufficient for the sins of the entire world, but we differ as to whether Jesus actually substituted for the sins of all people or only the elect. We agree that the gospel should be proclaimed to everyone, but we differ as to whether or how every hearer will be enabled to respond.

We agree that everyone has inherited Adam's hopelessly fallen sin nature, but we differ as to whether we also inherit his guilt. We agree that men and women are sinners, but we differ about the effects of sin on the mind and the will. We recognize the differences among us between those who believe that sin nullifies freedom to respond to the gospel and those who believe that freedom to respond to the gospel is marred but not nullified.

We agree that God is absolutely sovereign in initiating salvation, uniting the believer to Himself and preserving the believer to the end, but we differ as to how God expresses His sovereignty with respect to human freedom. We agree that the Holy Spirit working through the gospel enables sinners to be saved, but we differ as to whether this grace is resistible or irresistible. We agree on the necessity of regeneration that results in God-ordained, Christ-centered, Spirit-empowered obedience from the heart, but differ as to whether faith precedes regeneration or regeneration precedes faith. We agree that most Southern Baptists believe that those who die before they are capable of moral action go to heaven through the grace of God and the atonement of Christ, even as they differ as to why this is so.

These differences should spur us to search the Scriptures more dutifully, to engage in lively interaction for mutual sharpening and collective gospel effectiveness and to give thanks that what we hold in common far surpasses that on which we disagree. But these particular differences do not constitute a sufficient basis for division and must not be allowed to hamper the truly crucial cooperative effort of taking the gospel to a waiting world. Southern Baptists who stand on either side of these issues should celebrate the freedom to hold their views with passion while granting others the freedom to do the same.

TRUST

Cooperation

We affirm that Southern Baptists stand together in a commitment to cooperate in Great Commission ministries. We affirm that, from the very beginning of our denominational

Calvinism Advisory Committee

Chairman:	Tom Ascol	Timothy George	Tammi Ledbetter	Paige Patterson
David S. Dockery	Mark Dever	Eric Hankins	Steve Lemke	Stephen Rummage
Daniel Akin	Leo Endel	Johnny Hunt	Fred Luter	Daniel Sanchez
David Allen	Ken Fentress	David Landrith	R. Albert Mohler Jr.	Jimmy Scroggins

To read more about the committee and its members, visit www.thealabamabaptist.org and search for "advisory team on Calvinism."

life, Calvinists and non-Calvinists have cooperated together. We affirm that these differences should not threaten our eager cooperation in Great Commission ministries.

We deny that the issues now discussed among us should in any way undermine or hamper our work together if we grant one another liberty and extend to one another charity in these differences. Neither those insisting that Calvinism should dominate Southern Baptist identity nor those who call for its elimination should set the course for our life together.

Confession

We affirm that the Baptist Faith and Message, as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000, stands as a sufficient and truthful statement of those doctrines most certainly held among us. We affirm that this confession of faith is to serve as the doctrinal basis for our cooperation in Great Commission ministry.

We deny that any human statement stands above Holy Scripture as our authority. We also deny that the Baptist Faith and Message is insufficient as the doctrinal basis for our cooperation. Other Baptist confessions are not to be lenses through which the Baptist Faith and Message is to be read. The Baptist Faith and Message alone is our expression of common belief.

Friendship

We affirm the responsibility of every Southern Baptist to be a friend to all Southern Baptists, so long as we all stand within the Baptist Faith and Message. We affirm that Southern Baptists must avoid the development of a party spirit amongst us, with friendships and trust extended only to those who are in agreement with us.

We deny that issues related to Calvinism or non-Calvinism should alienate or estrange Southern Baptists from each other. Instead, we will extend to one another the mutual respect befitting the bonds of fellowship that hold us together.

Conversation

We affirm the responsibility of all Southern Baptists to guard our conversation so that we do not speak untruthfully, irresponsibly, harshly or unkindly to or about any other Southern Baptist. This negativity is especially prevalent in the use of social media, and we encourage the exercise of much greater care in that context.

We deny that our cooperation can be long sustained if our conversation becomes untruthful, uncharitable or irresponsible.

TESTIMONY

We affirm the responsibility and privilege of every Southern Baptist to advocate his or her doctrinal convictions. We affirm that theology should be honored and privileged in our conversations and cooperation. We also affirm that theological and doctrinal debate can be a sign of great health within a denomination that is devoted to truth and is characterized by trust.

We deny that the main purpose of the Southern Baptist Convention is theological debate. We further deny that theological discussion can be healthy if our primary aim is to win an argument, to triumph in a debate or to draw every denominational meeting into a conversation over conflicted issues. Of more significance to our life together than any allegiance to Calvinism or non-Calvinism should be our shared identity as Southern Baptists.

Most importantly, we affirm together that our testimony to the world must be the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ — and that Southern Baptists must stand together in the testimony that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. We stand together to declare that salvation comes to all who call upon the name of the Lord, and that God's desire is for the salvation of sinners and the reaching of the nations.

MOVING FORWARD

Where do we go from here? We must celebrate the unity we share together in our common Great Commission purpose while acknowledging and celebrating variety among us. We must clarify the parameters of our cooperation where necessary but stand together without dispute.

We should be thankful that these are the issues Southern Baptists are now discussing, even as liberal denominations are debating the full abdication of biblical morality and allowing the denial of central doctrines. We are, seen in this light, blessed by the discussions that come to Southern Baptists who want to affirm the fullness of the faith, not its reduction.

We should call upon all Southern Baptists to promote the unity we share within the Baptist Faith and Message and, while recognizing that most Southern Baptists will believe and teach more than what that confession contains, we must never believe or teach less.

We should expect all leaders in the Southern Baptist Convention and all entities serving our denomination to affirm, to respect and to represent all Southern Baptists of good faith and to serve the great unity of our convention. No entity should be promoting Calvinism or non-Calvinism to the exclusion of the other. Our entities should be places where any Southern Baptist who stands within the boundaries of the Baptist Faith and Message should be welcomed and affirmed as they have opportunities to benefit from, participate in and provide leadership for those entities.

In order to prevent the rising incidence of theological conflict in the churches, we should expect all candidates for ministry positions in the local church to be fully candid and forthcoming about all matters of faith and doctrine, even as we call upon pulpit and staff search committees to be fully candid and forthcoming about their congregation and its expectations.

We must do all within our power to avoid the development of partisan divisions among Southern Baptists.

We must not only acknowledge but celebrate the distinctive contributions made by

the multiple streams of our Southern Baptist heritage. These streams include both Charleston and Sandy Creek, the Reformers and many of the advocates of the Radical Reformation, confessional evangelicalism and passionate revivalism. These streams and their tributaries nourish us still.

We must also remember that labels, though often necessary, are often misleading and unfair. They must be used with care and assigned with charity. The use of the words "Calvinist" and "Calvinism" can be both revealing and misleading, since individuals may hold to any number of variants on doctrinal points. Similarly non-Calvinists, who may resist even that designation, will cover an even larger landscape of positions. Labels like these often fail us.

We must stand together in rejecting any form of hyper-Calvinism that denies the mandate to present the offer of the gospel to all sinners or that denies the necessity of a human response to the gospel that involves the human will. Similarly, we must reject any form of Arminianism that elevates the human will above the divine will or that denies that those who come to faith in Christ are kept by the power of God. How do we know that these positions are to be excluded from our midst? Each includes beliefs that directly deny what the Baptist Faith and Message expressly affirms.

We must remember that the diversity we celebrate is already honored in the names we revere — theological statesmen such as James P. Boyce and B.H. Carroll, E.Y. Mullins and W.T. Conner; missionary heroes and martyrs such as Lottie Moon and Bill Wallace; scholars such as A.T. Robertson and Robert Baker, educators such as Lee Scarborough and John Sampey; evangelists and preachers like George W. Truett and W.A. Criswell, R.G. Lee and Adrian Rogers; and pastor-theologians like Herschel Hobbs. Where would we be today if we attempted to divide these heroes and heroines of the faith by the issue of Calvinism? We would cut ourselves off from our own heritage.

We must also remember that a rising young generation of Southern Baptists is watching and listening, looking to see if this denomination is going to be a bold movement of churches on mission or merely a debating society.

Beyond them stands a world desperately in need of the gospel. Will we distract ourselves in an unnecessary debate while the world is perishing in need of the gospel?

If we stand together in truth, we can trust one another in truth, even as we experience tension. We can talk like brothers and sisters in Christ, and we can work urgently and eagerly together.

We have learned that we can have just this kind of conversation together, and we invite all Southern Baptists to join together in this worthy spirit of conversation. But let us not neglect the task we are assigned. The world desperately needs to hear the promise of the gospel.

Respectfully submitted,
The Calvinism Advisory Committee 卐

Across ALABAMA'S Associations

To submit news items, email news@thealabamabaptist.org or call 205-870-4720, ext. 112, at least three weeks prior to the event.

BIRMINGHAM

▶ A group of **Northpark Church, Trussville**, members recently returned from a missions trip to Ciudad Victoria, Mexico, to help build a church and reach out to the surrounding community. Another group of families will travel to Mobile for a missions trip June 9-13. The goal is to share the gospel with seafarers from around the world, lead a missions VBS and assist a refugee community with organizing and cleaning. A third group will travel to Quito, Ecuador, for a missions trip June 29-July 6 to work with orphans, lead VBS and complete work projects at an orphanage. For information, contact associate pastor Stephen Hall at shall@northparkbc.org. Bill Wilks is pastor. ▶ The **Shades Mountain Church, Vestavia Hills**, choir and others will travel June 7-16 to England to partner with Rising Brook Baptist Church in Stafford as they work to plant a new church in the city of Cannock. Work will include a week of concerts and musical outreach events. Danny Wood is pastor.

COOSA RIVER

▶ **Rick Deerman** is the new pastor of **Mignon Church, Sylacauga**. He is a graduate of the University of Montevallo and holds a master's degree from New Orleans Seminary. He



DEERMAN

previously served Bethany Church, Crane Hill. He and his wife, Cindy, have two children.

FRIENDSHIP

▶ **Union Hill Church, Oneonta**, will host Gold City Quartet in concert June 23, 6 p.m. Doors open at 5 p.m. Greg Hollis is pastor.

LIMESTONE

▶ **Fred Lackey** is the new associate pastor of **Clements Church, Athens**. Lackey most recently served as pastor of Westside Church, Jasper, from 1998 to 2013. He also served there from 1964 to 1972. Lackey has also previously served as bivocational pastor of Calvary Church, Prattville, and First Church, Athens. In addition, he is assistant to the president at the University of Mobile. He and his wife, Sue, have three children, six grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Tim Anderson is pastor.



LACKEY

RANDOLPH

▶ **Paran Missionary Church, Roanoke**, will celebrate its 167th

homecoming June 9, 10:30 a.m. Everyone is invited to attend. Jamie Taylor is pastor.

SHELBY

▶ **Underwood Church, Montevallo**, will hold an outdoor singing June 8, 4-6 p.m. There will be a cookout and music featuring Trent Phifer. The church also will hold a one-day revival June 9, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. Levan Parker will preach in both services and Trent Phifer will bring the special music. Randy Hollingsworth is pastor.

WALKER

▶ **Rick Sherer** is the interim pastor of **Westside Church, Jasper**. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Mobile and a master of education degree from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Sherer is a teacher at Sipsey Jr. High School in Walker County and has been preaching since 1974. He has served several churches in the state. He and his wife, Jerri, have five children.

The Alabama Baptist will not publish an issue July 11. Submit your church announcements for July by June 24. Email news@thealabamabaptist.org or call 1-800-803-5201, Ext. 112.

Reverse Mortgage News

By Jimmy Dixon

This past month, the Lord allowed me to help several homeowners pay off their mortgage. One common statement I heard from them was that it was difficult to get by these days. Expenses had gone up, but their income wasn't keeping pace. Getting rid of the mortgage payment would help to make ends meet.

In addition to making their payments disappear, we also helped most of them get some cash. Those who didn't have any immediate need for the cash decided to leave it in a growing line of credit. Their accounts are presently growing at 4.447%. I don't know of any place your money will grow any better, plus the growth fund is FHA insured.

One fact I want to remind everyone about: If you do a

reverse mortgage on your home, your name stays on the deed, and it's still your house. You can add a room, paint it pink, polka dot or purple. The reverse mortgage is a lien on the property just like any other mortgage when it comes to ownership.

If you have any questions about reverse mortgages or if you are thinking about doing a reverse, please call me. Information is always free, and I've been a specialist in this field for several years. Like *The Alabama Baptist*, I cover our state helping seniors improve the quality of their lives. I am an active deacon at Valley Creek Baptist Church, Hueytown. For a free brochure, quote or DVD, contact me directly at 205-567-4800 or jdixon@mcgowinking.com.



JIMMY DIXON



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FBC Florence celebrates 125th anniversary

It was a weekend of "Looking Back, Reaching Forward" for First Baptist Church, Florence, as the church celebrated its 125th anniversary May 17-19.

On May 17, the Colbert-Lauderdale Baptist Association church rededicated its chapel that once served as the church sanctuary. The speaker for the worship service was Nick Garland, a son of a former First, Florence, pastor. Garland was licensed and ordained at First, Florence, and is now a pastor in Oklahoma. The special worship leader was former minister of music Jerome Key.

Some of Garland's family members, including his mother, surprised everyone by traveling from out of state to attend the service, said Oscar Beck, chairman of the 125th anniversary planning committee. Beck added that a history of the church was presented through hymns during the service and a reception followed.

Then on May 18, the church held an indoor picnic in the fellowship hall. After the supper, a new playground was dedicated. The children helped cut the ribbon and sang a song for the attendees.

The evening worship service featured speaker Barry Sneed, a former minister of education and youth at First, Florence, who now serves as executive vice president of NavPress. The worship leader was Phillip Anderson, a First, Florence, supply music minister.

Roy Hill, pastor of First Baptist Church, Satsuma, who served First, Florence, in the late 1980s as minister of education and youth, spoke during the May 19 service. The worship leader was David Henderson, a former First, Florence, music minister who now serves as children's minister at Vaughn Forest Baptist Church, Montgomery.

Jerry Armor, representative from the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission, presented First, Florence, with a plaque, and a proclamation written by Florence's mayor was presented to the church by Dick Jordan, city council president and a former First, Florence, church member.

The weekend culminated with a covered dish lunch on the grounds.

Beck said the church is currently without a senior pastor and First, Florence, associate pastor Kevin Johnson "carried us through this weekend very well." He added that those attending the weekend events were "smiling, having a good time and reminiscing." (Julie Payne)

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THE ALABAMA BAPTIST

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Furber & Ann Robinson

Photo by Dee Ann Campbell

Helping the 'poor in hay'

Gilbertown Baptist takes hay to drought-affected ranchers in Texas, sees big harvest

By Dee Ann Campbell
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

Furber Robinson has started cutting hay on his farm, but the harvest will mean much more to him than merely a way to feed his cattle for the winter.

It will be evidence of God's blessings in his life — the fruits of faith that continue today, nearly two years after he reached out to Texas farmers in their time of need.

Robinson, 65, owns and operates a chicken farm just over the Mississippi state line near Quitman. His farming ventures also include the raising of cattle and the cultivation of hay.

When severe drought and subsequent fires hit Texas in late 2011, Robinson paid close attention. With hay rapidly growing difficult for the Texas ranchers and farmers to obtain, placing their livestock in jeopardy, providers from other areas began to gouge the ranchers, charging Texans as much as 10 times the going rate for hay.

As he continued to hear about the plight of the Texas ranchers, Robinson decided to act, discussing his concerns with members of his church, New Life Fellowship, Gilbertown, and also with the publishers of the local newspaper, *The Choctaw Sun-Advocate*. Publisher Tommy Campbell, also a member of New Life, provided Robinson with information that would lead him to a group of ranchers in that area.

Working through the Independent Cattlemen's Association (ICA) of Texas, Robinson offered truckloads of hay to

the ranchers who needed it. Through his efforts, the ranchers were provided with enough hay to see them through the remaining months of drought.

Although they offered to pay the going rate for the product, Robinson refused, explaining that it was his relationship with Christ that had prompted him to reach beyond himself to help those in need.

As the drought continued and the fires kept burning, Robinson continued to supply hay to the Texas farmers, sending several truckloads to the state in the weeks that followed.

Robinson's generosity did not go unheralded by the ICA. In a touching tribute to his benevolence and his faith, Robinson's story was featured in the organization's *Round-Up Review*, a statewide publication distributed to cattlemen throughout Texas.

'Never had this happen before'

"Furber Robinson is what every farmer and rancher should strive to be: dedicated to the land, trusting in the Lord and helpful to a neighbor in need, no matter the distance," the article read. "His act of helping and kindness has provided the opportunity for many operations to keep going. Thank you, Mr. Robinson, for all you have done for Texas. God bless and hats off to you."

The tribute to Robinson was only the beginning of the blessings that have come his way since 2011. Since then, God has poured out a harvest of hay on Robinson's farm that has been unrivaled in years past.

"Since I gave them all that hay, I've had more that I can use," he explained with obvious emotion. "I had 13 rolls left over at the end of that year."

But the blessings didn't end there. As he and his wife Ann began to cut their hay in 2012, the harvest grew even more remarkable.

"This past year, we really increased our number of cows,

but we were able to put up so much hay that we still had over 400 rolls left over," he said. "I've never had this happen before."

Robinson said the hay harvest has been so great over the past year that he has not had to purchase feed for his livestock, raising them solely on hay, grass and salt blocks.

Robinson has also developed a strong relationship with the farmers he reached out to in Texas, sharing mutual business interests as well as building a personal bond of friendship. It is a bond he believes goes far beyond just a professional connection between farmers.

It is a bond made possible, he said, through faith in Christ who brought them together during a time of struggle.

"I've made friends with the people I would never have known before," he said. "It's been a blessing to me. If they find out we are having bad weather here, they call to check on us, to make sure we are OK, to see if we need anything."

That growing friendship has proven fruitful to Robinson in his business ventures as well. When he and his wife decided to add purebred Hereford cattle to their herd, it was the farmers in Texas who helped him find them.

"I had trouble finding what I was looking for," he explained. "But when I told my friends in Texas about it, it wasn't long before the president of the Texas Farmers' Association, Phil Sadler, called me and told me he had some purebred cattle for me [and] brought them to me."

Robinson said although he has been awed by the blessings that have come his way since he reached out to the farmers in Texas, he would have reached out to them even if God had not chosen to bless him for it.

"If I had had to buy hay this year, if I had not had such a good year, it would still have been worth the blessing," he said. "The Bible says that if you give to the poor, you are giving to the Lord. Those farmers were poor in hay, and I had plenty, so I knew God wanted me to give to them." ❧

Navigating the Path of Survivorship

New initiative at Princeton Baptist guides breast cancer patients

By Jennifer Jackson

There is a new paradigm in the fight against breast cancer, and it's an indicator of positive progress. Survivorship is on the rise in a significant way — not only in the number of patients who are surviving breast cancer, but also in the number of years women are living beyond diagnosis with their pink badge of honor. But this new reality brings specialized needs: to care for these women warriors with a proactive approach that provides access to resources. The Princeton Baptist Breast Care Center has stepped up to answer that call.

Grant makes “next step” possible

Princeton Baptist Medical Center's Breast Care Center has remained ahead of the curve when it comes to diagnosis, treatment and follow-up care of breast cancer patients using a high-touch, personalized approach to caring for women who find themselves in a life-altering situation. So when the Women's Breast Health Fund of the Community Foundation of

Greater Birmingham was looking for an organization to implement a Breast Cancer Resource and Survivorship Network via a specific grant for a Navigator program, Princeton Baptist was a logical fit.

Terri Lamons, executive director of imaging services and neuroscience at Princeton, recalls the meeting that preceded the launch. “When the Women's Breast Health Fund group visited our Breast Care Center, their first reaction was ‘This place has a different feel to it.’ They realized right away that implementing the Navigation program would not be a culture shift for us. The culture was already in tact at Princeton; Navigation was just a way to better streamline the services and the passion we already had for these women.”

Navigating the way

The essence of the Navigator program is to guide women and their families as they negotiate diagnosis, treatment and survivorship of breast cancer, with the ultimate goal of increasing



Photos by Robert Farley



the patient's quality of life during recovery and on through survivorship. To fully address the resource needs, the Navigator program was established as a collaborative strategic plan in partnership with the Princeton Baptist Breast Care Center, the Baptist Health Foundation and the Women's Breast Health Fund through a grant provided by the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham.

Through the program, Princeton's clinical navigator and resource navigator work in tandem to provide a continuum of care to women facing the uncertain path that a breast cancer diagnosis creates, helping patients prepare for what lies ahead. This one-stop resource center offers services on both sides of the spectrum.

The clinical navigator, Marla Ford, is a professional nurse experienced in working specifically with women suffering from breast cancer and who understands the challenges of treatment and survivorship. As clinical navigator, Marla helps remove any “roadblocks” to treatment and makes sure comprehensive and varied cancer care services are accessible to all patients. The resource navigator, Teneramie Hall, is a licensed social worker and strives to provide exceptional services by using a holistic approach. She connects survivors with community resources and programs that empower them through the challenges of the new normal.

Pamela James is a nurse practitioner who serves as the manager of mammography and the Breast

Care Center at Princeton Baptist and oversees the program. “Patient navigation refers to the individualized assistance offered to patients, families and caregivers to help overcome health care barriers and facilitate timely access to quality health and psychosocial care throughout the continuum – from detection, survivorship (diagnosis, treatment support, rehabilitation, etc.) to end-of-life care.” Patient navigators address and anticipate obstacles to care. They address rehabilitation by providing education/support for issues related to survivorship including, but not limited to, lymphedema therapy, support groups, transportation and financial help.

Free and open to all

While the program is located and managed at Princeton Baptist, women do not have to be a patient at Princeton to take advantage of the Navigator resources. This free program is available to women across Jefferson, Shelby, Walker, St. Clair and Blount counties.

Pamela James is working diligently with community, civic and faith groups across the counties to raise awareness of the program and encourage breast cancer patients and survivors to participate. Princeton

is currently navigating 120 patients.

She has witnessed firsthand how this new level of care has enhanced the quality of life for many women in unique ways. “We recently had a patient who had undergone a bilateral mastectomy and had to receive chemotherapy. She was fearful of the effects of the chemotherapy regimen. Not only were we able to connect her with caring professionals who could talk her through the process, but one of our Navigators accompanied her to her treatment.” When Princeton talks about “we are here for you” this is the ultimate example.

Along with the two-year grant, funds from the Baptist Health Foundation have supplemented the program. And, with this new Navigation program, Princeton is setting the highest standards as it continues to provide a better quality of life for patients through compassionate care, which is the core of Princeton Baptist Medical Center.

For more on the Navigator program and Princeton Baptist’s Breast Care Center scan the QR code, visit <http://Princeton-BreastCareResources.org>, or call 1-877-222-7847.



The Navigator program provides a broad spectrum of services including:

- identifying local resources and support
- navigation through the health care system
- helping those without insurance apply for financial assistance
- arrange mammography services
- assessing unique concerns and needs for each individual patient
- help schedule doctor appointments
- ensuring follow-up care is available
- counseling and family support
- Breast Cancer Support Group
- assistance with prosthesis
- transportation to physician appointments
- genetic testing and counseling

The multidisciplinary approach of the Breast Care Center at Princeton Baptist allows women to receive complete and thorough consultations, diagnosis and follow-up – usually all in the same day. An experienced, certified, multi-disciplinary

team of professionals includes surgeons, pathologists, medical and radiation oncologists, nurse practitioners, certified mammography technologists, specially trained oncology RNs, lymphedema therapists and Spanish interpreters.

Comprehensive Services of the Breast Care Center include:

- Digital ultrasound and breast MRI
- Stereotactic needle biopsy – image guided and ultrasound guided
- Sentinel lymph node biopsy
- Radiation oncology
- Surgical oncology
- Medical oncology, including chemotherapy and hormonal therapy
- Lymphedema clinic
- Reconstructive plastic surgery
- Multidisciplinary care conferences
- Rehabilitation coordination
- Prosthesis
- Survivorship
- Counseling/Family Support
- Identifying local resources and support

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Speaking volumes

SBC leaders stand by colleague accused in sex scandal

Southern Baptist leaders in a movement that goes by names including the “New Calvinism” and “young, restless and Reformed” voiced support for a friend and colleague accused in a Maryland lawsuit of collusion in what is being called American evangelicalism’s biggest sex scandal to date.

Albert Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and Mark Dever, pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church, Washington, joined Presbyterian minister Ligon Duncan in a statement of support for C.J. Mahaney, one of several defendants accused of permitting and covering up the sexual abuse of children in churches affiliated with Sovereign Grace Ministries (SGM), a Calvinist church-planting organization based in Louisville, Ky.

“We have stood beside our friend, C.J. Mahaney, and we can speak to his personal integrity,” the trio, who with Mahaney started a biennial preaching conference called Together for the Gospel (T4G) in 2006, said in a statement on the T4G website.

Dever, Duncan and Mohler said they have wanted to speak publicly on Mahaney but waited until after Maryland Judge Sharon V. Burrell dismissed most of the lawsuit on a technicality. She ruled that nine of 11 plaintiffs did not sue within three years after turning 18 as required under Maryland’s statute of limitations.

Amy Smith, Houston representative of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, called it an example of “selective outrage,” where Southern Baptist leaders speak out on issues like opposition to same-sex “marriage” and allowing gay youth to be Boy Scouts but are silent when it involves one of their own.



MAHANEY

The lawsuit alleges that Mahaney and other SGM leaders knew about sexual abuse of children occurring in homes and on church property but did not report it to legal authorities. Instead church leaders insisted on handling the problem internally in the name of “church discipline,” a practice of confronting and correcting sin adapted from Bible verses including Matthew 18:15–17.

At SGM, the lawsuit alleges, that meant that victims as young as 2 were summoned to meetings with their molester and told to forgive them for their sins. Victims and parents were told not to call the police, because civil authorities cannot be trusted in disputes between Christians. When church members ignored that advice, they were put out of the church for “gossip,” while sex offenders remained with access to children in pursuit of restoration.

The suit says church leaders interfered with legal processes by misinforming victims’ families about when to show up for court dates and telling authorities they were speaking on behalf of victims without being authorized to do so.

As pastor of one of the churches named in the lawsuit and until recently president of

SGM, Mahaney is accused of knowing what was going on and advising subordinates on how to handle incidents of abuse.

Boz Tchividjian, a professor of law at Liberty University School of Law and grandson of Billy Graham, said evangelical leaders’ silence about Mahaney “was deafening and spoke volumes.”

While hoping to hear voices speaking out or expressing grave concerns about the allegations in the SGM lawsuit, Tchividjian said he found instead a lot of statements by Christians claiming that all of the individuals were innocent until “proven guilty by a jury.”

As executive director of Godly Response to Abuse in the Christian Environment (GRACE), Tchividjian said he has heard that before. The problem, he said, is that the same individuals don’t approach any other sinful crime in the same way.

What Christians ‘cry out’

“For example, so many Christians will cry out against abortion doctors who have been alleged to have killed babies outside of the womb (horrific), but when a person alleges child sexual abuse by someone in the Church, these same Christians cry out that a person is innocent until proven guilty by a court of law,” he wrote.

“Of course a person or institution can only be held legally responsible under civil law when that has been determined by a court of law,” Tchividjian said. “I don’t think anyone has suggested otherwise. However, does this mean that a jury is required in order to determine the existence of evil?” (ABP)

Want to know God?

By Pastor Rick Cato
Bethel Baptist Church, Pleasant Grove

John 3:16 is probably the most familiar verse recognized in the western world. Many of us have had the experience of watching a sporting event on TV and seeing the familiar sign being held up by some fan in the crowd with the words “John 3:16.” But many do not know its message or meaning. In 2009 when Tim Tebow wore it on the black-out under his eyes in the national championship game, more than 90 million people Googled the reference.

In these 25 words of Jesus much is at stake. They are as eternally relevant today as they were when Jesus spoke them. With these gracious words Jesus reminds us all that God loves the world. It’s important for us to remember that the world is more than Earth and the people who inhabit it. The world in the Scriptures represents everything and everyone who opposes God. Basically that is all of us at one time or another. But God loves us anyway. He loves you passionately and personally. And in those 25 words of Jesus we hear how much God loves us. He loves us so much He gave His Son, Jesus. In the words of one musician, that’s “a reckless, raging river” of love. Francis Chan called this “Crazy Love.” This kind of love expects a response.

Jesus said the response desired is to believe in Him. For many of us believing is a head thing like believing in scientific facts or historical information. But believing is also a heart thing. It is an act of trust that resides in the will, the entirety of one’s being. It is the willingness to trust Jesus’ declaration with all that we are, and this trust is then fleshed out in our daily living. It is expressed with a new quality of life. This everlasting life Jesus gives determines our lifestyle choices, affects our relationships and dominates every facet of our being. The New Testament is filled with stories of those who believed in Jesus and followed Him into this everlasting life. I remember the day I responded too. As I listened to a sermon on John 3:16, I put my trust in Jesus and He did just as He promised. He gave me the eternal life He said He would and nothing has been the same since.

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PART-TIME SECRETARY: Raleigh Ave. Baptist Church located in Homewood, Ala. Please send resumé by June 30 to: RABC, 1020 Oak Grove Road, Home-

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MISCELLANEOUS

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL: Spring Valley Baptist Church, Colossal Coaster World — VBS. June 9–13 from 6–8:30 p.m., 4K–6th grades. Address: 4193 US Hwy 11, Springville, AL 35146. www.springvalleybaptistchurch.org.

ALABAMA BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOMES & FAMILY MINISTRIES

Legacy

JUNE 2013

The *will* to ACT



By PhilanthroCorp, ABCH Ministry Partner

More people make charitable contributions while they are living rather than later through their wills. The truth is, most people never get around to making a will. They die, as lawyers say, "in testate."

What is there about a will that puts people off? Why do so many of us seem to lack the will to make a will? For one thing, it's inconvenient to find a good attorney, make the appointment, and spend time and money going through the process of gathering information and making decisions. It's much easier to put it off.

A second reason is the dread some feel in contemplating their own death or the death of their spouse. Their will is something they plan to do later. It's always later, and often never gets done.

Another reason for postponing action may relate to the difficulty of dividing up your estate if family conflicts exist, or when unsure how wisely the inherited assets will be used.

Still others lack the will to have a will because they consider their net worth does not merit such a difficult personal task. They think they have too few assets to bother with a will or may assume that everything will go automatically and equally to all members of the family. They do not understand the benefits of a will, not only in settling their estates according to their wishes, but in making their departure easier for their loved ones left behind.

Whatever the reason, making a will takes will power. It requires not only choices but also action.

Alabama Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries has a partnership with PhilanthroCorp in place that will help you create or update your will. To learn more, please visit our website at www.abchlegacy.org/pg. There you will also find the Estate Plan Organizer, a resource that will walk you through the estate planning process quickly and easily.

We hope you will take advantage of this ministry and allow it to bless you and your family.

GraceGifts

MEMORIALS

(Memorialized person's name is bolded.)

Mary Allen, Dickenson: Betty M. Howell
Cliffie Cannon, Monroeville: Eastwood BC Adult III Ladies; Eastwood BC
Will S. "Bill" Chapman, Jr. Atmore: Carlton & Virginia Sharpless
Mary Elizabeth Clark, Auburn: The Gatman Green Family
Joseph Lynwood "Bo" Daniel, Brewton: Ronda S. Daniel
Joyce Ann Dennison, Gallion: Providence BC
Pat Dixon, Boaz: Providence BC, Gallion
Joey Edwards, Gallion: Providence BC
Lloyd Fowler, Fayette: Mr. & Mrs. D. E. Lollar
Mildred C. Green, Brewton: Joyce Pate, Imogene Overbey & Pat Golden
Ida R. Hall, Atmore: Carlton & Virginia Sharpless
Annie Louise Hancock, Summerville, SC: Virginia R. Waldrop
Thomas Haynes, Florence: Highland BC Joy SS
Farron Helms, Monroeville: Eastwood BC

John Ray House, Jr., Uriah: Velma House Family
Harry Jeffcoat, Jr., Birmingham: Mr. & Mrs. J. Wray Pearce
Betty Jones, Pine Apple: Awin BC
Frank Keenan, Troy: Frances C. Ryles
Dot Lowery, Georgiana: Brushey Creek BC
Mattie Martin, Thomasville: Pine Hill BC
Sue McKenzie, Forkland: Eureka BC
Elizabeth P. Morrow, Atmore: Carlton & Virginia Sharpless
Juanita Mott, Wetumpka: Mr. & Mrs. Oscar Robinson
Ann Nettles, Monroeville: Alice Lucas
Rebecca Nipper, Uriah: The Velma House Family
Lola Mae Odom, Frisco City: Senior Ladies SS, Frisco City
Eric Pearson, Myrtlewood: Providence BC, Gallion
Margaret E. Propper, Birmingham: Mr. & Mrs. J. Wray Pearce
Theodore Qualls, Goodway: Velma House
Emma Jean Shell, Georgiana: Brushey Creek BC
J. C. Sims, Georgiana: Doug & Cathy Herring

Mary Lou Singleton, Birmingham: Senior Ladies SS, Goodway BC
Marianne Smith, Montgomery: Frank & Earline Smith
Jared Strong, Jackson: Cornerstone Class, Forest Avenue BC
Gracie Sullivan, Jackson: Cornerstone Class, Forest Avenue BC
Ted F. Thomas, Andalusia: Carolyn Feagin
Dorothy Tidmore, Albertville: Charlie & Mary Anne Crowe Wilson
Kerry Weatherly & Sara Weatherly, Montgomery: Maynita Weatherly



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Community outreach

Lindsay Lane Baptist ministers through Christian academy

When Dusty McLemore was called as pastor of Lindsay Lane Baptist Church, Athens, 20 years ago, he had a vision to start a Christian school. That vision lay dormant until the doors of Lindsay Lane Christian Academy opened in 2009.

Two years earlier the church had built a two-story, state-of-the-art children's building complete with an auditorium, and during the week the first floor was occupied by a day care but the top floor went unused. The church's leadership knew it was time to revisit that initial vision.

But where would they start? Eric Pugh, minister to families at Lindsay Lane Baptist, headed up a team and contacted Ed Gamble, executive director of the Southern Baptist Association of Christian Schools (SBACS).

"We had a great conversation and he offered advice and help in every way possible," Pugh said.

Gamble recommended the Kingdom School Institute, led in part by Glen Schultz, author of "Kingdom Education" and headmaster of Sherwood Baptist Academy in Albany, Ga. Pugh attended the institute's training session in 2008.

"It was everything and more than I imagined," he said. "It was so effective in explaining how to start a school, how to improve a school and how to grow it."

Leaders from Christian schools at the conference recognized that Lindsay Lane was just learning the terrain and reached out to help.



Photo courtesy of Lindsay Lane Baptist Church

ANSWER TO PRAYER — Lindsay Lane Christian Academy in Athens offers accredited schooling for preschool through 12th grade. Enrollment for the coming school year is 330 students.

"They gave us advice and prayed for us and kept in touch with us," Pugh said. "So we got a lot of support out of that first institute."

The first year of its existence, Lindsay Lane Christian Academy offered kindergarten through sixth grade, but parents wanted more. Meanwhile, the only other Christian school in the community — offering K-12 and full facilities — had become interested in merging with Lindsay Lane.

In less than 40 days that summer, the two schools consolidated into Lindsay Lane Christian Academy, which now offers accredited schooling for preschool through 12th grade.

Enrollment for the coming

school year is 330 students, Pugh said.

"It serves as an outreach to the community. We don't refuse anyone into the school," he said. "We've had a Hindu family and other faiths. Many students have been saved since [the school was opened] four years ago."

Fifteen schools in Alabama are affiliated with SBACS. Thirteen are associated with Alabama Baptist churches, one is associated with a Methodist church and one is associated with Big Oak Ranch. For more information, visit sbacs.org. (BP, TAB)

"It serves as an outreach to the community. We don't refuse anyone into the school."

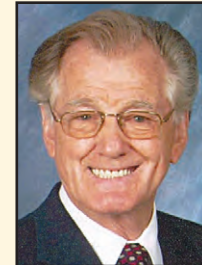
**Eric Pugh
minister to families
Lindsay Lane Baptist
Church, Athens**



James H. Bishop

Former FBC Hackleburg pastor dies

James H. Bishop, who served as pastor of nine churches for more than 48 years, died April 25. He was 81.



BISHOP

Bishop, of Hackleburg, graduated from Howard College in Birmingham (now Samford University). He spent 23 years serving as pastor of First Baptist Church, Hackleburg. He also served as pastor of Waco Baptist Church, Russellville; Mount Hebron Baptist Church, Spruce Pine; Fulton Bridge Baptist Church, Hamilton; Bear Creek Baptist Church No. 1; and churches in Mississippi and Tennessee.

Bishop also served as moderator for Marion Baptist Association in 1978 and 1979. He is survived by his wife of almost 60 years, Fay; five children; 16 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. (Neisha Fuson)

Berkely L. Webb

Former Alabama Baptist pastor dies

Berkely L. Webb spent 60 years in ministry serving churches in Alabama and Indiana. He died May 13 at the age of 80.

Webb earned degrees from Howard College in Birmingham (now Samford University) and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and served at a church in Indiana while attending seminary.

He later served as pastor of Woodley Road Baptist Church, Montgomery; Camden Baptist Church, Sheffield; and Lakewood Baptist Church, Huntsville. After retiring from full-time ministry in 1996, Webb served as interim pastor of First Baptist Church, Tuscumbia.

He is survived by his wife, Joan; two children; three grandchildren and one great-grandchild. (Neisha Fuson)



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RASHIONAL THOUGHTS

by Jennifer Davis Rash • executive editor • jrash@thealabamabaptist.org

Should I stay? Should I go?

The team of doctors filed into my aunt's hospital room with charts, notes and a stockpile of questions. I was visiting her but would also be helping her for the next few days. My uncle had been by her side since she was admitted.

Should I stay? Should I go? Was it inappropriate for me to be listening or would I need to know some of the information later and end up regretting it if I didn't listen?

I had forgotten to ask her how much she wanted me involved in the process and figuring out what was appropriate on the spot was tricky.

I decided to compromise by not leaving the room but moving into a far corner and busying myself on the iPad. I didn't pay close attention but was generally aware of what was being said.

Once everyone left and she and I could talk privately, I asked her what was appropriate as far as my participation. She did want me involved and listening so I could help her process all the information, so it all worked out well, but the experience spurred me to plan ahead in the future.

I realized visiting someone in the hospital is more than merely showing up to show support. There are certain do's and don'ts related to appropriate timing, reasonable lengths of stay and being respectful to the patients' medical information and situation (see story, page 1).

The discussion with my aunt also took both of us back to times when we experienced, participated in and observed

unfortunate hospital visitation scenarios. We recalled walk-



ing into one patients' room and finding 12 to 14 family members crowded in talking loudly, laughing, telling stories — basically having a reunion — while the patient lay writhing in pain.

I remembered finding one patient craving a drink of water but didn't have enough strength to find the button to call for the nurse. My dad taught me years ago to always offer the patient water, food if appropriate and help with whatever seemed needing to be done. He found my grandmother several times in the hospital and nursing home seeking a simple sip of water. He and his siblings always made sure she had plenty of water while they were present.

The patient may not ask for help for whatever reason, so I try to always offer.

And while a patient who is alone probably needs more help than those with caregivers onsite, it does seem important to not overstay in either situation. Forcing a patient to "entertain" guests can exhaust him or her.

At the same time, lending a hand to caregivers and/or sitting with those waiting during surgery can be helpful and appreciated.

I remember sitting with my cousin and her husband during her dad's heart surgery. I tried to be careful not to be a burden, but I also wanted to do what I could to help them pass the time so they weren't anxious with worry every second.

And giving a caregiver a few minutes to go for a walk or grab some food outside the hospital room can do wonders for the caregivers' energy and spirits. If he or she is uncomfortable leaving the patient, then bringing in food or even a snack basket is a good option.

And what about praying with the patient and/or caregiver? Absolutely. It's a perfect way to wrap up your visit while encouraging those present and is rarely rejected in these situations no matter the patients' faith background.

Hospital visitation — when done appropriately — allows us to serve others and show God's love. 🙏

Rashional EXTRAS ...

What topics are on your mind?

Email jrash@thealabamabaptist.org

'Put Jesus first'

It's the Sunday School answer, but if you know what it means, it ... works.

And if you don't, it sounds cliché, keeps you frustrated or lulls you into a blissful spiritual sleep.

Mine was the last of the three.

I thought it was a one-time decision. Will I put Jesus first? Yes. I will. So what did I think I meant?

It's crude, but it's honest: "I'm a Christian, I live in a way I think would be generally pleasing to God, and if someone put a gun to my head and told me I had to renounce my faith or die, I'd choose to die."

Seemed ambitious enough. And then, at the prompting of very wise people, I started reading the hard bits of the Bible. The parts where Jesus said you have to deny yourself and take up your cross daily and follow Him. To die to self as He died for us ... that means EVERYTHING in life has to be less important than Him ... daily.

Putting Him first. It's the easiest thing to do and the hardest thing to do.

It takes intentional thought and prayer ... but the floodgates open up and the hunger for Him and His Word grows more and more. Give Him a blank check with your life, and ask Him what He'd like to do with it and you'll find He's eager to take you up on it ... and show you more of Himself. Read His Word, the Bible. Talk to Him daily and ask Him how He wants you to spend your days and your relationships, how you personally can bring Him the most glory, how we can enjoy Him today and how we can tell others about Him and how much He means to us. It becomes a daily conversation, a journey with Him rather than a tally of major and minor decisions. The decisions start flowing out of relationship.

It takes discipline, and at the same time it's incredibly freeing.

Doesn't mean times will be easy ... in fact, He says they'll be hard. But He also said we have Him with us always, and that He is the reward at the end.

And He's worth everything.

EDITOR'S NOTE — 'Put Jesus first' is an excerpt from the blog gracefortheroad.com.

@MichaelCatt

"Out of clutter, find simplicity. From discord, find harmony. In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity." — Albert Einstein

Coach Bear Bryant's key qualities as a leader

1. His great work ethic; he would outwork anybody.
2. He delegated well but also maintained control.
3. He was a great listener.
4. He was eager to learn and as a result was receptive to different ways of doing things.
5. He was willing to change with the times.
6. He had great self-confidence.
7. He was a top salesman but did it in a low-key way.
8. He was a shy person. He enjoyed the attention he received but didn't seek it.
9. He was willing to make tough decisions, particularly related to areas of discipline.
10. He genuinely cared about his players and he showed it.
11. He was very intelligent. He'd give you that old Arkansas plowboy stuff with all the mumbling, but he was on the cutting edge of everything, like rules, recruiting, etc.
12. He enjoyed his role as a mentor and teacher.

Pat Williams
with Tommy Ford
"Bear Bryant on Leadership"



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I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:14

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For June 9

Explore the Bible By Douglas K. Wilson Jr. Dean, School of Christian Ministries, University of Mobile

WAS IT MY FAULT?

Job 4:6-7; 8:4-8; 11:6-15; 13:22-25

Last week we introduced Job, who chose to give glory to God in the midst of devastating loss.

The man lost his children and his livelihood, everything but his wife and his health. Between chapter one and this week's selected passages, Job's suffering has continued. He initially lost his possessions and his children, but Job has since lost his health. In addition, his wife has suggested that Job simply curse God and die.

Upon hearing the news, Job's friends gather to visit and encourage him. Their presence was a comfort to him until they began to speak (2:11-13). Eliphaz and his companions explain that Job's suffering is the result of unrepentant sin. Their errant theology led them to faulty conclusions.

An Appeal to Justice (4:6-7)

Eliphaz argues that God is just in His dealings with men. He argues, in essence, that Job is prideful, placing his confidence in his fear of God and his own integrity. In the passage, Eliphaz states that God justly punishes evildoers, implying that Job is suffering because of his actions or attitude.

Like those who asked Jesus why a man was born blind (John 9:1-34), we often want to assign blame for the pain we and others experience. Was the suffering a result of the man's sin or his parents'? Jesus answered that it was neither. We often fail to see that God's greater glory is the ultimate purpose of a believer's pain and suffering.

An Appeal to Tradition (8:4-8)

Bildad joins in the theological discussion now. He argues that history demonstrates cause and effect, that bad behavior leads to bad consequences. "Job, your children died," he argues, "as a result of their sins" (paraphrasing 8:4). If Job were to become pure and upright, God would surely bless him materially. This appeal to

tradition implies that God is obligated to bless certain people because of their behavior. Prosperity gospel advocates make the same appeal.

To counter Bildad's reasoning, Job pleads for mercy. Herein lies the balance regarding the dual nature of God's wrath and mercy (Ex. 34:6-7). Job recognizes that an appeal to God's justice reveals wrath. He further affirms that history reveals the God who is greater than creation. Only in God's mercy can Job find peace.

An Appeal to Logic (11:6-15)

Zophar adds his philosophical perspective, arguing that Job is suffering less than he deserves. Who does Job think he is, questioning God's plans and purposes? God is already withholding His full wrath from Job. The wisdom of God is limitless, so Job has no right to plead for God's mercy.

Companion number three presents the same kind of argument as his friends. Everything will be better in life once Job repents. The sores on his face will heal, he will never need to fear and his hope will return.

While these are intended to be words of comfort, they bring no joy. In the midst of his suffering, Job has no need to be lectured. As a man who fears and honors God, Job knows that those who trust God are not immune from pain. He is well aware that in this world, the wicked often prosper and the godly often suffer.

An Appeal to God (13:22-25)

Who do these men think they are, lecturing Job as if he had no knowledge of God? He tells them to be quiet and listen to what he has to say. He pleads his case directly to his Maker. God knows justice better than they, He is fully aware of history and He is the author of wisdom. Job is so confident in the righteousness of God that he states: "Though he slay me, I will hope in Him" (13:15). If Job is guilty, he wants God to reveal his transgression.

Bible Studies for Life By Jeffery M. Leonard Assistant Professor of Religion, Samford University

GOD CHOOSES A PEOPLE

Genesis 12:1-7; 15:5-8, 13-17

A Plan of Blessing (12:1-3)

The first 11 chapters of Genesis stand as one of the most depressing sections in all of Scripture. Banished from the garden, devastated by the flood, scattered after Babel, humanity in these chapters seems bent on rebellion and God seems equally determined to check that rebellion. Surely there must be more to God's plan for humanity than this dismal cycle of sin and punishment.

Unexpectedly — a word so often associated with God's great overtures of grace — God's next outreach to humanity turns out not to include much of humanity at all. Instead, we find in Genesis 12 God reaching out to just one man and woman, Abram and Sarai, the patriarch and matriarch who would come to be known as Abraham and Sarah. God promises to bless these two, making their descendants a great nation and blessing the whole world in the process.

God's choice of Abraham and Sarah for this role was an odd one. Old and still childless, these two were unlikely candidates for starting a new nation. Later interpreters would suggest Abraham caught God's eye because he had rejected the idolatry of his Mesopotamian neighbors. Genesis, though, offers no such explanation for God's choice. The text tells us only that the Lord told Abraham to go, and Abraham went.

A Response of Obedience (12:4-7)

Just as odd is Abraham's quiet obedience to God's call. God's promises to Abraham ranged from the enigmatic ("a land that I will show you") to the outlandish ("I will make you a great nation"), yet Genesis offers no explanation at all for Abraham's willingness to believe the word of this strange deity. It was an act of quiet obedience, one that would mark Abraham as the epitome of faith. More than a millennium later, Paul, James and the author of Hebrews would still find in Abraham the very definition of a life of faith.

A careful reader will note, though, that

there are some decidedly unfaithful moments in Abraham's life. While Abraham shows tremendous faith when he leaves for the land God will show him (Gen. 12), when he allows Lot to choose the best land for himself (Gen. 13) and when he submits to circumcision (Gen. 17), there are darker moments in Abraham's life as well. He lets the mother of the promise go into another man's harem, not once (Gen. 12:10-20), but twice (Gen. 20). He takes Hagar as a second wife in hopes of having children through her (Gen. 16). He laughs in God's face when God promises Sarah would soon have a child (Gen. 17:17).

How can we explain this great contradiction between faith and unfaith in Abraham's life? The answer is found in the two parts of God's promise to Abraham. While God promises to give Abraham both land and descendants, Abraham believes only one of these. Abraham so sincerely believes the promise of land that he is willing to leave his homeland in Mesopotamia and journey to the rugged hills of Canaan without so much as a word of protest. But the promise of descendants, that is another matter entirely. Abraham believes in the promise of land, but the promise of descendants is more than he can accept. He lets Sarah enter another man's harem, takes Hagar as a wife and laughs at God all because he cannot believe God would indeed create a great nation from him and Sarah.

A Relationship of Faith (15:5-8, 13-17)

Abraham is a man of faith, but not when it comes to descendants. There, his faith stumbles and nearly falls. Nearly, because God provides Abraham with one last chance to trust Him on the matter of descendants. The famous story in Genesis 22 begins with the words, "And God tested Abraham," and ends with, "Now I know that you fear God." Between these two famous phrases, Abraham finally decides to trust God in the area he has previously held back. Against all odds, he follows God's outrageous command, even when it pertains to his descendant, and passing the test at last becomes a genuine man of faith.

Christian Crossword

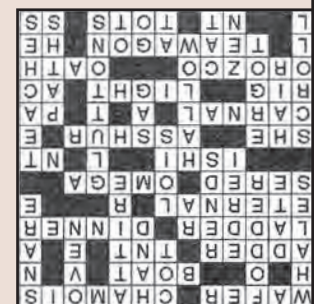
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Across

1. A cake. (Ex. 16:31)
3. Mountain sheep. (Deut. 14:5)
8. A skiff.
9. A snake. (Ps. 140:3)
13. Trinitrotoluene. (abbr.)
14. Portable steps.
16. An evening meal.
17. Perpetual. (Rom. 1:20)
19. Son of Zebulun. (Gen. 46:14)
20. Greek word signifying "the last." (Rev. 1:8)
22. Son of Appaim. (1 Chron. 2:31)
24. New Testament. (abbr.)
26. Feminine case pronoun.
29. Grandson of Noah. (Gen. 10:11)
31. Of the flesh. (Rom. 8:7)
32. Another name for father.
33. Truck driver's vehicle.

34. Not heavy.
 35. Alternating current. (abbr.)
 36. Mexican painter Jose Clemente _____.
 39. A promise. (Luke 1:73)
 40. Same as tea cart.
 44. Masculine pronoun.
 45. Northwest Territory. (abbr.)
 46. Small ones.
 47. Secret Service. (abbr.)
- ### Down
1. Sea monsters. (Gen. 1:21)
 2. Food for animals.
 3. Collapsible bed.
 4. Used for gripping.
 5. What you put on. (Prov. 7:10)
 6. A furnace. (Ps. 21:9)
 7. A net. (2 Tim. 2:26)
 10. Fruit of the palm.
 11. Where Og fought a battle. (Num. 21:33)
 12. Cuts out. (Hosea 13:8)
 15. Symbol for radium.
 18. The grandmother of Timothy. (2 Tim. 1:5)
 21. Those who are greedy eaters.
 23. To set apart. (Ex. 40:9)
 25. Gives instruction.
 26. A book or roll. (Rev. 6:14)
 27. John was clothed with camel's _____. (Mark 1:6)
 28. Used to make alkaloids.
 30. To hang loosely.
 32. All her _____ are peace. (Prov. 3:17)
 37. Buddhist sect developed in India.
 38. A feline.
 41. A preposition.
 42. To move or proceed.
 43. Old Testament. (abbr.)



Baptist News Briefs

Compiled from Wire Services

Seven states receiving Southern Baptist relief

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDR) volunteers are active in seven states responding to damage from floods, tornadoes and other disasters on the eve of hurricane season.

The sheer breadth of the responses — with hundreds of volunteers simultaneously engaged — is a humbling reminder of the enduring spirit of Southern Baptist service, SBDR leaders said.

“When everyone else gets tired, we reload,” said Sam Porter, disaster relief director for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma. “We’ll be here until we are not needed anymore.”

In addition to Oklahoma SBDR volunteers, some 200 strong, responding to tornado damage in the Oklahoma City area, volunteers also are serving in Oklahoma from Arkansas, California, Iowa, Kansas-Nebraska, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, Tennessee and Texas Baptist Men. SBDR volunteers also are serving in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, Texas and New York.

“The depth of work disaster relief volunteers are involved in now is astounding,” said Fritz Wilson, executive director for disaster relief at the North American Mission Board. “And they continue to serve.”

Wilson said if rain and flood predictions hold, there might be additional needs for response in Midwest states like Iowa.

IMB to hold new School of Prayer in Virginia

ROCKVILLE, Va. — “Prayer is not just important — it’s essential,” said Gordon Fort, senior vice president for prayer mobilization and training with the International Mission Board (IMB).

Fort is leading the IMB’s new School of Prayer for All Nations (SPAN). The initiative features weeklong “schools of prayer” workshops at the International Learning Center (ILC) in Rockville, Va., in which about 20 members/leaders of Southern Baptist churches practice the principles of prayer. The goal is for participants to replicate this focus on prayer within their homes, congregations and communities.

“Prayer is not simply a part of our ministry, it is the fuel of our ministry,” said one Baptist representative. “Prayer is such an important avenue for people to be directly involved in what God is doing on a global scale.”

The first SPAN is scheduled for July 29 through Aug. 2 at the ILC. Additional 2013 schools are scheduled for Sept. 2–6, Oct. 28 through Nov. 1 and Dec. 2–6. For more information or online registration, visit regonline.com/span or email span@imb.org.



SAMFORD UNIVERSITY

► **Samford’s Brock School of Business Names Alumnus of the Year, Gives Faculty Awards and Promotes Faculty:** Samford University’s Brock School of Business recently announced that Vicki Briggs, executive vice president and COO at St. Vincent’s Health System, has been named alumnus of the year.

Briggs is a 2009 master of business administration (MBA) graduate and member of the Brock School of Business Advisory Board. She recently returned to Birmingham from Lafayette, La., where she was the CEO of The Regional Health System of Acadiana.

Briggs, an American College of Healthcare Executives Fellow, has more than three decades in leadership roles in health care. She also has been active in community organizations.

The Brock School of Business also recently awarded the following faculty awards:

► Sara Helms, assistant professor of economics, 2013 Undergraduate Excellence in Teaching Award

► Jim Reburn, professor of accounting, 2013 Graduate Excellence in Teaching Award

► Franz Lohrke, Brock Family chair in entrepreneurship and professor, 2013 Outstanding Scholarship Award

► Darin White, professor of marketing and program director of

sports marketing, 2013 Outstanding Service Award.

In other faculty news, Stephen Jones was named the John W. Gay professor of banking, Barbara Cartledge was promoted to assistant dean of academic programs and Sara Helms was appointed director of the Brock Scholars Program.

UNIVERSITY OF MOBILE

► **University of Mobile School of Business Announces Student Honors, Inducts 17 Into International Honor Society:** The University of Mobile (UMobile) School of Business presented awards to two students and inducted 17 others into the Delta Mu Delta International Honor Society.

Jane Finley, dean of the UMobile School of Business, presented the ACBSP Leadership Award to Ashley Shelton, of Mobile. The award is given to a student demonstrating outstanding leadership in the School of Business.

Amy Wright, of Mobile, was awarded the Leon C. Megginson Best Paper Award, given to the master of business administration (MBA) student who wrote the best MBA comprehensive paper as chosen by the comp committee.

The awards were presented during the April 10 induction ceremony for UMobile School of Business students into the Delta Mu Delta International Honor Society.

Inductees are students majoring in accounting, business administra-

tion, computer information systems and MBA programs who are juniors and seniors in the top 20 percent of their respective classes or graduate students who have attained at least a 3.6 GPA in more than half of their required courses.

JUDSON COLLEGE

► **Judson Commencement Set:** Mark Foley will be commencement speaker for Judson College in Marion on June 22. Foley has served as the third president of the University of Mobile (UMobile) since 1998.

A native of Wichita Falls, Texas, Foley earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas, and master’s and doctoral degrees in psychology and counseling from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Foley began working in administration at New Orleans Seminary in 1987 and was later promoted to executive vice president before his move to UMobile.

Since coming to Mobile, Foley has emphasized the core values of faith, learning, conviction, integrity, stewardship and leadership. He has helped the university improve academic standards, build new facilities and establish the Center for Performing Arts and the College of Christian Leadership.

The commencement will be in the Alumnae Auditorium at 11 a.m.



Photo courtesy of J.B. Burt

Japanese Bible teacher retires

Tsuneyoshi Takeda (right) was recently honored on his retirement, celebrating 50 years of ministry and 50 years of marriage to his wife, Makimi (second from right). Takeda taught Japanese Bible studies at New Vision Baptist Church, Prattville, for more than 17 years. In 1977, he moved from Japan to Atlanta, where he began a Bible class in an old house he purchased. He traveled to cities around the South to teach Japanese Bible classes, including teaching in homes in Prattville for five years before starting Bible studies at New Vision. He and his wife have three daughters, two of whom are missionaries. Takeda was presented a plaque by (from left) J.B. Burt, pastor of New Vision, and Bill Morgan, director of missions for Autauga Baptist Association. (TAB)

Farsi church services a ‘target’

Security forces arrested an Iranian pastor in Tehran and announced that his church was closed as a crackdown on Christians intensified ahead of June elections.

Robert Asserian was arrested May 21 during a prayer meeting at his Central Assemblies of God Church after authorities entered his house and confiscated some of his belongings, according to advocacy group Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW).

Farsi Christian News Network reported May 24 that agents of

the Revolutionary Guard arrived May 22 and announced that the church was closed for the foreseeable future, although that was not independently confirmed.

Khataza Gondwe, Africa and Middle East director for CSW, told Morning Star News that the use of the Farsi in sermons at church makes it a particular target.

“The government’s main concern ... is that Muslim Farsi speakers may attend and convert, hence the pressure to close Farsi services,” Gondwe said. (MS)

Pastors imprisoned, fined in Kazakhstan

A Protestant pastor in Kazakhstan’s capital Astana, Bakhytzhon Kashkumbayev, was arrested on criminal charges of “harming health” May 17, Forum 18 News Service reported.

On May 19, he was ordered to be held for two months’ pre-trial detention on unclear charges, including praying and singing.

Other Christian leaders also are being persecuted in Kazakhstan.

Baptist leader Aleksei Asetov was jailed for three days in early May for refusing to pay a fine equivalent to a year and a half’s average local wages.

The fine was imposed for meeting for worship without state permission. (F18)

Rooted in God's Word



Kari Jobe

Photo courtesy of Merge PR

Singer/songwriter Jobe shares God's truths through music

By Leann Callaway
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

With a captivating voice and a strong desire to see lives changed for the glory of God, singer/songwriter Kari Jobe hopes to inspire audiences across the country to press into God's truths.

As Jobe leads worship, she also encourages young girls to become rooted in God's Word and not succumb to the pressures of society.

"I get so angry at the enemy on behalf of teenage girls especially," Jobe said. "I can't stand that the enemy tries to lie and affect them with their image and self-worth. I really want for teenage girls to understand that they are a child of God, fearfully and wonderfully made. It's so important to learn to walk in the ways of the Lord during those crucial teenage years."

Jobe accepted Christ at a young age, and she said her teenage years played a pivotal role in drawing her closer to the Lord.

"I was always in church growing up," Jobe said. "When I was a teenager, I started growing in my relationship with God and realized that He wanted a relationship with me. I realized that I couldn't just latch onto my parents' faith and belief in Christ; I had to make my own decision to follow Him as well. I started to understand what that meant and looked like. I'm very thankful that I finally got that revelation."

Today Jobe maintains a busy schedule and is currently on the Burning Lights Tour with Chris Tomlin and guest speaker Louie Giglio, pastor of Passion City Church, Atlanta.

Through her music and message, Jobe desires to raise awareness for the A21 Campaign, which focuses on abolishing human trafficking in the 21st century. To help raise funds and awareness in the fight against human trafficking and injustice, Jobe and her sister, Kris, have created an exclusive line of jewelry and T-shirts that contributes all proceeds to the campaign.

Jobe is also lending her voice to support the movie "Not Today," which was released nationwide April 12 and sheds light on the 27 million people trapped in modern-day slavery. This film project calls believers to respond by taking action and combating human trafficking with the gospel.

The songs on her current album, "Where I Find You," remind worshippers to dwell in the beauty and majesty of God's presence.

God's love for us

"I want to help people connect with God and help them understand His heart for us," Jobe said. "Music can be a powerful way to minister to people in times of trouble — to lead them to the feet of Jesus, who can bring peace, life, hope and healing. I've really been impacted to write songs that someone could sing to the Lord during challenging times, even when they can't find the right words on their own."

"During those times, I pray that these songs will encourage and remind people that nothing can separate us from the love of God, and there is nothing that He can't handle. He is the ultimate source of comfort, strength and protection. It's especially important for students to hear that message and know the truth of what God proclaims, because they are up against such a battle with the lies of this world." ❧

"Music can be a powerful way to minister to people in times of trouble — to lead them to the feet of Jesus, who can bring peace, life, hope and healing."

Kari Jobe
singer/songwriter

Religion In America

Compiled from Wire Services

NYC council endorses church rentals

NEW YORK — The New York City Council overwhelmingly passed a resolution calling on the state Legislature to allow houses of worship to rent from public schools.

The vote tally was 38–11, with council speaker Christine Quinn — the top Democratic candidate for New York City mayor, who will control education policy if elected — voting against it. It passed May 22.

"We had a huge, huge victory today," said Bill Devlin, who with council member Fernando Cabrera (D-Bronx) has headed up a group of pastors pushing for churches' equal access to public buildings.

The New York City Board of Education's policy forbids houses of worship from renting public schools but allows any other nonprofit to rent the space. Recently a federal judge placed an injunction on the policy, so houses of worship can rent from public schools, for now. The city has appealed the decision to the U.S. Second Circuit Court of Appeals, which heard arguments in November 2012 and could issue a decision any day. At least 40 churches in the city rent spaces from public schools.

The nonbinding council resolution now heads to New York's Legislature. Last year the state Senate approved legislation allowing churches to rent from public schools, but the bill died in the state Assembly after assembly speaker Sheldon Silver refused to bring it to a vote.

"The resolution is more than symbolic," wrote lawyer Jordan Lorence in an email. Lorence is handling the case against the city's policy in court for Alliance Defending Freedom. "The passage of a resolution urging enactment of specific legislation is the formal way the NYC Council makes its will known to state lawmakers."

The city's board of education has said that "impressionable" children might be confused if they saw a religious service happening at their school. Council members who spoke up against the resolution said it violated the Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

Calif. law puts Boy Scouts' tax-exempt status at risk

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Less than a week after the Boy Scouts changed its policy to allow gay-identifying youth, the California Senate passed a law that would revoke the organization's tax-exempt status if it doesn't also allow gay leaders.

The bill is aimed at all tax-exempt youth organizations, but it was evident from the get-go — when Democratic state Sen. Ricardo Lara introduced the bill in February — that the Scouts were the primary target.

On May 23, delegates at the Boy Scouts' national meeting approved new guidelines allowing homosexual-identifying youth to be members. The policy still prohibits openly homosexual adults from serving as leaders. Six days later the California Senate, by a vote of 27–9, passed a bill that would reverse the tax-exempt status of youth organizations that discriminate on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation.

"They are out of line with the values of California and should be ineligible for a tax benefit paid for by all Californians," Lara said of the Scouts, according to *The Sacramento Bee*.

The bill now moves to the Assembly, the lower house of California's Legislature.

Court affirms Planned Parenthood reimbursement

WASHINGTON — Indiana's effort to bar state-directed Medicaid funds from going to Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers has met an apparent dead end.

The U.S. Supreme Court refused May 28 to review a lower court's invalidation of a 2011 law challenged by Planned Parenthood, the country's leading abortion provider. The high court's refusal meant a ruling by the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals against a ban on Medicaid reimbursements for abortion providers will stand, but it also included a victory for pro-lifers.

The action enabled a state ban on some federal block grants for abortion providers to continue.

The case will return to a federal court, which temporarily blocked enforcement of the law in 2011, for what is expected to be a win for Planned Parenthood and its allies, according to *The Indianapolis Star*.

While Planned Parenthood contends Medicaid funding goes toward non-abortion services, pro-life advocates say the money can be used interchangeably and frees up other funds for the organization's abortion business. ❧