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'Part of our culture'

Huntsville youth actively discipling, celebrate with 13 lake baptisms

By Grace Thornton
The Alabama Baptist

On a recent Wednesday night, more than 250 people trodded down the well-worn dirt path from Mount Zion Baptist Church, Huntsville, to the banks of Vaughn Lake.

Almost just as worn is the path to faith in Christ among the church's students and their friends, according to Britton Latham, Mount Zion's student minister.

"Our students do a great job of reaching their friends," Latham said. "When we're in a worship service for students, there would be four or five generations of believers, meaning that students who grew up coming to Mount Zion would bring their friends, who would get plugged in and bring their friends, who would get plugged in and bring their friends and on and on."

That type of disciple making is just "part of our culture" in Mount Zion's student ministry, called Greenhouse, he said.

Latham baptized 13 students in the lake Aug. 7 after a "laid-back" service on the banks that spoke to the importance of baptism.

"Most of the students' families showed up — for some of them, it

was their first time on our campus," he said. "And it was great for our church family to see the fruit of pouring into our student ministry — great to see what God's been doing in their lives."

A lot of the friends that students bring to Greenhouse come from a background where getting to church on Sundays is difficult to do, Latham said.

So the church decided to have the baptisms on a Wednesday night at the lake to make it more accessible for them to "follow through with baptism," he said.

It's something new for the church.

Mount Zion held its first lake baptism recently when a man in the church who had been putting off baptism for 20 years asked to be baptized in the lake.

'Making a difference'

It worked well for him and also for the students, who were "excited to get to celebrate with their friends," Latham said. "They were on board and excited about getting to make their faith public."

Some of the students who were baptized had been Christians for two years. Others had been followers of Christ for only a week or two.



Photo courtesy of Mount Zion Baptist Church

Britton Latham, student minister of Mount Zion Baptist Church, Huntsville, baptizes Steven Underwood in the lake near the church.

But Ron Madison, pastor of Mount Zion, said they are already walking solidly in their new faith and making an impact on others.

"Many of these students are already making a difference in the lives of their friends as they bear testimony of their relationship with Jesus and the difference He has made in their lives," Madison said.

One of those students is 13-year-old Grace Chapman, who made a decision to follow Jesus during Centrifuge camp July 18.

Already Christ has made a big difference in her life, Chapman

said, and she's excited to share that with others. The lake was merely the beginning of that.

"It was really interesting to get to be baptized in the lake rather than inside the walls of the church," Chapman said. "I think that was something special to all of us."

God is doing "great stuff" through the students, Latham said.

"It's been so good to see students intentionally reaching out. For me and the leaders, we're just trying to hang on and keep equipping a generation of students." ■

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COMMENT

When School Bells Ring

When school bells ring across Alabama signaling the beginning of another school year, the sounds will mark the beginning of another chapter in the unbroken support of Baptists in this state for public education.

It was prominent Baptist pastor and politician Daniel P. Bestor, of Greensboro, who offered Alabama's first bill in the state Legislature to create a public school system. What Baptists did for their own children, they wanted for all the state's children.

In his book "Alabama Baptists: Southern Baptists in the Heart of Dixie," Wayne Flynt observes, "No sooner had early Baptists established churches than many of them began schools." He points to one church near Gorgos that started a school and charged each pupil \$1 per term but offered free tuition to children whose parents could not pay.

In 1844 Milo Jewett, then president of Judson College, declared, "Next to educating one's own children, nothing is more important than the education of the entire community." He said Alabama must educate "the whole people" or fall behind other states.

James DeVotie, who served churches in Montgomery and Tuscaloosa and edited *The Alabama Baptist* in the 1800s, contended that development of "mental capital" was the way to extend to "all classes an opportunity to rise from ignorance to a good degree of intellectual culture." He argued that "none should be overlooked" in establishing public schools.

It took the Alabama Legislature about 10 years (1854) to pass a bill establishing public schools in the state but when it finally did most of the leaders behind the effort were either Baptists or Methodists, Flynt points out. One prominent Baptist called education "the birthright of all Americans" and the editor of *The Alabama Baptist* predicted public schools "would be the most profitable investment the state has ever made in any enterprise."

Following the devastation of the Civil War, Baptists continued their enthusiastic support of public education, and Alabama leaders such as Benjamin Riley worked tirelessly to include blacks in the educational efforts. When the state Legislature tried to divide educational funds by race in proportion to the taxes each paid, Baptists objected because blacks had little wealth and paid little taxes at that time. The bill would destroy educa-



THOUGHTS By Bob Terry

tion for black children, Alabama Baptist leaders warned.

The extent of Alabama Baptist support for public education was evidenced in the convention sermon of the 1876 annual meeting when the preacher declared the "primacy of public education above all other state needs."

To be sure, public education had its critics, including some Alabama Baptists. Flynt points to Baptists who complained during the 1870s and 1880s about not being able to teach religion in public schools and others who thought the quality of education too inferior for their children and advocated for private (usually parochial) schools instead.

No time to flee

Baptists and other religious groups have a long history of sponsoring parochial schools in Alabama and still do. Some of these are outstanding institutions academically and in other ways. The right and responsibility for parents to educate their children as they desire is deeply rooted among Baptists. In 1971, for example, Southern Baptists declared in resolution form "that we reaffirm the right of religious people or religious bodies to develop institutions to achieve their religious objectives at their own expense, and that we reaffirm the right of parents to send their children to nonpublic schools at their own expense."

Historically Baptists have believed as the resolution declares: "That we reaffirm our belief that the use of public funds for education in church-controlled schools, regardless of the manner in which these funds are channeled to church school, is contrary to the principle of religious liberty." That includes the tax credit provision passed by the Alabama Legislature during its last ses-

sion as part of the Alabama Accountability Act.

Through another resolution in 1979 Southern Baptists noted their historical support of public education and their commitment to the right of all children to achieve their God-given potential. "We hereby commit ourselves to help achieve quality education for every child in this nation," the resolution said in closing.

Critics of public education can be found today as they could more than a century ago. Some Baptists still object to religion being taught in public schools. Concern about quality of education continues. A few Southern Baptist leaders such as Al Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., have called for "responsible Southern Baptists to develop an exit strategy from the public schools." When that idea was presented to Alabama Baptists in 2004, it was roundly rejected. A year later a similar proposal was rejected by messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Some political organizations also are piling on public schools with loud assertions that "the public schools have failed." While there are isolated problems, no other public institution has done as much good for as many people as public schools. No other public institution has contributed so much to the progress of our state and our nation as the public schools. Public schools have been part of the culture of aspiration for Baptists and others since their founding, and they still are.

Alabama public schools have work to do, and they are improving. Reading scores are up. Math scores are up. Curriculum is improving. Standardized tests show in some places elementary students from poverty-plagued neighborhoods outperform students from some of the state's wealthiest areas.

The scores remind us that to equate demographics with destiny is a mistake. Children from poor families, like those from other families, can achieve great things if provided the opportunity.

Public education can work for all. Some low-achieving schools have been turned around. Others can be. It takes leadership from teachers and administrators, participation by parents, support from the community and resources from government. This is no time to flee from the public schools. Children still need the opportunity to become all God created them to be. Alabama still needs to educate "the whole people" or fall behind. Investing in public education is still the state's most profitable investment.

Whether one attends public schools, private schools, parochial schools or home schools, all can support public schools.

So when the school bells ring in a few days, say a prayer for the public schools — for the administrators, teachers, students and staff. Many of them are your fellow Alabama Baptists. Be a part of Alabama Baptists' long history of supporting public education.

LETTERS

TO THE EDITOR

PERSECUTED CHURCH

Thank you for your column "Persecuted Church." Christians need to be kept aware of the suffering endured by our brothers and sisters, especially

in Asia, Africa and the Middle East. We all need to lift up the persecuted brethren in daily prayer and thank God for our own religious freedom in this nation. If we aren't paying close

attention and faithfully noting our (See 'Letters,' page 21)





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

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Father/son team

Gadsden duo Wilburn and Wilburn sings about 'the Father and Son'

By Anna Keller

Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

Jonathan Wilburn doesn't remember a time when music wasn't a central part of his life.

His parents met in high school thanks to a mutual love of singing and began performing together in church as a duo. He recalls his mother playing the piano every night after supper for him and his two brothers, and the boys and their father made up a quartet.

The family liked singing together so much, in fact, that they began to tour — first as a quartet and then later a trio made up of Jonathan Wilburn and his parents. Eventually he left his Tennessee home to move to Alabama to be the lead singer of the Gold City Quartet.

It's no surprise, then, that Jonathan Wilburn infused his own home with music as well, and his son, Jordan, has been singing since he could talk. Jordan Wilburn sang with his dad and grandparents when he was a toddler and later, in high school, sang in church regularly.

But after touring with Gold City for 12 years, Jonathan Wilburn got burned out and grew tired of the constant touring. He came home and accepted a job as a car salesman, where he worked until he felt God leading him to return to singing.

"I remember the day I went in to work and God laid it on my heart to begin singing again," he said. "I wanted to start a quartet, and

I prayed and couldn't get a peace about it. The words God put on my heart were, 'All I need is a willing father and son to tell others about the Father and Son.'"

Jonathan Wilburn quit his job at the dealership that very day and formed a gospel duo with his son called, appropriately, Wilburn and Wilburn.

Growing ministry

The two started small, performing locally a couple of times a month. Quickly, though, their ministry began to grow, and the bookings started really coming in.

"Our biggest source of activity is in the church, but we've also performed at fairs, small theaters and as a part of some crossover contemporary stuff," Jordan Wil-

burn said. "I'd love to work more in the conference venues as well. We've done some of that."

For Jonathan Wilburn, being able to sing with his son by his side is an incredibly special opportunity — one he's consistently grateful for.

"I'm thankful to be working with my son, and our constant goal is to follow God and His will," he said. "It's hard to let go of our will and hang on to His, but the older I get the more I realize how important it is to submit to the will of God. There's such peace in it."

Bruce Freeman, pastor of Faith Baptist Church, LaGrange, Ga., has known Jonathan Wilburn for several years and describes him as being someone "who's definitely on solid ground." The Wilburns



Photo courtesy of Wilburn and Wilburn

FOLLOWING GOD — Jonathan Wilburn (left) and his son, Jordan, started singing as a gospel duo after God laid it on Jonathan Wilburn's heart.

have performed at Freeman's church several times, and they're booked again for a performance in October.

"There's nothing else out there in the southern gospel world that's a father/son combination like this," Freeman said. "I think it speaks volumes when they just walk out on the stage, just to see a father/son combination working so well."

Plus the duo is able to connect with a broad audience because Jordan Wilburn resonates with the younger crowd while the older folks relate to Jonathan Wilburn, Freeman said.

Truly ministering to audiences through song is something Jordan Wilburn feels called to do.

"I'm starting to learn more that whomever God puts in front of us each night is who

is supposed to be there," Jordan Wilburn said. "If that night we communicate the message of the songs we sing, then we've reached our goal for the night. We take it one day at a time."

Reaching audiences

And it's certainly proven to be effective. In addition to connecting with audiences, Wilburn and Wilburn's first record was nominated for a Dove Award, the group won the 2012 *Singing News* Horizon Group of the Year Award and Jordan Wilburn was awarded the 2012 Horizon Individual Award. The father/son team is now working on their sophomore album.

For more information about Wilburn and Wilburn, visit www.wilburn2.com.

Clarification to Aug. 8 editorial about words of 'In Christ Alone'

EDITOR'S NOTE — The editorial "Why Disagree About the Words of a Hymn?" published in the Aug. 8 issue received thousands of responses via Twitter, email, the website and phone calls in less than 24 hours. Because of the questions raised by the responses, the following clarification is offered.

By Bob Terry

Editor, The Alabama Baptist

Before I arrived at the office the morning of Aug. 9, I received a phone call telling me the editorial "Why Disagree About the Words of a Hymn?" had generated a lot of response overnight. I was shocked when the caller added that I was being accused of not believing in penal substitutionary atonement — the teaching that Jesus paid the price for sin when He died on the cross in our place.

That anything I write would call into question the atoning work of Jesus Christ is inappropriate and to those who read this editorial that way, I apologize.

Let me be clear. I believe in and unapolo-

getically preach: 1. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23); 2. The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life (Rom. 6:23); 3. God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself (2 Cor. 5:19); 4. How much more, then will the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our conscience from acts that lead to death so that we may serve the living God (Heb. 9:14); 5. If you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved (Rom. 10:9); 6. Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (Rom. 10:13).

Consistent with that belief I wrote in the editorial, "... it is God's grace that initiated the sacrifice of Jesus to provide covering and forgiveness for our sin and that His sacrifice satisfied the holy demands of God's righteousness for sin to be punished." I believe that is an affirmation of the penal substitutionary atonement understanding of salvation.

Again, sin separates us from God. Sin has a price that has to be paid before sinful man can

be reconciled to a holy God. Jesus paid the price for our sin on Calvary and only because of what was done for us on the cross can we be reconciled to God. I understand that to be bedrock Christian beliefs.

With this said, the editorial in question was not about atonement. It was about what has been called "the mindset of God" at Calvary. Some emphasize God as angry and vengeful. To me this does not properly recognize God's love expressed in the incarnation when "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."

Calvary was a place of punishment — punishment for human sin. The law was fulfilled to demonstrate God's righteousness and justice. The punishment was poured out on Jesus. Calvary is also the place that God's love is seen most clearly for there "He gave His only begotten Son."

Whether punishment equates to anger or vengeance may be debated but there is no question about God's loving initiative in making salvation possible.

To read the Aug. 8 editorial, visit www.thealabamabaptist.org.



Photo courtesy of Hillcrest Baptist Church

Hillcrest Baptist Church, Enterprise, makes Vacation Bible School (VBS) an all-day affair with traditional VBS in the morning, lunch then afternoon sports camps.



Vacation Bible School connects churches to families, children statewide

By Grace Thornton
The Alabama Baptist

If Hillcrest Baptist Church, Enterprise, decided to stop having Vacation Bible School (VBS), “the kids would tar and feather me,” said Annette Whitton, director of children’s ministries. “They absolutely love it.”

For the last seven years, Hillcrest has made VBS an all-day affair with traditional VBS in the morning, lunch then afternoon sports camps.

“We started doing it this way the year Game Day Central came out as the LifeWay VBS theme (2007), and it all went together so well that we decided to keep doing it,” Whitton said. “It gives men an opportunity to work their schedules and participate in VBS. If they love football or are a coach, or have something else that’s really their love, they can use it to pour into the kids.”

This year, Hillcrest offered tracks in football, baseball, softball, basketball, tennis, volleyball, soccer and cheerleading, as well

as options like taekwondo, cooking, painting and lyrical worship.

Each track breaks halfway through for a devotional time to talk about what they learned that morning in VBS or hear a testimony from a coach.

“Sometimes it sticks even better in that context. I know with my own son, if you could teach it to him on a baseball diamond, you were golden,” Whitton said. “You can teach truth and say, ‘This is how to take it to your Christian life.’”

‘It was amazing’

After VBS was over, Hillcrest baptized six children on family night, two the following Sunday and several more in the weeks following.

“It was amazing,” she said. VBS week, she said, is all about “speaking Jesus into some kids.”

It’s an effort that’s still got a lot of traction among Alabama Baptist churches — and gets a lot of results, said James Blakeney, an associate in the office of Sunday



Photos courtesy of Hillcrest Baptist Church

Hillcrest Baptist Church, Enterprise, offers a track in taekwondo as part of its afternoon sports camp.

“More professions of faith are made as a result of Vacation Bible School than most anything we do.”

James Blakeney
associate in the office of Sunday School and discipleship
Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions

VBS reaches Spanish-speaking children

Not only did a Vacation Bible School (VBS) in Foley teach 40 Spanish-speaking children the message of Jesus, it also reached more than 100 people in the community with the gospel during its VBS Family Night.

It was all part of Pastor Annel Robayna's vision for Iglesia Cristiana Dulce Refugio, a church he planted in 2012 that currently meets in the building of First Baptist Church, Foley. Instead of just reaching children through the VBS, Robayna sought to reach new families in the Hispanic community around Foley, and beyond, with the gospel.

All this happened at Friendship Baptist Church, Bon Secour, which made its Family Life Center available for the VBS, held July 15–18. A team of 29 adults and youth from two other Hispan-

ic churches in the state led the VBS, and two people on the team accepted Christ and were baptized July 18.

According to Randy Johnson, pastor of Friendship Baptist, Robayna's church interacted with enough new families during the VBS that Robayna has hopes to expand the ministry and begin meeting in Friendship Baptist's Family Life Center on Sundays at 3 p.m. for worship.

The church hopes eventually to include English as a Second Language classes and Bible studies, Johnson said.

Rick Ellison, director of missions for Baldwin Baptist Association, said the work Robayna is doing is "important because of the numerous Spanish-speaking people in our county who need to be reached for Christ." (Neisha Fuson)

School and discipleship of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions.

"It's the largest evangelistic outreach we have," he said.

While numbers for this summer's VBS are still rolling in — 1,184 Alabama Baptist churches have reported a total enrollment of 135,934 so far — the final numbers for 2012 were up from the year before, Blakeney said. In 2012, more than 2,900 Alabama Baptist churches reported 255,431 children attending and 7,241 making professions of faith in Jesus Christ.

That's a figure up from 15 years prior, too — something that's against the national average, according to a recent Barna poll, "The State of Vacation Bible School."

Eighty-one percent of American churches held VBS in 1997, but that figure dropped to 67 percent in 2012.

But according to Barna, that might not necessarily mean it's losing ground as a staple summer outreach.

"In recent years, Christians have been somewhat anxious about the continued tradition of VBS," the Barna study read. "And while the national offering of VBS has dipped slightly since 1997, when eight out of 10 churches were hosting VBS, six to seven out of 10 churches has been the steady rate since then. Such consistency indicates the summer spiritual education of children isn't going away anytime soon."

And it continues to be a mainstay of Southern Baptist churches even if it's declining across other denominations. Nine out of 10 Southern Baptist churches held VBS in 2012, according to Barna.

It's an effort that has seen a massive harvest over the years, Blakeney said.

"More professions of faith are made as a result of Vacation Bible School than most anything we do," he said.

And Barna reports that VBS may also hold some sway over whether or not children stay connected to a church as young adults, an age when many fall away.



Photo courtesy of Macedonia Baptist Church

Macedonia Baptist Church, Vinemont, in the Battleground Community, exhibits a rollercoaster it built for Vacation Bible School.

Whitton said one thing that has helped with that issue at Hillcrest is to utilize a different set of people for the morning VBS and the afternoon sports camps. They also choose their dates to fall so that school-teachers have ample rest time between when school breaks for summer and VBS begins.

Connecting with families

They also try not to drag out the responsibilities — they do much of their follow-up while VBS is still going on, using the evenings to visit the families of the children who make decisions, she said.

"It really connects with the children and the families to show that we care enough to visit while VBS is going on," Whitton said.

For more information about the Barna study, visit www.barna.org. To submit your church's VBS report, contact your association's director of missions, or Blakeney at 1-800-264-1225, Ext. 286. ☞



Photo by Mandy Cole

Deerfoot Baptist Church, Trussville, holds 'Kingdom Chronicles: The Armor of God' Vacation Bible School on June 17–21. A total of 84 children participated this year.



Photo by Neisha Fuson

Stephen Hall (left), associate pastor of NorthPark Baptist Church, Trussville, leads the outdoor activities portion of the church's Vacation Bible School held in early June.



Photo courtesy of FBC Centre

FBC Centre holds an adult class at Vacation Bible School (VBS). There were 21 adults enrolled. The church also held VBS at night for the first time.

BACK TO CAMPUS



Photo by Jake Duke

University of West Alabama



Shelton State Community College Photo by Bethany Rogers

Alabama Baptists pray for college, university students as fall semester begins

By Carrie Brown McWhorter
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

Unless you a.) live or work in a college town or b.) are sending a student off to college this fall, you might not think about the 300,000 students enrolled in colleges and universities throughout Alabama. This year, state

Baptist leaders hoped to change that with a prayer emphasis.

Praying Across Alabama Campuses is a continuation of Praying Across Alabama, a statewide emphasis that began in February. On-campus events held during the week of Aug. 5–10 sought to engage Alabama ministry leaders in praying for revival on campuses around the state, according to Mike Nuss, director of the

office of collegiate and student ministries for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions (SBOM). Though the on-campus effort has wrapped up, Nuss encourages Alabama Baptists to continue praying for students as they return to campus this fall.

“The overall goal of Praying Across Alabama Campuses is simply to support and cover with prayer Baptist Campus Ministries (BCM) and church ministry efforts to

reach students for Christ,” Nuss said.

College campuses in Alabama represent a vast missions field of young people, said Jerrod Brown, senior Baptist campus minister at the University of South Alabama in Mobile. College students are making decisions that will affect their entire lives — professionally, personally and most importantly, spiritually — so it is critical that they hear about Jesus, Brown said.

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Auburn University

Photo by Doug Rogers

BACK TO CAMPUS



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Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions

"They are exposed to a variety of worldviews and truth claims that will ultimately fail them or leave them unfulfilled," Brown said. "It is incredibly important to make sure collegians are exposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ — the Way, the Truth and the Life."

It is also important to reach students soon after their arrival on campus, Nuss said.

"College students set patterns for their college career during the first three weeks of school — friends and social connections, study habits, church attendance and ministry involvement. That is why BCM and church collegiate ministries on campuses across Alabama work hard to connect with students and impact those habits during the first three weeks they are on campus," he said.

Praying for students and ministry leaders is an essential part of reaching those students during

those initial weeks and during their college years, Nuss said. Praying Across Alabama Campuses was a way to engage all Alabama Baptists in the effort.

At least 19 organized events were scheduled on 15 campuses across the state. Though each event was focused around prayer, organizers took different approaches on each campus. At the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, Woman's Missionary Union members hosted a prayer tea at the Baptist Student Center to pray specifically for collegiate women in Tuscaloosa. Both Auburn University and Troy University

planned times to pray specifically for the approximately 8,000 international students from more than 100 countries who attend college in Alabama. At the University of Alabama-Huntsville, local ministers planned a mid-day prayer walk Aug. 6, and students

(See 'Prayer,' page 8)

"It is incredibly important to make sure collegians are exposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ."

**Jerrold Brown
senior Baptist campus
minister, University
of South Alabama**



Photo by Bethany Rogers

University of Alabama

"The overall goal of Praying Across Alabama Campuses is simply to support and cover with prayer Baptist Campus Ministries (BCM) and church ministry efforts to reach students for Christ."

**Mike Nuss, director of the office of collegiate and student ministries
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Catherine Gayle Thrash

Montgomery, Ala.

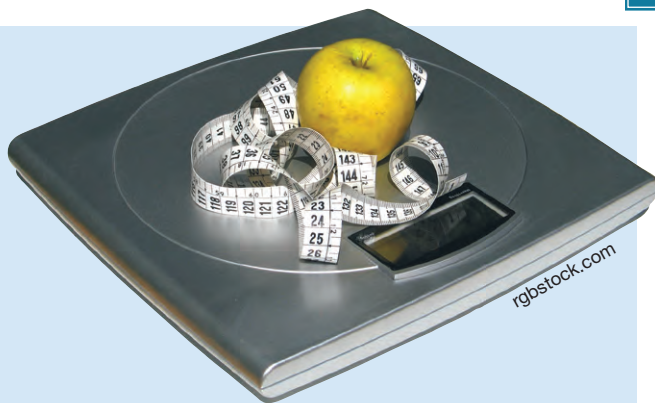
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Avoid 'Freshman 15'

Tips for maintaining healthy weight, lifestyle during college

Trying to avoid the dreaded "Freshman 15" weight gain? While college is an adjustment, it doesn't have to mean an adjustment in your pants size.

In fact, the Freshman 15 is a myth. Freshman students gain only 2.5 to 3.5 pounds on average during their first year in college, according to a recent study published in "Social Science Quarterly." But be advised, the same study finds that college students do gain moderate but steady weight during and after college.

So stay vigilant about diet and exercise.

► Be Prepared

"Stress, anxiety and homesickness can all lead to overeating," warns registered dietitian nutritionist Kristi King, spokesperson with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Before you snack, ask your-

self why you're doing so. If stress, anxiety or sadness is a factor, take a study break to chat with friends or go on a walk.

► Smart Snacks

Late nights and stress can lead to binge eating, so don't keep junk food on hand. Instead stock healthy snacks that combine protein and carbohydrates.

► Don't Skip Breakfast

"Breakfast wakes up the metabolism and provides energy to the brain and muscles for the day's activities," King said. "People who eat breakfast tend to eat less throughout the day."

King recommends that breakfast be quick and combine carbohydrates and some protein to help keep students feeling full. Good options include whole-grain toast with peanut butter, a low-fat granola bar and fruit or a whole-wheat tortilla with hummus and an apple.

(See 'Exercise,' page 12)



University of Alabama in Huntsville

Photo by Edwin Hocutt

Prayer vital during formative college years

(continued from page 7)
gathered for prayer later that evening on the campus' new greenway.

Prayer walks around each campus and prayer rallies at designated locations were part of most events. At Troy University, local ministers prayer walked

around student housing, according to campus minister Brad Bensinger. Through the Troy BCM Facebook page, Bensinger also encouraged students to pray about how they can be involved in discipleship during the upcoming academic year.

Nuss said Alabama Baptists

should continue to pray for the state's college students, specifically for the following concerns:

► For students to be receptive to the gospel message.

► For campus ministers and church collegiate ministry leaders.

► For students as they en-



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BACK TO CAMPUS

“We encourage people to pray for God to help the student missionaries see their role in making disciples back on their campuses.”

Mike Nuss, director of the office of collegiate and student ministries, Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions

counter challenges to their faith and witness.

► For churches as they reach out to students.

► For campuses to be open to ministry efforts.

Nuss also suggests praying for collegiate believers to grow and mature in their faith during these formative years.

“Pray that believers on each campus will be strengthened to speak, serve and love more boldly and more often,” he said.

Finally Nuss encourages Alabama Baptists to pray for student missionaries who have served

around the world this summer through One Mission Students.

“We encourage people to pray for God to help the student missionaries see their role in making disciples back on their campuses,” Nuss said.

Ultimately the goal is to involve all Alabama Baptists in regularly praying for college students, Brown said.

“Prayer is our dependence on God to move in our world. If we desire to see a mighty movement of God on the college campus, dependence on God through prayer is a prerequisite,” Brown said.



Photo by Doug Rogers

Jacksonville State University

As a college minister, Brown is uplifted by the prayers for the students he works with and others like them across the state.

“It is incredibly encouraging to see Alabama Baptists join together in a mighty movement of prayer to seek God’s movement among collegians,” he said.

More information about Praying Across Alabama Campuses and college/BCM ministries is available at the SBOM website, www.alsbom.org.



Photo by Chris Mills

Troy University

“If we desire to see a mighty movement of God on the college campus, dependence on God through prayer is a prerequisite.”

Jerrod Brown

senior Baptist campus minister, University of South Alabama

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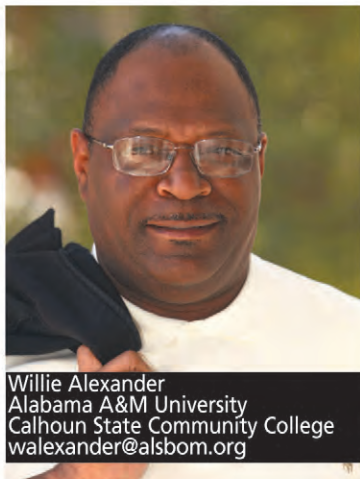
For campus ministers and church collegiate ministry leaders.

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For campuses to be open to ministry efforts.

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Willie Alexander
Alabama A&M University
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Are you, or is someone you know, enrolling in an Alabama college or university this fall? Consider contacting one of these state missionaries, who serve as campus ministers through BCMs across our state. Let them help you make your next step!



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University of Alabama in Huntsville
Calhoun Community College
Huntsville
ehocutt@alsbom.org



Jake Duke
West Central Alabama Area
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Gary Brittain
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Alabama Baptist Convention
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university of mobile

Where learning, faith, leadership change the world

From singing at the Pentagon to winning national honors as entrepreneurs who operate a clothes closet that helps those in need, University of Mobile (UMobile) students are showing how “Learning, Faith & Leadership” can change the world.

The energy on campus is evident as faculty and staff use the final days before classes begin Aug. 19 to prepare for residence halls filled to capacity and students eager to develop their talents in more than 40 areas of study.

Ram Rush, the annual back-to-school orientation extravaganza of get-to-know events, concerts, worship experiences and athletic competitions, begins Aug. 16 when students move in and continues through Aug. 24.

What they will see

The most noticeable changes to campus are the result of the university’s faithful stewardship of resources. This summer, UMobile renovated existing academic buildings to make more efficient use of space and meet changing needs.

One key aspect of the project is the retaining wall constructed on both sides of the entrance drive — a necessary and beautiful addition designed to save the historic Eichold Oaks lining the drive from erosion that threatened them.

Additional facility updates include:

► Renovated Ben May building to house the College of Arts & Sciences, with 10 fac-

ulty offices and five classrooms.

► Updated Frances Garner and M.C. Farmer academic buildings.

► Expanded the bookstore and moving the student fitness center to Bedsole Commons, the student center on the first floor of J.L. Bedsole Library.

► Replaced original windows in Weaver Hall with tinted energy-efficient windows that will reduce heating and air conditioning costs.

► Installed outdoor lights at Jacobs Baseball Field to allow for night games.

► Completed baseball locker room with erosion control under-way.

► Renovated outdoor swimming pool with new decking and restrooms.

What they will experience

The “University of Mobile Experience” provides outstanding and challenging academic opportunities, a variety of ways to learn and practice leadership, and intentional faith-developing Bible study, worship, service, missions, ministry and more. Programs are constantly being updated and expanded, including:

► Freshman Seminar, a series of classes that provides new students with tools and tips for college success, adds a new strengths development program. Part of the Student Success Center’s “Freshman Year to Dream Career” four-year career development program for all students, the strengths-based

program helps students identify personal strengths and talents while intentionally developing them so as to stand out to future employers.

► UMobile is launching a new record label, 8Eighty Records, to develop students and alumni as Christian vocal and instrumental artists. The label’s first release will be a live worship album recorded at Ram Hall featuring four original songs written by UMobile students and alumni.

► The School of Christian Ministries is engaging students in interactive ministry by integrating academic training in ministry coursework, practical training in ministry teams and leadership training as ministry interns, plus international service projects and partnerships with churches and faith-based organizations.

► A new Show Choir, Chorale and Percussion Ensemble are among the 22 ensembles in the Center for Performing Arts/School of Music and School of Worship Leadership. A full schedule of performing arts events is on the university calendar at www.umobile.edu, including the popular Christmas Spectacular, which drew national attention in 2012. To arrange for an ensemble to perform at an area church, school or community event, call 251-442-2420.

► Project Serve will be held Sept. 20, when the university moves the classroom to the community with service projects at more than 60 locations in Mobile and Baldwin counties.



Photo courtesy of the University of Mobile

CLASSROOM TO COMMUNITY — UMobile student Nicole Barker visits at a veteran’s home during Project Serve 2012.

► The College of Arts and Sciences is piloting the use of a cutting-edge technology, VoiceThread, in selected courses. The cloud-based application allows students easy access to course material away from campus and encourages off-campus classroom discussions.

Students and families interested in learning more about UMobile are encouraged to visit the

campus during one of the special Visit Days, attend the Christmas Spectacular & Tour Day, enjoy a transfer reception for students considering transferring from another college or arrange a private visit or group tour.

For more information or to arrange a campus visit, go to www.umobile.edu/visit or call enrollment services at 251-442-2222 or 1-800-WIN-RAMS. (UMobile)

Pell City family calls its choice to enroll at UMobile ‘a blessed experience’

Laurie and Paul Brasher of Pell City prayed that God would direct the path their children should follow for their education.

“Without a doubt, the University of Mobile (UMobile) was confirmed in each of our hearts,”

Laurie Brasher said. “We made the decision with much prayer to enroll our son, Seth, and he has had such a blessed experience at UMobile that our daughter, Anna, wanted to enroll as well.”

Today Seth is a senior majoring

in worship leadership and president of the Student Government Association, and Anna is a freshman majoring in nursing.

Laurie and Paul Brasher said it’s easy to list the top three reasons their family chose UMobile:

► “The presence of the Lord is all around. There is no doubt that the Lord is praised on campus.

► “The highly qualified professors are very caring and help the students adjust to college life, giving

wisdom and advice as well as teaching them the curriculum.

► “There are so many activities for our children to be involved in. Seth volunteers in ministries that were not offered in our community or church, and he has become an even stronger leader because of opportunities at UMobile.”

“I believe God will grow wisdom and knowledge in a person when the Lord is exalted first in their lives,” Laurie Brasher said. “When you enter the gates at UMobile, you not only feel the presence of the Lord, you can see the presence of the Lord in the faculty and students.” (UMobile)



Photo courtesy of the University of Mobile

A UMOBILE FAMILY — Paul and Laurie Brasher prayed for God to direct their children’s paths for college, and the path took them to the University of Mobile. Seth (back right) is a senior majoring in worship leadership and is SGA president. Anna (center) is a freshman majoring in nursing, and Luke, 15, is in high school. Paul is pastor of New Hope Baptist Church, Pell City, where Laurie serves as worship leader.

Connect to UMobile

It’s easy to be connected to
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Exercise helps improve one's mood, controls weight, stress

(continued from page 8)

► Cafeteria 101

The dining hall can be a friend or foe. There may be high-calorie foods and oversized portions, but most universities provide nutritious options too. Opt for foods that are baked, broiled, steamed, grilled or roasted, while steering clear of foods that are buttered, fried or swimming in cream sauce.

When filling your plate at the cafeteria, consider following the U.S. Department of Agriculture's MyPlate guidelines.

► Exercise

Regular exercise pays dividends, helping control weight, improve one's mood and control stress.

Many universities have excel-

lent fitness centers available for students, but you don't have to become a gym rat to stay fit. Instead of taking the bus or driving to class, walk or ride your bike.

► Get Help

If you'd like help creating a healthy meal plan or want tips for controlling weight, check to see if your university offers nutrition counseling services. Registered dietitian nutritionists are food and nutrition experts. They can help you ace your health goals.

More tips to maintain a healthy weight your freshman year and beyond can be found at www.eatright.org.

Going to college means adjusting to a new lifestyle. Don't let the changes get the better of your health and wellness. (StatePoint)

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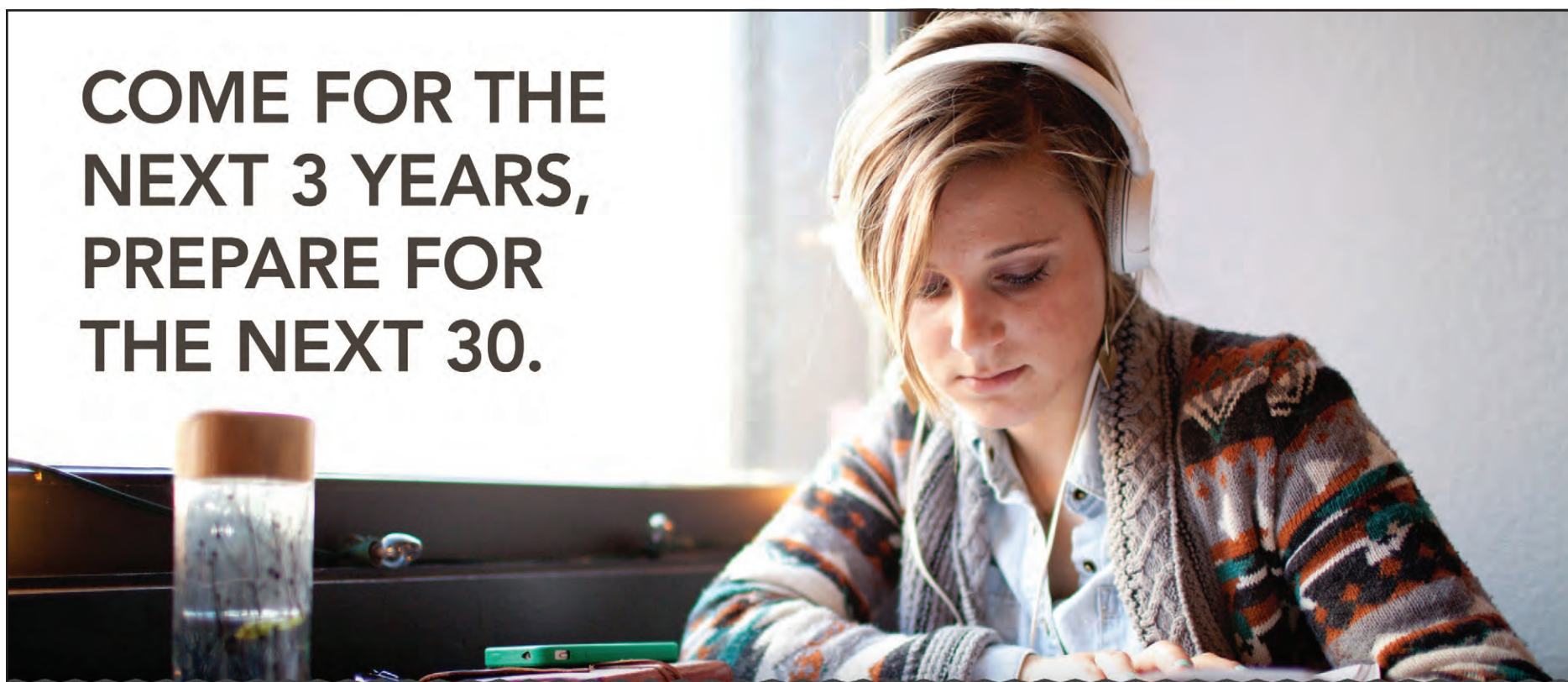


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Judson College

First cohort of nursing students graduate from Judson College this summer

By Kristi Metty
Judson College

This summer, Judson College in Marion graduated its first students from the nursing program. With degree in hand, these students are now eligible to sit for the NCLEX-RN (registered nurse) exam in pursuit of licensure as a registered nurse.

Nursing students have two degree options. They can complete a 72-credit-hour program (including general education and nursing courses) that leads to an associate degree in nursing (ADN). A four-year program leading to a bachelor of science in biology and an ADN (Track III of the biology major) is also available, which requires an additional 68 credit hours.

Judson President David Potts said, "We're a Christian college and the school has always been

solid in science and in pre-professional programs in allied health professions." The new program utilizes the facilities and resources of Judson's highly successful science department, which boasts a 100-percent acceptance rate to graduate schools and professional programs among pre-professional studies students who meet these programs' minimum requirements.

In addition, the nursing labs feature state-of-the-art simulators, which allow students hands-on skills practice. "Our labs provide students greater opportunities to become familiar with equipment and procedures prior to entering the clinical setting," said Christine White, nursing clinical and lab coordinator.

"We began this program to provide opportunities for entrance into the nursing profession. There

"We're a Christian college and the school has always been solid in science and in pre-professional programs in allied health professions."

**President David Potts
Judson College**



Graphic courtesy of Judson College

is an increased interest in the nursing profession and there are not enough nursing schools to meet the demand. Judson's nursing program would welcome the opportunity to provide nursing education to highly qualified stu-

dents," Nursing Program Director Wanda Hayes said.

Financial assistance may be available to qualified nursing students and forgiveness of student loans may be possible.

"Many of our students develop

excellent contacts and references while participating in clinicals in a number of facilities," Hayes said.

For more information, visit www.judson.edu or call the office of admissions at 800-447-9472. ☛

Judson College's 175th anniversary events schedule

With the theme, "Light and Truth, From Generation to Generation," Judson will celebrate her 175th anniversary during academic year 2013-14. This year also marks the 200th anniversary of the arrival of Ann and Adoniram Judson in Burma (Myanmar) and the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Movement — an era of struggle in which justice and truth were sought. In this special year, Judson recognizes the intersection of three anniversaries. In so doing, we reflect upon extraordinary moments that have forever changed lives and look toward a future undergirded by Lux et Veritas — light and truth.

Rose Sunday: Soli Deo Gloria

Aug. 25

A Founder's Day Celebration of students, alumnae and friends

Fannie Lou Hamer: This Little Light...

Sept. 19

Billie Jean Young, alumna of 1974, performs her original one-woman show of the account of a civil rights icon

James H. DeVotie: A Lens into Southern Religious Life in the Nineteenth Century

Oct. 15

Through the ministry of James DeVotie, Chris Peters looks at the impact of the church on southern culture in the 19th century, including race relations and Baptist institutions founded during that period.

Perry Lakes Park: Celebrating Light and Truth Through Creation

Oct. 17

Recognition of Judson's commitment to nature conservation and collaborative efforts in support of Perry Lakes Park

The Legacy of an Excellent Lady as Told by Adoniram Judson

Oct. 22

Jerry Cain, chancellor of Judson University, tells a story of Ann Hasseltine Judson and her impact in their missions efforts through the character of her husband.

An Evening in Ann's Era

Nov. 2

Ann Hasseltine Judson's contemporary, Jane Austen, is the inspiration for the Third Annual English Country Dance

To Do Justice: A Day with the Alabama Supreme Court

Nov. 6

Students and visitors will witness justice in action as the Alabama Supreme Court conducts a session on the Judson College campus.

Christmas Tea and Vespers: Voices Across Generations

Dec. 7

A choral event featuring Judson Singers, Judson Ringers, FAITH Ensemble and the 175th Anniversary Alumnae Choirs

Christian Emphasis Week with Dr. Timothy and Mrs. Denise George

Jan. 14-16, 2014

A Christian Perspective on Life, Race and Prejudice

The Gift of Reason: Exploring Intersections of Science and Biblical Faith

Feb. 13, 2014

A seminar challenging all to grow in their understanding of the relationship between Christianity and the sciences

JIMMYLEE

Feb. 26-March 1 and March 3-5, 2014

A play by Billie Jean Young depicting the tragic story of a Marion native whose death sparked the Selma to Montgomery March and the infamous Bloody Sunday

G 2 G: Lighting the Path

March 18, 2014

A conference for students, alumnae and other participants to explore opportunities and network with leaders in various professional fields

J-Day: A Celebration of Generations

April 4-5, 2014

Generations of alumnae reunite in fellowship, song and tribute to their college and their Judson sisters

Commencement

June 28, 2014

Chuck Hooten leads worship at the state Youth Evangelism Conference at Samford University on Aug. 2-3.

'Making DISCIPLES'

Youth Evangelism Conference challenges students to live Christian life as 'More Than a Game'

By Neal Embry
Intern, The Alabama Baptist

If you think the only reason you go to the school you do is to get an education, you just missed the entire Christian life," Wade Morris said.

Morris was the speaker for the state Youth Evangelism Conference (YEC), held Aug. 2-3 at Samford University's Wright Center. His challenge to the 710 youth echoed the theme of this year's conference, "More Than a Game."

YEC, hosted by the office of collegiate and student ministries of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions (SBOM), is an annual event that brings in youth groups and their ministers for a time of worship and learning.

This year, students were asked to invest

in their relationship with Christ and take it seriously.

"The reason why we take the Christian life seriously is because this isn't a practice round — it's the real thing," Morris said.



Photo by Doug Rogers
Wade Morris

Worship leader Chuck Hooten joined Morris at YEC, and The Big Game Show entertained the audience, creating an interactive time for students through game shows.

Youth ministers also had a chance to watch a new LifeWay Christian Resources film, "Season of a Lifetime," which tells the true story of a high school football coach who deals with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) in his final season.

Keith Loomis, an associate in the SBOM office of collegiate and student ministries, was encouraged by the leaders he saw at YEC.



Photo by Doug Rogers

"I am always humbled and blessed by the men and women who love God and teenagers," he said. "The dedication of these local church leaders in investing in the students' lives for the glory of Jesus and the changed lives for Christ make the theme 'More Than a Game' a lifestyle, not just a theme."

'Pursuing Christ'

Chris Mills, who also serves as an associate in the SBOM collegiate and student ministries office, agreed.

"We have a role in making disciples and pursuing Christ more so we can look like Him," he said.

Mills said Morris, who delivered three messages, "hit a home run every time," and several students decided to follow Christ.

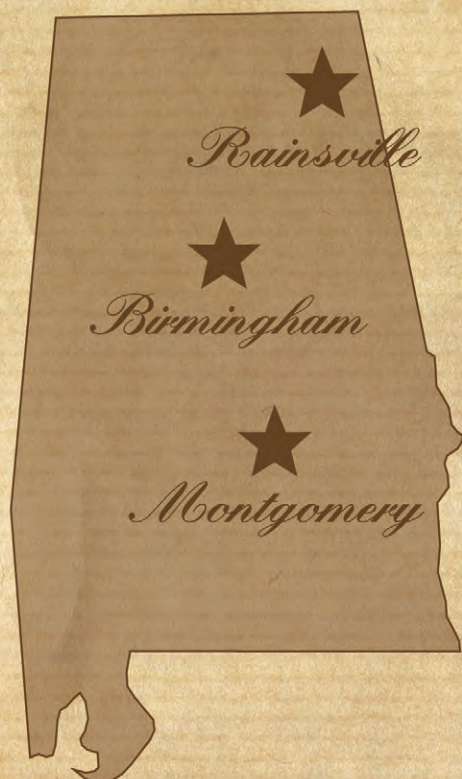
Three of those students came from Calvary Baptist Church, Cottondale.

Todd Larson, youth minister at Calvary, said a conference like YEC is great for their small church.

"We have limited access to these great conferences," he said. "With YEC, because of its low cost, we were able to go. It's so effective, I brought eight youth and three were saved."

While preparations are now being made for next year's YEC, Loomis hopes the 2013 conference has a long-term impact on students.

"I hope they were inspired, challenged and equipped to return back to their missions field (home, school, community) to share the gospel with other students." ❧



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Eventful year ahead for Samford including academic expansion, construction projects

Students of Samford University in Birmingham can expect an eventful 2013-14 academic year ahead. During the summer months, school officials have laid plans that promise exciting activity on several fronts.

"This year, in our most ambitious academic expansion in more than 50 years, we will clear the way for the newly organized College of Health Sciences, which will sustain and expand a long standing commitment to the mission and scholarship of the healing arts professions," Samford President Andrew Westmoreland said.

"We're also excited that construction will begin for a new home for the Brock School of Business," Westmoreland said, adding that Samford is grateful for the friends who have pledged financial support to enable the project to move forward.

The projects are just two of many that underscore the school's commitment to provide the best education possible for future generations.

"In all of our academic programs, our people are engaged in pursuits that are honoring God, strengthening minds and building bridges," Westmoreland said. "In our 172nd year of partnership with Alabama Baptists, it is my prayer that Samford will continue to serve as a vibrant, nationally recognized academic institution that does not waver from its Christian commitment."

"It is an honor for us to be af-

filiated with the work of Alabama Baptists."

Academically speaking

The new College of Health Sciences, when fully developed, will include the existing Ida V. Moffett School of Nursing and McWhorter School of Pharmacy, as well as two new units: a School of Health-Related Professions and a School of Community and Public Health. The department of kinesiology and nutrition, now housed in Orlean

Bullard Beeson School of Education and Professional Studies, will become part of the School of Health-Related Professions. A new Center for Faith and Health, proposed as part of the college, will provide a model for inter-professional practice, scholarship and service that focuses on faith, health, end of life and ethics.

Nursing dean Nena F. Sanders, in a new role as vice provost, will oversee planning for and implementation of the new College of Health Sciences.

In the School of the Arts, creation of the Forum for Worship and the Arts is underway. Matching the strengths of Samford with the needs of the local church, the program addresses a need that worship leaders have for interdisciplinary studies in worship, preaching, music, theatre, dance, visual art, architecture and film. Samford is alone among undergraduate universities in the southeast and all Baptist

"It is my prayer that Samford will continue to serve as a vibrant, nationally recognized academic institution that does not waver from its Christian commitment."

**President Andrew Westmoreland
Samford University**



Photo courtesy of Samford University

WELCOME — Colorful flowers will welcome new and returning students to Samford University.

institutions in engaging worship and the arts at this level. Samford music professor Eric L. Mathis is director of the new program.

Beginning fall 2013, Samford's Orlean Bullard Beeson School of Education will offer graduate courses online in its master of science in gifted education and doctorate in educational leadership degree programs. Besides offering flexibility for working teachers and administrators, the online venue will enable the school to increase its positive impact on educators beyond the campus and state.

The Howard College of Arts and Sciences is initiating a program to recognize juniors who have distinguished themselves through scholarship and service. John Howard Scholars will serve on the Dean's Student Leadership team and also will conduct a collaborative project that will utilize their leadership skills, creativity and academic knowledge. The first class of Howard Scholars will be announced in September.

A Samford welcome

Nineteen new faculty members, including English department chair Mark Bradshaw Busbee, will begin their first fall semester as Samford educators.

About 900 new students are expected to experience their first semester at Samford. The new student cohort, including transfers and entering freshmen, is up 11 percent over 2012. The freshman class con-

tinues to reflect exceptional academic quality as evidenced by an average ACT score of 26 and GPA of 3.7, officials report.

Samford anticipates a record total enrollment of about 4,900 this fall, according to vice president for student affairs and enrollment management R. Phil Kimrey.

Financial blessings

In early July, gifts and pledges to the multiyear, multimillion-dollar Campaign for Samford totaled an impressive \$172 million. At this point in the campaign, which launched in October 2007 to build endowments for scholarships and new buildings, some 16,040 donors have made gifts to Samford.

Vice president for advancement Randy Pittman points out that the largest donor is a collective group of people through the Cooperative Program of the Alabama Baptist Convention. Representing contributions from churches throughout the state, Alabama Baptist campaign gifts totaled more than \$28.6 million as of June 30.

The campaign goal is \$200 million in gifts and pledges by the end of 2014.

Samford also is blessed with significant grant awards that support a variety of opportunities. Recent awards include a \$1 million federal grant to help Ida V. Moffett School of Nursing ease the national shortage of nurse educators, a \$499,551 Department of Justice grant that allows Samford to spearhead a cam-

pus safety program at five area colleges and a \$169,950 grant to fund continued development of a Center for Science and Religion. Other grants support projects that range from ecosystem research to how to reduce avoidable hospitalizations in Alabama nursing facilities, a project led by McWhorter School of Pharmacy experts.

Building the future

Groundbreaking for the state-of-the-art business school building, which will be located north of Harwell G. Davis Library, will take place this academic year.

More immediately, Samford will have two new residence halls move-in ready for students in late August. The buildings in Samford's West Village will bring the university's residence capacity to about 2,300. The J.T. Haywood Field House for baseball and softball teams is nearing completion in the West Campus athletic complex.

To help personnel maintain these and other buildings, several tidy Smart cars have replaced a few tired pick-up trucks. Also in support of Samford's "go-green" effort, other older, inefficient service vehicles will soon be replaced with all-electric models.

Student leaders, athletes, band members and others will arrive on campus throughout August in preparation for the fall semester. Freshman move-in day is Aug. 23. Classes begin Aug. 26. (SU)

Samford fall events of note

► Beeson Divinity School fall chapel series, "Tell It Slant: The Parables of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke," Andrew Gerow Hodges Chapel, 11 a.m., Tuesdays, beginning Sept. 3. Free.

► "Engage the South," church planting conference hosted by Beeson Divinity School and sponsored by Acts 29 and The Gospel Coalition, Sept. 24, Wright Center. Registration information: www.gotothehub.com/acts-29-engage-the-south.

► Samford Hymn Sing, Sept. 29, Reid Chapel, 2 p.m.

► Preview Days sponsored by Office of Admission: Sept. 28, Oct. 19 and Nov. 23.

► Homecoming, Nov. 15-16.

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Dealing with SCHOOL

By Kristin Lowrey and Anne Lawton
Pathways Professional Counseling

I am concerned about my 8-year-old daughter. Beginning over the summer when I would mention school starting in the fall she would get visibly upset but would deny that anything was wrong. She completed second grade in May. She had a great year and the school year seemed to end well. Recently we went to summer registration and were able to meet her upcoming third-grade teacher. The teacher seemed very nice. But my daughter has begun to complain regularly of stomachaches and states she is not going to school when the fall semester begins. I took her to see her pediatrician who said there was nothing medical going on. The doctor mentioned that it could be school anxiety. What does this mean and what do I do now? Please help.

As summer transitions into fall and a new school year begins it is often an exciting time for children: shopping for new school supplies, backpacks and clothes; getting ready to begin a new grade; meet-

ing the new teacher; and finding out who will be in your class.

However it can be a stressful time for the same reasons. A new grade means a lot of changes: a new teacher with new and different rules, new routines and new classmates. Many children have

a fear of school and may resist going to school especially in the beginning of the year. For many this goes away as the fear of the unknown subsides, but for some children this fear grows.

In itself, stress is not a bad thing. Stress is a normal part of life for adults and children alike. But when our stress levels increase and our normal daily functioning and development are affected, there is a problem.

Stress can then turn into general anxiety or anxiety related to something specific, such as school.

"Anxiety is a condition of persistent and uncontrollable ner-



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ANXIETY

vousness, stress and worry that is triggered by anticipation of future events, memories of past events or ruminations over day-to-day events, both trivial and major, with disproportionate fears of catastrophic consequences," according to the "Encyclopedia of Children's Health."

On average, 1 in 10 young people suffer from anxiety, making it the most common emotional problem in children. Children and adolescents dealing with anxiety may display physical symptoms that look similar to a medical illness. With complaints of physical symptoms it is recommended that a medical doctor examine your child to determine if there is a medical reason other than anxiety for those symptoms.

Symptoms of anxiety most often displayed by children and youth include stomachaches, disturbances of eating or sleeping patterns, nervous habits, stuttering and phobic reactions to certain things.

Children may be hesitant to tell a parent what they are feeling or experiencing, or they may not

know what they are feeling or why their bodies are reacting this way.

Parents and other adult figures who are able to connect emotionally and be involved will be an asset to a child experiencing these symptoms.

Sharing experiences

One thing that is helpful to an anxious child is an adult who can share a story about stress in his or her life and talk about how he or

she handled it. In addition, parents should set the tone by following Philippians 4:6, which says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving present your requests to God."

In modeling this correct response to anxiety, children will learn a powerful and healthy coping technique. So sit with your children, give them a hug and talk with them in a way that com-

municates your care and concern for their heart and emotional well-being.

Anxieties and fears often come and go with time, but if your child's anxiety begins to affect his or her ability to perform the responsibilities of childhood such as learning, making friends and having fun, it is time to seek guidance from a qualified mental health practitioner.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Kristin Lowrey (LCSW, PIP, RPT-S) and Anne Lawton (MA, LPC, RPT) are counselors for Pathways Professional Counseling in Birmingham. ☞



Practical & helpful tips

► Before the fall semester begins, visit the school and meet the teacher.

► If your child is attending a new school, then plan to walk around the school and point out the lunchroom, classrooms, restrooms, gym, etc., when you visit prior to school starting.

► Include your child in back-to-school shopping, allowing them to help make

choices when appropriate.

► Talk about school routines including things that have changed since the last school year.

► Arrange playdates with old classmates.

► Talk with your child about returning to school to help lessen back-to-school stress.

► If you have a young child, draw a picture together of the school and the car/bus that will get

them to and from school.

► Make sure your child is getting enough sleep and is eating a healthy diet.

► Teach your child basic coping skills to utilize during school such as taking a deep breath or talking to a friend.

► Meet with your child's teacher to discuss if something at school is contributing to the anxiety.

Source: Pathways Professional Counseling

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Photo by Jennifer Davis Rash

NorthPark Baptist Church, Trussville, members partner with Twenty-Third Street Baptist Church, Birmingham, members to provide new shoes and backpacks for area children.

Shoes & backpacks

Alabama Baptist churches help with back-to-school items

Alabama Baptist churches and associations across the state have been busy filling backpacks with school supplies and purchasing school uniforms and clothes. Some even provided new socks and shoes for needy children.

Members of NorthPark Baptist Church, Trussville, partnered with Twenty-Third Street Baptist Church, Birmingham, Aug. 3 to hand out the items collected by both churches, Mission Birmingham and Samaritan's Feet.

Church members washed the

children's feet and prayed for them before putting on their new socks and shoes. Mission Birmingham also provided items for all the foster children in Jefferson County.

"We took care of all the orphans in the county," said Frank Woodson of Mission Birmingham. (TAB)



Dothan's Mount Enon celebrates 125 years

Mount Enon Baptist Church, Dothan, celebrated its 125th anniversary July 14 with an "old-fashioned" homecoming Sunday and a several-day revival that followed.

According to James Nance, minister of music and senior adults, the Columbia Baptist Association church began the day at 9:30 a.m. with fellowship and registration before the 10 a.m. service.

Jerry Starling, who was ordained in ministry in Mount Enon Baptist, spoke during both the anniversary service and the church's following revival that began Sunday evening and went through July 17. Steve Skidmore, a former Mount Enon minister of music, lead the music for both the anniversary service and revival.

Virginia Stephenson, representative for the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission, presented the church with a plaque. The church history also was read. And a fellowship meal followed the service.

Small crosses made from materials of the 1960s church building's windows were distributed to the approximately 250 attendees as keepsakes. Nance added that a 100-year-old curio cabinet that had been donated to the church was stocked with old church records and other artifacts and was on display for attendees to view. A DVD presentation of church photographs from the past also was shown during the service.

According to anniversary committee chairperson Marty Battle, a quilt made by some of the church's ladies featuring a picture of the original church building and other historical items was hung in the fellowship hall.

Pastor Jerry Hood said the anniversary "was a step into revival (and) we had a lot of good results from revival as well."

Looking to the future of Mount Enon, Hood noted that the 11 acres of land the church has purchased surrounding its current property will give them room to grow. (Julie Payne)

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Birmingham's Dawson Memorial to host ACAP national meeting

By Neal Embry
Intern, The Alabama Baptist

The American Council on Alcohol Problems (ACAP) will hold its national meeting Sept. 23-24 at Dawson Memorial Baptist Church, Birmingham.

The Monday night session will begin at 7 and is open to the public. Local churches and community members are encouraged to attend. The session will feature singing by Elizabeth Godfrey Ford, daughter of Alabama Citizens Action Program (ALCAP) executive director Joe Godfrey, and preaching by Kevin Hamm, pastor of Gardendale First Baptist Church.

Tuesday's speakers are:

► Jim Angel, professor at Samford University in Birmingham, will speak on the effects of alcohol on health.

► Jason Underwood, a lawyer from Kentucky, will address privatization of alcohol sales.

► David Brumbelow, author of "Ancient Wine and the Bible: The Case for Abstinence," will address the topic of his book.

► Tony Cooper, executive director of Birmingham's Jimmie Hale Mission, will speak to the group as they tour the shelter in downtown Birmingham.

ACAP — which is made up of 37 state affiliates — seeks to reduce the influence, availability and consumption of alcohol in the U.S.

ALCAP's service

ALCAP serves as Alabama's affiliate to ACAP. ALCAP leaders work to keep the state informed of moral issues that need to be addressed. It is an interdenominational ministry supported by donations from individuals and churches. As an auxiliary of the Alabama Baptist State Convention, ALCAP also receives a small amount of funding through the Cooperative Program.

Godfrey said alcohol is an "increasing threat" in society. As it becomes more available, the more likely young people are to drink it, he said, noting one of the biggest issues facing states right now is the privatization of alcohol.

Privatization puts alcohol sales and distribution in the hands of private companies as opposed to being controlled by the state itself.

Alabama is currently a "control state," but there is discussion in the Legislature to privatize alcohol, Godfrey said.

In control states, the state itself sells and distributes heavier beverages at local Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) stores and uses a parallel license system to regulate the sale of lighter beverages, such as beer and wine.

Along with educating those in attendance on privatization and other issues related to alcohol, ACAP members also will say goodbye to their executive director, Dan Ireland. Ireland, who served as ALCAP's executive director for 30 years before retiring in 2008, is stepping down from his 15-year ACAP post.

Bill Day will be named the new ACAP executive director. Day, who works with ALCAP's school program (American Character Builders), is the retired education director for ALCAP.

For more information about ALCAP, visit www.alcap.com. For more information about the ACAP conference or to register a group, visit www.sapacap.com or call Cheryl Corley at 205-989-8177.

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Under Goal for Year	\$562,685

The total given monthly and year to date gifts include CP base, CP state causes and SBC causes.

— Correction —

In the "Teen ministers to women rescued from trafficking" story on page 8 of the Aug. 8 issue, the last sentence, "We have been so proud of her boldness to follow the Lord," is a comment by Ty Parten, pastor of Thomasville Baptist Church, rather than Rob Hilbun, youth pastor.

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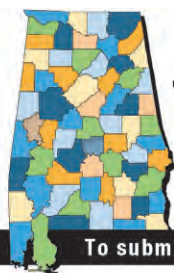
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Across ALABAMA'S Associations

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BIBB

► **Ben Corley** is the new pastor of **Schultz Creek Church, River Bend**. Corley has been preaching and teaching since 1966. He is married to Jo. The church also will celebrate homecoming Aug. 18, 10:30 a.m. with "Men of Music" as guest singers. Corley will speak and lunch will follow. The singing will continue about 1 p.m. There will be no services Sunday night. The Aug. 19-21 services will be held at 7 p.m. Everyone is invited.



CORLEY

BIRMINGHAM

► Frank Jones will be in concert at **Deerfoot Church, Trussville**, Aug. 25, 5 p.m. Everyone is welcome. Roger Willmore is pastor. ► **East Gardendale Church, Gardendale**, continues its August Alive 2013! Thursday Night Revival Services. The Aug. 15 event at 6:15 p.m. will feature

Dan Lanier and Daryl Green. For information call 205-608-0889. Allen Davis is pastor. ► **Gary A. Furr** will be honored for his 20th anniversary as pastor of **Vestavia Hills Church** on Aug. 25, 10 a.m. Fisher Humphreys, professor of divinity, emeritus, of Samford University in Birmingham, will speak. A reception will be held in the fellowship hall from 3-5 p.m. Furr previously served as pastor of churches in Georgia and Texas. He and his wife, Vickie, have three children.



FURR

BLOUNT

► **Pleasant View Missionary Church, Holly Pond**, will hold a third Sunday night singing Aug. 18, 6 p.m. with The Fishermen. For information call 256-796-5986. Randy Burtram is pastor.

CALHOUN

► **Westwood Church, Alexan-**

dria, will host the "Reach" Global Impact Celebration on Aug. 24-25. On Aug. 24 meet the missionaries and visit missions booths at 5 p.m. Breakout sessions with the missionaries will be at 6:30 p.m. On Aug. 25 meet the missionaries in small groups at 9 a.m. Church planter Jason Durant will speak during morning worship at 10 a.m., and lunch with the missionaries will follow. Pastor Rodney Clingan will speak at 5 p.m. Everyone is invited.

CHEROKEE

► **Pine Grove Church, Centre**, will host the Cherokee Association Evangelism Rally on Aug. 21, 7 p.m. Phil Waldrep, of Phil Waldrep Ministries, will speak and a pre-service concert will be at 6:30 p.m. with Eric Phillips, formerly with The Mark Trammell Trio. Wendell Dutton is director of missions.

COOSA RIVER

► **Lincoln Church** will sponsor a presentation by Danny J. Hubbard, a local radio evangelist and the author of the book, "Apocalypse Alive," on Aug. 17, 9 a.m. in the fellowship hall. Everyone is invited. A pancake breakfast will

be held at 8:30 a.m. before the presentation. Bill Goodwin is pastor.

SHELBY

► **Underwood Church, Montevallo**, will hold a "Back to School Bash" on Aug. 17, 3-6 p.m. There will be food, fun and a school shop featuring supplies students will need as they return to school. Everyone is welcome. Randy Hollingsworth is pastor.

TUSCALOOSA

► **Circlewood Church, Tuscaloosa**, will host a kick-off event of Operation Christmas Child for the Tuscaloosa area on Aug. 22, 6:30 p.m. Project leaders from all churches please attend. Everyone is invited. Food and door prizes will be offered. Herb Thomas is pastor.

OTHER

► **Greater Shiloh Missionary Church, Birmingham**, will hold a special worship service Aug. 18 with Robert Smith Jr., professor of Christian preaching at Beeson Divinity School of Samford University in Birmingham, as the guest speaker. For information call 205-925-5972. Michael W. Wesley Sr. is pastor.

MARKET PLACE

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CHURCH POSITIONS

PASTOR: Cottonton Baptist Church is seeking a pastor. Send resumés to: Cottonton Baptist Church, P.O. Box 35, Cottonton, AL 36851.

FULL-TIME SENIOR PASTOR: New Hope Baptist Church, Clarkdale area. Send resumés to: 6573 Highway 145, Meridian, MS 39301, NLT Aug. 31, ATTN: Pastor Search Committee.

SENIOR PASTOR: First Baptist Church, New Hope, Ala., a congregation size of 250 is seeking a full-time senior pastor. Send resumé to: Terry Rice, c/o First Baptist Church, 535 Bearden Road, Grant, AL 35747.

BIVOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC & MEDIA: First Baptist Church of Mount Olive, Ala., is seeking a bivocational minister of music and media. Please email resumés to: Sheila@fbcmo.org.

BIVOCATIONAL MUSIC MINISTER: Southern Baptist church in north Shelby County seeks bivocational music minister for blended worship, adult choir, and praise team. Send resumé to: charleshoustondale@gmail.com.

PART-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC: Rangeline Baptist Church of Demopolis, Ala., is seeking a part-time minister of music. We enjoy a blended mix of worship music. Mail resumé to: Rangeline Baptist Church, ATTN: Music Committee, 5805 County Road 19, Linden, AL 36748.

CHOIR DIRECTOR & MINISTER OF STUDENTS: Oak Bowery in Ohatchee

is searching for a choir director and minister of students. If you are interested in either/both, send resumé to: oakbowerybaptist@att.net.

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MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY: Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Trussville, Ala., is seeking full-time director of preschool and children's ministries. Submit resumé to: 7789 Gadsden Highway, Trussville, AL 35173, or email: rcore@rbconline.net.

OTHER POSITIONS

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Want to know God?

Pastor Jay Wolf
First Baptist Church, Montgomery

Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13).

I was fishing on the jetties near the bridge that connects Destin to Ft. Walton. The afternoon winds gusted strong and the fish refused my hook-filled offerings.

Suddenly my attention focused on a boat about 300 yards from me. I saw a man hurl an orange life-ring into the water to rescue a swimmer. A few minutes later, a Coast Guard boat with divers raced to the same spot. After nearly 15 minutes, the divers emerged with a limp body.

God prompted me to play the role of a chaplain so I met the family of the deceased man. Evidently two friends were swimming when a dangerous undertow grabbed them and began to pull them downward. One man cried out for help and was rescued. The other erroneously thought he could swim away from the danger and save himself. One was saved and the other lost.

Witnessing that dramatic and terrible drowning at Destin reminds me of the desperate condition of all of humanity. God declares that we are in trouble. We are spiritually drowning. We desperately need His rescuing assistance. God's Word clearly states "all have sinned, and the wage of our sin is death." However Jesus — the gracious Rescuer — responds to a sinner's cry of repentance and He comes to our aid. The Scripture explains: While the "wage of our sin is death, the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23).

C.S. Lewis observed that there is only one place where you will not find God — and that is where He is not invited. He further noted, "God is not a burglar who breaks into your life. He is a gentleman who responds to your invitation." So the ball is in your court. Jesus the Rescuer stands ready, willing and able to pull you into His ark of salvation. You must ask for His rescuing help. "Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved." With childlike faith, call out to Jesus in prayer, and He will extract you from sin's suffocating bondage and give you His incomparable gift of eternal life.

LETTERS

(continued from page 2)
conscience, we too could face further limitation on our religious freedom and witness the curtailing of our own fellowship activities and evangelism efforts right here in America. Already we are limited in public displays at Christmas, wearing of religious jewelry in some schools, student-led prayers and use of schoolrooms for Bible study groups and prayer clubs. I am especially grateful that you include reports on Christians

suffering found among various denominations, as I am a practicing Catholic while my husband attends Shady Grove Baptist Church in the Neel Community outside Hartselle. Keep up the good work.

Gloria Garrison
Hartselle, Ala.

ARTICLE SELECTION

The Bible teaches that we should go into all the world and spread the gospel. However I think *The Alabama Baptist* should be printing news about the things going

on in Alabama and America. We are in the process of losing many of our freedoms and soon the Christians in America will be a minority. The Alabama people need to know what is happening in these areas. Hope you will consider this and work on putting America back on the correct path.

Harold Greene
Winfield, Ala.



Photo by Taylor Hamm

Homeless people in the Mobile area can order cooked meals free of charge at Ransom Café ministry locations, such as the West Mobile location shown here.

‘Beyond ... four walls’

Ransom Café ministry serves homeless population in Mobile area

By Taylor Hamm
Intern, The Alabama Baptist

Matt Armbruster likes to cook, and a few years ago he felt he needed to use that God-given ability to serve the Lord.

So he and others in his community started the Ransom Café ministry. The food ministry provides places where Mobile's homeless population can order cooked meals free of charge. Running completely off donations, the café (which meets in several churches in the area) changes its menu often.

Armbruster said the ministry revolves around Matthew 20:28, emphasizing the importance of serving and putting others first.

“We know people are hurting, and we just use [the café] as an avenue to get to know people,” said Armbruster, an area Christian who helps with Church on the Street, a homeless ministry in Tillman's Corner. “It's been good for the whole community around, but it's been great for the Christian community.”

He and his wife, Tara, opened the first Ransom Café in 2010 at West Mobile Baptist Church, Mobile. After that, God provided opportunities for the couple to open cafés at four other churches in the Mobile area, Armbruster said.

Powerful testimony

David Gill, pastor of First Baptist Church, Theodore, approached Armbruster about starting a Ransom Café at their church after he met a widow who had a powerful testimony of her encounter with the café.

Gill said he reflects on Isaiah 58:7-8, which speaks of providing for the homeless and breaking forth, because he sees that principle come to life through Ransom Café.

“My philosophy is that if you're taking care of the poor, God will bless you,” he said. “While we have been providing for those outside the church, the attitude of gratefulness and enthusiasm among members has improved, as well as attendance.”

‘Clean Machine’

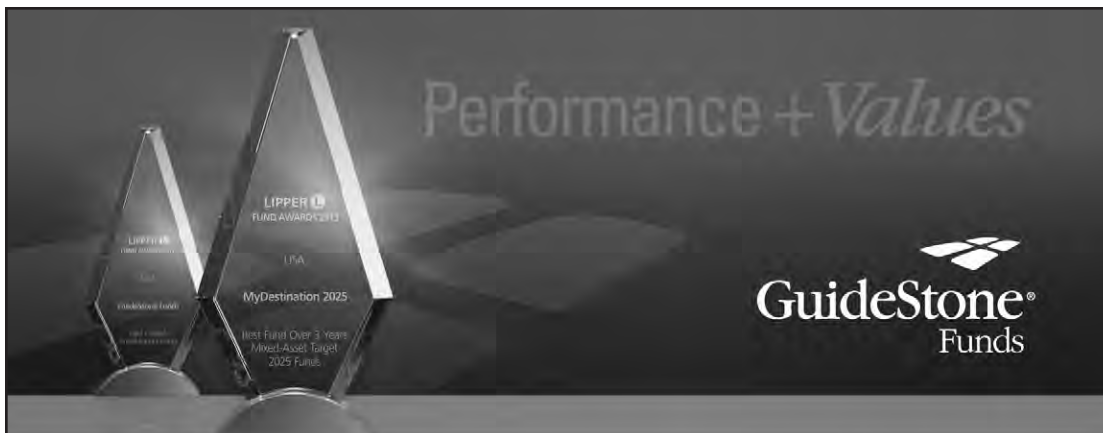
Many of the churches involved have opened up other ministries, such as food pantries or clothes closets, in conjunction with the cafés. In addition to providing meals, the Ransom Café ministry also has a portable “Clean Machine” that houses showers and laundry facilities, something made available at the Ransom Café and in homeless communities at various times.

Charles Gibbs, pastor of West Mobile Baptist, said Ransom Café has opened up his church's eyes to the fact that there are ministry opportunities everywhere.

“It has helped us understand that the job of the church is beyond being inside four walls,” Gibbs said. “It has created opportunities to share the gospel and we get to spend our time getting to know people.”

The ministry's mission is to build relationships by serving those in need, teaching others about food and job preparation and ultimately sharing the gospel.

Ransom Café is open at a different church location every day from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. ☞



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LIPPER
FUND AWARDS 2013
UNITED STATES

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About the 2012 Best Overall Small Company Lipper Award: Fund groups with at least three equity, three bond and three mixed-asset classes are eligible for a group award. The lowest average decile rank of the three years' Consistent Return measure of the eligible funds per asset class and group will determine the award winner over the three-year period ended 11/30/2011. In cases of identical results, the lower average percentile rank will determine the winner. 182 firms were eligible for this award.

About the 2013 Mixed-Asset Target 2025 Funds Award (three year): Classification averages are calculated with all eligible share classes for each eligible classification. The calculation periods extend over 36, 60 and 120 months. The highest Lipper Leader for Consistent Return (Effective Return) value within each eligible classification determines the fund classification winner over three, five or 10 years. The GuideStone MyDestination Fund 2025-GS4 won for the three-year period ended 11/30/2012. 92 funds were eligible for this award.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For August 18

Explore the Bible

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

IS THERE ANY HOPE?
Ecclesiastes 9:3-18

Reading Scripture must always be done in context. If not, it would seem that Solomon was either a universalist or a fatalist here. After all, his summation of life and death is that the end is the same for the righteous and the wicked, the holy and the profane. The truth is, he is endorsing neither fatalism nor universalism. Rather the Teacher is addressing the hopelessness that accompanies death.

The recurring “under the sun” in the text reminds the reader of the author’s temporal, seemingly sense-driven view of life. If man is the measure of all things (because he can sense no one greater), then he will be dissatisfied. He experiences pain, frustration and injustice as normal realities in life. From time to time, though, he catches glimpses of hope.

As Long as You’re Alive (3-6)

Hope accompanies life. From “this mortal coil” worldview (thank you, William Shakespeare), one has hope in living, where there is none in death. Even Hamlet recognized that hope only exists in life; the “undiscovered country” held no such hope (Act 3, Scene 1).

From a Christian worldview, we must affirm that hope is for this mortal life, but on different grounds. The redeemed and the condemned face the same temporal gateway in death, but their destinations are vastly different. As such, both experience hope only in this life. The Christian holds to a confident assurance that God keeps His promises and that his hope is built on the righteousness of Christ. Our hope is fulfilled as we enter into eternity. Unbelievers only have whatever wishful thinking they cling to in this life. “It is appointed for people to die once — and after this, judgment” (Heb. 9:27).

Give Your Best (7-10)

Enjoy your food, as you express thanks to the Father for giving you daily bread. Drink your grape juice, smiling as you read this. Have a joyful heart, knowing that God knows

the work that you do. Dress and groom yourself. Celebrate your marriage; it is a privilege to have one another. Make the most of your days before they are all gone.

These thoughts are not exclusive to Solomon, the international and cosmopolitan king who was well-versed with the wisdom literature of Mesopotamia and Egypt. Similarities between these and other ancient writings — “Gilgamesh” and the Egyptian “Harper’s Song” — offer substance to the claim that Solomon authored Ecclesiastes.

The longer I live, the more I am reminded of certain individuals while reading Scripture. As I read this section, a certain man comes to mind who recently entered into his rest. He dearly loved his wife, loved the Lord and committed himself to a life of service for others. Waking up early, as was his custom, he ran an errand on behalf of his church, went home to work in the yard and passed into eternity shortly thereafter. He found work to do, and he did it. No sitting and waiting for death to come; he simply walked through the door.

Letting the Chips Fall (11-18)

The author observed life. Conventional wisdom, like that found here, is based on noticing the surrounding world. The turtle beats the hare; the fastest do not always win the race.

In “Mere Christianity,” C.S. Lewis wrote about characteristics noted by Plato to which even nonreligious people adhere, called cardinal virtues. Lewis demonstrates that wisdom can be gained through observation. He distinguished these cardinal virtues from theological ones, unique characteristics of Christian faith.

Paul observes that God has a purpose for invisible people. When weak, foolish and common individuals find favor with God, He equips them for His work. When the mighty triumph, who glorifies God? When the nobleman shows honor, who is surprised? When the well-educated succeeds, who asks why? But when God uses a nobody (by worldly standards), God alone receives the glory. Soli Deo Gloria.

Bible Studies for Life

By Jeffery M. Leonard
Assistant Professor of Religion, Samford University

JESUS COMMISSIONS HIS CHURCH
Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:6-8; 2:41-47

Understand the Scriptures (Luke 24:44-49)

Among the more curious elements of Jesus’ ministry are His repeated admonitions not to tell anyone about Him. Jesus heals a leper but then warns him to say nothing to anyone about it (Mark 1:43). He restores a girl to life but then tells the family not to tell what He had done (Mark 5:43). He tells Peter, James and John not to inform even the other disciples about His transfiguration (Mark 9:9). When Peter correctly identifies Jesus as the Messiah, He sternly orders His disciples not to share this with anyone else (Mark 8:30). If Jesus intended to reach the world, why would He take such pains to hide His message? Answering this question involves grasping a tension not always evident today. In Jesus’ day, one could be Messiah or one could suffer; one could not do both. To be Messiah was to be a political ruler, a person who would expel the Roman armies from the promised land and restore Israel to its former Davidic glory. Suffering and death were incompatible with such a calling.

Because Jesus knew He had to suffer, He deliberately downplayed His identity as the Messiah. It is only when He performs some act of power or when someone perceives His Messianic identity that Jesus admonishes His followers not to make Him known. To be swept in as the Messianic king would have threatened the mission of suffering He needed to accomplish first. Were people to hear Jesus was Messiah, they would never be able to hear His message of the cross.

Jesus’ own disciples fell victim to this temptation. They grasped on to every hint that Jesus was the Messiah. But His message of coming suffering and resurrection skipped across their minds like a stone skipping off a pond. Jesus’ death caught them by surprise, and the first reports of His resurrection struck them as utter nonsense (Luke 24:11).

It would take days, years even, for the news and full import of Jesus’ resurrection to reg-

ister with Jesus’ followers. But as Jesus’ resurrection did come more fully into focus, it would have a profound effect on every aspect of their lives. Living in the light of Jesus’ resurrection, the disciples would reach profound insights into the nature of God’s relationship to humanity. Even the Scriptures themselves would be understood in a new way now that Jesus had died and risen again.

Engage in Mission (Acts 1:6-8)

With Jesus raised from the dead, the disciples naturally wondered whether the moment had arrived for Jesus’ kingdom to be established on earth. With His suffering accomplished, surely now Jesus would overthrow Rome’s hegemony and take His place as Messiah. While not denying the eventual realization of these hopes, Luke especially suggests their arrival would not happen immediately. Jesus’ return and the establishment of His earthly kingdom would be delayed for some time (Luke 21:8, 24). But if the full flourishing of Jesus’ kingdom was delayed, another spiritual facet of Jesus’ kingdom was already present. Even before His death and resurrection, Jesus told His disciples the kingdom was already among them (Luke 11:20; 17:21). Now was the time for the disciples to start living out that kingdom, in the present not just the future.

Connect to Grow (Acts 2:41-47)

In the early church in Jerusalem, we find a community dedicated to living out kingdom values in the present. This singular congregation is described as being devoted to the apostle’s teaching and to one another. Sharing their possessions, selling property to make sure the needs of all were met, breaking bread and praying together, these early believers showed their determination to live out the message of Jesus on a daily basis. The attraction of this style of life was apparently quite irresistible. As the people joined together in praise and fellowship, they gained the favor of the people around them and saw their numbers increase on a daily basis. As people saw the message of Jesus lived out, they were drawn to the person who had first given that message. They were drawn to Jesus Himself.

Christian Crossword

Mrs. Chester Vance Jr. Copyright 1994 ©Barbour Publishing Inc.

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Across

1. God of my master _____ (Gen. 24:42)

6. Thine only son _____ (Gen. 22:2)

10. Suffix indicating names in zoology.

12. Obstetricians (abbr.).

13. Idle chatter.

15. Even the men of _____ (Gen. 19:4)

17. Lifted up his _____ (Gen. 22:4)

19. Abbreviation for Micah.

20. Military cap.

23. Small deer.

25. Departed out of _____ (Gen. 12:4)

26. Vitamin _____.

27. Symbol for hydrogen.

28. Children by _____ (Gen. 16:2)

30. Lemon _____.

31. _____ the father of Lecah. (1 Chron. 4:21)

32. A spider: _____ chnid.

33. Roman numeral for 201.

35. Pursued them unto _____ (Gen. 14:14)

37. Government issued.

39. Abram removed _____ tents. (Gen. 13:18)

40. Neither _____ thou any thing. (Gen. 22:12)

41. But _____ shall her name be. (Gen. 17:15)

43. Son of Haran. (Gen. 11:27)

44. Behind him a _____ (Gen. 22:13)

45. All that he _____ (Gen. 13:1)

47. Called the altar _____ (Josh. 22:34)

49. That I _____ bury my dead. (Gen. 23:4)

50. King of Salem. (Gen. 14:18)

Down

1. _____ of the Lord. (Gen. 22:15)

2. Abraham's daughter-in-law. (Gen. 24:67)

3. And Ishmael _____ (Gen. 17:25)

4. Bustle, fuss.

5. Assembled or created.

7. _____ shall thy seed be. (Gen. 15:5)

8. _____ and Phichol. (Gen. 21:22)

9. When he was _____ (Gen. 17:24)

11. Ex officio.

14. Expresses surprise or distress (Span.).

16. Get thee into the land of _____ (Gen. 22:2)

18. Dry, withered.

21. Dwelt in the wilderness of _____ (Gen. 21:21)

22. _____ the choice. (Gen. 23:6)

24. Twenty years _____ (Gen. 23:1)

27. _____ of Abram's cattle. (Gen. 13:7)

29. Sarai's handmaid. (Gen. 16:1)

34. Roman numeral for 101.

36. To make amends.

38. Abbreviation for Individual Retirement Account.

42. Behold, here I _____ (Gen. 22:1)

45. I _____ rather be a doorkeeper. (Ps. 84:10)

46. Yes (nautical).

48. Roman numeral for 600.

49. I.

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RESOURCES:

Your Guide to Today's New Music and Literature

Sound Bites By Rick Sharp

BUILDING 429

We Won't Be Shaken

Provident Label Group LLC

Coming on the heels of last year's smash "Where I Belong," a song that garnered *Billboard* magazine's No. 1 Christian song for 2012 and BMI's Song of the Year for 2013, Building 429 continues to push forward with their latest release, "We Won't Be Shaken." If what I hear on Christian radio is any indication, the new album's first single and title cut may prove to be just as big a hit for the band.

Produced by the formidable duo of Jason Ingram and Rob Hawkins and recorded with the entire band playing (yes, together) in the studio, Building 429 has created a record that serves their existing fan base quite well, while at the same time plowing fertile new ground that will certainly expand their influence in the Christian music world. Their stated mantra for this record — "What would you attempt to do if you knew you could not fail?" — sounded at first to me a little ego-



tistical. But after a quick listen, it became apparent these guys knew exactly where they were going, and I don't doubt they've made exactly the record they set out to make.

Building 429's frontman Jason Roy described the new album this way: "We really felt like we wanted to make a record that said, 'Stand up. You have been called. We are God's children. Who can stand against what God has begun?' If you listen to the record you find that there's a bit of bravado in it, but it's bravado from a standpoint of we don't have to always talk about how weak we are because His strength is made perfect in our weakness. This record says, 'God is going to use us and we are not going to fail.'"

He's certainly confident and probably right. Recommended.

KEITH & KRISTYN GETTY

Live at The Gospel Coalition
Getty Music Label LLC

Recorded in the spring of 2013 over the five days of The Gospel Coalition conference in Orlando, Fla., "Live at The Gospel Coalition" is an outstanding collection of 13 previously released songs by the Gettys, traditional hymns

and one new song, "Lift High the Name of Jesus," which was co-written by the Gettys and Ed Cash.

"Working with Keith and Kristyn has been one of the great joys of my career," Cash said. "First and foremost, their songs are packed full of theological truth, but their commitment to musical excellence and great melodies with respect to church tradition is unparalleled. This album is a fabulous collection of songs recorded in a live atmosphere with a real congregation exalting the Almighty."

Originally from Northern Ireland, the Gettys' first project came in 2006. Shortly thereafter they moved to Ohio, and in 2010 they found their permanent home in Nashville. They have produced four albums and appeared at Franklin Graham crusades, the GMA Dove Awards and the Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization and have provided feature performances at London's Royal Albert Hall and the legendary Grand Ole Opry.

If you're a fan of high-quality



traditional Christian music, you won't find a better example than "Live at The Gospel Coalition." Look for it when it releases Sept. 10.

MATT GILMAN

Awaken Love

Forerunner Music

Worship leader Matt Gilman's debut CD "Awaken Love" is the perfect vehicle for Gilman's amazing tenor voice. Close your eyes and you could easily visualize any of the great voices of '80s rock: Steve Perry, Robert Plant or Brian May. Yep, he's that good. Certainly his style is vastly different from any of those guys, but man, that voice.

Gilman honed his worship-leading skills and his voice at the

International House of Prayer, Kansas City, and the trance-y, easy worship style of the record comes from that training. While this is not a mainstream Christian music record, Gilman's excellent songwriting is buoyed by understated musicianship and clean production values. All that and Gilman's voice — did I mention the voice? — makes for a very satisfying first effort.

Gilman has created a stunning musical and lyrical palette with "Awaken Love." Do yourself a favor and give it a listen.



Christian Marketplace Top Ten Best Sellers

Fiction

1. *The Harbinger*, Jonathan Cahn (Charisma Media)
2. *A Vow for Always*, Discovery Series #6, Wanda E. Brunstetter (Barbour)
3. *A Revelation in Autumn*, Discovery Series #5, Wanda E. Brunstetter (Barbour)
4. *The Guardian*, Home to Hickory Hollow Series #3, Beverly Lewis (Baker)
5. *Band of Sisters*, Cathy Gohlke (Tyndale)
6. *The Chance*, Karen Kingsbury (Howard)
7. *Home Run*, Travis Thrasher (David C Cook)
8. *Borders of the Heart*, Chris Fabry (Tyndale)
9. *Crossing Oceans*, Gina Holmes (Tyndale)
10. *The Pieces of Summer*, Discovery Series #4, Wanda E. Brunstetter (Barbour)

Nonfiction

1. *Jesus Calling*, Sarah Young (Thomas Nelson)
2. *Not a Fan*, Kyle Idleman (Zondervan)
3. *Jesus Calling*, Large-Print Deluxe Edition, Sarah Young (Thomas Nelson)
4. *The Real Win*, Colt McCoy and Matt Carter (Waterbrook/Multnomah)
5. *Heaven Is for Real*, Todd Burpo (Thomas Nelson)
6. *Circle Maker*, Mark Batterson (Zondervan)
7. *Happy, Happy, Happy*, Phil Robertson (Howard)
8. *Jesus Calling*, Deluxe Edition, Sarah Young (Thomas Nelson)
9. *Jesus Calling*, Women's Edition, Sarah Young (Thomas Nelson)
10. *The 5 Love Languages*, Gary Chapman (Moody)

Book Reviews By Martine Bates Sharp, Ed.D.

Creature of the Word: The Jesus-Centered Church

Matt Chandler, Josh Patterson and Eric Geiger. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2012. 242 pp. (Paperback).

Churches should be centered around Jesus. Well, duh. We all know that. The Church, after all, is the bride of Christ. Why would we need a book telling us that our churches need to be Jesus-centered?

The authors provide a clue from Samuel Johnson via C.S. Lewis. "People need to be reminded more than instructed." It's not that we don't know but that we need reminding. We need reminding that the gospel of Christ should permeate everything we do, according to the authors. They offer a series of examples of how our theology should inform our philosophy and guide our practice. Too often, they write, the discussion starts with practice rather than the other way around. There is often incongruence — disconnect — between

what we say we believe and what we actually practice.

Need an example? So did I. "If a pastor teaches on the grace of Christ being bigger than any sin, yet the culture does not allow for openness and confession, an outsider who admits to struggle in his life will be unlikely to experience much mercy in the way people express themselves. Sadly a culture of law will weed out a culture of grace." Ouch.

The book is well written, packed with illustrations and examples that get to the heart of who we should be and who we really are as churches. Just wait until you get to the chapter on the Jesus-Centered Flower Committee.

Landmarks: Turning Points on Your Journey Toward God

Bill Delvaux. Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2013. 190 pp. (Paperback).

Imagine one of the early explorers in this country. He and his team might have a small amount

of information from Native Americans and other explorers, but it is vague — just landmarks, really. There is a river to cross, a mountain to scale or skirt. There is no GPS, no road map showing where to turn.

Bill Delvaux likens life to those early explorations, with a series of landmarks to be reached but with little information on how to get there. Using his own life as a painfully honest example, Delvaux has developed nine landmarks that he believes parallel the human spiritual journey.

While not a magic bullet for the confusion, uncertainty and hopelessness that often beset us, "Landmarks" is like a mirror through which we can see ourselves — perhaps, like the stages of grief, giving us a frame for what we are experiencing and helping us move toward "the full life Jesus has planned for us."

So "if you feel stuck out there on the highway of humanity" and are in need of spiritual direction, "Landmarks" might help you find your way.



**‘My medicine
is Jesus’**

IMB photo

The ancient Songhai believed their sorcerers could master the river spirits. Though the empire no longer exists, their descendants still live on and around the Niger River.

Church in West African Songhai village growing amid persecution

Timbuktu. The name inspires images of faraway lands, mythical realms and immense wealth. Many people are unaware the city actually does exist. Timbuktu was only one of a myriad of splendid cities within the Songhai Empire. For more than two centuries, the Songhai dynasty ruled most of central West Africa, supported by a flourishing trade in gold and salt.

“They were a rare combination of military and mystic might — they had these great warriors, but they also were these sorcerers and magicians who controlled the spirits of the river,” said John Smythe, an International Mission Board (IMB) representative who’s been working among the Songhai of Niger since 2006.

Ruled by a dynasty of Muslim kings, the empire expanded through a combination of practical politics and holy war. The meteoric rise of the empire was matched by its sudden invasion and downfall in 1591.

Modern Songhai are mainly subsistence farmers, coaxing millet and rice out of the clay of the Niger River valley. It’s a land of flat-topped hills and wide, washed-out valleys with deep, rain-cut channels between. Pale red clay and dark brown stone contrast oddly, like a bizarre sand painting.

Songhai villages consist of mud-brick houses; walls surround spacious, if bare, yards. Trash litters the streets — there is no other place for it. Animals wander wherever acacia fences do not keep them out. Village life is highlighted by scent. The heat bakes out the odor of moist sand and green growth. The smell of sweat and wood smoke is prevalent.

“Community is life” to the Songhai, Smythe explained. “They understand that tomorrow, ‘I might not have enough rice to feed my family, so I’d better rely on the community.’”

While officially Muslim, the Songhai generally practice animism — alongside daily prayers and reciting the Quran, “there’s still spirit-possession ceremonies. ... They are involved in all sorts of witchcraft,” Smythe said.

Less than 1 percent of the village population is Christian.

Out of the ruins of vanished empires and ancient superstitions, however, a new kingdom is being built among the Songhai, Smythe said. “A kingdom not built with human hands, a kingdom that’s being built by God made out of living stones.”

This kingdom has not been built without struggle. According to Smythe, Songhai conversion is “a traumatic experience.” Those who step outside of accepted practices are ostracized, even exiled, by their communities. Many villagers refuse to buy or sell with a convert, and family members often shun believers. Pressure to return to the old ways comes from all directions.

One new believer must now eat outside every time he visits his in-laws, as they regard non-Muslims as unclean. Another told his family of his conversion and returned home that night to find all his possessions in a bag outside. Believers are often told, “Only white people can be Christians.”

The harshest confrontation came after Smythe and his family moved away from the small town where they had been ministering for three years, when a believer’s wife died suddenly. Ibrahim had been a dedicated Muslim who prayed five times daily, gave charity and donated animals for religious festivals. “I thought in my heart if I [did these things], I was receiving forgiveness,” he said. “I could never know that in my heart ... if I was being forgiven or not.”

After repeatedly dreaming of a light “that was Jesus Christ” coming between him and enveloping darkness, Ibrahim became a determined Christian despite rejection by his neighbors and refusal of business. His dedication and encouragement soon led his wife to Christ as well.

When his wife died, the village leaders, noting neither Ibrahim nor his wife were Muslim, refused to have her buried, claiming she would be treated like an animal and left to rot. Only if Ibrahim confessed Islam would his wife be buried and prayed for as culturally required. He refused and set out to bury his wife alone, but the other believers rallied around him and came to his aid.



IMB photo

Southern Baptist representative John Smythe and his family once lived in this Songhai village.

This unity in the face of cruel rejection was a turning point for the local church. It demonstrated the church could endure, even without the Smythes’ presence. “It was [a] testimony that, ‘We are not going to go back to our old faith, that we’re here to stay,’” said Smythe, who now lives two hours away in Niamey, Niger’s capital city.

In the face of opposition, the Smythes and their team “literally got to watch history change” as this small group of believers grew into the first church ever seen in the region. That church “has continued to grow and understand what it means to be the church,” Smythe said. “They are a true community that gives as anyone has need and shares as anyone has need.”

The transformation of believers is apparent to their village. Boubacar, once the “No. 1 bandit” in town and leader of the local *fadah*, or gang, was so altered that his friends asked him what medication he was on. He claimed, “My medicine is Jesus Christ.”

Following Jesus

Boubacar stopped smoking, drinking and fighting and even broke off an engagement. Three days after Boubacar’s conversion, Smythe discovered he intended to take a second wife, a practice common and perfectly acceptable to the Songhai. Smythe, with some unease, shared God’s plan for marriage as found in Genesis. Smythe relates: “His eyes just got huge, and I thought, ‘Oh man, he’s gonna hit me.’ And he looked me and he said, ‘I had no idea God’s Word said that.’” Boubacar went that very day to break off the engagement, despite having already paid the bride price. When asked about his decision, he claimed, “Everything Jesus said, that’s what I want to do.”

Boubacar was one of the believers who came alongside Ibrahim to bury his wife. His example has led many of his former gang members to become believers.

Ibrahim and Boubacar are now leaders in the town church. Men meet in Ibrahim’s compound to sing worship songs, pray together and listen to the Proclaimer, an audio Bible in the Songhai language. Female believers meet separately or listen to the Proclaimer with their husbands at home.

“You can’t see a building,” Smythe said about the blossoming movement among the Songhai. “Instead it’s a group of men, it’s a group of ladies huddled under a tree praying together, it’s a group studying God’s Word under a hangar, and it’s a new kingdom being ushered in. ... It’s that kingdom that’s going to endure.”

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