

THE ALABAMA BAPTIST



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INSIDE



WorldCrafts
expands, intro-
duces more than
60 new products

◆ Page 3



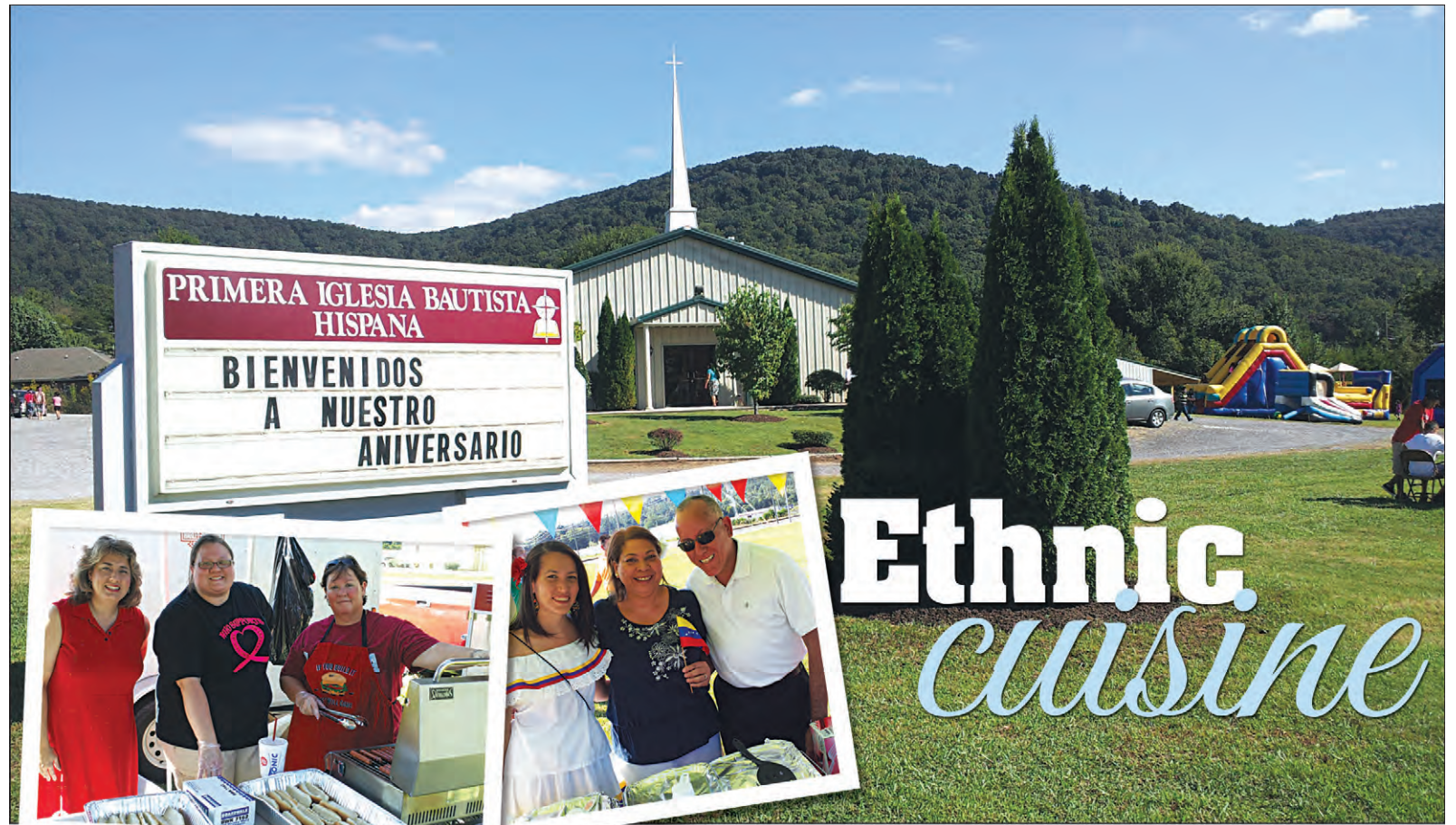
**Proper commu-
nication between
church leader-
ship, members is
vital, experts say**

◆ Pages 6-7



**Has the role of
the evangelist
changed?**

◆ Page 19



Photos courtesy of Chris Murdock

Fort Payne Hispanic church hosts sixth annual International Food Festival

By Julie Payne
The Alabama Baptist

A bright blue sky provided the perfect backdrop for colorful balloons and streamers strung along tents on the campus of Primera Iglesia Bautista Hispana (First Hispanic Baptist Church), Fort Payne, on Sept. 14.

The savory smells drifting through the air silently announced it was time for the church's sixth annual International Food Festival.

Primera Iglesia Bautista Hispana, a mission church plant of DeKalb Baptist Association, hosts the festival each year in an effort to reach its community.

Each tent at the festival represents a different country, and cuisine from six countries — El Salvador, Mexico, Guatemala, Venezuela, Colombia and the United States — was offered this year.

"They have a great variety of foods" at the event, said Ken Clement, director of missions for DeKalb Association.

Members of churches in DeKalb Association, which included Second Baptist Church, Fort Payne, and Liberty Hill Baptist Church, Collinsville, served as volunteers at the festival and assisted with face painting for the children.

Chris Murdock, pastor of Ruhama Baptist Church, Fort Payne, and a friend of Adel Robayna, pastor of Primera Iglesia Bautista Hispana, attended the International Food Festival and noted that the food was provided free of charge by the members of Robayna's church.

Variety of foods

"The people who make up the congregation brought ethnic dishes from their country," Murdock said. "The food was great."

In addition to the delicious cuisine options to sample, games and inflatables were provided for children on the church's property.

Participants also enjoyed music and a parade of flags that showcased the countries represented in the church as well as a worship service. Adel Robayna's son, Annel Robayna, pastor of Iglesia Cristiana Dulce Refugio, Foley, spoke about the

Church and used Philippians 2:1-11 as his text.

Clement said about 100 people attended the service, and the sanctuary was "pretty much full." As a result of the service, one young person accepted Christ.

Adel Robayna, who is from Venezuela, began serving as the pastor of Primera Iglesia Bautista Hispana nine years ago, Clement said, noting the church averages about 100 people on Sundays.

"It's really flourished since he has been here. He's really done a fantastic job," Clement said.

Murdock noted that in the last 12 months, 476 people have come to faith in Christ through the Hispanic ministries of DeKalb Association. The association also has a Hispanic mission church in Kilpatrick.

Murdock wasn't at all surprised at the festival's large attendance, noting that it was "very typical" based on the church's past events. "There's always somebody saved and there's always a good turnout," he said.

DeKalb is one of at least 27 associations in the state helping support a Hispanic ministry, church plant or church. ☛

Faith and Family
Parenting styles
Authoritative, authoritarian, permissive or uninvolved
Which type of parent are you or do you plan to be? Find out more about each one in next week's issue.



COMMENT

Ways the Cooperative Program Helps Your Church

Oftentimes people think of the Cooperative Program (CP) as the primary way Southern Baptists work together to fund missions efforts. It certainly is that, but one should never forget that the CP provides important helps to every Baptist church. Here are just a few.

1. The CP helps a church fulfill the biblical command to share the gospel. After affirming that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, the apostle Paul wrote, “and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:19). Jesus Himself said in John 20:21, “As the Father has sent me, I also send you.” Each gospel writer recorded Jesus instructions for His followers to be witnesses “even unto the ends of the earth.” The CP helps churches fulfill God’s purpose of believers being “laborers together with God,” not out of coercion but out of gratitude and love for what God has done for us through faith in Jesus Christ.

2. The CP helps a church share the gospel where the church cannot go. Whether one looks at the world geographically or demographically, the same conclusion is inevitable. No church can share the gospel in every place or with every people group. Yet as churches give through the CP they help share the gospel in most every country in the world. They do this among an ever-increasing number of people groups through more than 5,000 international missionaries and cooperating bodies of national Christians with whom these Baptist representatives work.

A partnership

3. The CP helps a church share the gospel in all areas of Baptist life. The CP is a partnership between a church, its state convention and the national body. When a church does local missions that is part of the CP. Christ-honoring missions and ministries in the state are part of the same effort. So is all that Baptists do together through the national body — seminary education, church planting efforts in the underserved areas of the United States and evangelistic efforts in distant lands.

4. The CP demonstrates the value of partnership with other churches. Together churches can do more than any church can do alone. More than 5,000 international missionaries, church planting efforts in major cities in North America, an extensive network of Baptist colleges, universities and seminaries, a nationally recognized disaster relief program, extensive ministry efforts through state conventions and local associations, hundreds of thousands of new believers around the world each year — all attest to the benefits of Baptists working together. And because the churches collectively decide how CP contributions are spent, only what the churches decide to do is underwritten financially.



THOUGHTS By Bob Terry

5. The CP models how local church members can work together. The genius of the CP is all the churches working together. That principle carries over to the local church. Even if there were not financial needs to undergird ministries at home and around the world, every member would still need to give as an act of worship of what he or she has accumulated. Giving is not just for the financially well-to-do or from the surplus of one’s gain. Just as giving through the CP involves every church regardless of size, giving through the local church involves every member.

6. The CP emphasizes the value of a broad and balanced program. Evangelizing, disciplining, equipping, ministering — every facet of the Christian faith is important. Each requires ongoing efforts. Light bills have to be paid as well as salaries for ministers. Whether it is the local church budget or the budget of a state or national convention, the concern is undergirding the entire work, not just the pet concerns of a few powerful influencers.

The Lord’s money

7. The CP emphasizes efficiency in handling the Lord’s money. Every penny given by Baptists is the Lord’s money and must be handled carefully and efficiently. Consider just the postage costs if churches attempted to support missionaries independently. To mail a check to each of the 5,000 missionaries (using the cost of a First Class U.S. stamp) would cost \$2,250. To send monthly check for one year would cost \$27,000. Multiply that number by the 3,200 cooperating Alabama Baptist churches and it would cost \$86,400,000 annually in postage. That is more

than twice the amount Alabama Baptists gave last year through the CP. And still, there would be nothing for work in the state or the nation. No way of fulfilling the biblical command of sharing the gospel is more efficient than the CP.

8. The CP helps develop a missions consciousness in the church. People may make a one-time gift because they are told it is going to a good cause. But no one long supports a cause in which they are not interested. Either they will learn about the cause or they will cease giving. Because information comes before interest, CP giving can stimulate the opportunity for members to learn about missions. It can become almost cyclical: members give to missions causes through the CP; they learn more about missions at home and abroad, which results in more giving and praying and personal involvement in missions.

9. The CP helps churches teach the importance of proportionate giving. Most churches use the biblical concept of tithing (10 percent) as the standard for Christian stewardship. For those unable to start at this level, churches encourage starting at a set percentage and moving toward the 10 percent goal. For those already tithing, churches frequently promote additional offerings by increasing one’s contribution by a set percentage. Likewise the CP promotes a church channeling a set percentage of its income to missions causes. The church

decides on the percentage. It is a percentage deemed fair to all and it can be adjusted annually until the church reaches its goal for missions giving.

10. The CP puts all churches on equal footing. Whether a church’s budget is \$1,000 or \$1 million, each church makes a percentage commitment to the partnership efforts of local and global missions. Every church’s commitment is important just as every member’s tithes and offerings are important. Numerical size and financial resources take a back seat to spiritual commitment to work together with other Baptist churches in fulfilling the biblical command to share the gospel.

Because of these and other contributions, all of us would do well to remember that the Cooperative Program is important to every cooperating Baptist church.





"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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A young woman in Sri Lanka makes wooden toys for Gospel House Handicrafts, a new partner of WorldCrafts that made their debut in the Fall/Winter 2013-2014 catalog that was released Aug. 1.

Dignity & hope



Photo courtesy of WorldCrafts

WorldCrafts expands to support more in poverty, introduces more than 60 new products

WorldCrafts' focus on providing a sustainable income for impoverished artisans around the world and helping to free women from human exploitation expands this year with seven new artisan groups and more than 60 new products introduced in 2013.

WorldCrafts is a division of Woman's Missionary Union that develops sustainable, fair-trade businesses among impoverished people around the world. Begun in 1996, WorldCrafts' vision is to offer an income with dignity and the hope of everlasting life to every person on earth.

Earlier this year WorldCrafts introduced products from two new partners — Sema Leatherworks in Kenya and Shelano in India. The following five additional new partners in Indonesia, Kenya, Uganda, Sri Lanka and

Thailand made their debut with WorldCrafts in the Fall/Winter 2013-2014 catalog, which was released Aug. 1.

1. Ayu Sewing Project was created to help impoverished Indonesian women learn a trade they could use to support their families. According to Andrea Mullins, director for WorldCrafts, these families live from month to month and barely make enough money to feed their families, much less provide for other needs such as schooling. By making only a few scarves per week, these mothers are increasing their monthly income by 40 percent. The women use the money to pay for their kids' schooling, as well as family medical and rental expenses.

2. Back to Africa in Kenya began in 2008 as an offshoot of Heart of the Bride Ministries Inc. The objective of Back to Africa is family preservation and care for families at risk. The artisans, most of whom are single mothers and/or refugees, lived in extreme poverty before they began creating Back to Africa jewelry.

3. ChildVoice International provides healing for children — particularly girls — of war-torn countries such as Uganda through its emphasis on sanctuary, psychosocial and spiritual counseling, education, skill building, reintegration support and access to basic health care. ChildVoice's programs are designed to also help the girls return home. "Approximately 93 percent of the girls served in the last few years are back in their communities, raising their families and working in meaningful jobs, not dependent on aid or outside help," Mullins said.

4. Gospel House Handicrafts in Sri Lanka was established in 1983 in order to provide employment and training to young adults in the field of making wooden toys, utility items and ornamental handicrafts. They are currently providing full-time employment for numerous artisans and part-time employment for additional workers.

5. Samaritan Creations in Thailand exists to rescue, restore and empower women by the grace and love of God by offering women an alternative income to prostitution. Through entrepreneurial training and funding, Samaritan Creations empowers women to return to their

hometowns to plant churches, alter the local economy and forewarn people of the trap of prostitution.

WorldCrafts also introduced four new party themes this fall: Amazonian Affair, Harvest Celebration, Mosaic of Missions and New Year Party. All party themes and party downloads have been updated to include information regarding the season and new artisan groups.

Choose a theme

Choosing a theme is the first step to throwing a WorldCrafts party, according to the WorldCrafts website. Parties can be thrown as a small gathering in a home, as part of a normal women's group gathering or as a large churchwide party.

The WorldCrafts site offers instructions on how to plan a party starting with selecting a theme, choosing a place and a date, recruiting volunteers, ordering catalogs and sending invitations.

During the party, WorldCrafts products are displayed on tables with country cards that tell the story of the artisans who made the products. The host (or a volunteer recruited by the host) may provide international snacks — possibly from recipes offered at worldcrafts.org/pdfs/parties/WCrecipes.pdf.

Guests mingle, eat and browse the WorldCrafts tables before a DVD is shown featuring footage of artisans making the products. Partygoers can then finalize their purchases using catalog order forms to be turned in by the host.

To have products in time for Christmas orders must be submitted by Nov. 15.

"All jewelry products are now packaged in a unique WorldCrafts jewelry box complete with an insert card that features the story of the artisan who made the product," Mullins said. "These boxes are perfect for gifting WorldCrafts jewelry items."

All purchases, she said, help fight poverty. "Each time you purchase a WorldCrafts fair trade product or host a party, you are making an eternal impact on impoverished men and women around the world," Mullins said.

For more information, visit www.WorldCrafts.org. (WMU, TAB)



Photo courtesy of WorldCrafts

A woman in Thailand works with new WorldCrafts partner Samaritan Creations.

Across ALABAMA'S Associations

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

BETHLEHEM

► **Ramah Church, Evergreen**, will celebrate its 141st homecoming Oct. 13. A special music presentation will be at 10:30 a.m. Worship services will begin at 11 a.m. Guest speaker will be Q.T. Curtis, former pastor of Sage Avenue Church, Mobile. Lunch will follow. William Bodiford is pastor.

COFFEE

► **Whitewater Church, Elba**, will celebrate its 152nd anniversary Oct. 13. Services will begin at 10:30 a.m. There will be an old-fashioned dinner on the grounds following services. Pastor Richard Collier will bring the message. Fred Mallory, music director, will lead music with Judy Fuller, pianist, and Lisa Stinson, organist. The Fuller girls and Hattie White will provide special music. For information, contact Pam Smith at 334-897-5459.

ELMORE

► **Lake Hill Church, Deatsville**, will celebrate Founder's Day on Oct. 13, 10:30 a.m. Back Porch Pickers will perform and a potluck meal will follow. The church will also hold revival services Oct. 14-16, 7 p.m. Layton Sampson will speak. Monday is family night and the family with the most members present will receive a gift. Tuesday is bring a friend night. Wednesday is round up night. For information, call 334-546-3989. Bill McFarland is pastor.

MORGAN

► **Lebanon Church, Falkville**, will hold a one-day revival Sept. 29

with James Shutt. Paul Shutt will lead the music. Services will be at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. Randy Ashley is pastor. ► **Southwest Church, Hartselle**, will host New Ground in concert Sept. 29, 5 p.m. For information, call 256-773-5994. De-witt Crowe is pastor.

SHELBY

► **Ben Birdsong** is the new student minister for **Meadow Brook Church, Birmingham**. He holds a bachelor's degree in marketing and human resources from the University of Alabama at Birmingham and a master of divinity degree from Samford University's Beeson Divinity School. He also will begin a doctor-



BIRDSONG

ate of ministry program at Gordon Conwell Seminary's Boston campus in January 2014. He previously served with students at First Church, Pelham. He is married to Liz.

TALLAPOOSA

► **Wayside Church, Alexander City**, will celebrate its annual homecoming with a special service Oct. 13, 11 a.m. Lawrence Phipps will be the guest speaker. A fellowship meal will follow the service. Everyone is invited. Larry Cummings is pastor. ► **Sandy Creek Church, Camp Hill**, will celebrate its 175th anniversary Oct. 6 with a

10 a.m. service led by former pastor Mark Brantley. Music will be provided by Scott Fowler of Lu-verne. For information, call Betty Hall at 256-896-2633. Rick Hall is pastor.

ST. CLAIR

► **Joseph Morris** is the new associate pastor of **Seddon Church, Pell City**. He holds a bachelor of science degree from Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va. He previously served a two-year internship with Hill Crest Church, Anniston, and was a bivocational youth pastor at Westwood Church, Alexandria. He then served a year and a half on the volunteer staff at Hill Crest Church as the creative arts minister for Merge Student Ministries at Hill Crest. He and his wife, Kelli, have one son. Dale Foote is pastor.



MORRIS

WASHINGTON

► **First Church, McIntosh**, will celebrate homecoming Oct. 6 with Alvin Tucker bringing the message. Singing will begin at 10:30 a.m. led by Johnny Atchison and conducted by members of the church and guests. The morning service will begin at 11 a.m. A fellowship lunch will follow in the fellowship hall. All former and current members are encouraged to attend. John Stone is pastor. ☪

Alabama updates

People, churches making news across the state

Langner marks 30 years at FBC Phenix City

Eugene Langner recently celebrated 30 years of ministry at First Baptist Church, Phenix City.

On Aug. 25, the Russell Baptist Association church formally recognized Langner and presented him with letters from Bob Terry, *The Alabama Baptist* editor, and Phenix City Mayor Eddie N. Lowe. A fellowship lunch followed the morning service.

Langner said he was called into ministry as a boy during a camp at Shocco Springs Baptist Conference Center in Talladega. He said "it took him a while" to get back around to serving in ministry, though. He attended the University of Alabama and later pursued a law degree. In 1970, he surrendered to the ministry at the age of 26 and attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. He then earned a master's degree from the University of Louisville and began to serve as pastor of a church in Kentucky. In 1983, he earned his doctor of ministry degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Langner served as pastor of Industrial City Baptist Church, Hueytown, for more than four years and then began serving as pastor of First, Phenix City, in 1983.

From his years of ministry Langner said he learned that "people respond to who you are and what you are rather than what you say." "People (at First, Phenix City) have been good to me," he said.

Langner has four daughters and seven grandchildren.

(Neisha Fuson)



LANGNER

Motion declined for task force to find Boy Scouts' 'substitute program'

Less than three weeks after the Boy Scouts voted to permit openly homosexual youth as members, a messenger to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) moved that an alternative organization be sought.

The motion by messenger Harold M. Phillips, of Maryland, during the June 11-12 SBC annual meeting called for a special task force to explore "any available youth programs as well as the possibility of offering a substitute program for those desiring to find an avenue for their boys to learn leadership skills and moral standards once offered by the Boy Scouts of America, seeing they have lost their way and lost their moral compass, the Bible."

However, the SBC Executive Committee declined to recommend creation of the task force "believing it is not in the purview of the Southern Baptist Convention to create an alternative civic organization for boys or to have a task force expressly or tacitly endorse one scouting alternative over another."

The Executive Committee response to the motion came during its Sept. 16-17 meeting in Nashville and will be reported to the 2014 SBC annual meeting in Baltimore.

Supplementary materials

provided to Executive Committee members recounted the existence of two longstanding Southern Baptist-based programs — Royal Ambassadors (RAs) for boys in grades 1-6 and Challengers for young men in grades 7-12, both sponsored by national Woman's Missionary Union (WMU). Both RAs and Challengers primarily focus on missions education and involvement but also entail the development of Christlike character and have elements of outdoor recreation.

Missions education

Steve Heartsill, managing editor for RAs at WMU headquarters in Birmingham, said there are some parallel elements to RAs and Boy Scouts, like an award system, camping and competitions using wooden racecars. WMU does not view RAs "as an alternative to anything," however.

"With a rich history of 105 years, the purpose of Royal Ambassadors is missions education and involvement," Heartsill said. "RAs is about leading boys to Christ, teaching missions and developing a Christlike character."

The RA pledge includes a promise "to keep myself clean and healthy in mind and body." (Compiled from BP)



Photo courtesy of Circlewood Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa

TUSCALOOSA'S CIRCLEWOOD BAPTIST HONORS FIELDS FOR 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

Circlewood Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa, recognized Billy R. Fields for 50 years of service as a deacon and Sunday School teacher Sept. 8. Pictured are (l to r): Winton Patterson, minister of music; Ora Fields, wife of Billy Fields; Billy Fields; and Herbert Thomas, pastor.



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The Boulder County flood washes away a road in Jamestown, Colo., a small mountain town of 300 on Sept. 15.

Test of FAITH

Americans increase trust in God, donations to relief agencies during natural disaster, survey finds

Torrential rainfall amounts have caused deadly flooding in Colorado in recent days, forcing thousands of residents to evacuate their homes and triggering oil spills. The disaster has caused property losses estimated at nearly \$2 billion, according to Reuters. Mexico is reeling from the effects of major storm systems including hurricanes Ingrid and Manuel that recently made landfall. According to news reports at press time, the death toll from the storms had risen to 97. And in Northern Califor-

nia, firefighters worked to battle a raging wildfire that destroyed homes.

When natural disasters occur, most Americans take increased interest in God and donate to relief agencies — and they trust faith-based agencies more than their secular counterparts.

Those are among the findings of a LifeWay Research survey conducted days after an historic EF5 tornado devastated parts of Oklahoma on May 20, killing two dozen people and causing billions of dollars in damages.

According to the study, commissioned by LifeWay's Bible Studies for Life curriculum, a third of Americans increase their trust in God during times of suffering. In response to the question, "How do you feel about God when suffering occurs that appears unfair?" the most common response is "I trust God more" (33 percent). Other responses include:

- ▶ "I am confused about God" (25 percent).
- ▶ "I don't think about God in these situations" (16 percent).
- ▶ "I wonder if God cares" (11 percent).
- ▶ "I doubt God exists" (7 percent).
- ▶ "I am angry toward God" (5 percent).
- ▶ "I am resentful toward God" (3 percent).

"Disasters, particularly natural disasters, perplex all of us," said Ed Stetzer, president of LifeWay Research. "While some call them 'acts of God,' others question why a good and loving God would do such a thing.

"The fact is, God does not give us all the answers," Stetzer said. "But, as Christians, we believe that God gives us Himself — and that is why we have faith. Faith is believing God when you don't have all the answers. But, disasters test that faith — some people draw closer to God, some pull away."

Nearly six in 10 Americans (57 percent) agree with the statement, "When a natural disaster occurs, my interest in God increases." Thirty-one percent disagree and 12 percent don't know. Nearly two-thirds of respondents living in the South agree (62 percent), compared with just more than

half in the West (54 percent) and Northeast (51 percent). Women, people with a college degree and those who attend worship services once a week are also likely to be more interested in God during a disaster.

Doubt in prayer

Despite their increased interest in God following disasters, most Americans doubt prayer can avert natural disasters. Fifty-one percent disagree that praying can avert natural disasters, with a third (32 percent) strongly disagreeing. Still, 34 percent believe prayer can avert natural disasters. Americans in the South (40 percent) are more likely to believe than those in the Northeast (26 percent) and West (28 percent).

When a natural disaster occurs, Americans trust faith-based groups to be more responsible than secular groups with their donations by nearly a two to one margin. Fifty-six percent agree they trust faith-based groups more, while 28 percent do not. Those who live in the Midwest and South, men and those who do not have a college degree are more likely to trust faith-based charities, while those in the Northeast and Americans ages 45–64 are not as likely.

Almost 60 percent of Americans donate to relief agencies in the wake of natural disasters. Thirty percent donate to both faith-based and secular relief agencies, 15 percent donate to faith-based relief agencies only and 12 percent donate to secular relief agencies only.

A third of Americans (32 percent) don't donate to any relief agencies. (LifeWay, TAB)



commons.wikimedia.org

The Rim Fire approaches the Groveland Ranger Station in the Stanislaus National Forest in California. The fire, which began Aug. 17, is under investigation.



Message breakdown

Do churches operate on

need-to-know basis?

Experts say learning proper communication between church leadership, members is vital

Many churches have cut back the number of business meetings held each year. Some have scaled back publications — particularly mailed-out print versions.

Some large churches with communications staff or a department have eliminated them or severely reduced their resources.

Does communication make much difference in churches? Can't most members find out what they need or want to know? The complex answer often boils down to the distinction between "need" and "want" — and who controls the desired information.

Sensitive personal matters — and confidential pastoral counseling sessions — should be protected, but keeping members informed and facilitating communication at all levels within a congregation must be nurtured, church-health expert Bill Wilson believes.

"Communication gets off-track internally first ... because we just assume communication will happen," noted Wilson, president of the Center for Congregational Health based in Winston-Salem, N.C. The center offers communication training for church leaders.

"When people think of upgrading communications, they talk about the mechanics," he added. Early on, center staff thought in those terms as well, until they realized "just giving people more tools doesn't get to the issue."

Church conflict can contribute to communication breakdown. As a center consultant, Wilson assists congregations with conflict management. Often the first comments he hears from members are complaints such as: "We just don't know what's going on," or "The pastor only talks to certain people."

"Most clergy don't do this (communicate) well. We encourage them to talk with someone in their church or someone they know who works as a publicist, in public relations or who is a communications person," he said.

Definition of communication

"They have to start with the understanding that communication is not: 'Can you preach a sermon, write a column or post a blog?'"

Pastors and staff, lay leaders and church members in general need to rethink what "communication" means. Wilson challenges them to consider what the Bible teaches.

Pointing to John 1:1, he said, "Jesus is the Word. ... God is conveying truth to people, and He uses several ways to communicate."

Part of the problem is today's "low-trust kind of culture," Wilson acknowledged.

The Bible commands believers to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15), which means they do not have the option to keep quiet. They also must make sure the truth can be determined. Then they must express that truth in Christlike love, which "is the hardest one of all," he said.

How can church leaders cultivate openness and transparency? How can congregations learn to communicate internally?

Members often nod their heads in agreement at business meetings, in the hallways or at events and then express their feelings in other venues.

"We tend to wait until there is a major issue before we realize we need to learn to communicate," Wilson said.

"Communication gets off-track internally first ... because we just assume communication will happen."

Bill Wilson

president, Center for Congregational Health

The larger or more complex a church is, the more difficult communication might become, said Glenn Akins, Baptist General Convention of Virginia assistant executive director. He is a member of Bon Air Baptist Church, Richmond, a multisite congregation.

Business approach

Akins generally takes a business approach to church governance. "The larger and more complex a church is, the more members must rely on the management" in whatever form that takes — lead pastor, executive pastor or group of elders. "But there must be some level of transparency or accountability built in," he said.

"It gets muddy when laypeople get down into management," which is more evident in larger churches. "They can't have every lay leader involved in personnel management," he said.

Akins also believes most church members, at least at Bon Air, are not interested in decision making, but they do want to be informed about the decisions that are made.

"My experience as a pastor was that you could get most any information as long as you didn't go beyond the understood boundaries," Wilson said.

In Baptist life, each congregation develops its own boundaries.

Based upon his ministry in the local church and now as a consultant, he said the old adage, "'Tell the truth and trust the people,' really does work most of the time." (ABP)

Helpful resources

The Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions



Alabama Baptist Convention State Board of Missions
 office of communications and technology services offers resources and direction related to church communication through conferences and consultations. For more information, contact Brian Harris at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 310, or bharris@alsbom.org.

The Alabama Baptist newspaper



offers a convenient way to get your church's news into the homes of your church members. For more information about the local edition service, contact Debbie Campbell at 1-800-803-5201, ext. 106, or dcampbell@thealabamabaptist.org.

1. Listen to the congregation.

2. Speak where people are listening.

3. Don't forget the bathrooms.

4. Adapt your plan to fit your church's size.

Involving every member

Churches can empower members for ministry by keeping them in loop with current information

By Grace Thornton
 The Alabama Baptist

Brian Harris couldn't believe what he was hearing. "When I was a communications director at a church, I had a church member ask why she hadn't heard about a particular event," he said.

His first thought: "Have you not been at church?" It "was a churchwide event, and she was literally standing beside a poster in the hallway when she asked me the question," he said. "In some cases, you just can't win."

But in many other cases, church members have legitimate feelings of being out of the loop about what's going on in church and their concern is legitimate, said Harris, an associate in communications and technology services for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions.

"I definitely think it's different on a church-by-church case and often the openness of communication is a direct reflection of the leadership in the church," he said. "I think most church leaders want their congregation to be informed of everything but a lot of times it just doesn't happen."

And much of the issue comes from the preferences of the congregation — leaders will never get everyone to agree on what is the right amount or method of communication, Harris said.

"With that in mind, you have to open several channels and be constantly aware of new opportunities," he said. "At the same time, you have to be able to maintain these channels of communication. It's almost just as bad to have a presence on social media or the Web, for example, and never update it than it is to not be on it at all."

Keep it current

Charles Malmede, director of media services for Whitesburg Baptist Church, Huntsville, agreed.

Whether Facebook or other Web-based communication, "no matter which you choose, the most important thing is maintaining it with current information," Malmede said. "If you don't, people will not trust it and they will stop using it to find the information they are looking for."

It's vital for the church to have trustworthy communication, he said. The goal is to have every member involved in ministry, and that can't happen if they don't have the information or aren't confident in the information source.

"We cannot achieve our goal of getting every member involved in ministry if we can't effectively communicate with them," Malmede said.

Harris offered some tips on communicating with church members:

- ▶ Listen to the congregation. "They will help dictate what is needed," Harris

said. "If it's a younger church, then you have to be on social media. You've got to have a well-maintained website."

If the church is older, printed materials will likely be valued, he said. "A lot of churches are right there in the middle, and you end up having to do it all."

If that's the case, church leaders who primarily communicate in print should be willing to experiment with an email newsletter option for those who prefer it, Harris said.

- ▶ Speak where people are listening.

Harris said most people expect churches to have a Web presence at this point, and Greg Golden, associate pastor in media ministries for Cottage Hill Baptist Church, Mobile, agreed.

"If we hope to get and keep their attention, we must do so in a relevant style that meets them in their patterns of daily life," he said. "We as a church are competing for their attention and their time, so we should put our best face forward on all the methods of conveying information so that our members can be fully informed and more completely engaged in their church."

In Golden's church, that means using a monthly bulletin handout, a weekly handout, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, a text service, a weekly email blast and video announcements that are shown in the services.

At Whitesburg Baptist, it includes some of these as well as a "top four" announcements

each week during the services and posters in the major thoroughfares, Malmede said.

- ▶ Don't forget the bathrooms.

Restroom facilities offer a prime opportunity to communicate, Harris said.

"I visited a church and found that they were even taking advantage of the time a person was in the bathroom to tell them about things that are going on," he said.

"It sounds crazy, but virtually everyone is guaranteed to visit the bathroom at some point while they are in the building."

He loved the idea so much that he installed plastic paper holders in each spot an individual might see them while in the bathroom.

"People thought I was crazy at first, but then members started telling me stories about how they saw it in the bathroom and it really helped them to learn more about a particular event," Harris said.

- ▶ Adapt your plan to fit your church's size.

Larger churches may have staff dedicated to communication, but in smaller churches, the responsibility can fall to the pastor or secretary, who already have full plates, Harris said.

"You really don't want to take on too much and end up sacrificing your health or home life, so it becomes important to grow and nurture a strong and supportive volunteer staff to help." ❧

"It's almost just as bad to have a presence on social media or the Web, for example, and never update it than it is to not be on it at all."

Brian Harris
 associate in communications and technology services, Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions

Love God, reach people

Phipps launches ministry to encourage churches in outreach

By Grace Thornton
The Alabama Baptist

Lawrence Phipps never ceases to be amazed when people ask if he and his friends are angels.

It's happened more than once. To him, it's affirmation that the Holy Spirit is at work — and that believers have to be obedient to share their faith.

"One day while we were out visiting, we knocked on the door of a young woman who was crying when she came to the door," Phipps said. "She said, 'A few minutes ago, I started praying that if God was really in my life He would send someone to talk to me. You're not angels, are you?'"

Phipps is so convinced that God desires to use His people that he recently resigned from Vaughn Forest Baptist Church, Montgomery, after nearly 20 years as pastor to start It's Life Ministry (ILM). Through ILM, Phipps hopes to encourage churches "by rekindling a passion for reaching people for Christ."

The vision was birthed from a burden that started years ago, one that has already produced fruit from a book he wrote called "It's LIFE." The book, written to equip Christians to share their faith in everyday life, uses the acronym L.I.F.E.: L — God is Love; I — people are Imperfect; F — God offers Forgiveness; E — we can have Eternal life.

He later followed that up with a book for new believers, "More Abundant LIFE: 100 Days to Start or Restart your Christian Walk."

Both have shown themselves to be fruitful at Vaughn Forest Baptist, which baptized eight new believers in 1994 when it organized — and 2,313 last year.

"I want to see our convention, our churches get re-energized for why God leaves us here on earth," Phipps said.

One way ILM aims to help that happen is through outreach revivals. Through these events, Phipps gives church members tools to get out in the community and invite people to revival services.

Learning to take off and land

"There are a lot of people wanting to do missions work but they don't know how to share their faith or engage people in spiritual conversations," he said.

It's like flying a plane, he said — the flying part doesn't take that long to learn, but it takes effort to take off and land. Talking about Christ is the same way — the hardest part is getting into the conversation initially and then wrapping it up at the end, Phipps said.

This is evidenced by the fact that a large majority of professing Christians have never shared their faith with anyone, he said.

Others do share but get discouraged because they share without results, or the people later fall away, Phipps said.

"But we shouldn't let that discourage us," he said. "Jesus Himself told us that as we sow seed, it will fall on different kinds of soil. Don't let anyone deter you from continuing to sow seed."

Christians should pray that God would send the lost to them, Phipps said.

One method he uses to get people started with "entry-level" outreach is a "random act of kindness" card.

"For instance, you can go through the drive-thru line at McDonald's and pay for the person behind you," he said. "I ask the person at the window to give the person behind me a card that says, 'You are the recipient of a random act of kindness.'"

On the back of the card is information about the revival and the church hosting it.

Phipps also provides resources for church members such as a tract called "Just for You," which asks the recipient if he or she is looking for a place to be loved, inspired and have meaningful fellowship.

"A lot of people are afraid or intimidated about sharing their faith, but they can start with a handout that says, 'Come visit our church,'" Phipps said.

During an outreach revival week, or at another planned time, Phipps holds meetings with church leaders to work through the book "It's LIFE." The group does this with the goal that nine people will begin a long-term evangelism ministry out of these initial meetings, he said.

"That's doable — it doesn't matter how big or small your church is," Phipps said.

Those who want to go forward with the ministry are

organized into teams of three, and in the following weeks and months they go out visiting on a consistent basis, growing in sharing their faith regularly.

Another possibility ILM encourages is to take the church's Sunday School classes through "More Abundant Life," which helps both new believers and longtime Christians revive their passion to love God and love others like Christ does. That passion is what ILM sees as its mission, Phipps said.

Through ILM, Phipps consults with church leaders to put together a plan that fits their congregation's needs. This could include a variety of events, training and guided churchwide prayer options. "It's not a 'one size fits all' plan. We discuss it and discover what their needs are, then put together a plan," he said.

Phipps recently did just that at First Baptist Church, Athens, where Edwin Jenkins serves as pastor.

"We were not looking for behavior change but heart transformation, and Lawrence fit right in with that. He did a marvelous job of pointing us that direction," Jenkins said. "Our people were very responsive to him. He provided all we had hoped for in terms of evangelism and seeking God."

For more information, call 334-328-5232 or visit itslifeministry.com. ☞



Photo courtesy of Lawrence Phipps

Lawrence Phipps



Reading Bibles only allowed in registered religious buildings

TASHKENT, Uzbekistan — Begzod Kadyrov, chief specialist of the Uzbekistan government's Religious Affairs Committee in the capital of Tashkent, has defended the widespread fines handed down to individuals after religious literature is confiscated from them. Asked why such penalties are handed down, and why individuals cannot carry their religious books like the Bible with them, he responded: "According to the Religion Law, religious books are only allowed to be read within registered religious communities' buildings."

In two separate cases in August administrative fines on 20 religious believers in Samarkand and Kashkadarya for "illegal religious literature" totaled the equivalent of nearly 68 years' official minimum wage.

Told about the vast number of fines and penalties in Uzbekistan for "illegal religious literature" — including these two cases — Kadyrov declined to comment. "Those are court decisions and the courts are independent from us."

Asked whether the purpose of the Religious Affairs Committee is not to help religious communities and individual believers, and why the Committee will not initiate positive changes to the harsh Religion Law, Kadyrov claimed, "No one from the communities has complained to us [about the Law or the penalties]. We cannot just act on the basis of articles published on the Internet."

Kadyrov would not discuss his committee's "expert analyses" of religious literature, on the basis of which numerous religious works — including Muslim and Christian literature — are ordered destroyed by the courts.

Catholic priest in Tanzania seriously injured by acid

ZANZIBAR CITY, Tanzania — Asserting that Tanzania's Zanzibar Island is not a place for Christians, suspected Muslim extremists threw acid on a 60-year-old Catholic priest Sept. 13, sources said.

Joseph Anselmo Mwangamba stepped outside an Internet café on the outskirts of Zanzibar City, capital of the semi-autonomous island in the Indian Ocean about 16 miles off the coast of Tanzania, when the assailants threw acid on his face and chest, a café worker said.

"Finish him. Zanzibar is only for Muslims — not for Christians," one of the assailants reportedly said, according to café worker Mariamu Juma.

As the criminals fled, Juma poured water on his burns and rushed him to Mnazi Moja Hospital. In critical condition, the priest was transferred to the mainland's Muhimbili National Hospital in Dar-es-Salaam. At press time, his condition was said to be stable, according to pastor Lucian Mgaywa of the Church of God, Zanzibar.

In August, two men on a motorbike threw acid on two British 18-year-old women in Zanzibar.

Suspected Islamic extremists shot and killed Evaristus Mushi, a 56-year-old Roman Catholic priest, Feb. 17 in the Mtoni area outside Zanzibar City. The murder came nearly two months after the Christmas Day 2012 shooting of another Catholic priest, Ambrose Mkenda, that seriously injured him.

Killers of slain Christian confess, arrested in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — The killers of Pakistan's first Christian to become a federal cabinet member, Shahbaz Bhatti, have confessed to the crime, Bhatti's brother and security sources said.

Paul Bhatti, brother of the slain federal minister for minority affairs, told sources that security officials and a senior government minister said a suspect belonging to terrorist group Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) had confessed to murdering Shahbaz Bhatti over his efforts to amend Pakistan's blasphemy laws and his support of Asia Noreen (also known as Asia Bibi), a Christian woman sentenced to death for alleged blasphemy.

The TTP is closely connected with Al Qaeda. The capture of three Islamic extremist suspects in connection with the assassination comes more than two and a half years after the March 2, 2011, murder in Islamabad.

With the assistance of intelligence agencies, the suspects were arrested from their hideout in Phulgran, a suburban area of Islamabad. The security officials also seized a car laden with explosives. ☞

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Alabama Baptist Convention State Board of Missions

ONE MISSION:
The Great Commission

ONE PROGRAM:
The Cooperative Program

MANY MINISTRIES:
Great Commission Ministries

FOCUS on ONE Mission

news and features about missions and ministries from the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions (800) 264-1225 | www.alsbom.org

A Few Worthy Quotes in Tweets

These tweets, which were also posted on Facebook, were sent from the Twitter account of @ricklance during the past several months:

“Love God, love people, but use money.” —Charles Roesel

“What we are in California is coming your way in the Bible Belt.” —Jeff Iorg

“It is the devil’s lie that you cannot preach about stewardship in today’s churches.” —Jeff Iorg

“In whatever man does without God, he must fail miserably or succeed more miserably.” —George MacDonald

“We need to get the people in the Word of God and, more important, we need to get the Word of God in people.” —O.S. Hawkins

“The most dangerous time in the life of a vision is when it comes to fruition. You have to keep envisioning.” —O.S. Hawkins

“The cross challenges us to follow Jesus in every way, in

every day.” —Jay Wolf

“If we are true intercessors, we must be ready to take part in God’s work on behalf of the people for whom we pray.” —Corrie ten Boom

“The richness of the Word of God ought to determine our prayer, not the poverty of our hearts.” —Dietrich Bonhoeffer

“We should never get over God living in us. It is a Kingdom miracle.” —Ronnie Floyd

“We are more like gardeners working window boxes than farmers working a field.” —Chuck Kelley, speaking about evangelism

“God doesn’t dole out His Spirit in proportion to the size of the church.” —Ron Klassen

“The quality of our spiritual lives will never rise and consistently stay any higher than the level of our prayer lives.” —Charles T. Carter

“A good marriage is made up of two good forgivers.” —Gigi Graham

“Forgiveness is not remembering to forget but forgetting to remember.” —Gary Inrig

“Sir, my concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God’s side, for God is always right.” —Abraham Lincoln

“We must follow Christ on His terms, not ours. That is what it means to be salt and light.” —Mark Foley

“The reason we do not share our faith is that we have lost a sense of gratitude for our salvation.” —Nate Adams

“Frustration is the common cold of the pastor.” —State Missionary Dale Huff

“One of our problems in evangelism is that we have lost a sense of lostness.” —State Missionary Billy Harris

“Grace without Jesus Christ is homeless.” —Lee Eclov in his book *Pastoral Graces*

“You don’t minister to a dying nation without feeling the death pangs yourself.” —Charles Swindoll

“The heartbeat of a God-centered and healthy ministry is the heartbeat of prayer.” —Lance Witt

“You evangelize to revitalize; you don’t revitalize to evangelize.” —Ken Priddy

“Revitalization happens as ministry emphasis shifts from members to people in the community.” —Gary McIntosh

To follow Rick Lance on Twitter, go online to www.twitter.com/ricklance.

By Rick Lance
State Missionary
Executive Director



Sunday, October 13, 2013

For resources or other information, please contact State Missionary Jim Swedenburg at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 283, or (334) 613-2283, jswedenburg@alsbom.org or visit alsbom.org/worldhunger



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ROYAL AMBASSADOR SOAPBOX DERBY



**OCTOBER 19, 2013. IN MONTGOMERY
DEXTER AVENUE IN FRONT OF THE STATE CAPITOL**

**Register at 9 a.m., race begins at 10 a.m.
Registration Fee: \$10 per car (payable at the race)
Soapbox Derby Guidelines: www.alsbom.org/ra**

For a free DVD with engineering drawings of the frame of the soapbox car; to order soapbox frame with steering linkage, axles and braking system; or for other information, please contact Ministry Assistant Jill Stokes at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 227, or (334) 613-2227, jstokes@alsbom.org

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

**Training Opportunities for Men's
Ministry/Brotherhood Directors
and Royal Ambassador Leaders**



CENTRAL

Thursday, October 3: Northwood Hills Baptist Church, Northport. Training for MM Directors and RA Leaders. 6:30-9 p.m.

Tuesday, October 8: Deerfoot Baptist Church, Trussville. Training for MM Directors and RA Leaders. 6:30-9 p.m.

Thursday, October 10: First Baptist Church, Pelham. Training for MM Directors and RA Leaders. 6:30-9 p.m.

Thursday, October 17: Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church, Bessemer. Training for MM Directors and RA Leaders. 6:30-9 p.m.

Tuesday, October 29: First Baptist Church, Fayette. Training for MM Directors and RA Leaders. 6:30-9 p.m.

For more information, please contact Ministry Assistant Jill Stokes at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 227, or (334) 613-2227, jstokes@alsbom.org.

AREA TRAININGS:

www.alsbom.org/ra or www.alsbom.org/men

NORTH

Thursday, October 3: Marshall Baptist Retreat Center, Guntersville. Training for MM Directors and RA Leaders. 6-8:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 24: Calvary Baptist Church, Russellville. Training for MM Directors and RA Leaders. 6:30-9 p.m.



**order your 2013-2014
church planning guide**



This 16-month calendar (Sept. 2013–Dec. 2014) has State Board of Missions events and emphases already printed with plenty of room for you to add your church's events.

Limit **20 COPIES** per church. To order, please **call, fax or e-mail** your

request to Charleen Hobbs at 1.800.264.1225, ext. 231; 334.288.2693 (fax); chobbs@alsbom.org; or **order online** at www.alsbom.org/cpg.

Be sure to **include** your name, church name, mailing address and number of guides needed (up to 20).

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

OCTOBER 6-8 ✨ SHOCCO SPRINGS

Spouses are welcome to attend! Sunday night worship kickoff begins at 7 p.m. The event will conclude by noon on Tuesday. **The conference itself is free.** Lodging for two nights and four meals will be \$75 per couple or \$50 per individual. Childcare will not be provided.

This retreat is designed for the "point person" in a local church who leads in youth ministry (middle school – high school), no matter your vocational status.

"Together Ministry" will take a look at the impact of youth ministry service on relationships in our personal lives: family, friends, etc. We will also give consideration to impacting the lives of others in relationship-driven local church ministry with youth.

Featuring Chris Sligh, American Idol top ten finalist in season six.

Sunday night speaker: Wade Morris

Other speakers include Roger Davis from Student Life and Andy Blanks from Youth Ministry 360.

Many breakout sessions will be offered.

For additional information visit www.onemissionstudents.org/youthministersretreat or please contact Ministry Assistant Lydia Patterson at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 275, (334) 613-2275, lpatterson@alsbom.org.



Chris Sligh



ALABAMA YOUTH MINISTERS RETREAT

FOCUS on One Mission

V.E.L.C.R.O. CHURCH



ASSIMILATION CONFERENCES

Thursday, October 3, 2013:
 First Baptist Church, Athens;
 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Thursday, January 9, 2014:
 East Pointe Baptist Church,
 Spanish Fort; 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Registration:
www.alsbom.org/velcrochurch
Cost: \$10 per person (includes book and lunch). Check in begins at 9 a.m.

Speaker: Mike James

For more information, please contact State Missionary Daniel Edmonds at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 285, or (334) 613-2285, dedmonds@alsbom.org.



alsbom.org/cp

COOPERATIVE PROGRAM IN BRIEF

— “Since Christ commanded us to work together to ‘build God’s kingdom,’ I believe that the Cooperative Program is the instrument that God has given Southern Baptists to accomplish our task most effectively.” *Clarke Skelton, pastor, Valley Grande Baptist Church (Selma Association)*



— “The Cooperative Program is like the legs on a centipede. They all work together to get somewhere. The Cooperative Program is one of our ways of working together to get the Gospel all over the world. That is why I believe in and support the Cooperative Program.” *Ronnie Boulware, pastor, Antioch East Baptist Church, Greenville*

— “The Cooperative Program is a great investment because it represents churches working together through missions and ministry to carry out the Great Commission.” *James S. Watkins, pastor, First Baptist Church, Leroy*



— “Over the years I have had the opportunity to meet and talk to some of those who have been called to the mission field, home and foreign. I have noticed that many of them spend much of their time at home raising money that enables them to stay at their missions work. I am pleased that those supported by the Cooperative Program do not have that added burden of raising money to support themselves and their work. The CP also enables small churches, like ours, to be able to have a part in the Kingdom work that goes on at home and around the world.” *Alan Griffith, pastor, Emmanuel Baptist Church, Phenix City*



alsbom.org/cp1



52nd Annual Alabama Association of Baptist Secretaries Conference

SUNDAY THROUGH WEDNESDAY, March 2-5, 2014, Shocco Springs

“Taste and See: Savoring the Sweet Grace of God”

Conference Leader: Margaret Kennedy

Worship Leader: Tim Gay

We invite you to join us as we celebrate and share the sweet grace of God in our lives professionally, personally and spiritually. Mark your calendar and plan to join us. Other details will be coming soon.

For more information, please contact Ministry Assistant Sandra Lewandowski at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 316, or (334) 613-2316, slewandowski@alsbom.org.

2013 Alabama Baptist State Convention Annual Meeting November 12-13, Whitesburg Baptist Church, Huntsville

LIFE changers

A celebration of how God is using the ministries of the Alabama Baptist State Convention to change lives

Tuesday Evening



Speaker:
Frank Page—
president and chief
executive officer,
SBC Executive
Committee



Worship Leader:
Charles Billingsley—
along with the Whitesburg
choir and Alabama Singing
Men & Alabama Singing
Women

Theme Interpretation Speakers

Cecil Sanders—pastor, First
Baptist Church, Headland
Tuesday morning



Robert Smith—director of
missions, Muscle Shoals
Baptist Association, Moulton
Wednesday morning

President's Address

John Killian—president,
Alabama Baptist State
Convention; pastor, Maytown
Baptist Church
Tuesday morning



Convention Sermon

Kevin Wilburn—pastor, First Baptist
Church, Scottsboro
Wednesday morning



For the complete order of business, please visit www.alsbom.org. For messenger cards, please visit www.cards.alsbom.org. Please note that blank cards will not be issued, so you'll need to know the names of your church's messengers who will be attending.

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HOTEL GUIDE

Huntsville Area Accommodations

I-565 Exits

- 7 Airport
- 8 Intergraph
- 14 Redstone Arsenal
- 15 Space Center
- 17 Governors Drive
- 19 Downtown, VBC
- 20 Oakwood Avenue

Downtown Map Locations

- 1. Visitor Center
- 2. Von Braun Center
- P Parking
- 3. Huntsville Museum of Art
- 4. Courthouse Square
- 5. Alabama Constitution Village
- 6. Weeden House Museum
- 7. Historic Huntsville Depot
- 8. Chamber of Commerce

Whitesburg B. C.
6806 Whitesburg Dr. S.
Huntsville, AL 35802

HOTEL GUIDE The following hotels have offered special rates to those attending the State Convention Annual Meeting. Remember to ask for the Alabama Baptist State Convention rate when you call. Rates listed do not include taxes. This information is provided as a service and not intended to be a recommendation of any kind. If you have problems making a reservation or securing the posted rate at any of these hotels, please contact Charleen Hobbs at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 231, or chobbs@alsbom.org.

1. Convention Hotel
Marriott-Huntsville
5 Tranquility Base
Huntsville, AL 35805
\$102 • 256-830-2222

2. Candlewood Suites Huntsville
201 Exchange Place
Huntsville, AL 35806
\$65.99 (queen) • 256-830-8222
Free internet

3. DoubleTree Suites by Hilton
6000 Memorial Parkway SW
Huntsville, AL 35802
\$79 • 256-882-9400

4. Embassy Suites Huntsville Hotel & Spa
800 Monroe St
Huntsville, AL 35801
\$119 • 256-327-7808
Free breakfast and Evening Manager's Reception

5. Fairfield Inn by Marriott
1385 Enterprise Way
Huntsville, AL 35806
\$89 (double and king)
256-971-0921
Free expanded continental breakfast, free internet access

6. Federal Square Inn
8781 Madison Blvd
Madison, AL 35758
\$55.99 (single) \$59.99 (2 doubles) • 256-772-8470
Free continental breakfast, free Wi-Fi

7. Four Points by Sheraton Huntsville Airport
100 Glenn Hearn Blvd
Huntsville, AL 35824
\$80 • 256-772-0121
Free Wi-Fi

8. Hampton Inn & Suites
7010 Governor's West Dr
Huntsville, AL 35806
\$109 • 256-971-1850
Free deluxe continental breakfast

9. Hampton Inn
4815 University Dr
Huntsville, AL 35816
\$89 • 256-830-9400
Free breakfast, free evening snacks

10. Holiday Inn Downtown
401 Williams Ave SW
Huntsville, AL 35801
\$85 • 256-424-0039
Free Wi-Fi

11. Holiday Inn Express
3808 University Dr NW
Huntsville, AL 35816
\$75 • 256-721-1000
Free breakfast

12. Homewood Suites by Hilton
15 Town Center Dr
Huntsville, AL 35806
\$109 (king) \$129 (2 queens)
256-895-9511
Free breakfast and dinner

13. LaQuinta Inn
4870 University Dr
Huntsville, AL 35816
\$62 • 256-830-2070
Free breakfast

14. Motel 6
8995 Madison Blvd
Madison, AL 35758
\$39.99 • 256-772-7479

15. Residence Inn
6305 Residence Inn Rd
Huntsville, AL 35806
\$109 • 256-895-0444
Free hot breakfast buffet, free Wi-Fi

16. Springhill Suites Huntsville
320 Providence Main St
Huntsville, AL 35806
\$109 • 256-430-1485
Free full hot breakfast buffet

17. TownePlace Suites by Marriott
112 McMurtrie Dr
Huntsville, AL 35806
\$99 • 256-971-5277
Free continental breakfast, free Wi-Fi

18. Westin Huntsville
6800 Governors West, NW
Huntsville, AL 35806
\$135 • 256-428-5404

FOCUS on One Mission



**FRIDAY AND SATURDAY,
JANUARY 24-25, 2014, SHOCCO SPRINGS**

GUEST SPEAKER/PERFORMER:

Kyle Matthews, minister of worship arts, First Baptist Church, Greenville, S.C., owner of See For Yourself Music and award-winning recording artist and songwriter. The combination of his musical storytelling and spoken-word presentations is educational, enlightening and entertaining. Kyle is often recognized for writing the Dove Award-winning song "We Fall Down." He is married to Susan and has two children, Emily and Christopher.

Conferences and activities designed for children, youth and high school drill participants and their leaders will be offered at the retreat. Participants will learn to know God's Word and to see how it relates to their lives. Leaders will learn more about Bible drill and how to have an effective ministry in their churches. Come and be a part of this exciting retreat.

STEP #1: LODGING RESERVATIONS:
1-800-280-1105 (Shocco Springs)

STEP #2: RETREAT RESERVATIONS:
Go online to www.alsbom.org/bibledrill, and click on 2014 Bible Drill Retreat Information. Registration will begin in November, 2013.

Online Info: www.alsbom.org/bibledrill

For more information, please contact Ministry Assistant Nancy Henderson at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 313, or (334) 613-2313, or nhenderson@alsbom.org.

FAITH-FOCUSED SECURITY TRAINING

This training is highly recommended for all churches taking mission trips and required for churches who participate in State Board of Missions projects. Topics will include travel security, code of conduct, crime survival, basic crisis policy and more, all from a faith-based perspective. Training is provided by Fort Sherman Academy, a recognized leader in faith-based training for missions organizations.

COST: \$40 per participant (**non-refundable**, includes lunch and training).

REGISTRATION: Limited to 50 participants.

CHOOSE FROM THREE EVENTS:

• **Faith-Focused Security Training—Sentinel Level A:** Saturday, October 26, 2013; 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Government Street Baptist Church, 3401 Government Blvd., Mobile. Led by Sentinel Trainers certified by FSA.

For more information or to register, go online to www.alsbom.org/ffst, or please contact Sheron Poole at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 298, or (334) 613-2298, spool@alsbom.org.

Fall Senior Adult Retreat

**Monday through Wednesday, October 14-16, 2013
SHOCCO SPRINGS**

Press On: Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:13-14, NASB)

Celebration Leader: Gerald Hallmark, retired pastor, First Baptist Church, Alexander City

Preacher: James Sampley, pastor, First Baptist Church, Ashville

Musician: Alan Furr, First Baptist Church, Ashville

Come and join with other senior adults to celebrate the race "for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." You will not have to jump any hurdles or run a marathon, but you will hear some great messages from God's Word, praise God through some inspiring music and enjoy some time of sweet fellowship and fun. This event will begin with lunch on Monday and end with lunch on Wednesday.

Registration: 1-800-280-1105. Cost depends upon choice of lodging and is per person.

Online Info: www.alsbom.org/fallsenioradultretreat

For more information, please contact State Missionary Eileen Mitchell at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 221, or (334) 613-2221, emitchell@alsbom.org.



Children's Honor Choir Auditions

Deadline for audition forms and CD: November 1. Start preparing now as your children's choirs start back at school time.

Senior Adult Choir Celebrations

October 24 and 25, 2013, beginning at 10 a.m. October 24 at First Baptist Church, Pleasant Grove, and Eastmont Baptist Church, Montgomery; October 25, First Baptist Church, Fairhope, and Central Baptist Church, Phenix City. For updates regarding this ministry event, go online to www.alsbom.org/seniorfest. Call for a registration form.

State Keyboard Festivals

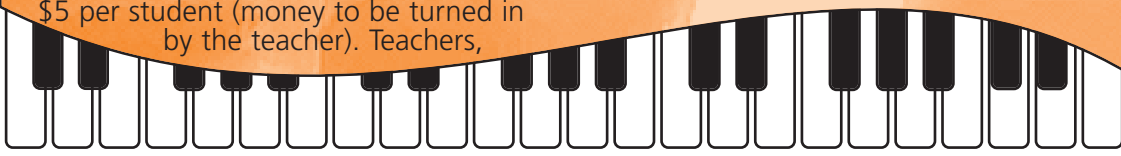
November 2 at Meadow Brook Baptist Church, Birmingham, and Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Gordo; November 4 at First Baptist Church, Fairhope; November 5 at First Baptist Church, Enterprise. Cost \$5 per student (money to be turned in by the teacher). Teachers,

please bring the money for all students to the event or mail a check to: Office of Worship Leadership & Church Music, State Keyboard Festivals, P.O. Box 11870, Montgomery, AL 36111-0870.

NewSong Tour

Auditioned choir for current 7th and 8th graders
Tour Dates January 3-5, 2014 in Talladega/Trussville areas
Deadline for Audition CD's/Applications – November 11, 2013
Information and Application available online.

For more information on these events, please contact Ministry Assistant Sharon Cleveland at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 279, (334) 613-2279, scleveland@alsbom.org or visit www.alsbom.org/worship





ROYAL AMBASSADORS WEEK

NOVEMBER 3-11, 2013

IDEAS:

- ☐ BOYS WEAR VEST AND TAKE UP OFFERING ON SUNDAY.
- ☐ HAVE A PASTOR'S TABLE (LIKE A CAPTAIN'S TABLE) FOR RAS AT THE WEDNESDAY NIGHT SUPPER.
- ☐ PRESENT THE SKETCH "WHAT'S A BOY WORTH?" ON SUNDAY MORNING.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT STATE MISSIONARY STEVE STEPHENS AT 1-800-264-1225, EXT. 268, OR (334) 613-2268, SSTEPHENS@ALSBOM.ORG.



Called to Communicate

Tuesday, October 8, 2013 • 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Baptist Building,
2001 E. South Blvd.,
Montgomery,

FEATURING
Charles T. Carter,
Sammy Gilbreath and
Sid Nichols.



Charles
Carter



Sammy
Gilbreath



Sid
Nichols

COST: \$20 per person

For more information, please contact Ministry Assistant Jamie Allen at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 256, or (334) 613-2256, jallen@alsbom.org. www.alsbom.org/ctc

JOIN HUNDREDS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS FROM ACROSS ALABAMA and dozens of missionaries from across the globe as we pursue God and pursue God's Heart for the Nations. This conference will be held alongside the Great Commission Prayer Conference and First Baptist Church Montgomery's Global Impact Celebration. This weekend will feature training and encouragement from missionaries from all over the world as we challenge students to pray, give and go.

FOR MORE INFORMATION contact Elissa Kilpatrick, ekilpatrick@alsbom.org or 334-613-2262.
www.onemissionstudents.org/pursue

February 7-8, 2014



pursue
GOD'S HEART FOR THE NATIONS

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

Friday and Saturday, January 17-18, 2014 • **WORLDSONG MISSIONS PLACE**, Cook Springs

FOR: students grades 7-12 and their leaders
COST: \$45 per person
REGISTRATION DEADLINE: January 3

- Hear personal stories from a young missionary who is answering God's call to serve him here at home and abroad.
- Experience dynamic worship led by an awesome praise band.
- Dive deep into God's Word through Bible study.
- Take part in a missions/ministry project in one of the communities surrounding the Cook Springs area.

STUDENT
MISSIONS
WEEKEND

For more information, visit www.alabamawmu.org, or contact Erin Bishop at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 224, or (334) 613-2224, ebishop@alsbom.org.

NOVEMBER 2013

MY HOPE AMERICA
WITH BILLY GRAHAM

DON'T MISS BEING INVOLVED IN BILLY GRAHAM'S FINAL CRUSADE.

FOR YOUR CHURCH TO BE TRAINED, CONTACT THE **STATE EVANGELISM OFFICE** AT 1-800-264-1225, EXT. 245, PDAVIS@ALSBOM.ORG WWW.ALSBOM.ORG/MYHOPE

ENGAGE 24

24 DAYS OF PRAYER

ONEMISSIONSTUDENTS.ORG/ENGAGE24

OCTOBER

- 1 Pray for students across Alabama to be open to the Gospel message
- 2 Pray for students at Auburn University
- 3 Pray for students at Alabama State University
- 4 Pray for students at the University of Alabama in Huntsville
- 5 Pray for students at the University of Alabama in Birmingham
- 6 Pray for students at the University of North Alabama
- 7 Pray for students at the University of Montevallo
- 8 Pray for dorm rooms and classrooms to be places of peace
- 9 Pray for commuter students
- 10 Pray for **ENGAGE24** and for students to be bold in their witness for Christ TODAY!
- 11 Pray for church collegiate groups across Alabama
- 12 Pray for students at Jacksonville State University
- 13 Pray for students at Samford University, Judson College and the University of Mobile
- 14 Pray for students at Troy University
- 15 Pray for students at the University of South Alabama
- 16 Pray for students at Auburn Montgomery
- 17 Pray for students at Alabama A&M University
- 18 Pray specifically for relationships with non-believers to be strengthened
- 19 Pray for students at the University of West Alabama
- 20 Pray for community college campuses across our state
- 21 Pray for students at the University of Alabama
- 22 Pray for relationships with international students on our campuses
- 23 Pray for faculty, staff and administrators on campuses across our state
- 24 Pray for campus ministers on the college campus "mission field" in Alabama

ENGAGE24 is an evangelism effort through Baptist Campus Ministries in Alabama and across the nation and is sponsored by the Office of Collegiate & Student Ministries of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions. This resource is made possible by gifts from Alabama Baptists through the Cooperative Program.

News from Alabama WMU



Fall Missions Festival for Children

Friday and Saturday, **OCTOBER 11-12**, or Friday and Saturday, **OCTOBER 18-19**, 2013.

WorldSong Missions Place, Cook Springs.

\$50 per person. At Fall Missions Festival,

children will learn about all God is doing in

Peru. Children grades 1-6 and their leaders will hear

from missionaries, as well as experience South American

culture through food, customs and other activities led by young adults who love

and serve the Lord and have a heart for children and for missions. Activities will

begin at 5 p.m. Friday and conclude at 3 p.m. Saturday. *For more information,*

visit www.worldsongretreat.com or contact Brandy Cleveland at 1-800-264-

1225, ext. 223, or (334) 613-2223, bcleveland@alsbom.org.

Fall Missions Festival for Adults

Tuesday, **OCTOBER 22**, or Thursday, **OCTOBER 24**, 2013. WorldSong Missions Place, Cook Springs. \$16 per person (includes lunch). **Registration deadline:**

Monday, October 14. Held on the beautiful campus of WorldSong, this year's

festival will focus on the amazing country of Peru, the emphasis area for the

2013 International Mission Study. You will have opportunities to learn from and

interact with missionaries, pray together and enjoy other special activities. The

Fall Missions Festival for Adults is open to adults of all ages. *For more*

information, go online to www.alabamawmu.com or please contact Pat Ingram

at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 292, or (334) 613-2292, pingram@alsbom.org.



Potential Dividends from More High School Graduates

By Jim Williams
Special to The Alabama Baptist

By the year 2020, 90 percent of students should be graduating on time from Alabama high schools, under a goal adopted in 2012 by the State Board of Education.

This is an ambitious goal, but it could have a big payoff for the graduates and for the state's economy.

When the goal was set, the on-time graduation rate was 72 percent. Local school systems got off to a good start, raising the rate by three points to 75 percent in the first year. However, consistent increases of about two points a year will be needed to make the state's goal.

More valuable

Students who graduate from high school are more likely to work steadily, and they are more valuable to their employers. Census Bureau data show that a typical high school dropout makes less than \$11,000 a year. In contrast, a high school graduate earns twice as much (about \$21,600) and an individual with an associate's degree makes about three times as much (\$32,600). Individuals with a bachelor's degree earn, on average, about four times (\$42,800) what a high school dropout earns each year.

Alabama's public high schools graduated 45,220 students in 2011. With a 90 percent graduation rate, they would have produced over 11,300 more graduates. Assum-

ing the averages hold true, this would add at least \$120 million to annual earnings in Alabama — more if college degrees also increase as a result. With this would come about \$12 million in added tax collections for state and local governments each year.

The indirect benefits also would be substantial. For example, research shows that the higher graduation rate would mean lower crime rates, fewer arrests and less need for incarceration. Using the relationships estimated in one academic study, the crime-reduction benefits from meeting Alabama's goal would add up to \$23 million a year in savings. The study's authors wrote, "It is difficult to imagine a better reason" for policies to improve the graduation rate.

But graduating 90 percent will require focusing individually on each student, across all grades. It will be important to follow their performance using the new state exams that track the path to college and career readiness, as well as to monitor trends in attendance, discipline and classroom grades.

Perhaps the greatest benefit from pursuing the new goal will be increased appreciation of the stake we have in each student.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Jim Williams is executive director for the nonprofit, nonpartisan Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama. Jim may be contacted at jwillia@samford.edu.

Samford University announces record fall enrollment

Samford University's fall 2013 enrollment has reached an all-time high of 4,833, university officials announced Sept. 13. The total exceeds the 2012 record of 4,758. This is the fifth consecutive year of record fall enrollments.

Included is a record freshman class of 755, exceeding the previous record of 743 set in 1997. A record 2,197 students are living in university-owned residence facilities.

Samford officially records enrollment at the end of the 15th class day, according to R. Phil Kimrey, Samford's

vice president for student affairs and enrollment management. Included in the totals are 3,013 undergraduates and 1,820 graduate and professional students. The students represent 44 states, including Alabama and the District of Columbia, and 21 other countries.

The profile of the entering class continues to be very strong, Kimrey said, with an average ACT score of 25.5 and an average high school GPA of 3.69. The freshman-to-sophomore retention rate also remains high at 86.7 percent. (SU)

Americans believe Syria conflict could fulfill biblical prophecy

A third of Americans believe recent conflict with Syria fulfills biblical prophecy about the end of the world, according to a telephone survey conducted in early September by LifeWay Research.

With the threat of U.S. airstrikes against Syria dominating the news cycle, 32 percent of the 1,001 survey participants agreed with the statement: "I believe the battles in Syria are all part of the prophecies of the Book of Revelation."

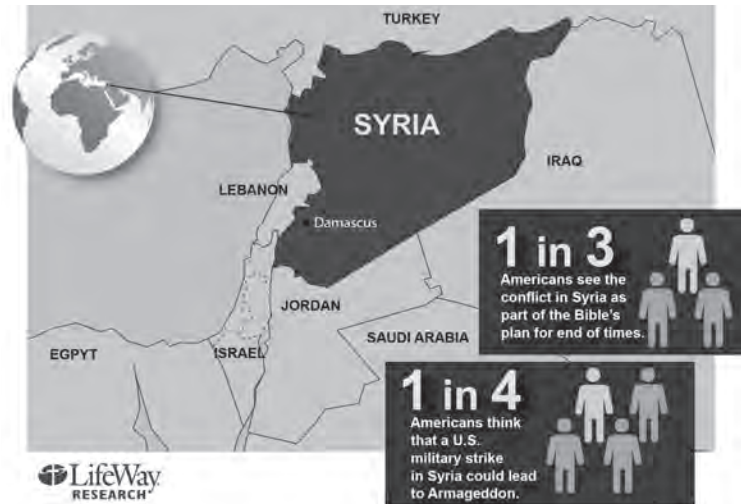
One in four (26 percent) said they believe that U.S. military intervention in Syria might lead to the Battle of Armageddon prophesied in the Book of Revelation just prior to the Second Coming of Christ. One in five (18 percent) said they believe the world will end in their lifetime.

Those results surprised Ed Stetzer, president of LifeWay Research. "We weren't talking about Armageddon during the air strikes on Bosnia," Stetzer said in a news release.

The fact that Syria is mentioned in the Bible and its close proximity to Israel, however, have prompted considerable end-times speculation.

"Many students of the Word of God see a major alignment of ancient prophecies regarding the end times being fulfilled right before our eyes," end-times author Carl Gallups told WorldNetDaily.

Gallups, a graduate of New Or-



LifeWay graphic

leans Baptist Theological Seminary and pastor of Hickory Hammock Baptist Church, Milton, Fla., isn't alone in that assessment.

Isaiah 17:1

Most cite Isaiah 17:1, which proclaims: "Behold, Damascus will cease from being a city, and it will be a ruinous heap."

Hal Lindsey, author of the best-seller "The Late, Great Planet Earth" said events described by the prophet could only be accomplished by nuclear weapons.

Dispensationalism is a method of biblical interpretation that forecasts a literal 1,000-year reign of Jesus on earth, a notion affirmed by Christian Zionists, who believe prophecies about biblical Israel are

unfolding today in the modern Israeli state.

Joel Rosenberg, author of "Damascus Countdown" said, "It's a very sobering thought to think that a judgment of a city or a country could happen in which an entire city could be wiped out, but that is in fact what the Bible is predicting."

Rosenberg said it is too early to know if Syria's current actions are the same as those foretold by Isaiah, and that he thinks it is wrong for people to "try to say for certain that it's going to happen now."

"The bottom line is we don't know whether these ... prophecies ... will happen in our lifetime or soon, but they could, because they haven't happened yet." (RNS)



By Julie Payne
The Alabama Baptist

Someone You Should Know

ADDIE DENNIS

Shady Grove Baptist Church, Bessemer
Bessemer Baptist Association



DENNIS

FAVORITE VERSE: Matt. 28:20
FAVORITE HYMN: "I'll Meet You In the Morning"
HOBBIES: Working for the Lord, quilted previously

FAMILY STATUS: Widowed after 38 years of marriage to Herbert; three children; eight grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; and five great-great-grandchildren

Addie Dennis, 99, has been a member of Shady Grove Baptist Church, Bessemer, since 1942. She still serves as both the director of the church's Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) group and as a teacher for senior adult ladies. Dennis taught young people from 1942 to 1964, and since 1964 she has taught adults. She has served as the church's WMU director since 1968.

to take that adult class. If you're teaching adults, you really do have to study.

Q: What do you get out of your ministry work?

A: It helps me a lot doing the studying. ... I just love teaching that class.

Q: How do family members support you in your ministry work?

A: They really do support me. ... They encourage me and tell me how proud they are of me.

Q: How do you see yourself involved in this work in the future?

A: As long as I can drive and go to church (I will be involved). I'm 99, but as long as I can drive I will be working for the Lord.

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

A: I couldn't live without Jesus Christ.

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

Alabama Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists (ACOSBE)



SAMMY GILBREATH
 Director of the
 office of evangelism,
 Alabama Baptist
 State Board of Missions

I continue to enjoy my relationship with the Alabama Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists (ACOSBE) and these God-called servants. I have served alongside them and observed their commitment to reaching people for Christ. I pray that as churches and associations plan evangelistic ministries they will give these servants opportunities to use their God-given talents and wonderful spiritual gifts. I pray God will continue to bless our vocational evangelists in our overall effort to reach Alabama for Christ.



DARLENE BERRY
 Huntsville
 women's ministry
 256-535-0850
 darleneberry77@gmail.com



DAN BAYSE
 Trussville
 evangelism, pulpit supply,
 family life education, youth
 seminars, training for prison
 and jail ministry
 205-661-0104
 djbayse@prodigy.net



JOHN BUSH
 Montgomery
 Across Festivals,
 Children's Hope
 334-201-9493
 john@acrossfestivals.com
 www.acrossfestivals.com
 john@childrens-hope.com
 www.childrens-hope.com



DON GRAHAM
 Clanton
 preaching, revivalist
 205-755-7295
 rjganddwg@gmail.com
 www.dongraham.org



JUNIOR HILL
 Hartselle
 preaching
 256-773-6198
 revjrhill@aol.com
 www.juniorhillministries.com



LEONARD HILL
 Duncanville
 preaching
 205-343-2297



CRICKET LEE
 Dothan
 singer/speaker for women's
 retreats, revivals, conferences
 334-797-7208
 cricketleeministries@gmail.com
 www.crickettlee.com



JAMES MESSER
 Theodore
 preaching
 jemrebs@aol.com
 251-653-6652, 251-605-8491
 www.jamesmesser.com



PERRY DAVID NEAL
 Wetumpka
 preaching, outreach
 334-514-7478, 334-462-1274
 drperryneal@bellsouth.net



HERMAN PAIR
 Oneonta
 preaching, teaching
 205-873-0518
 hpair@gmail.com



BOB PITMAN
 Muscle Shoals
 preaching
 901-409-5867
 brobob@bobpitmanministries.com



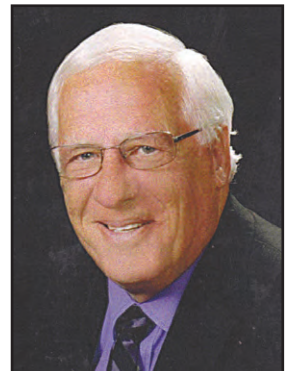
BO SHEDD
 Cullman
 youth evangelist, church
 crusades, high school assemblies
 256-347-3166
 shed.melinda@gmail.com
 Facebook: Lennon Shedd



BOB SMITH
 Huntsville
 music
 256-797-6011
 bob@bobsmithmusic.org
 www.bobsmithmusic.org



LEE PITTS SPOONER
 Mobile
 singer, speaker, musical
 ventriloquist
 251-660-9038
 leepittsministry@aol.com
 www.leepitts.org



BUD SWINDALL
 Southside
 preaching
 256-413-7418
 budandbarbara@charter.net



DAVID TODD
 Theodore
 worship leader/singer/song-
 writer
 251-599-4764
 dsactodd@bellsouth.net



JOHNNY TUCKER
 Citronelle
 preaching
 251-866-7213, 251-604-8770
 jmt82347@bellsouth.net



TERRY VEAZEY
 Montgomery
 preaching, singing, ventriloquism
 334-221-0246
 terry@terryveazey.org
 www.terryveazey.org



PHIL WALDREP
 Decatur
 preaching
 256-355-1554
 phil@philwaldrep.org
 www.philwaldrep.org



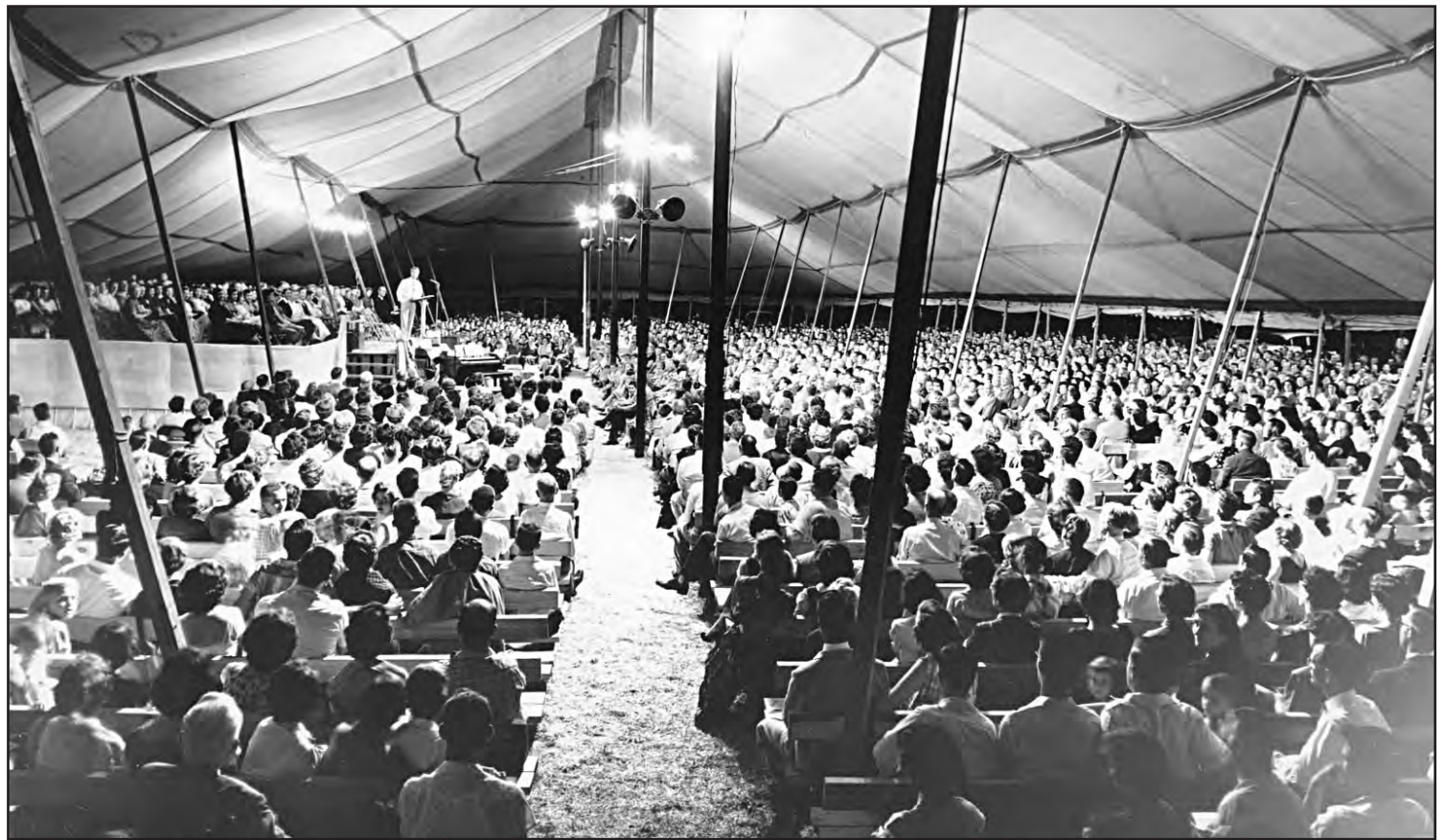
LEON WESTERHOUSE
 Birmingham
 preaching, music evangelist
 205-854-3839
 lpwester@aol.com
 www.leonwesterhouse.com



Alabama Baptist Convention
 State Board of Missions

*"And God gave some,
 apostles; and some,
 prophets; and some,
 evangelists; and some,
 pastors and teachers;
 For the perfecting of the
 saints, for the work of the
 ministry, for the edifying
 of the body of Christ."
 Eph. 4:11-12*

Southern Baptist evangelist Eddie Martin was known for preaching tent revivals, some of which accommodated crowds of more than 3,000. Martin, who died in 1997, had a successful evangelistic ministry that spanned more than 50 years.



BP photo

Has the role of the evangelist changed?

Evangelists using different methods, but one says revivals coming back around

By Grace Thornton
The Alabama Baptist

If Billy Graham had come on the scene in 2013 instead of 1949, Phil Waldrep's not sure it would've been the same story.

Back then churches thought nothing of holding two-week revivals. But now that kind of mass evangelism is "a component, not a priority" of a church's evangelistic focus, said Waldrep, speaker, author and founder of Phil Waldrep Ministries in Decatur.

"When I was younger, I got

some very good advice from some wise men who saw the trend changing," he said. "They saw a day where a person might not be able to make a full-time living as a mass evangelist."

So Waldrep began developing other divisions, like conferences where churches traveled to him rather than Waldrep going to them for revivals. He began partnering with churches to do outreach in a different way, such as bringing in high-profile Christians like athlete Tim Tebow or the Robertson family of the TV show "Duck Dy-

nasty" to headline an event.

"We still reach people for Christ — we just use different methods," Waldrep said.

Back when Waldrep was growing up, Billy Graham and Alabama evangelist Junior Hill were household names, packing out venues and seeing many people saved.

"In those days, churches thought nothing of holding revivals from Sunday to Sunday. But that changed from Sunday to Wednesday and then only Sunday after a while," Waldrep said.

Some of that cutback is because churches themselves are meeting less, so there are fewer chances for a church to have a guest speaker, he said.

Harper Shannon, who served as director of the office of evangelism for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions from 1985 to 1997, agreed that changing lifestyles have changed the face of evangelistic work.

"People's lifestyles have changed so much," he said. "It's one thing to have a two-week revival when the farmers were laying by (right before harvest time). They could all come to church every day for a week or two. But circumstances have changed quite a bit."

Hill said full-time evangelists aren't as visible in the church now

as they used to be. Where there were hundreds across the convention at one point, now there may be dozens, he said.

"I think there will always be the role of a full-time evangelist, because it's a biblical calling," Hill said. "But there does seem to be a trend away from using harvest evangelists."

'Simply a messenger'

Will Graham, Billy Graham's grandson and a full-time evangelist, said Christians need a revived passion for the preaching of the gospel.

"Unfortunately I think many of us hide behind the mentality of 'lifestyle evangelism,'" Will Graham said. "We timidly think that if we live a good enough life, people will see our faith and will, in turn, make a decision for Christ."

Each believer is commanded to be an evangelist, he said.

Visiting speakers such as Lawrence Phipps of It's Life Ministries (see story, page 8) can help encourage and equip members to share their faith as well as offer revival events to which they can invite their friends and neighbors.

The mechanics of evangelists' work may have changed, but that doesn't mean that the core of evangelism has, Shannon added.

All Christians are called to

evangelize, though some may be called to do it full time, he said.

"The role of the evangelist as far as I'm concerned has not changed as far as the perspective of people is concerned. An evangelist is simply a messenger," Shannon said.

"I believed (years ago) and still believe God calls people to be evangelists just like He does to be a pastor or a teacher or other profession."

And Waldrep said he believes the pendulum is beginning to swing back in the direction of mass evangelism, back where things used to be.

"I've had young pastors telling me, 'Our church doesn't meet enough,'" Waldrep said. "They are thinking of bringing back Sunday night services."

Some of the effects of meeting fewer times is less cohesion among the church body and less dedication to evangelism, he said.

Pastors and churches who say they've lost some of that are beginning to want to make moves to get it back, Waldrep said.

"I think church revivals will be different, but I think that the way they used to be prioritized will come back around," he said. "It's a very effective method if a church makes it a priority."

(Neal Embry contributed)

REPORTER FOR THE DAY CONTEST



ATTENTION COLLEGE STUDENTS: Be The Alabama Baptist's "Reporter for the Day."

Go backstage to meet the band and record footage for our Facebook page with your brand new Flip Cam!

Includes a pair of VIP tickets, Meet & Greet passes and Flip Cam

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Friday, Oct. 25, 2013
Whitesburg Baptist Church, Huntsville

For contest guidelines, visit tinyurl.com/m6ahqmh

 THE ALABAMA BAPTIST

Historical HIGHLIGHTS

FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES OF THE ALABAMA BAPTIST



50 Years Ago September 1963

Alabamians Elected at Louisville: Four students from Alabama were among the 17 from nine states elected to various positions on the Student Executive Committee of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., in recent campus elections. Martha Jo Glazner, of Montgomery, was elected secretary of the student government organization; Joseph C. Daniel, of Birmingham, chairman of the social committee; David G. Dyer, of Northport, chairman of the relief and welfare committee; and Joseph W. McDade Jr., elected for a two-year term to the eight-member ethics board of the student organization. Glazner is a graduate of Judson College in Marion, and the other student officers are all graduates of Howard College in Birmingham. Twenty students from Alabama have been accepted for admission to the seminary this fall.

40 Years Ago September 1973

Two New Instructors Named: Jeanne Shaffer, widely recognized composer, arranger and musician,

and Livia Alma Tarrants, secretary of the Hunter-Jumper Association of Alabama, recently have joined the Judson College faculty. Shaffer comes as coordinator of the music department and Tarrants as instructor in equitation and part-time instructor of biology. Shaffer's compositions and arrangements have been published by Canyon, Broadman and Abingdon presses and Concordia Publishing House, as well as being used by churches and other music groups. Tarrants began horseback riding at the age of 11 and has won numerous ribbons and trophies that have culminated in several state championships.

30 Years Ago September 1983

New President: Thomas E. Corts assumed the presidency of Samford University on Sept. 1. He did so with a "very strong feeling that this is an excellent place." Corts, who succeeds Leslie S. Wright as president of the university, revealed in an interview that he has had a long-term admiration for Samford University and feels that it is within the leadership and providence of God that

he was elected president. Wright served 25 years as president and now becomes chancellor of the university. Corts comes to Samford from Wingate College, a North Carolina Baptist institution, where he has served as president since 1974.

20 Years Ago September 1993

Scholarship Fund Established: Concord Baptist Church, Blecker, in Tuskegee Lee Association has donated \$10,500 to the University of Mobile to establish the L.H. Koon Memorial Scholarship Fund. The fund will provide scholarships for students from Concord or the surrounding area. The scholarship was named for a Concord deacon who also served as men's Sunday School teacher until his death in 1962. Neil

Koon, son of L.H. Koon; James C. Mooney, pastor emeritus of Concord Baptist; and Bud Passmore, pastor of Concord, presented the check to the school.

10 Years Ago September 2003

Alabama Teens Lead Nation in Ministry: Alabama sent out the most high school summer missionaries through the North American Mission Board's sojourner program this year. Eleven teens, scattered from Maryland to California, volunteered in various ministries to "provide an extra set of hands that can pitch in and do the work," said Scotty Goldman, who is with the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions collegiate ministries. Goldman said he hopes to "have even more students in Alabama involved next year."



MARKET PLACE

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

CHURCH POSITIONS

PASTOR: Axis First Baptist Church is seeking a God-led, spirit-filled individual for the position of pastor. Send resumés to: P.O. Box 98, Axis, AL 36505.

BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR: Grace Baptist in Montevallo is seeking God's direction for a bivocational pastor. Please email resumés to: gracebaptistmontevallo@gmail.com or call 205-602-3847.

TWO MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES: Mt. View Baptist Church, Alexandria, Ala. is seeking a bivocational pastor and bivocational minister of music. Send resumés to: Mt. View Baptist Church, ATTN: Search Committee, 1354 Mt. View Road, Alexandria, AL 36250.

FULL-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC & EDUCATION: Please send resumés to: Hepzibah Baptist Church, 5329 Renfroe Road, Talladega, AL 35160.

MUSIC MINISTER: Shades Crest Baptist Church, a 1,200-member CBF/SBC congregation in Birmingham, Ala., seeks an experienced minister to lead a multifaceted music and worship ministry. SCBC values traditional worship that is blended with contemporary elements in order to honor God and meet the needs of people. Successful candidates should have a graduate degree in music, experience in leading a music program including fully graded choirs and orchestra, and a commitment to serve on a pastoral team. If interested, send resumé and cover letter by Nov. 15 to: sbcmusicsearch@gmail.com, or by mail to: Search Committee, Shades Crest Baptist Church, 452 Park Ave., Birmingham, AL 35226.

MINISTER OF WORSHIP: First Baptist Church, Marion, Ark., is seeking full-time

minister of worship to lead a large, multifaceted worship ministry. Resumés and recommendations can be sent to: Dr. Clay Hallmark, FBC, P.O. Box 6, Marion, AR 72364, or emailed to: clay.hallmark@firstmarion.org.

WORSHIP LEADER: Grace Baptist in Montevallo is seeking God's direction for a worship leader to lead our congregation in praise and worship. Please email resumés to: gracebaptistmontevallo@gmail.com or call 205-602-3847.

PART-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC: Lagoon Baptist Church of Gulf Shores, Ala., is seeking a part-time minister of music. Mail resumé to: Lagoon Baptist Church, c/o Search Committee, P.O. Box 6500, Gulf Shores, AL 36547.

PART-TIME MINISTER OF YOUTH: Turnerville Baptist Church of Chunchula, Ala., is seeking a part-time minister of youth. Please send resumés to: turnerville3610@bellsouth.net, or mail to: Turnerville Baptist Church, 13882 Roberts Road, Chunchula, AL 36521, ATTN: Audrey Davis.

BIVOCATIONAL YOUTH PASTOR: Belmor Baptist Church is seeking a bivocational youth pastor who will serve the church by planning and leading our youth ministry. Contact belmorbaptist@att.net for more information.

OTHER POSITIONS

CHURCH SECRETARY: Heflin Baptist Church has an immediate opening for a church secretary 27.5 hours per week. Resumé may be emailed to: pmorrisbc@centurytel.net, or mailed to: P.O. Box 116, Heflin, AL 36264. Deadline to apply is Oct. 1.

HOUSE PARENTS: Christian couple

needed to serve as relief house parents at the Alabama Baptist Children's Homes in Decatur. Position is full-time with benefits. Couple must be committed to Christian walk and willing to be flexible in work schedule. Typical schedule is 6 days on in cottages, 3 days off. HS diploma or GED required. Contact Dr. Michael Smith at 256-355-6893 or dmsmith@abchome.org.

DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS: The Tallapoosa Baptist Association is seeking a director of missions. Please forward resumés to: TBA Search Team, Box 308, Dadeville, AL 36853 or email: gwig@att.net. Deadline: Oct. 1.

BUSINESS

MOVING? LOCAL, STATEWIDE OR LONG DISTANCE: Coleman American/Allied Van Lines. Special rate and programs for Alabama Baptist ministers, staff and church members. Contact Gary Washington at 205-540-7470 or gary.washington@covan.com.

FOR SALE NEW & USED STAIRLIFTS: Lift chairs, power wheelchairs, car lifts, scooters and walk-in tubs. We service Alabama. 1-800-682-0658.

TIME TO REPLACE THAT OLD CHURCH SIGN?: Reliable Sign Services, a Christian-operated, full-service sign company for two decades, is ready to assist you as you expand your church sign ministry. From electronic message boards to traditional signs, Reliable will fabricate and install statewide or ship anywhere. www.reliablesigns.com. 1-800-729-6844, 205-664-0955.

CHRISTIAN VALUES BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY: Christian Values Green Technology Company seeks mature business professionals for high-income op-

portunity. Home-based office. Hands-on support and apprenticeship-style training. For complete information, call Paul at 888-710-6994.

CHURCH CONSTRUCTION

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

CONFERENCES & RETREATS

TWIN RIVERS RESORT — RETREAT CENTER: NE Georgia Mountains. Churches/families. 10 fully equipped cabins and lodge. Room for 65 to meet, sleep and eat. 866-754-2010. www.twinriversresort.net.

TRAVEL/VACATION

AFFORDABLE BEACHSIDE VACATION CONDOS: Gulf Shores and Orange Beach, Ala. Rent direct, Christian family owners. Lowest prices on the beach. Call 251-550-9421, 205-556-0368, 205-752-1231 or www.gulfshorescondos.com.

LOG CABIN: Lake Guntersville area, beautiful view and fully furnished. Discounts to ministers. Log on to www.paradisevista.net to see pictures. Call for reservations at 205-540-3600.

NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAIN COTTAGE: Hayesville, Western North Carolina — lovely, like new mountain cottage for rent, May–November. 2 BRs, 2 BAs. All conveniences. Weekly/monthly. On beautiful Hiwassee River. Low price \$500 plus tax weekly. Sleeps five. Children welcome. No pets. 828-389-3302.

Want to know God?

Pastor Eddie Davidson
First Baptist Church, Hamilton

It was a gray, overcast day. I was hunting between the railroad and the river. Rain falling in recent days caused the river to rise. I was unaware of how much and how fast. I stepped confidently into the woods. All I had to do was turn around and walk back, but the valleys I walked through when I started were quickly filled by the rising river. I was lost in that river bottom for a long time before I realized it. A rising river placed me in danger I didn't realize was there.

My situation was more desperate than I knew and growing more desperate by the minute. The sun was setting. The waters were about to rise over my head. I was lost, and I needed to be saved.

I was so afraid I sat down on a stump and cried. I asked God to help me and show me the way out. By then, it was just about dark. When I stood up, I could see a light swinging back and forth in the wind. I made up my mind I would head straight for that light even if I had to swim across that swollen river. That light was my only hope. The closer I got, the more I could see it was just a light hanging down from an old shed. There was a man working there who told me how to find my way home.

Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). Are you lost? Do you feel a sense of urgency — a sense that time is running out? What should you do? Jesus is your light in the darkness. Your only hope is to find Him and follow Him. As you look for Him, remember He is also looking for you.

Admit to God you are lost. You have followed sin and wandered from His presence.

Look for the only Light in life's darkness. That Light is Jesus Himself. Right now He is shining His Light for you to see. Repent of your sins and turn to Him in faith. Ask Him to place His life in you to enable you to live in a way that pleases Him. Trust Him. Follow Him. Tell others about Him.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For September 29

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

THE POWER TO GIVE LIFE John 4:1-15, 25-26

Go (1-5)

Jesus departs Judea and is going to Galilee, but “He had to pass through Samaria.” Jesus has a divine appointment at the well in Sychar. The Samaritans are a racially mixed group of partly Jewish and partly Gentile ancestry. The king of Assyria had brought foreign people to settle in Samaria in 722 B.C., and over time they had intermarried with Jews who had remained in the area. They had their own version of the Pentateuch, their own temple on Mount Gerizim and their own rendering of Israelite history.

Jesus intentionally takes this difficult, mountainous route to Sychar to make a disciple. Daniel Akin, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., reports that one out of five non-Christians in America do not know a Christian. Surely heaven weeps, and so should we. Christians must become intentional about introducing people to Jesus. Serving Jesus can no longer be understood as simply serving on a church committee. Christians need to share Jesus as they go to the gym, school, work, ball games and family gatherings. We cannot begin to obey the Great Commission without going to people who do not know Jesus as Savior and Lord.

Engage (6-9)

Jesus, tired from the journey, is sitting at Jacob’s well at noon. Don’t miss the humanity of Jesus. He is tired. While resting He encounters a woman of Samaria. He uses this as an opportunity to engage this woman with gospel truth. As we sit in the doctor’s office waiting room or at the hair salon, for example, we should take the opportunity to engage people with the gospel.

Jesus asks this woman for a drink of water from the well. She responds: “How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)” For the sake of evangelism, Jesus boldly crosses barriers

that separate people from God. Jesus crosses over the racial barrier between Jews and Samaritans to show that the message of salvation comes from God to the Jews, but it is intended for all the peoples of the earth. Jesus crosses over the gender barrier and shows God’s gracious heart for this woman and for all women.

Clarify (10-15, 25-26)

A master teacher, Jesus uses the metaphor of water to speak to the woman about salvation. Cleverly exposing her sin and her need for God’s forgiveness, Jesus requests that she first go home to get her husband before He could give her living water. She replies with a half-truth, that she has no husband. Jesus then names her sin, saying she has had five husbands and is now living with a man who is not her husband.

The naming of the woman’s sin is the turning point in the conversation. She recognizes that Jesus must be a prophet deserving respect, so she refers to Him as “sir.” This is appropriate since the Samaritans are not waiting for the Messiah but rather the promised prophet who would be like Moses.

The woman asks Jesus about the theological issue dividing their religions. Where should she go to confess her sin and be reconciled to God? Should she go to her Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim or should she travel to the temple in Jerusalem? Jesus astounds her by declaring an end to both Samaritan and Jewish worship. Jesus crosses over the geographical barrier and opens the possibility that everyone everywhere can worship if they repent of their sin, because Father God is seeking them and will give them the truth and the Holy Spirit. Jesus clarifies the most important issue in the world for this woman — her need for salvation and how she can receive God’s gift of forgiveness.

How does this lesson convict you? Are you intentionally seeking to make disciples of non-Christians? Will you ask Father God to place at least one person on your heart to seek to introduce to Jesus?

Bible Studies for Life By James Riley Strange Associate Professor of Religion, Samford University

THE PRESSURE OF CONFLICT James 4:1-10

Verse 1

In 1:14-15 James introduced the idea that following our desire leads to death. In chapter 3 he spoke generally about the power of speech in Christian congregations; in 4 he addresses behaviors he has heard about in communities. Many translations say “conflicts and disputes” in verse 1 and “disputes and conflicts” in verse 2, but the language is of death: warfare (“wars and skirmishes” is a better translation) and murder (compare with the images of death in chapter 3). The language “your cravings that are at war *within you*” should be translated “among you [plural].” James is not talking about a struggle within a person but about conflicts among church members (see 3:6) that come from cravings.

Verse 2

Here James spells out the connection between desire and death. The language points to the context of the congregation. We can only guess what their issues were, but we know what ours are: we want a certain worship or preaching style, or a certain color of carpet, or more than one (or only one) service, or a building project. Sometimes the ministers themselves are in conflict. We can’t get what we want, so we “commit murder” and engage in “skirmishes and wars.” We are willing to fight with our fellow believers even if the conflict kills the congregation. Death can happen quickly or slowly as resentments fester.

Verse 3

“You ask” implies that people are praying for what they want. Well naturally that is what we do when we pray (see 1:5, 17; 5:15-16). Or is it? James indicates that people should instead pray for God’s will to be done (see 4:15). A particular worship style or carpet color might be fine, but the problem arises when people pray not for the good of the congregation — or because it’s what God wants for the congregation — but for their own selfish gains.

Verses 4-6

James takes on the voice of a biblical prophet, calling church members who follow their own cravings “adulteresses.” Translations often say “adulterers,” but James uses a feminine Greek word to recall the prophets’ accusations against Israel, God’s bride (see Jer. 3; Ezek. 16; Hos. 1-3). James sees things in black and white: either we are friends with the “world” and enemies of God or the other way around, but not both.

The “scripture” in verse 5 is unknown and the verse is devilishly difficult to translate. The quote in verse 6 is from Proverbs 3:34.

Verses 7-8

“Hands” is a metaphor for deeds, and the heart is the seat of the will and intellect, so James wants his readers to purify what they do and desire and how they reason. Therefore the solution to the problems of verses 1-4 is to submit ourselves to God wholly. In that way we will resist the devil, who has little power other than to tempt.

Verses 9-10

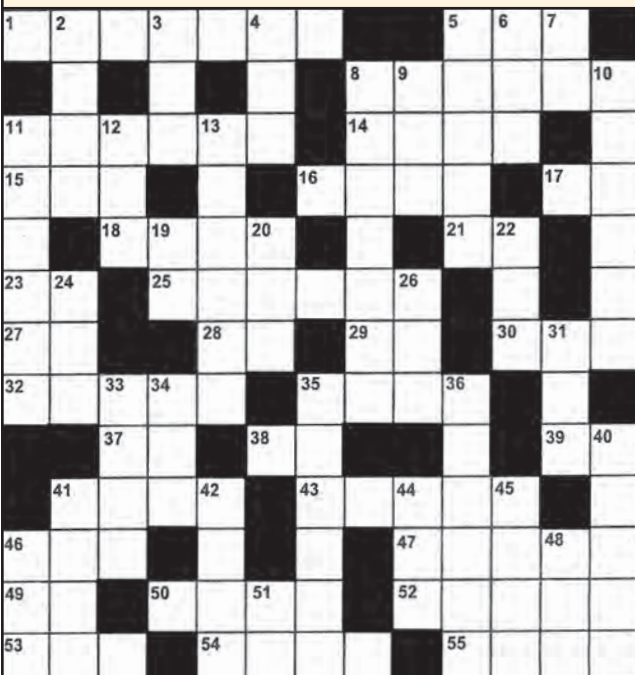
James returns to the idea in 1:9 of the reversal of fortunes at the end of this world (compare 5:1-6) and hence the need for repentance (recall the preaching of John the Baptist). “Laughter” and “joy” probably refer to the pleasure we take in the things that we crave.

We are probably tempted to blunt James’ sharp words and soften his rough condemnation of anything that dilutes Christians’ loyalty to God.

It is better to take his words as they are and to ask, “When do I damage my family of faith by my selfish actions, God?” “What of my deeds, desires and ways of thinking do I need to purify?” “How can I, today, wholly subsume my will to yours?” And we can ask, “God, in Your mercy help me to see what I need to do and help me to do it.” In that way, reading God’s Word leads us to prayer and (it is to be hoped) to listening to God.

Christian Crossword

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Across

- Jonathan ___ up upon his hands. (1 Sam. 14:13)
- Automobile.
- The Philistines took the ark ... to ___. (1 Sam. 5:1)
- Belonging to the son of Jephunneh. (Num. 13:6)
- Lizard, snail and ___ are unclean. (Lev. 11:30)
- Much ___ about nothing.
- He is up ___ good (two words).
- Printer’s measure.
- Sea bird.
- Prefix meaning into.
- Mother.
- Thou hast followed ___. (1 Kings 18:18)
- For example.
- Duty every soldier hates.
- Take thy neighbor’s raiment ___ pledge. (Ex. 22:26)
- National Football League. (abbr.)
- Good ___ are not everything.
- Bela the son of ___. (Gen. 36:32)

Down

- I ___ in the way of righteousness. (Prov. 8:20)
- Curlery and ___.
- Emergency Medical Service. (abbr.)
- Them which are of the house of ___. (1 Cor. 1:11)
- A sweetened fruit drink.
- Rosemary. (abbr.)
- Thy father was an ___. (Ezek. 16:3)
- Hello.
- Fe, ___ Fo, Fum.
- To exist.
- The strong hold of ___. (2 Sam. 24:7)
- To offer a sacrifice unto ___ their god. (Judg. 16:23)
- What holds up a golf ball.
- To surprise someone.
- I am. (contr.)
- There was a marriage in ___ of Galilee. (John 2:1)
- He killed Goliath.
- A meat offering baked in a ___. (Lev. 2:5)
- Ancient wisdom.
- Rulers of ___. (Ex. 18:21)
- This is my beloved ___. (Matt. 3:17)
- Spoken of by ___ the prophet. (Matt. 24:15)
- The excellency of ___ and Sharon. (Isa. 35:2)
- ___ sat in the gate of Sodom. (Gen. 19:1)
- Belonging to the son of Abinoam. (Judg. 4:6)
- Ebenezer. (abbr.)
- Just a little rest.
- Prefix meaning not.
- Lost three days ___. (1 Sam. 9:20)
- What a cow says.
- Fabulous.
- ___ of little faith. (Matt. 6:3; two words, var.)
- The king carried the people captive to ___. (2 Kings 16:9)
- Said Jehu to ___ his captain. (2 Kings 9:25)
- Joseph and Mary looked for a ___ an inn. (Luke 2:7; two words)
- Belonging to Gaal’s father. (Judg. 9:30)
- Son of Ishmael. (Gen. 25:13, 15)
- Joshua built an altar in

- mount ___. (Josh. 8:30)
- Moses gave unto ___ ... the kingdom of Sihon. (Num. 32:33)
- Part of a cathedral.
- Given for good service.
- Ye rebelled ... in the desert of ___. (Num. 27:14)
- Not yes.



RELIGION in America

Compiled from Wire Services

Court upholds contraception mandate in Michigan

KENTWOOD, Mich. — A federal appeals court ruled Sept. 17 that a for-profit manufacturing corporation must provide workers with health insurance that includes no-cost birth control even if it violates the religious teaching of the owners.

The 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against the Roman Catholic family that owns controlling interest in Autocam, a Michigan business that produces automotive and medical supplies. The family filed a lawsuit objecting to the contraception mandate in the Affordable Care Act on religious grounds.

The court said a secular, for-profit company is not a person that can exercise religion under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

The Southern Baptist Convention Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) supported Autocam and the Kennedy family in a friend-of-the-court brief written by the Christian Legal Society. Along with other groups including Prison Fellowship and the National Association of Evangelicals, the ERLC brief argued that exemptions for “religious employers” in the act are inadequate to protect religious liberty.

Passed by Congress in 1993, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act says the government cannot “substantially burden a person’s exercise of religion” without a compelling interest and by the least restrictive means.

Courts have differed over whether the law applies to corporations. In June the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said the owners of Hobby Lobby can continue their lawsuit claiming the contraception mandate violates their faith, because it includes methods of birth control that take effect after conception has occurred.

Immorality, when celebrated, is ominous, Iorg says

MILL VALLEY, Calif. — The U.S. Supreme Court’s rulings on gay “marriage” in June summon a response to “the most significant change in American society since abortion on demand was legalized in 1973,” Jeff Iorg, president of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., said during the seminary’s fall convocation.

Iorg warned that legalizing gay “marriage” is “an alarming affirmation of the final step of rejecting God’s design for human sexuality and traditional marriage as the foundation of a stable society.”

The apostle Paul’s description of first-century Rome in Romans 1:32 is sobering and applicable to the current situation, Iorg said. “Sexual sins are not the final step on this downward spiral. The last step of rejecting biblical morality is when people applaud or celebrate those who legitimize immoral practices. We have reached that point in America.

“Sexual immorality — of all types — has been part of the human experience throughout recorded history,” he said. “The troubling issue today isn’t so much the rise of immorality. That cycle ebbs and flows with changing generations. The troubling issue is the applause.

“The final act of an unraveling society isn’t immoral behavior; it’s canonizing immoral behavior as a ‘new normal’ and celebrating it as a ‘moral victory.’”

Bishops rebuke critics of Catholic Relief Services

BALTIMORE, Md. — U.S. Catholic bishops rebuked conservative critics of Catholic Relief Services (CRS), flatly denying charges that the group has wavered in its commitment to church teachings on contraception and abortion.

A strongly worded defense statement was released on the first day of the annual fall meeting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ administrative committee annual meeting Sept. 11.

“The U.S. Catholic bishops stand firmly behind CRS in its commitment to promote and defend human dignity and the sacredness of every human life from the moment of conception until natural death, and at every moment in between,” the bishops said in a statement.

The humanitarian agency has tried to fend off a coordinated attack by conservative critics who charge it works too closely with groups that support family planning policies.

CRS served more than 100 million people in 91 countries in 2012, promoting education and relieving poverty — an “extraordinary witness to the gospel of life,” the bishops said.

CAMPUS News



UNIVERSITY OF MOBILE

► **University of Mobile Jazz Band Presents ‘A Night to Remember’ Big Band Music:** The University of Mobile (UMobile) Jazz Band will perform the best of jazz at “A Night to Remember” on Oct. 3 at 7 p.m. at Saraland High School Performing Arts Center.

The concert will feature works by artists such as Glenn Miller, Nat King Cole and Frank Sinatra. The event is part of the UMobile Performing Arts Series.

Titles to be performed include: “It Had to Be You,” “I’m Beginning to See the Light,” “Unforgettable,” “Take the A Train,” “Blue Skies,” “Mack the Knife,” “Route 66,” “All of Me” and the quintessential “In the Mood.”

SAMFORD UNIVERSITY

► **Samford Offers Three Preview Days Fall 2013:** Samford University will host Preview Days for prospective students on three Saturdays fall 2013: Sept. 28, Oct. 19 and Nov. 23.

Interested students and their families can learn about Samford’s application, scholarship and financial aid process, tour the campus, meet faculty and staff, and explore academic options. Each Preview Day begins at 7:30 a.m. with the program at 8 a.m. in Wright Center.

The September and November Preview Days will include a complimentary tailgate lunch and

tickets to an afternoon football game. Lunch will be served in the cafeteria Oct. 19, a Samford football bye week.

In addition to Preview Days, the Samford office of admission hosts visits on weekdays and most Saturdays that are not tied to a holiday or university-wide event. Visitors can tour campus, attend an information session, visit a class, meet with faculty and stay overnight.

► **Beeson’s Lay Academy of Theology Offers Varied Fall Courses:** Samford University’s Beeson Divinity School will offer varied study opportunities fall 2013 through its Lay Academy of Theology. The noncredit courses are designed to interest laity as well as ministers.

Most courses meet one night a week for six weeks and are taught by Beeson faculty. The classes begin at 6 p.m. and meet for two hours. Topics, leaders and dates are:

► **From Slavery to Redemption:** An Exposition of the Book of Exodus, with attention to Exodus’ placement in the Pentateuch and Christian Canon, led by Hebrew and Old Testament professor Mark Gignilliat, Mondays beginning Sept. 30.

► **The Faithful Female Disciple,** an exploration of ways that gifted and faithful women can be used in God’s kingdom work, led by educator and minister’s wife Virginia Webster, Mondays beginning Sept. 30.

► **Learning to Pray from the Masters,** lessons from the Psalms, the Gospels and great men and women prayer warriors, led by

Lyle Dorsett, Billy Graham professor of evangelism, Tuesdays beginning Oct. 1.

► **Addressing Moral Questions Christianly,** a primer in Christian ethics and a look at current issues in the public conversation, led by Christian ethics and doctrine professor Graham A. Cole, Thursdays beginning Oct. 3.

► **In a one-week, afternoon seminar on The Life and Thought of John Calvin,** research professor Gerald Bray will introduce the life, times and writings of the great 16th century reformer. Sessions will meet Jan. 27–31, 2014, 1:30–3:30 p.m.

The Lay Academy also sponsors a popular Boot Camp for Christian Writers led by veteran writers Denise George and Carolyn Tomlin. The one-day seminar will meet Oct. 12, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The seminar includes tracks on story writing, writing for children and young adults, and plotting and characters in fiction writing.

For more information, visit www.beesondivinity.com/lay-academy.

JUDSON COLLEGE

► **Marion Matters Projects Set the Tone for a School Year of Giving Back to Community:**

On Aug. 23, new students joined teams of returning students, faculty and staff members to complete 14 simultaneous projects during an event called Marion Matters. For each of the past nine years, Marion Matters has introduced students to Judson’s community service efforts on the Friday of Welcome Week.

Analysis finds remarriage rate down 40 percent

A new analysis of federal data provided exclusively to *USA Today* shows the United States’ remarriage rate has dropped 40 percent over the past 20 years.

“Pretty much everyone, regardless of age, is less likely to get remarried than in the past,” said sociologist Susan Brown, lead author of the analysis by the National Center for Family & Marriage Research at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio.

Younger than 35

The analysis of data comparing 2011 with 1990 shows that in 2011, 29 of 1,000 divorced or widowed Americans remarried, down from 50 per 1,000 in 1990.

The remarriage rate has dipped for all ages, with the greatest drops among those younger than 35: a 54 percent decline among ages 20–24 and 40 percent for ages 25–34. Much of the drop

is due to the rise of cohabitation and older ages for first marriage — almost age 27 for women and almost 29 for men.

A generation ago, cohabitation was often called “living in sin,” but that social taboo has faded. Unmarried couples of all ages are moving in together — 7.8 million, according to 2012 Census data. And 37 percent of cohabiters have been married before. Between 1990 and 2012, the percentage of unmarried couples living together more than doubled, from 5.1 percent to 11.3 percent.

New research does suggest those who have been divorced once are less likely to stay in an unsatisfying marriage a second time.

And many divorced people are hesitant to risk tying another knot.

Remarriage is “difficult and different” from first marriage, said relationship expert Maggie Scarf, a Yale University fellow. She conducted interviews with 80 remarried individuals to see how their marriages fared.

“In the first marriage, the couple has time alone to set up their own culture — the way they do things,” Scarf said.

“But in the second marriage, you have a single parent who has been living alone with his or her children and they are deeply, deeply bonded and have a culture of their own.” (RNS)

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IMB photo

Anna Sander, a Swedish Christian, shows Christ's love to the prostitutes of Stockholm through an organization called Talitha, named after Jesus' words 'Talitha koum,' which brought a girl from death to life.

Set free in Jesus' love

Swedish Christian rescues women from sex trafficking

In Stockholm, women from around the world are finding real love that frees them from the sex that once enslaved them. After listening to each other's stories of rescue from the hushed world of sex trafficking, tears fill the eyes of everyone in the room and joy is experienced for the first time.

Swedish Christian Anna Sander works among these women, young and old, in a nongovernmental organization (NGO) called Talitha. The name originates from the account in the Gospel of Mark when Jesus said, "Talitha koum," meaning "Little girl, rise up," and brought a young girl from death to life.

The broken handcuffs Sander daily pins to her shirt represent being set free in Jesus' love. This message of freedom is constantly welcomed with tears of joy by those being rescued from sex slavery.

Sander's life was changed by the gospel she once rejected. While staying with a Christian host family in Georgia through an exchange program, she went to Florida to help victims of Hurricane Andrew. She saw the difference in the reactions of Christians and non-Christians and explained, "Being a Christian is not what I thought, and I decided that I wanted to be a Christian."

Falling prey to false promises

Involvement with Talitha enables Sander to live out her Christian faith. Talitha offers trauma therapy and twice weekly psychoeducation and Bible teaching on topics such as self-esteem, values and other moral issues. Many of the women have never learned to set a plan for their future.

Sander shares the story of one of these women.

While in Latvia, one girl met the man of her dreams, and he charmed her with promises of a better life in western Europe where he said the rest of his relatives lived. She gladly went ahead to France to meet his sisters and relatives.

"When she got there," Sander said, "she understood that there was nothing that he had talked about and she ended up in prostitution pretty much right away and never saw this man again."

Her life of prostitution took her around Europe

under the power of an older woman. Eventually the police found the young woman and imprisoned her and her fellow workers, along with the woman who owned them.

Upon being released, the young woman decided to stop prostituting herself, but "she met several people from that network in the street and they threatened her, and they also murdered a member of her family because she refused to go back into prostitution," Sander said. "So she came here and ended up in prostitution in Sweden because she had no way to support herself. She was almost starving to death, so she had to sell herself.

"A person from church found her in a prostitution street and said, 'I know Talitha — that's an organization that can help you.' So they sent her to us. We have helped her now for two years, and she's doing really good. Really good. She's working, she's learning Swedish and she's doing fine."

Sander's love flows through every aspect of her life, love for all the people of Stockholm. As she works with others, including International Mission Board representatives David and Laura Moench, to plant a church in the heart of the city, her hopes outweigh her doubts of the city coming to know Jesus.

Much of what they do in church planting has been adapted from churches elsewhere in the country and throughout the world.

"This is a brand new church, only since the 10th of March, and we try to do different kinds of outreach," Sander said.

Some opportunities to talk about Jesus come as they take a coffee wagon to a strategic intersection in Stockholm and offer free coffee. They also host children's events that allow families to meet others in the community. Other relationships are forged as artists visit each other's exhibitions and discuss common interests.

Sander pleads for prayer on behalf of Sweden and asks readers "to pray for the Swedish hearts because they are so hard and they are so focused on material things and what they think is to have success in life. Pray that their hearts will be broken and start to search for God." (IMB)



**World of
RELIGION**
Compiled from Wire Services

Quebec charter would ban 'overt' religious symbols

QUEBEC CITY, Quebec — Quebec's government introduced in mid-September its much-discussed Charter of Quebec Values, which would ban "overt and conspicuous" religious symbols worn by government employees.

Pushing the twin ideals of secularism and separation from Canada, the Parti Quebecois' plan would prohibit public employees from wearing large crosses and crucifixes, Islamic headscarves, Sikh turbans and Jewish yarmulkes as a way to establish "religious neutrality" in public.

The prohibitions would apply to civil servants, teachers, law enforcement officers, firefighters, doctors, nurses and public day care employees.

Elected officials would be exempt. Universities and municipalities could seek a renewable, five-year exemption.

"The time has come to rally around our common values," Bernard Drainville, the minister in charge of the plan, said at a news conference Sept. 10. "They define who we are. Let's be proud of them."

The government also introduced a visual graphic to explain the plan, detailing what is deemed ostentatious and what is acceptable. Small earrings showing a religious symbol are fine; a hijab is not.

A bill will be introduced soon in the National Assembly, but the minority government of Premier Pauline Marois will need opposition support for the measure to pass.

The plan has been widely denounced as xenophobic, even racist. But polls have shown that a majority of Quebecers approve the measures.

Meanwhile Canada's federal government says if the charter is approved, Ottawa would order a review by its Justice Department.

"We would challenge any law that we deem unconstitutional, that violates the fundamental constitutional guarantees to freedom of religion," said Jason Kenney, the federal multiculturalism minister.

Church of Wales votes to allow women bishops

LAMPETER, Wales — The decision by the Church of Wales to consecrate women bishops means the Church of England — the mother church of the worldwide Anglican Communion — will be the last in Britain to admit women as bishops.

Cheers erupted in a hall at Lampeter, Ceredigion in Wales, when the 144-member governing body of the Welsh church announced the result of the vote Sept. 12. A similar bill failed narrowly in 2008.

Ireland and Scotland both allow female bishops though none have been elected yet.

"The Welsh vote means that the Church of England will be last to accept the inevitable — women as bishops probably by the year 2015," said Christina Rees, a member of the archbishop of Canterbury's advisory council and a prominent campaigner for women bishops over the last three decades.

Someone You Should Know

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send his or her name, a contact number and the reason you think he or she should be featured to: **Someone You Should Know, c/o The Alabama Baptist, 3310 Independence Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209, or to news@thealabamabaptist.org.**