

# THE ALABAMA BAPTIST



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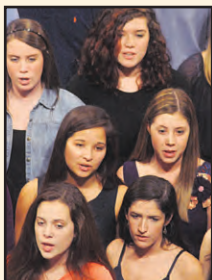


**Southern Baptists raise awareness about hunger ministries with new name — Global Hunger Relief**

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**More than 500 youth gather for choir festival in Montgomery**

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BP photo

Women craft individual vision boards in a 'Strong Bonds' class at the Lee County Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC), one of three CWJC centers the Woman's Missionary Union awarded a \$1,200 grant in 2013.

## 'Change & growth'

**Alabama Christian Women's Job Corps site among 3 receiving grants**

**A**labama's Lee County Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) in Auburn is one of three sites awarded grants in 2013 from national Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) and its foundation.

Also awarded grants were the CWJC of the Golden Triangle in Starkville, Miss., and the Greater Arlington CWJC in Arlington, Texas.

They will each receive about \$1,200 from the CWJC endowment managed by the WMU Foundation.

The Lee County CWJC has ministered the past six years by focusing on life skills and job skills, raising self-esteem and self-confidence.

"We do so much more than just re-

### CWJC graduate wins scholarship

**I**magine being told your entire life that you are stupid and believing it to be true; this is how Marceia Bonin-Turner described her life before coming to Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) in Nashville.

"I came to CWJC broken because of a lifetime of abuse,"



**BONIN-TURNER**

Bonin-Turner said. "For years, I was told I wasn't good enough or smart enough and I believed it."

But now, after graduating from CWJC and earning her GED in 2011, Bonin-Turner's story looks different.

She will continue her education at Nashville (See 'WMU,' page 3)

sumés, mock interviews and dressing for success," said Lynn Bell, board secretary of Lee County CWJC. "We try to help the entire person — mind, body and spirit — and focus on each individual growing spiritually. Some participants have never owned their own Bible before coming to CWJC."

The Lee County center will use its funds to purchase new computers and printers for students, print recruitment materials and purchase

study books to help with GED tutoring, Bell said.

The Auburn center has seen 79 women graduate during the past six years and serves an average of 20 women annually. The center has one paid staff member and utilizes volunteers including 25 local educators who participate weekly, plus community leaders and professionals who commit to single sessions.

Overall there are 159 registered (See 'CWJC,' page 3)

## CP gifts top fiscal year goal, trail 2012 total

**T**he Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) met its Cooperative Program (CP) budgeted goal of \$188 million but ended its fiscal year 1.92 percent below 2012 contributions, SBC Executive Committee President Frank S. Page has announced.

"When we projected this year's CP allocation budget, we anticipated that churches would recover from the global economic crisis more slowly than the general economy, something researchers have observed from past recessions," Page said. "Knowing that, we felt it prudent to budget accordingly."

CP gifts totaled \$188,001,275.70 during the fiscal year Oct. 1, 2012–Sept. 30, 2013, or \$3,677,718.58 less than the \$191,678,994.28 received the previous fiscal year. The 2013 giving was 0.00068 percent above the budgeted goal of \$188 million.

The CP is Southern Baptists' channel of giving, begun in 1925, through which a local church can contribute to the ministries of its state convention and the missions and ministries of the SBC. Monies include receipts from individuals, churches, state conventions and fellowships.

### Distribution of funds

The money was distributed as follows: 50.2 percent to international missions through the International Mission Board; 22.79 percent to North American missions through the North American Mission Board; 22.16 percent to theological education; 3.2 percent to the SBC operating budget and 1.65 percent to the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

In the 2013–2014 budget year, which began Oct. 1, IMB's percentage increased to 50.41 percent, while the SBC operating budget decreased to 2.99 percent. Other allocation percentages remained the same. (BP)

# COMMENT

## Showing 'Double Honor'

**D**o you know the value of a word “rightly spoken”? According to Proverbs 25:11, it is worth more than “apples of gold in settings of silver.” Perhaps that is why the idea of a time set aside for pastor appreciation has been so quickly embraced by many Christian groups including Alabama Baptists.

Pastor Appreciation Day provides a structured opportunity for individuals and congregations to share words “rightly spoken.” It is a time to encourage the pastor and other ministry staff members as well as affirm their various ministries. And, in case you missed it, pastors need the uplifting affirmation that comes from words “rightly spoken.”

In mid-2012 a Gallup survey found that confidence in organized religion had shrunk to a modern-day low. Only 44 percent of Americans expressed confidence in organized religion. Forty years ago (1973) the church was the most trusted institution in the nation, according to Gallup.

Later in 2012 another Gallup study found that only 52 percent of Americans deemed clergymen to be highly honest. Again ministers had declined from being the most trusted vocation in the nation to being eighth on the list.

Against these findings, it is not surprising to read the words of one Baptist minister who wrote, “We are in a high-demand, low-stroke profession in a culture that does not value our product or our work. We labor among people with unrealistic expectations and deep inside we expect far more from ourselves and the church.”

### Faithful and committed

There is no denying that some ministers have damaged the credibility of their fellow servants of God but there remains an army of committed pastors and other ministers who listen to God and lead their churches to follow Him. The great majority of those serving Alabama Baptist churches are faithful and committed servants of God and of His church.

Words “rightly spoken” on Pastor Appreciation Day can be like a healing tonic to these servants of God. They can sooth disappointments.



### THOUGHTS By Bob Terry

They can repair confidence in one's ministry skills. They can compensate for pain carelessly inflicted. They can restore a sense of calling.

After all, ministry is always done in community and it is the community that either affirms or rejects the work of its ministers. Pastor Appreciation Day is a way for the church to reaffirm the calling of God on the lives of its ministers.

One pastor wrote how deeply he was impacted by a church that gave him a plaque on Pastor Appreciation Day signed by all of the church's active resident families pledging to pray for him each week during the coming year. It would be hard to overstate the affirmation of his ministry and of his calling to that church symbolized by that gift, he said.

In 1 Timothy, the apostle Paul reminds his son in the ministry of the importance of teaching the church to honor its ministers. Elsewhere the Bible teaches that ministers are one of God's gifts to the churches for their work has been given to them by God.

Ministers (overseer and elder are interchangeable here) who direct the work of the church well are worthy of “double honor,” Paul writes in 1 Timothy 5:17. In both the Old and New Testaments, the words translated “honor” have the connotations of recognition, respect, rewards and remuneration.

Pastor Appreciation Day provides the opportunity of recognition and respect. Some churches choose to use the occasion for rewards and

provide tangible gifts. But a financial gift on a special day of recognition can never take the place of systematic care for the pastor and ministerial staff members.

The apostle Paul ties “double honor” to the Old Testament warning not to muzzle the ox while treading grain (Deut. 25:4) and Jesus' words that the laborer is worthy of his hire (Luke 10:7).

The principle is simple. Just as God ordained ample provision for the ox at work, the Christian community is to reward adequately those who devote time and energy to the work of ministry.

Earlier in the letter (1 Tim. 3:3) the writer condemned the minister who is a “lover of money.” Here the apostle writes with equal harshness about the stingy attitude of churches that feel it is their duty to keep the pastor poor and humble.

### Laboring for Christ

Through the centuries scholars have disagreed on the exact meaning of “double honor.” However all agree it certainly means more or greater honor than given to others. That implies God intends for ministers of His church be honorably rewarded for their labors for Christ in behalf of others.

No Baptist should ever forget that the principle of adequately providing reward and remuneration for the pastor and ministerial staff has divine biblical sanction. Providing recognition and respect through observing a Pastor Appreciation Day is good but it is not enough. Every church must also consider reward and remuneration in order to provide “double honor.”

Churches are responsible for ensuring that salaries and benefits of ministerial staff members are fair and adequate. Churches are responsible for annually reviewing salaries and benefits to ensure they remain appropriate. Churches are responsible for establishing procedures for this to be done in an ongoing way so the work of the church is done “decently and in order.”

Part of the “double honor” due pastors and ministers includes continuing educational opportunities as God continues to work in their lives to make them better ministers. Certainly part of “double honor” is making sure that those who give their lives in ministry through God's church can live out their final days in dignity because churches have helped them prepare for retirement.

October is Pastor Appreciation Month on the denominational calendar, and many churches will have a special day to show recognition and respect. And those churches that really provide “double honor” to their ministers will continue to show honor as they work on the reward and remuneration provided the pastor and ministerial staff members through the church budget. 🙏

## LETTERS

### TO THE EDITOR

#### ABORTION CLINICS

As a longtime receiver of *The Alabama Baptist*, I read and like the articles and pictures that appear each week.

In reading the recent front page about the lesser number of abortion clinics in Alabama (Sept. 19 issue, “Birmingham abortion clinic closes as part of national trend, leaves 5 clinics

in state”) I am pleased to read there are fewer such clinics. Kudos for Alabama.

When I noticed the factoid in the upper right hand photo saying “more than 50 million abortions have been performed since abortion was legalized in 1973,” I thought, “Wow!”

When you realize the population of the United States as of Sept. 18 is about 316,707,000 people, we have suc-

cessfully eliminated about 15.6 percent of our population.

When you think about 50 million people not alive, that means that many people will never vote, have families, work and contribute to our country, and (See ‘Letters,’ page 13)



## Christian Job Corps

# 'Everyone can do something'

By Candice Lee  
WMU Foundation

I can't do everything, but I can't do nothing. I have to do something." A friend recently made this simple yet profoundly true statement. It clicked with me immediately, as I thought about the number of times recently that I have turned down volunteer opportunities.

We all have to say "no" sometimes, and there is absolutely nothing wrong with that. When you have small children at home and your time is limited, like me, it just isn't possible to make commitments that involve large chunks of time.

But just because you can't do it all doesn't mean that you can't do something. Recently I met Neeley Caldwell, brand new site coordinator for Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) in Lee County (see story, page 1). Neeley has a passion for reaching those in need. You sense it the moment you meet her. As she told me about

the items she needed for the women going through her CWJC program, I immediately said, "I'll help."

This is not a project I could take on alone, but I knew I could count on my Sunday School class and my co-workers at the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) Foundation and national WMU

to help out. And they did. Items came pouring in: toilet paper, shampoo and conditioner, toothpaste, disinfectant wipes and more. And we were able to present items to both Neeley's site in Lee County and our local site in Birmingham.

I love WMU ministries. They put Christ-followers in contact with people who need to know that Christ loves them. But I've mostly watched from the sidelines, doing nothing because I felt limited in my ability to contribute. Now I realize

it's okay if I can't do everything. But doing nothing is no longer an option. I can do something. Everyone can do something. And my part combined with your part means that we are making a difference. 🙏

### GET INVOLVED

- ▶ Contact a local CWJC/CMJC site and find out what they need.
- ▶ Get your missions group or Sunday School class involved (see list of CWJC/CMJC sites, this page).
- ▶ If you're able to give a little more of yourself, now's the time.
- ▶ Volunteer as a CWJC/CMJC mentor.

## WMU scholarship helps further education

(continued from page 1)  
State Community College as a recipient of the Faye Dove Scholarship Award, established in 2013 by national Woman's Missionary Union.

The new annual scholarship honors select CWJC graduates who have demonstrated perseverance in achieving personal goals and plan to continue their education. Bonin-Turner was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.

She plans to continue her education, earn a master's degree and become a licensed therapist. She credits the CWJC for her success.

"Because of the love and encouragement I received at CWJC, I am literally forever changed," she said. "The positive environment helped me more than words can say."

Sober for five years, she volunteers 20 hours a week to help

women who are fighting addictions, and is confidently rebuilding her life.

"God has carried me through so many of life's challenges," she said. "At CWJC, I found hope, love and acceptance. It was so beautiful to begin to believe that I could get beyond my insecurities. That's what I found at CWJC and I have carried that with me into all facets of my life." (BP)

## CWJC 'equips, empowers' women in US

(continued from page 1)  
and certified CWJC and Christian Men's Job Corps (CMJC) sites, and several of these serve participants in multiple locations at satellite sites. Of these sites, 120 offer CWJC, 10 offer CMJC and 29 offer both. In 2012, 11,080 staff and volunteers served approximately 4,250 participants.

According to independentsector.org, the estimated value of volunteer time for 2012 is \$22.14 per hour.

With more than 3.7 million volunteer hours served in 2012, CWJC/CMJC had an economic impact of more than \$82 million based on this estimate.

Founded by national WMU

in 1997, CWJC provides a Christian environment to equip disadvantaged women for life and employment through biblical nourishment. Each participant is paired with a mentor to guide, encourage and keep them accountable.

For more information, visit [wmu.com/jobcorps](http://wmu.com/jobcorps). (BP)

## Obama speaks to Iran's leader about U.S. pastor's release

A historic phone call between President Obama and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani on Sept. 27 capped a significant week in the case of an American pastor imprisoned in Iran.

During the 15-minute call, Obama voiced concern for Saeed Abedini, a U.S. citizen who marked a year of incarceration for his Christian faith Sept. 26. Though Secretary of State John Kerry has called for Abedini's release, this was the president's first time to speak out on the pastor's behalf.

Obama also expressed concern for two other Americans imprisoned or missing in Iran, in addition to dealing with other topics.

Abedini's wife, Naghmeh, said the call marked "the most encouraging news I have heard since Saeed was imprisoned one year ago. I am very grateful to President Obama for standing up for Saeed and for the other Americans who are held captive in Iran. This development is truly an answer to prayer."

The conversation was the first time presidents of the two countries have spoken directly since 1979.

Abedini's family is optimistic in the wake of the president's phone call, as Iran released 91 prisoners of conscience in the days leading up to Rouhani's Sept. 24 speech at the United Na-

tions. Two of them were women held since 2009 on charges of "undermining the national security of Iran" after they converted from Islam to Christianity and joined a house church, according to Morning Star News.

Obama's move was "a significant step forward in this critical case," said Jordan Sekulow, executive director of the American Center for Law and Justice, which represents Naghmeh Abedini. "We're ... grateful to President Obama for raising Pastor Saeed's imprisonment and call on President Rou-

## State CWJC, CMJC ministry sites

**Albertville** — Marshall County Christian Services, Linda Henry [lindray@bellsouth.net](mailto:lindray@bellsouth.net); CWJC Marshall South Site, Leslie Henry [cwjc217@charter.net](mailto:cwjc217@charter.net)

**Anniston** — Calhoun Baptist Association CWJC, Millicent Monk [cwjc@sbsbc.org](mailto:cwjc@sbsbc.org)

**Arab** — CWJC Marshall North Site, Gwyn Moore [misssgwyn720@yahoo.com](mailto:misssgwyn720@yahoo.com)

**Auburn** — CWJC of Lee County, Neeley Caldwell [cwjc-lee@att.net](mailto:cwjc-lee@att.net)

**Birmingham** — M-Power Ministries CWJC, Beverly Sansom [Beverly.sansom@mpowerministries.org](mailto:Beverly.sansom@mpowerministries.org)

**Cleveland** — Anchor Ministries, Charlotte Stevens [anchorministries12@gmail.com](mailto:anchorministries12@gmail.com) or Nancy Dill [dillnn@aol.com](mailto:dillnn@aol.com)

**Guntersville** — Lift Up Your Head with CWJC, Shelia Banks [cwjc.shelia@yahoo.com](mailto:cwjc.shelia@yahoo.com)

**Huntsville** — CWJC of Madison County, Elaine Dickson [cwjc@cwjc.net](mailto:cwjc@cwjc.net); First Baptist Church Site, Charmika Merriweather [cmerriweather@cwjc.net](mailto:cmerriweather@cwjc.net); The P.L.A.C.E. Ministry Center, Pat Swinford [pswinford@cwjc.net](mailto:pswinford@cwjc.net); Union Hill CWJC, Constance Tiller [ctiller565@aol.com](mailto:ctiller565@aol.com)

### CMJC

**Albertville** — Hope for Life CMJC, David Lokey [dlokey@charter.net](mailto:dlokey@charter.net)

**Anniston** — Calhoun Baptist Association CMJC, Jim Davis [jdavis@cbasbc.org](mailto:jdavis@cbasbc.org)

For more information, visit [www.alawoman.com/cwjc](http://www.alawoman.com/cwjc) or [www.alawoman.com/cmjc](http://www.alawoman.com/cmjc).



"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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ABEDINI

hani to put his promise of being 'moderate' into action by releasing Saeed without further delay."

The 33-year-old pastor had converted from Islam to Christianity in Iran in 2000 and planted house churches until 2005. Although Iran has no law against house churches, the government termed his involvement a threat to "national security,"

even though he had ceased such work after agreeing in 2009 to limit his ministry to humanitarian work, according to Morning Star News. (BP)



BGR photo

# Dealing with the world's **hunger** problem

## Southern Baptists raise awareness about hunger ministries with new name — Global Hunger Relief

**W**hen it comes to people in need, big numbers can hide the human faces they represent. Statistics tell us that more than

1 billion people around the world are hungry more often than not, and about 24,000 people — more than half of them young children — die every day from various conditions that could have been alleviated by basic nutrition.

The personal realities of those numbers are more compelling. Think about the humility of the African man who scours the ground where bags of maize are being distributed in his village, picking up every dusty kernel so that he can provide one more mouthful for his family.

Try to imagine the anxiety of the Alabama child who is afraid to leave her classroom on Fridays for fear that she will miss the backpack of food that will keep her from going hungry over the weekend.

Consider the worries of the Syrian lawyer who is a refugee in a neighboring country,

living in a shelter made from plastic bags and cardboard and scrambling for any work to provide for his extended family of 20.

In each of these situations, Southern Baptists are there, providing help for today and hope for the future.

Certainly other relief organizations are doing similar work, but Southern Baptists are different: While some groups keep as much as 70 percent of their donations to cover overhead, Southern Baptists are assured that their donations go directly to the actual need.

How is that possible?

### 'Boots on the ground'

For Southern Baptists, the answer is because we support our mission endeavors by giving through our Cooperative Program. In this way, most overhead costs are already covered for missionaries and partners who are our "boots on the ground."

Not only that, but because hunger donations are channeled through the International and North American mission boards, those funds become a vital part of Southern Baptist missions strategies to impact the world for Christ.

Whether churches are "loving loud" in communities across North America or "embracing" unengaged, unreached peoples in difficult places, Southern Baptists have a tremendously effective approach to loving their neighbors through hunger ministries.

To help raise awareness about Southern Baptists' unique approach to funding hunger ministries, a new name — Global Hunger Relief — is taking the place of the World Hunger Fund.

Beginning with this year's World Hunger Sunday, Oct. 13, the new name will show up in more places. Global Hunger Relief will follow precisely the same guidelines used with the World Hunger Fund. As with the World Hunger Fund, funds will continue to be distributed 80–20 between international and North American causes.

The hope is that a new name and fresh look will revitalize conversations about the global hunger crisis and raise awareness about the effective efforts Southern Baptists are making to help people in need experience the life-changing love of God.

A new website is being developed at [www.GlobalHungerRelief.com](http://www.GlobalHungerRelief.com), and social media

presences are being created on Facebook and Twitter. The Global Hunger Relief initiative will officially launch at the 2014 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in Baltimore, Md., and will be in full swing for World Hunger Sunday 2014.

### Spreading the news

Updates about the new initiative will be shared through Baptist Press and the World Hunger Fund/Global Hunger Relief partners: the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, International Mission Board, North American Mission Board, Woman's Missionary Union, LifeWay Christian Resources, SBC Executive Committee and Baptist Global Response.

Two bulletin inserts — one focused on North America, the other international — can be downloaded for promotion of the global hunger relief cause at <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/wsgvr72k2h475es/YqjP5CPtC5>. You also can help the cause by visiting [www.GlobalHungerRelief.com](http://www.GlobalHungerRelief.com) to share your heart about the importance of combating hunger and tell what your church is doing to make a difference. (BP)

# Hunger in Alabama

## Alabama Baptists not immune to hunger issues; state Baptists can take lead in relief, advocacy

By Grace Thornton  
The Alabama Baptist

**J**ude was an Alabama Baptist preacher — a preacher who had no food.

Severe health issues cost him his job. He couldn't walk anymore. His wife left him, and he lived in a dark house for a month when the power and water got cut off.

Then it got worse — he got evicted.

But evangelist Rick Hagans of Opelika tells Jude's story as one of redemption. Funds from Global Hunger Relief (see story, page 4) given to Hagans' Harvest Evangelism ministry helped give Jude a room in a recovery shelter with hot meals every day.

His first day at Harvest Evangelism, Jude sat down to a plate full of roast beef, mashed potatoes, biscuits and sweet tea.

"If you could've watched this man eat, you would've smiled and passed him seconds," Hagans said. "Through your hunger fund giving, that's exactly what the Alabama Baptist State Convention is doing — passing seconds to hungry men, women and children."

Jude isn't the only Alabama Baptist who's been the recipient of funds from Global Hunger Relief.

A mother of three who is a member of First Baptist Church, Fairhope, had given to the church benevolent ministry in the past, and then she fell on hard times.

Her husband left her, and her income was slashed.

Connie Hardman, a member of First, Fairhope, said, "Once she was able to courageously voice her need to someone ... discreetly we were able to give her food and food vouchers at our local grocery store. We didn't realize how much this family had struggled until one of the children voiced that 'now we can have milk in the house again.'"

Alabama Baptists like Hagans and Hardman are finding themselves on the front lines of the battle to end hunger in Alabama — something that is part of a much larger world-

wide war, according to Bread for the World, a Christian ecumenical anti-hunger group.

Globally one in four children is stunted because of malnutrition. Demand for food is projected to rise 50 percent by 2030, according to Bread for the World.

In the United States, 49 million people face food insecurity on a daily basis, 15 million of those children, according to Feeding America.

The numbers are big, but victory is possible, said David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World.

"The number of extremely poor people in the world has been cut in half since 1990," he said. "God has given our generation the possibility of ending hunger and extreme poverty — worldwide and certainly within our own richly blessed nation."

Forty-three religious leaders — including Beckmann — signed a statement that said "with concerted effort, a system to hold all nations accountable and God's help, we believe this is an achievable goal."

In 2000, 189 countries got behind the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which sought to cut the proportion of people living with hunger and poverty by the end of 2015.

According to Bread for the World, the poverty goal has been met, but the hunger target hasn't.

It's still attainable, Bread leaders said, but

even as they push for that they are focusing largely on what comes next after the MDGs end in 2015.

Bread for the World "urges the president of the United States to provide leadership to get the nations of the world to set specific goals for continued progress against poverty and hunger — and announce a goal and plan to end hunger in America," Beckmann said.

According to Bread for the World, "the reason the United States still has hungry people is simply that national, state and local government leaders have not made hunger a top priority. With effective leadership and the right strategies, hunger and poverty could be



sxc.hu

## World Hunger

Sunday is Oct. 13.

ended in the United States much earlier than 2040."

The organization encourages faith-based groups to urge the president to become more involved in developing a framework for the years following the MDGs' conclusion and to "take the lead in rallying all countries to support a goal of ending hunger and poverty."

This is where LaMarco Cable, Bread's deputy director of organizing and grassroots capacity building, said Alabamians could help.

"We are making the case that goals (for the future) should truly be universal, meaning that they should apply to all countries, including the United States," Cable said. U.S. leadership, he said, needs to be encouraged by Americans to address the issue on American soil, not just focus on low-income countries as the MDGs did.

To back this principle up at home, Alabama Baptists continue to meet hunger needs head on in their communities — Alabama Baptists like Michelle Weaver, coordinator of the food and benevolence ministry at First Baptist Church, Alabaster.

"A family of Mormons visited our church, and we found out that between the six of them in the household they were barely eating," Weaver said.

Church members took groceries to their

home and even organized to prepare them meals, she said. "Between all of the ministering to this family and assisting them with groceries, they continued to visit our church."

They are now members and have professed Jesus Christ as Savior, Weaver said.

George Thompson, director of missions for Judson Baptist Association, said Baptists in his area have been able to see similar needs met.

### 'For real' hungry

"The director of Love in Action (a Judson Association ministry center in Abbeville) was approached by a new client who was crying real tears, saying 'You have helped me so much with this food. I am so hungry.' She was 'for real' hungry," Thompson said.

"We have had more than a few to shed real tears when receiving Jesus Christ as Savior" after they are touched by people meeting their needs, he said.

"These are only a few of the stories we hear often."

For more information about Global Hunger Relief, visit [www.GlobalHungerRelief.com](http://www.GlobalHungerRelief.com). For more information about Bread for the World and the MDGs, visit [www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org).

EDITOR'S NOTE — Some names have been changed. ☞

**"The number of extremely poor people in the world has been cut in half since 1990. God has given our generation the possibility of ending hunger and extreme poverty — worldwide and certainly within our own richly blessed nation."**

David Beckmann  
president, Bread for the World

# Across ALABAMA'S Associations

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

## BESSEMER

► **Grace Life Church, McCalla**, will hold Pumpkin Patch at Shadow Lake on Oct. 17–20 and 24–27, Thursdays and Fridays 9 a.m.–2 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; and Sundays 1 p.m.–5 p.m. There will be face painting, games, hay rides and more. There will be baked goods and concessions on the weekend. The church also will hold trunk or treat at Shadow Lake on Oct. 31, 6 p.m. There will be candy, hot dogs, drinks and inflatables. Joel Frederick is pastor.

## BIRMINGHAM

► **First Church, Trussville**, will host a conference on Breast Cancer Education Awareness on Oct. 19, 9 a.m. The theme is “Restoring Mind, Body, Spirit” and the Scripture is Jeremiah 29:11. Helen Krontiras, oncologist at UAB, and Julie Whatley, nurse practitioner at UAB, will share about breast cancer. Cathy Lee Phillips, writer, storyteller and inspirational speaker, will also speak. Kristy White will lead praise and worship. All ladies are invited to attend. Breakfast and coffee will be available beginning at 8:30 a.m. For information con-

tact Debbie Arrington at 205-228-1006. Buddy Champion is pastor.

## BIBB

► **First Church, West Blocton**, will celebrate its 125th Founder’s Day on Oct. 20, 10:30 a.m. A celebration of the 125th anniversary of Woman’s Missionary Union (WMU) will be included, and Rosalie Hunt will speak on the ministry of WMU. Roasco Kornegay will be in concert and will speak and the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission will present a plaque to the church in honor of its 125 years. A tree-planting ceremony will follow the service and lunch will be at noon. A church committee is collecting pictures and memorabilia for display. Robert Praytor is pastor.

## CHILTON

► **Mountain Creek Church, Marbury**, will celebrate homecoming Oct. 13, 10 a.m. with Justified in concert. John Episcopo is pastor.

## BLOUNT

► **Pleasant View Missionary Church, Holly Pond**, will celebrate homecoming Oct. 20, 10:30 a.m. with singing by 2nd Mile

from DeKalb, Miss. Lunch will be served. Everyone is invited. The church will not have a service that evening. Randy Burtram is pastor.

## COFFEE

► **Eanon Church, Jack**, will celebrate homecoming Oct. 20, 11 a.m. Pastor Mark Ward will speak and a covered dish lunch will follow. The Dennis Family will sing at 1:30 p.m. For information call 334-470-0593. ► **Zion Chapel Church, Elba**, will celebrate homecoming and its 175th anniversary Oct. 27, 10 a.m. There will be a presentation by the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, music, a video presentation and special recognitions. Former pastor Chris Barrows will speak and lunch will follow. Cary Maulden is pastor.

## JUDSON

► **Sardis Church, Abbeville**, will celebrate its 164th homecoming Oct. 13. Sunday School will be at 9:45 a.m. and worship at 10:45 a.m. Former pastor Jamie Brock will speak and a covered dish lunch will follow. All former members, pastors and friends are welcome. George Bryan is pastor.

## Alabama updates

People, churches making news across the state

### Paint Rock Baptist members ‘able to meet many needs’

Paint Rock is a small, tight-knit community of just more than 200 people in North Alabama, and the Putnam family has been a part of the town for decades. Harvey Putnam grew up in Paint Rock attending Paint Rock Missionary Baptist Church, and when he married his wife, Betty, she also became a member. When the Putnams’ children, Paige and Lance, were born, they began attending Paint Rock Baptist as well.

According to Pat King, the wife of Paint Rock’s pastor, Charles, the Putnam family is a “bedrock of this community.” They have given their time and resources over the years to lend a hand to anyone in need, she said.

So when Lance Putnam was diagnosed with acute leukemia earlier in 2013, the church family was ready to help.

While he is insured, his medical bills began piling up after chemo, an abdominal surgery and a stem cell transplant. The church held a fundraising auction at the church’s family life center, and at any given time, 400 to 500 people were present bidding on everything from Brunswick stew to homemade cakes to household items. Be The Match also had a booth set up where people could register to be added to the bone marrow transplant list.

“In everything we did, God really did pour out His favor and establish the work of our hands,” Pat King said. “It was like loaves and fishes.”

Lance Putnam says he and his family — wife Jenny and children Sydney and Sawyer — are so thankful for the church’s support.

“The people of Paint Rock and the surrounding areas are some of the kindest and most giving people I know,” he said.

But that is just who the congregation is, Betty Putnam noted.

“The church has helped cultivate our gifts and to work with others to better serve our Lord,” she said. “It’s always been a very giving church. Even though it’s small, we’re able to meet many needs.” (Anna Keller)

### Mills retires after more than 65 years in ministry

Ferrell B. Mills, pastor for more than 65 years of churches in Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Oregon and Alaska, retired from the full-time pastorate Sept. 15.

Mills, a native of Florida, began serving as pastor of churches while still in high school.

He served two terms as president of the Alaska Baptist Convention and served as the Alaska representative on the Sunday School Board (now LifeWay Christian Resources), Foreign Mission Board (now International Mission Board) and Home Mission Board (now North American Mission Board).

While in Florida, Mills was partnership coordinator for three years between Florida and Montana and served as a church growth consultant. He also served on the Florida State Board of Missions and was active in association work in Alabama, Florida and Oregon.

Mills served as pastor of churches in five Alabama counties during his years of ministry and most recently served as pastor of Chapel Hill Baptist Church, Millry, for eight years.

He and his wife, Linda, will reside in Chatom, and Mills will continue teaching and preaching as the Lord leads. He can be reached at 251-847-6350. (TAB)

### Barbour Association names new Hispanic missionary

Anthony Gardiner, the newly hired Hispanic missionary for Barbour Baptist Association, began in the role Sept. 8. Gardiner, who is a native of Puerto Rico, said he is “really excited” to work in his new role at the association to reach the Hispanic community.

Gardiner served in the U.S. Army for 12 years, from 1992 to 2004, and has served as a deacon of Bush Memorial Baptist Church, Troy.

He holds a degree in missions from The Baptist College of Florida in Graceville and is currently studying clinical mental health counseling and marriage counseling at Troy University.

In his new role, Gardiner serves as pastor of the association’s Hispanic mission church. He also will do other ministry work in Barbour County, including an event Nov. 9 that invites all Hispanics from the Louisville community for a soccer tournament, food and the sharing of the gospel.

Gardiner and his wife, Aileen, an occupational therapist, have four children. (Julie Payne)

## Someone You Should Know

By Julie Payne  
The Alabama Baptist

### RALPH GIVENS

First Baptist Church, Headland  
Judson Baptist Association



GIVENS

**FAVORITE VERSE:** John 3:16

**FAVORITE HYMN:** “It Is Well”

**HOBBIES:** Computers, video equipment, radio control airplanes,

gardening

**FAMILY STATUS:** Married 68 years to Ella Verna Givens

Ralph Givens, 94, has been a member of First Baptist Church, Headland, since August 1951. He has served in the church as Sunday School teacher, Royal Ambassadors leader, a deacon since 1952 and served on the cemetery committee. He is retired as chairman of the video committee.

**Q: What influences in your life pointed you to Christ?**

A: Family: Christian parents, brothers, sisters, children and grandchildren have all had an influence on my faith journey as well as incredible spiritual leaders such as Roby J. Lee.

**Q: When and how were you led into your work on the church’s video committee?**

A: My friend Alfred Granberry’s wife Jimmie was disabled and bedridden. She truly missed being able to attend worship ser-

vices at FBC. In 1988, Alfred donated \$500 and asked me to record the services on VHS tape so his wife could watch them each week. From there my lifelong friend Dempsey Griffin joined me and we started making videotape copies of the weekly services and taking them into the homes and facilities where our church and community members were homebound. Years later, I negotiated time slots on the local cable TV community channel and that’s how our services began airing in the surrounding area. ... It has been amazing to see how God has grown this ministry from one man’s loving concern for connecting his wife with her church to reaching a whole community.

**Q: What does this role demand?**

A: For years, I recruited and trained a lot of special people to serve in this ministry; too many to

count. Each of them has been a blessing to me and God’s kingdom. Now I am retired but continue to prepare a digital videotape for each week’s recording and make DVD copies of services and programs if requested.

**Q: What do you get from this ministry work?**

A: The sweet satisfaction that shut-ins can feel they are still connected with a church family that loves them.

**Q: How do family members support you?**

A: My family has always encouraged me to stay active in my church ministries and inspires me to keep serving.

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

A: Without Christ there is no life.

# The Cooperative Program

## in action in Alabama



### After pastor dies suddenly, family finds provision through ChRP survivor benefit

By Grace Thornton  
The Alabama Baptist

**A**ll of Abbeville was stunned when 40-year-old Michael Whitt, pastor of the city's First Baptist Church, died of a sudden heart attack on the softball field July 9.

But no one was more stunned than his wife, Melissa, and four children — Elizabeth, Lydia, Julia and Jonathan.

"The night Mike died was the longest one of my life," Melissa Whitt said. "I laid there all night, surrounded by my precious children, wondering how I was going to provide for them."

But the Lord spoke very clearly to her through 1 Chronicles 20:12 and 15–17, she said. "We have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You."

In the days following, a miracle showed up.

It was a significant check from the survivor protection benefit of the Church Retirement Plan (ChRP) that the Cooperative Program (CP) helps to provide for every participating Alabama minister.

#### 'God's gracious provision'

Melissa Whitt was stunned again. "I found out about this benefit as well as another policy Mike had taken out for us," she said. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow. He was providing for us just as He promised."

With those funds in place, Melissa Whitt was able to keep homeschooling her children.

It was "God's gracious provision" through Alabama Baptists that "gives us

greater confidence in His plan to give us 'a hope and a future,'" she said.

There are stories all over the state of people who have been significantly blessed by the ChRP, said Bobby DuBois, associate executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions (SBOM).

Through their gifts through the CP, Alabama Baptists contribute monthly to the 403(b)(9) plans of ministers in the state who participate in the ChRP, a GuideStone Financial Resources retirement option.

It's "a contribution Alabama Baptists make for every minister in the Alabama Baptist State Convention who participates in the plan" and gives more than \$52.50 each month, DuBois said.

The amount depends on the amount put in by the minister. For every \$3 above \$52.50 that a minister contributes, the SBOM will contribute \$1 up to a maximum of \$17.50 a month.

From the ChRP, ministers get retirement benefits as well as disability income benefits if needed and the survivor protection benefit that the Whitt family received.

"That benefit can go up as high as \$100,000 depending on the age of the minister who dies," DuBois said.

The disability benefit can provide up to \$500 a month for qualifying participants.

To receive these benefits, a minister must have been participating in the plan for at least a year.

"We've had some situations where someone was disabled, and it's not much, but every dollar helps," said Lee Wright, coordinator of Church Compensation Services for the SBOM. "We've also had a number of times that something tragic has happened — we've had some ministers pass away, and their widows were very, very grateful."

**"Praise God from whom all blessings flow. He was providing for us just as He promised."**

Melissa Whitt



Photo courtesy of Melissa Whitt

Melissa Whitt didn't know how she was going to provide for her family after her husband Mike, pastor of FBC Abbeville, died suddenly of a heart attack at 40. God surprised her family with provision through the ChRP, she said.

The ChRP contributions are "a tremendously important ministry, even though it's not enormous," Wright said. "It encourages ministers to be a part of a retirement system. Before (the ChRP ministry began),

many of them were woefully unprepared."

For more information about the ChRP, contact Wright at [lwright@alsbom.org](mailto:lwright@alsbom.org) or 1-800-264-1225, ext. 241, or visit [www.guidestoneretirement.org](http://www.guidestoneretirement.org). ❧

## CHURCH RETIREMENT PLAN

*Provides Alabama ministers with retirement funds as well as survivor protection and disability income*

Age at death	Maximum benefit payable
35 and under	\$100,000
36–45	\$75,000
46–55	\$50,000
56–65	\$25,000
66–70	\$16,000
71 and over	\$10,000

#### Survivor protection benefit:

This benefit is paid to your beneficiary if you die while employed at an eligible employer and you're making contributions to your account. The benefit amount depends upon a participant's age at death, see chart to the left.

#### Disability income benefit:

This benefit provides an income of up to \$500 per month if you become disabled, plus \$35 is contributed to your retirement account each month of your disability.

# New Health Plan Option for Seniors

## Baptist Health System and VIVA HEALTH partner to offer a unique Medicare Advantage plan

THERE'S A NEW MEDICARE ADVANTAGE PRODUCT AVAILABLE TO THOSE AGE 65 AND OLDER, THANKS TO AN INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN BAPTIST HEALTH SYSTEM AND VIVA HEALTH. IT'S AN EXCITING "FIRST" FOR BAPTIST AND THE STATE OF ALABAMA – BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY – IT'S A UNIQUE ALTERNATIVE FOR THE MEDICARE POPULATION.

Unveiled in October in advance of the annual enrollment period that runs Oct. 15–Dec. 7, the VIVA MEDICARE Me plan was designed with the individual in mind. It has a primary network of Baptist's four hospitals and more than 400 physicians in the Baptist Physician Alliance.

"This new plan is exciting for us because it is focused on some key

areas of health care that we think are important," said Baptist Health System President and CEO Shane Spees. "More than half of our patients are Medicare patients, and we've become very good at caring for this senior population."

### A plan designed just for you ...

That's why the plan is called VIVA MEDICARE Me. It's also why the benefits it offers are focused around the services that are most important to members.

If you are on Medicare and you already use Baptist Health System hospitals and physicians – or if you are willing to change – this plan may be right for you.

To learn more about the plan, see the ad on the next page.

### How does it work?

VIVA MEDICARE Me is available for

people age 65 and over in Jefferson, Shelby, Walker and Talladega counties, where Baptist Health System operates four hospitals – Princeton Baptist (Birmingham), Shelby Baptist (Alabaster), Walker Baptist (Jasper) and Citizens Baptist (Talladega).

Medicare Advantage plans are private health plans that take the place of traditional Medicare and often offer additional benefits and lower out-of-pocket costs when compared to Traditional Medicare.

Each year, Medicare beneficiaries may choose a Medicare Advantage plan or switch to a new one for the following

year during Annual Enrollment Period, Oct. 15–Dec. 7.

"The Baptist Physician Alliance is

very pleased to be part of this plan and the unique health benefits it will provide for our patients," said BHS Chief Medical Officer Dr. Elizabeth Ennis. "This includes coordinated physician care and communication for plan members, which is especially important for those patients

who have chronic health conditions, whether hospitalized or not, who would benefit from this level of communication and service."

"We feel like we already have a strong partnership with all our providers, and we have a similar model with our owner, UAB Health System," said Cardwell Feagin, VIVA HEALTH's chief operating officer. "But this alliance with Baptist tests a new type of relationship with a provider that does not have common ownership. If this is successful, as we believe it will be, we would be interested in similar models with other providers in the future."

For Baptist Health System, the new Medicare plan is just another step toward its goal of putting the patient first.

**"More than half of our patients are Medicare patients, and we've become very good at caring for this senior population."**

**Shane Spees  
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H0154\_mcdoc1302A CMS Accepted 10/07/2013

[www.VivaMedicareMe.com](http://www.VivaMedicareMe.com)

# How can Baptists with differences live together?

Cultural and theological diversity among Baptists worldwide is both a challenge and a strength, Baptist World Alliance (BWA) general secretary Neville Callam told European Baptist leaders gathered Sept. 25-28 in Bratislava, Slovakia.

Callam urged the Council of the European Baptist Federation (EBF) to endorse a Covenant on Intra-Baptist Relations adopted by the BWA General Council in July. The covenant, available in 22 languages on the BWA website, recognizes the diversity of language, culture, opinions and perspectives among the 228 member organizations in 121 countries that comprise the worldwide Baptist organization formed in 1905.

While global in scope from the start, in the early years BWA membership was mostly composed of conventions and unions from the Western world. That changed in the last century, when explosive expansion in Africa, Asia and Latin America shifted the locus of Christianity toward the Southern Hemisphere.

## 'An equal voice'

Callam said Baptists today should see themselves as "a family without a dominant group marked by a plethora of languages that does not lead to Babel" and in which "all cultural groups have an equal voice."

The Covenant on Intra-Baptist

Relations, drafted by a special commission, provides a framework for responding to growing diversity in BWA meetings and operations.

"This diversity includes various cultures, languages, customs, histories, racial identities, ways of expressing theological conviction and personal and communal encounters with Christ in different cultural contexts," the covenant says. "By God's grace, the BWA reflects, in a visible way, the rich diversity of the one body of Christ."

At the same time, that diversity brings challenges including the difficulty of achieving clear, precise and commonly understood communication across multiple languages.

"That challenge is enhanced when well-meaning individuals do not know or fully appreciate the biblical, cultural, historical or theological distinctives and sensibilities that inform the perspectives articulated by various members of the BWA family," the document states.

The covenant begins with a commitment to offer opinions and perspectives "in a spirit of humility and with the request for the Holy Spirit to guide us in our speaking and in our listening to others."

No matter how passionate BWA

members feel about a particular issue or position, the covenant continues, conversation and dialogue "must always be focused on principles and not on individuals, cultures, regions, nations or denominational bodies."

"As a world community of Baptist believers, we remain incomplete until we have vigorously sought to hear, understand and respect the diverse viewpoints reflected by others, especially those persons from cultures that have been marginalized through material poverty and the legacy of colonialism and imperialism," the covenant says. "There-

fore we strive to avoid practices or conversations that perpetuate the dominance of one cultural perspective as providing the normative experience or theological perspective for all members of the BWA."

The BWA pledges to identify and employ tools to communicate more effectively and seek to develop "lasting and meaningful relationships through thought-

ful and prayerful conversations both within and outside of formal meetings."

"When we believe an opinion or perspective is seriously flawed, we challenge each other as beloved family members rather than as strangers and enemies," the covenant says. "Even the correction of perceived errors must be done in love."

## Internal diversity

Callam acknowledged the significant role Europe has played in the BWA and suggested the EBF consider ways to apply principles of the covenant in its own ongoing efforts to bring internal diversity into conversation with its commitment to unity.

Founded in 1949 to unite European Baptists emerging from the devastation of World War II, the EBF today encompasses more than 50 Baptist unions representing 13,000 churches and 800,000 members stretching from Portugal to Russia. The EBF represents nearly every country in Europe and Euro-Asia and also five unions in the Middle East. It is one of six regions that make up the BWA. (ABP)



CALLAM



## 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

**SENIOR PASTOR:** Four Points Baptist Church in Centreville, Ala., is now accepting resumés for a full-time senior pastor. Please send resumés to: Audie Hodgins, 382 1st Ave. N., Centreville, AL 35042.

**SENIOR PASTOR:** Piedmont FBC is currently seeking a full-time senior pastor. Send resumés to: Kip McFry, 605 Piedmont Avenue, Piedmont, AL 36272, or email to: fbcpastorsearchteam@gmail.com.

**PASTOR:** North Gardendale Baptist Church, Gardendale, Ala., is seeking a bivocational or full-time pastor. Send resumés to: dl1308@bellsouth.net, or P.O. Box 1308, Gardendale, AL 35071, ATTN: Pastor Search.

**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.

**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.

**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 resumés and cover letter by Nov. 15 to: scbcmusicsearch@gmail.com, or by mail to: Search Committee, Shades Crest Baptist Church, 452 Park Ave., Birmingham, AL 35226.

**BIVOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC:** Liberty Baptist Church, Hartselle, Ala. Prefer blended/traditional music. Send resumés to: Liberty Baptist Church, 1206 Lane Road NW, Hartselle, AL 35640.

**WORSHIP LEADER & ACCOMPANIST:** Pleasant View Baptist Church, Foley, seeks musicians to lead and accompany our adult choir and worship music. Worship is blended-traditional. Information/application at 251-943-1845.

**STUDENT MINISTER:** Bellview Baptist Church is looking for a part-time student minister. Applicant needs to feel called by God to ministry and committed to the local church. Applicant needs to be enthusiastic, organized and self-motivated with a cooperative spirit and a team approach to ministry. Send resumés to: pastor@bellviewbc.org, or mail to: 6674 Eastern Valley Road, McCalla, AL 35111.

**PART-TIME YOUTH MINISTER:** Gethsemane Baptist Church is seeking a part-time/bivocational youth minister. Resumés may be sent to: gethsemanebaptist@yahoo.com or Personnel Committee, GBC, P.O. Box 9, Hayden, AL 3507 (no phone calls).

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### FOR SALE

**CEMETERY PLOTS:** Cemetery plots and open and closing Jefferson Memorial Trussville. \$4,200 value for \$3,000. 3 available. Email: greenesib@gmail.com. Phone: 205-902-2878.

## Want to know God?

**Pastor Rick Patrick**  
First Baptist Church, Sylacauga

When the rich young ruler came to Jesus asking how to be saved, Jesus told him to sell all his possessions and give to the poor. He went away sad. Jesus said it was easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. Coming to Jesus sounds hard.

Jesus also said if anyone came to Him and did not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters and even his life, he could not be a disciple. He taught us to take up our cross and be willing to die for our faith. Again coming to Jesus sounds hard.

On the other hand, the profession of faith uttered by the thief on the cross was brief and simple. He asked Jesus to remember him when He came into His kingdom. Then Jesus assured the man he would be with Him in paradise. Coming to Jesus sounds easy.

The Philippian jailer asked Paul and Silas what he had to do to be saved. They told him to believe in the Lord Jesus and he would be saved, just like his entire family, as they too believed.

Again coming to Jesus sounds easy.

So which one is it? In the famous words of Forrest Gump, "Maybe it's both."

Ministers explain the process of coming to Christ in a variety of ways. Since it is a matter of the heart, even a trusting child capable of understanding the basic story of the gospel is able to place his or her faith in Christ and be saved.

But the implications of our faith in Christ and the demands He makes upon our lives are profound enough to challenge even the most mature Christians until the day Jesus calls us home to heaven.

The Bible tells us we must confess with our mouths Jesus as Lord. It is a very simple thing to confess our sin and say we turn away from it and toward Christ.

But the Bible also says we must believe in our hearts God raised Him from the dead. Our verbal confession is no magic soul-saving spell when someone's heart is not in it but is given instead to the things of this world.

Confess. Believe. You can be saved today.

**ALABAMA BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION ANNUAL MEETING**

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

Nov. 12–13, 2013 • Whitesburg Baptist Church, Huntsville • Theme: Life Changers

**TUESDAY MORNING**

PIANIST ..... Frank Jones  
 WORSHIP LEADER ..... Keith Hibbs  
 8:30 Pre-session Music ..... Keith & Amy Hibbs  
 8:45 Call to Order ..... John Killian  
**GREETINGS**  
 Madison Baptist Association ..... Charles Howell  
 Whitesburg Baptist Church, Huntsville ..... Jimmy Jackson  
 Congregational Music ..... Keith Hibbs  
 Invocation ..... Dwight Everett  
 8:55 Enrollment of Messengers ..... Mary Sue Bennett  
 9:00 Committee on Order of Business ..... Henry Cox  
 9:05 Committee Appointments ..... John Killian  
 9:10 Memorial Service ..... Joe Bob Mizzell  
 9:20 Alabama Baptist Ministers Benefit Society Mike McLemore  
 9:25 Introduction of Resolutions ..... John Nicholson  
 9:30 Congregational Music ..... Keith Hibbs  
 9:35 Miscellaneous Business  
 9:50 **RECOGNITIONS**  
 Former Convention Presidents ..... Rick Lance  
 New Pastors and  
 New Church Staff Members ..... W. Robert DuBois  
 10:00 Life Changers ..... Cecil Sanders  
**Changing Lives Through Campus Ministries**  
 10:20 Baptist Campus Ministry ..... Mike Nuss  
 10:40 Special Music ..... Keith Hibbs  
**Changing Lives Through Christian Higher Education**  
 10:50 Samford University, Andrew Westmoreland; The  
 University of Mobile, Mark Foley; Judson College, David  
 Potts; The Education Commission, Rick Marshall; Board  
 of Aid to Students in Church-Related Vocations, Bill  
 Goodwin  
**WORSHIP AND PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS**  
 11:10 Presentation of Convention President ..... Rick Lance  
 11:15 Special Music ..... Stev Parsons  
 11:20 President's Address ..... John Killian  
 11:50 Benediction ..... Ernie Price

**TUESDAY AFTERNOON**

PIANIST ..... Frank Jones  
 WORSHIP LEADER ..... Doug Wood  
**WORSHIP**  
 1:30 Pre-session Music ..... Alabama Singing Men/Alabama  
 Singing Women  
 1:45 Invocation ..... Jamey Pruett  
**Changing Lives Through State Missions**  
**REPORT OF STATE BOARD OF MISSIONS**  
 1:50 Report of Executive Director ..... Rick Lance  
 2:15 State Board of Missions Recommendations  
 2:45 State Board of Missions — Life Changers  
 3:15 Convention Recognitions  
**Changing Lives Through The Cooperative Program**  
 3:30 The Cooperative Program ..... Jim Swedenburg  
**REPORTS OF CONVENTION COMMITTEES**  
 3:40 Audit Committee ..... W. Robert DuBois  
 3:45 Insurance Committee ..... W. Robert DuBois  
 3:50 Resolutions Committee ..... John Nicholson  
 4:00 Miscellaneous Business  
 4:10 Committee on Boards and Commissions ..... Bill Hand  
 4:20 Committee on Committees ..... John Nixon Jr.  
 4:30 Time, Place, and Preacher Committee ..... Rob Jackson  
 4:40 Benediction ..... Mike Allums

**TUESDAY EVENING**

**Changing Lives Through Working Together to Reach the  
 World**  
**WORSHIP**  
 6:45 Pre-session Music ..... Charles Billingsley/Whitesburg Choir/  
 Alabama Singing Men/Alabama Singing Women  
 6:50 Invocation ..... Paul Hicks  
 Recognitions ..... Rick Lance  
 6:55 Special Music ..... Charles Billingsley/Whitesburg Choir/  
 Alabama Singing Men/Alabama Singing Women  
 Message ..... Frank Page

**WEDNESDAY MORNING**

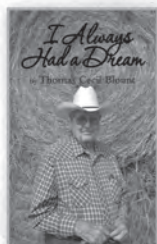
PIANIST ..... Frank Jones  
 WORSHIP LEADER ..... Dana Workman  
**WORSHIP**  
 8:30 Pre-session Music ..... Hillwood Baptist Church  
 8:45 Congregational Music ..... Dana Workman  
 Invocation ..... Zac Reno  
**Changing Lives Through Meeting People's Unique Needs**  
 8:50 Alabama Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries,  
 Rod Marshall; Shocco Springs Baptist Conference Center,  
 Buster Taylor; Alabama Baptist Retirement Centers, Ray  
 Burdeshaw; Alabama Woman's Missionary Union, Candace  
 McIntosh  
 9:20 Life Changers ..... Robert Smith  
 9:50 Election of Officers  
**Changing Lives Through Informing People for Ministry**  
 10:05 *The Alabama Baptist*, Bob Terry; Alabama Baptist  
 Historical Commission, Lonette Berg; The Baptist  
 Foundation of Alabama, Barry Bledsoe; Alabama Citizen's  
 Action Program, Joe Godfrey; Christian Life Commission,  
 Kenny Hatcher  
 10:25 Resolutions Committee Report ..... John Nicholson  
**Changing Lives Through Ministry in Times of Disaster**  
 10:35 Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief ..... Mel Johnson  
 10:55 Previously Scheduled Business/Election of Officers if  
 needed  
**WORSHIP**  
 11:05 Congregational Music ..... Dana Workman  
 11:10 Introduction of Convention Preacher and Alternate  
 Preacher ..... John Killian  
 Special Music ..... Scottsboro FBC Praise Team  
 Scripture ..... Tim Cox  
 11:25 Convention Sermon ..... Kevin Wilburn  
 11:50 Introduction of Convention Officers ..... Rick Lance  
 11:55 Benediction — Adjournment ..... Michael Cassidy

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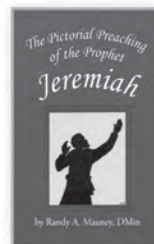
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## UNIVERSITY OF MOBILE

► **University of Mobile Names New Art Gallery:** University of Mobile College of Arts & Sciences dean Dwight Steedley said it was easy to select a name for the university's new art space. He thought of one person who has been a long-time supporter of the Baptist university's art department, as well as a participant in the program.



**FOLEY**

When Phil Counselman, associate professor of art and art department chair, independently arrived at the same name, the professors knew they had the right person — Marilyn Foley, wife of UMobile President Mark Foley.

The professors unveiled the new name — the Marilyn Foley Art Gallery — at the gallery's first reception Sept. 19. The new space is located in the newly renovated Ben May Building on the university's campus.

The gallery is open to the public Mondays through Fridays, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Exhibits change frequently and include professional artists as well as works by students.

"I feel very honored and appreciated, and undeserving," Marilyn Foley said. "I've certainly enjoyed being part of the art program the last few years, and it has been a real privilege to take classes and get to know the students while feeding my interest and desire to get better."

## SAMFORD UNIVERSITY

► **Samford To Hold Preview Day on Oct. 19:** Samford University will host its second Preview Day of the fall for prospective students and their families Oct. 19.

The program will include information sessions on Samford's application, scholarship and financial aid process, as well as campus tours and visits with admission counselors. A complimentary lunch will be served in the campus cafeteria.

Check-in will begin at 7:30 a.m. and the program will start at 8 a.m. in Wright Center.

For details, visit [www.samford.edu/previewdays](http://www.samford.edu/previewdays) or call the office of admission at 205-SAMFORD.

## JUDSON COLLEGE

► **Judson College to Host Party at Perry Lakes Park:** As part of its 175th anniversary, Judson College will host a party at Perry Lakes Park on Oct. 17 from 3 p.m. to dusk.

The Ambassador Brass Quintet of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra (ASO) will welcome guests beginning at 4 p.m. with a celebratory fanfare by Paul Dukas from the top of the 100-foot birding tower. At 4:30 p.m., new interpretive kiosk panels featuring significant sites and wildlife species will be unveiled.

Afterward the ASO Quintet will play a mini-concert at the park pavilion.

Guests are encouraged to bring lawn chairs and blankets for the concert and picnic supper. Food may be brought in or purchased from a barbecue wagon that will be on-site.

Perry Lakes Park is a 600-acre hardwood forest of the Cahaba River. The structures, signage and trails are available as a result of more than 40 years of volunteer work by groups including the Judson College Earth Team.

## State Baptist group opposes part of 'Obamacare'

The Christian Life Commission (CLC) of the Alabama Baptist State Convention (ABSC) unanimously adopted a resolution Oct. 1 opposing the much-debated Affordable Care Act's contraceptive mandate. It is being opposed because the mandate infringes on religious liberty, CLC members said.

The CLC addressed the issue somewhat later than most groups who decided to oppose it, but the timing is related to how the state convention entities work.

A motion related to the topic was made at the November 2012 ABSC annual meeting by Tom Stacey, member of Elkdale Baptist Church, Selma, and director of missions for Selma Baptist Association.

Stacey's motion — which asked that the CLC in cooperation with the ABSC executive leadership file an amicus brief in federal court to support those groups filing lawsuits related to the contraceptive mandate — was referred to the CLC for consideration. CLC members first met in February and heard from Stacey about his motion. "This mandate is ... an assault on the value of life," he said. "I'm opposed to abortion and this mandate supports it."

James Jordan, of the Nashville law firm of Guenther, Jordan and Price and CLC counsel, said, "Thus far there have been 71 lawsuits filed asking for accommodation for reli-

giously affiliated organizations."

Guidestone Financial Resources, Southern Baptist's retirement and insurance agency, also has announced its intention to file suit and that it won't provide abortion drug coverage in health insurance plans "no matter what," Jordan noted.

"Historically, divided matters like this make it to the U.S. Supreme Court," he said.

While Southern Baptists' Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission has filed an amicus brief, the Alabama Baptist CLC decided not to follow suit. Instead, the committee

is submitting the resolution adopted Oct. 1 to be considered by the ABSC Resolutions Committee.

The resolution says in part, "... we express solidarity with those persons across our nation who are engaged in legal actions opposing the contraceptive services mandate in order to champion a robust view of religious freedom in America."

The Resolutions Committee will meet Oct. 22 to decide about this and other resolutions to be considered by messengers at the Nov. 12-13 ABSC annual meeting in Huntsville. (Michael Brooks contributed)



## Robert T. Anderson

*Former Mission Service Corps volunteer coordinator dies*

Robert T. Anderson, who served several roles in Alabama Baptist life, died Sept. 26. He was 86. Anderson worked as a professor and chairman of the department of educational administration and leadership for the University of Alabama. After retiring he served as volunteer coordinator for Alabama's Mission Service Corps. He was a deacon and Sunday School teacher at First Baptist Church, Montgomery, where he was a member for 21 years.



**ANDERSON**

Kenny Hoopes, associate pastor for spiritual maturity/senior adults at First, Montgomery, said in stature Anderson was 5 feet 1 inch tall but was a "giant of a man as far as his character and love for the Lord."

Anderson is preceded in death by a daughter. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Betty, one son and three grandchildren. (Neisha Fuson)

**2013 ALABAMA BAPTIST PASTORS CONFERENCE**  
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 Whitesburg Baptist Church, Huntsville

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**Mark Foley** president, University of Mobile  
**Dusty McLemore** pastor, Lindsay Lane Baptist Church, Athens



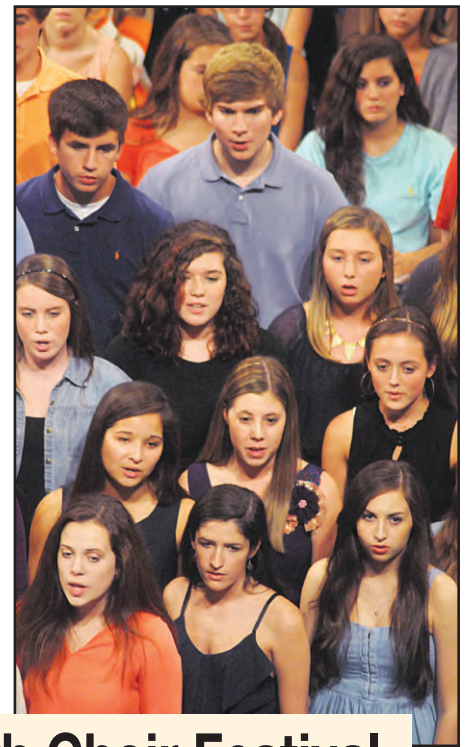
**Paige Patterson** president, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary  
**Bob Pitman** evangelist, Bob Pitman Ministries  
**Jerry Vines** evangelist, Jerry Vines Ministries  
**Daniel Wilson** pastor of West End Baptist Church, Clanton

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## FBC Montgomery hosts Youth Choir Festival

Photos by Doug Rogers

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# Joyful noise

**M**ore than 500 students from youth choirs representing 17 churches in Alabama and Georgia participated in the 2013 Youth Choir Festival, hosted by First Baptist Church, Montgomery, Sunday evening, Sept. 29. Alabama Baptist churches came from the fol-

lowing associations: Autauga, Baldwin, Bessemer, Birmingham, Calhoun, Coosa River, Covington, Elmore, Escambia, Montgomery, Russell, Selma and Tuskegee Lee.

Also participating in the event were First United Methodist Church, Montgomery, and Fellowship Baptist Church, Rome, Ga. (Doug Rogers)

## LETTERS

*(continued from page 2)*  
 pay taxes to help finance our country.

I realize there are some good reasons for abortions such as to save a mother's life, incest and rape, but I guess most are abortions of convenience.

The world still condemns Nazi Germany for eliminating over six million Jews throughout Europe. I have visited the Holocaust Museum in Washington and came away sickened at what went on during WWII by the Nazis.

I wonder if in the future someone will build a museum dedicated to the loss of America's 50 million babies?

Just because an abortion is [legal], it doesn't make it right.

I applaud the people in the photo on the right-hand part of the first page wanting an end to abortion.

Perhaps one day God-inspired

national leaders will repeal this terrible law so our country can return to Christian principles. And let's have Alabama be the national front runner for closing abortion clinics.

Bob Jaques  
 Hartselle, Ala.

### CHRISTMAS CARDS

Christmas 2013 is fast approaching. It is time to give our friends an opportunity to help with gathering Christmas cards. The cards will be sent to the HIV/AIDS inmates at Limestone Correctional Facility and/or others as part of the MAC D Ministries Project.

Select Christmas cards just as you would for your friends. The cards need to be signed by a person or group. We do not send return addresses or phone numbers. Put your card in an envelope but do not address the envelope or seal it.

The cards are to bring Christmas cheer to some who may not have much to be cheerful about. Your card might be the only one they receive — remember that as you select your cards, pray for the person who will receive your card as you are getting it ready.

Cards are needed by Dec. 3. Send to MAC D Ministries, 4030 6th Street East, Tuscaloosa, AL 35404.

If you feel the need to call or email, please do at 205-553-1592 or [adunnam4030@comcast.net](mailto:adunnam4030@comcast.net).

Thank you so much for your help in past years and for the help you will give as we get ready for this special Christmas ministry.

Scarlett Dunnam  
 Tuscaloosa, Ala.



# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For October 13

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

### THE POWER TO HEAL John 5:2-3a, 9b-17

#### Taking the Initiative (2-3a)

This lesson encourages Christians to take the initiative in meeting people at their point of need and through this opportunity to introduce them to Jesus. Every Christian is responsible to make disciples, and many opportunities present themselves as believers live their daily lives. Non-Christians show up at the same places many Christians do — ball-parks, the office, at school, waiting rooms, church, the mall. Everywhere you go, potentially there are non-Christians there who need a gospel witness.

In John 5 Jesus goes up to Jerusalem for a feast of the Jews. As He enters through the Sheep Gate, a small point of entry on the north wall of the city, He passes by a pool called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades. "Bethesda" means "house of mercy," a fitting term given the desperate state of the people lying there in hope of a miracle cure. This pool is identified as a single large two-pool complex near the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem and adjacent to the modern Church of St. Anne. The two pools are separated from each other by a partition. The remains of columns found around this site help confirm that the partition between the pools, along with each of the four sides surrounding the pool complex, likely contained the five roofed colonnades.

As Jesus passes by the pool of Bethesda, He sees an invalid of 38 years. Jesus knows this man has been there a long time, demonstrating Jesus' omniscience. Jesus asks the sick man, "Do you want to be healed?" He answers Jesus that he has no one to help him into the waters after they have been stirred. The invalid apparently holds to the popular belief that the first person into the pool after the waters have been stirred, and only the first person, would be miraculously healed.

Jesus' powerful word heals the man. Jesus also instructs the man to pick up his mat and walk. Jesus takes the initiative and demonstrates His sovereign mercy by healing this

man. Christians need to take the initiative to reach out to serve people in Jesus' name.

#### Dealing with Resistance (9b-13)

The Jewish religious leaders, rather than rejoicing over the man's healing, criticize him for carrying his bedroll on the Sabbath. Nothing in the Old Testament specifically prohibited such an innocent activity as carrying one's bedroll on the Sabbath day. The man is violating later Jewish traditions that had developed hundreds of minutely detailed and burdensome rules about what kind of "work" was prohibited, including a code that forbade carrying an object from one domain into another.

The religious leaders want to know who had instructed him to carry his bedroll on the Sabbath day. The healed man does not know, for Jesus had healed him and slipped away in the crowd. The religious leaders hear of the healing and the violation of their code, and they are only interested in the latter. They think they see what is important, but in religious matters there are none so blind as those who are always certain that they see.

#### Keeping On (14-17)

Jesus meets the man again in the temple complex, a short distance from where the original healing had taken place. Jesus instructs the man to stop sinning lest something worse happen to him. The unavoidable implication is that the bad thing that has already happened was occasioned by the sin that the person must not repeat.

The man runs and reports to the religious leaders that Jesus had healed him. John writes this is why the religious leaders are persecuting Jesus. Jesus' Jewish opponents put their merely human religious tradition above genuine love and compassion for others, which the Old Testament commands and Jesus exemplifies. When Jesus says, "My Father is working until now, and I am working," He implies that He, like the Father, is Lord over the Sabbath. The Jews recognize Jesus' claim to deity and seek to kill Him. Jesus keeps on fulfilling the mission the Father has sent Him to do.

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

### EVEN CHRISTIANS COLLIDE Luke 10:38-42

In this brief passage we learn about two sisters who had a conflict over what to do when Jesus came to visit. We learn much simply by putting the passage in its context.

The passage occurs near the beginning of Luke's "travel narrative," which narrates Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. All three "Synoptic" Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) have a travel narrative, but Luke's is especially long (almost one-third of the Gospels) and occupies a central place in the story (9:51-19:27). Consequently at every point along the way, whether Jesus is teaching the lawyer about the Good Samaritan (just before our passage: 10:25-37) or is instructing the disciples in how to pray (just after it: 11:1-4), we are to keep in mind the words, "When the days drew near for Him to be taken up, He set his face to go to Jerusalem" (9:51). Jesus is on His way to His death.

#### Verse 38

Consequently the phrases "on their way" and "along the road" imply "to Jerusalem." Luke, therefore, is probably using the "way to Jerusalem" as a symbol for discipleship (remember that in Acts, Luke's second volume, Jesus' followers called themselves "the Way": Acts 9:2; 18:25; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22). That is certainly the case with today's passage.

Luke calls the place where Mary and Martha live "a certain village." John identifies it as Bethany, a town near the Mount of Olives, the hill immediately east of Jerusalem (John 11:1, 18). John suggests that the sisters live together (John 11:20) and mentions a house of the women's brother Lazarus (12:1). Luke suggests that the house in his story is Martha's and makes no mention of Lazarus, although some suggest that he is the Lazarus of Jesus' parable in Luke 16:19-31.

#### Verses 39-40

John also portrays Martha as one who

serves. Luke's "much serving" sounds awkward today, but we will see that it helps us, because later in Luke 22:24-27 Jesus will define discipleship as serving.

In John's story, Mary anoints Jesus' feet with perfume (John 12:1-3; Luke does not identify the woman who anoints Jesus, and places the story at the house of Simon the Pharisee: 7:36-50).

Luke presents us the striking picture of Mary sitting at Jesus' feet; we normally expect male students to take this posture, whether literally or figuratively. Remember it is Luke who mentions that Jesus has female followers (Luke 8:1-3; 23:55-56; 24:22-24; compare Acts 9:36-39; 16:14-15; 18:2-3; 18), and here he shows us a tableau of a woman disciple learning at the feet of her teacher (compare Luke 8:35; Acts 22:3).

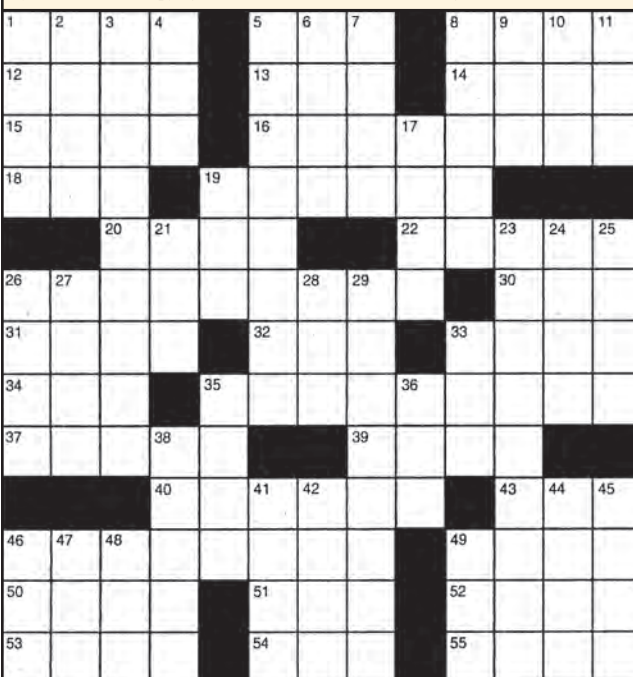
#### Verses 41-42

Jesus' enigmatic statement, "Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her," invites us to ask what we see in this passage. In the context of Luke's Gospel and Acts, both Martha's service and Mary's learning show us different and laudable paths to discipleship. But in the immediate context of the story, Jesus praises Mary's way over Martha's. Why? The background mentioned earlier suggests an answer: because Jesus is on His way to His death, opportunities to learn at His feet are few and fleeting. On the other hand, opportunities to serve will abound after Jesus has gone. See especially Acts 6:1-7, where the Jerusalem believers choose seven men to serve widows. The word translated "serve" ("serve/wait tables" and "serve the Word") in verses 2 and 4 is the basis of our English word "deacon."

Luke's story, therefore, invites us to look at ourselves when we come into conflict with a fellow Christian. We should ask, "Despite our disagreement, and despite our differences, how is my brother or sister in Christ being a faithful disciple of our Lord?"

## Christian Crossword

By Lee Esch Copyright 1994 ©Barbour Publishing Inc.



### Across

- Arrived.
- Bean counter. (abbr.)
- The trees of the field shall \_\_\_\_\_ their hands. (Isa. 55:12)
- Will \_\_\_\_\_ rob God? (Mal. 3:8)
- Hurl.
- Assistant.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ is clothed with strength. (Ps. 93:1)
- Citizen of Tirane.
- Food additive. (abbr.)
- Every \_\_\_\_\_ fled away. (Rev. 16:20)
- Pointed tools.
- Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and \_\_\_\_\_ and forever. (Heb. 13:8)
- Ones who offer their services.
- Compass direction.
- Dry.
- Farm organization for youth. (abbr.)
- Information.
- 2,000 pounds.
- I lay down \_\_\_\_\_ the sheep. (John 10:15)
- If thine \_\_\_\_\_

hunger, feed him. (Rom. 12:20)

- \_\_\_\_\_ is good, save one. (Luke 18:19)
- Prisoner.
- Capture.
- A Japanese island.
- A city in Hawaii.
- Hosea. (Rom. 9:25)
- Abraham's burnt offering. (Gen. 22:13)
- Aware of.
- Purchases.
- Before. (poetic)
- Selves.

### Down

- He maketh the storm a \_\_\_\_\_ . (Ps. 107:29)
- Old Testament prophet.
- Imitation butter.
- Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the \_\_\_\_\_ . (Rev. 22:13)
- Organize.
- Survey.
- Father God. (Mark 14:36)
- I \_\_\_\_\_ all things through Christ. (Phil. 4:13)
52. (Roman numeral)
- A city in Oklahoma.
- My tongue is the \_\_\_\_\_ of a ready writer. (Ps. 45:1)
- Insects.
- Love worketh no \_\_\_\_\_ . (Rom. 13:10)
- Marry.
- Extremely loud.
- Regarding. (2 words)
- Twelve months.
- Do good to them that \_\_\_\_\_ you. (Matt. 5:44)
- Press.
- Major football organization. (abbr.)
- What things were \_\_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_\_ those I counted loss. (Phil. 3:7)
- Ye have made it a \_\_\_\_\_ of thieves. (Matt. 21:13)
- Exotic pet bird.
- Enemy.
- Voice transmitters. (informal)
- He hath cast me into the \_\_\_\_\_ . (Job 30:19)
- Jewish month.
- Singing part.
- Sounds of disapproval.
- Elf.
- Oklahoma State

- University. (abbr.)
- Ye have taken away the \_\_\_\_\_ of knowledge. (Luke 11:52)
- A garden tool.



# 'Hope is What We Crave'

## Musical duo 'for KING & COUNTRY' shines spotlight on Christ

By Leann Callaway  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

**T**wo brothers from Sydney are capturing the attention of audiences around the world as they desire to share the gospel through songs.

Since releasing their debut album, "Crave," Joel and Luke Smallbone — better known as the contemporary Christian duo for KING & COUNTRY — have been given many unique opportunities and platforms to share the message behind their music.

Their original song "The Proof of Your Love" was named Christian music's song of the year by Amazon.com. In addition, iTunes referred to "Crave" as the breakthrough album of 2012 in their genre. The duo has received tremendous exposure while having their songs featured on various television shows, along with appearing on "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno." With a surge in popularity, their music was placed in the top 25 on Billboard's Chris-

tian albums chart for more than 60 weeks.

The songs on their debut album were specifically designed to strengthen a believer's daily walk with the Lord while opening doors to engage in conversations with nonbelievers.

"We really wanted the heartbeat of the album to be songs about life," Joel Smallbone said. "What the record is really saying is that you can find God in any and every situation. Find God in your relationships. Find God in your work. Find Him today."

### Connecting people to God

"We included songs about relationships, a friend who was struggling with depression and songs about God being the center of our lives. All the songs are based on our desire to connect people to God and have them turn to Him in any situation."

Despite the accolades and achievements, the duo remains focused on keeping the spotlight shining on Christ.

Recently the brothers were traveling on a missions trip to El Salvador with Compas-



for KING & COUNTRY

Photo courtesy of Word Label Group

sion International, a child-sponsorship organization dedicated to meeting the physical and spiritual needs of children living in poverty around the world. During the trip, they suddenly became inundated with text messages and emails congratulating them for garnering seven Dove Award nominations. Among the categories they have been nominated include Song of the Year, New Artist of the Year and Contemporary Christian Performance of the Year. The 44th annual Gospel Music Association Dove Awards will be held at Allen Arena on the campus of Lipscomb University in Nashville on Oct. 15.

Instead of reflecting on the prestigious honors, for KING & COUNTRY focused on ways they could bring relief to those in need.

"I looked out the window and was reminded of the extreme poverty that these people are living in each day," Joel Smallbone said. "It really put the accolades and awards in their rightful place. No matter what, we will continue supporting the other artists and keep doing what Christ has called us to do — sharing messages about the hope and salvation only found through a relationship with Him."

Through the years, they have sought advice and guidance from their older sister, Grammy and Dove Award-winning recording artist Rebecca St. James. While spending many years performing concerts around the world, St. James also uses her platform to share messages of inspiration and teams with a variety of ministries.

By taking an active role and encouraging students to take a bold stand for Christ in their schools, for KING & COUNTRY partnered with See You at the Pole and helped to promote the 2013 prayer gathering around school flagpoles Sept. 25.

The heart and vision behind their music is highlighted on a live CD/DVD project, "Hope is What We Crave." The brothers maintain a busy schedule — touring, performing concerts, writing and recording songs, in addition to acting roles. Joel Smallbone played King Xerxes in "The Book of Esther" and is also featured in the

movie "Like a Country Song" with Billy Ray Cyrus.

During concerts, the duo takes time to share the stories behind the songs and they emphasize the importance of having relationships that honor Christ. In fall 2013, they will join the Newsboys on the Restart tour. In spring 2014, they will tour alongside Casting Crowns.

"One of the major things that we talk about is relationships," Joel Smallbone said. "We have a campaign that we started

to remind young girls never to settle for second best and not to let any man disrespect them. So often it seems like society suggests for women to talk, dress, act, think or feel like they're cheap, like they are worth nothing more than a penny. But we believe in a God who says they're priceless.

"We've made necklaces in the shape of a coin with the word 'priceless' engraved on it, as a reminder of a woman's worth. We've also made bracelets that have 'respect and honor' written on them. We've made them available at every performance that we can."

### Life-changing encounters

"We've seen thousands of guys and girls rally behind this cause. Young girls saying, 'I know that I have worth and value as a daughter of the King.' Young men are saying, 'I'll step up and be a leader. Chivalry is not dead. I will treat these ladies with respect and honor.'"

Through their music and message, for KING & COUNTRY desires that their concerts will provide more than just entertainment. They hope to provide students and young adults a life-changing encounter with God.

"We find deep satisfaction in being able to go beyond the airwaves and engage people in messages of hope and the truth of the gospel," Joel Smallbone said. "It's been encouraging to be able to present the music to people live, but it's also been equally inspiring to see people respond to these messages that we share." ❏

**"What the record is really saying is that you can find God in any and every situation."**

**Joel Smallbone  
for KING & COUNTRY**

## MOVIE REVIEW

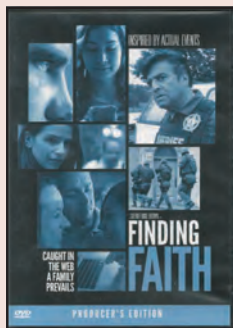
### Finding Faith

Produced by The Safe Surfin' Foundation and JC Films. 2013. 111 minutes.

Inspired by actual events, this movie is sure to strike terror into any parent or grandparent who sees it. It is hard to miss the stories of predatory behavior in social media outlets, but this movie gives a chilling look at how an innocent family can be victimized by a cunning, evil person.

The story is one of Faith, an innocent 14-year-old girl who was abducted for sale to sex traffickers. Fortunately, this girl — the one whose ordeal the story is modeled from — was found safe after three days. The story is dramatic and gripping, with solid performances by Erik Estrada (remember the Latin heartthrob from the TV

show "Chips"?), Stephanie Bettcher, who plays Faith, and Jamie Watson, who plays the girl's dad. Other than those three and a handful more, the acting was uneven, with some actors overacting pretty seriously and others uncomfortably wooden — a la Randy Travis.



Although it is entertaining, the film was produced as more than entertainment; it was intended to educate parents and teens about Internet safety. It certainly met its goal with this grandmother. I intend to share the information with my children.

The movie was co-produced by Liberty University and Thomas Road Baptist Church, Lynchburg, Va., and includes music by Jason Crabb, Avalon and Charles Billingsley.

— Martine Bates Sharp



Mikie Mahtook

Photo by Marvin Gentry via Montgomery Biscuits

*“I think He put me here to influence other people positively by the way I play, by the person I am and the stage I am on.”*

Mikie Mahtook  
Montgomery Biscuits

# Playing with heart

## Montgomery Biscuits' Mahtook lives life for Christ, remembers father's legacy

By Bill Sorrell  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

**M**ikie Mahtook looks at his feet to find heart. When he was in high school, he began writing the number 54 on his cleats. That number belonged to his father Michael Mahtook when he was a linebacker on Louisiana State University's (LSU) football team from 1980 to 1983.

It is a “reminder,” said Mikie Mahtook, 23, a right fielder for the Montgomery Biscuits.

In 1994, Michael Mahtook died at age 32 of heart disease. Mikie Mahtook, who is named after him, was 4 years old.

“When he passed, I was the man of the house,” Mikie Mahtook said. “He left me with a big family. He had a lot of brothers and sisters. I have a lot of cousins. They tell me stories and keep his memory alive within me. I do things to remind them that I am his child. I have some of his mannerisms. I try to live my life the way he would want me to and make him proud of me.”

Playing baseball with a football mentality, Mikie Mahtook used inspiration from his father to propel him into the first round of the 2011 MLB First-Year Player Draft after his junior season at LSU. The Tampa Bay Rays picked him 31st overall. He is rated as the Rays' No. 11 prospect.

### Successful college career

At LSU, Mikie Mahtook was first-team All-American and first-team All-SEC and led the SEC with a .383 batting average and 29 stolen bases in 2011. He also was on the SEC Academic Honor Roll. As a freshman, he was an integral part of the Tigers' winning the 2009 College World Series, his biggest thrill along with being drafted.

His father's death made him grow up fast.

“I learned that I am a lot more mature,” he said. “The older I got, the more responsibility I put on myself to be that good influence and do things to help my family out. ... I have grown to know your family is everything. If you have them, you can do whatever you want.”

Together his mother, Mary Anne Mahtook, his 21-year-old twin sisters Catherine and Christina and he make up what he calls the “Fantastic Four.”

“[My mother] sacrificed a lot to give us the lives that we have had,” Mikie Mahtook said. “I am very grateful for that. As a result, we have a very close relationship with each other.”

His mother introduced him to Christ and is his spiritual role model.

“After everything that happened with her, she became real close [to Christ],” he said. “Everybody in my family is a devout Christian.”

As Mikie Mahtook got older, the more he wanted to grow in his Christianity.

“I wouldn't be the person I am without [Jesus],” he said. “I've gone through a lot of heartache. If you don't have [God] to help you out, it makes it that much harder to get through it.”

He believes God has purposefully placed people in his life to help him grow. He credits his uncles with helping him be “the guy I am today.” His friends' fathers were there for him and included him.

“It was a combination of different things that made it a lot easier for me,” he said. “I was fortunate.”

A combination of family, church attendance, Bible reading and prayer have helped keep him on target spiritually.

“Every year, the older you get, the more difficult things get, the more opportunities you have to fall in bad places,” Mikie Mahtook said. “My mom, family and sisters have helped me stay on the right path and made me grow.”

Baseball is a conversation starter about faith.

“Once they get to know me, the way my personality is and the type of person I am, hopefully they would know that I am a Christian,” he said. “You tell them what you

are about. Hopefully it influences them positively and they will want to follow in my footsteps.”

Former Montgomery pitcher Kyle Lobstein said Mikie Mahtook is someone he wanted to get to know better and be able to discuss matters of faith with.

“He seems like he would be a straight-edge guy,” said Lobstein, now a pitcher with Toledo in the International League.

Montgomery catcher Mark Thomas calls Mikie Mahtook, who has a “little Cajun” in him, “one of the nicest guys I have met from the draft class. He is a humble guy and good teammate.”

Merrill Kelly, a former teammate, watched Mikie Mahtook battle at the plate.

“He grinds it out at bats,” Kelly said. “When he gets his pitch, he doesn't miss.”

Through the 2013 season, Mikie Mahtook had a batting average of .254 with 30 doubles, eight triples, seven homers and 68 RBI. He had a slugging percentage of .386 and an on base percentage of .322. Among Southern League batting leaders, he was tied for sixth in hits, tied for fourth in doubles, No. 5 in triples, ninth in RBI and tied for 12th in stolen bases.

“He swings the bat pretty well and puts the ball in play,” Lobstein said. “That is all you can ask of him.”

Mikie Mahtook's strengths are his passion, his dedication and how hard he plays.

“You must never let your guard down,” he said. “I want to make it to the big leagues, be the best player I can possibly be and get better every day. I want to show the Rays that they made a great investment in me (he signed for \$1.15 million).”

He believes playing with heart is part of God's purpose.

“I think He put me here to influence other people positively by the way I play, by the person I am and the stage I am on.”

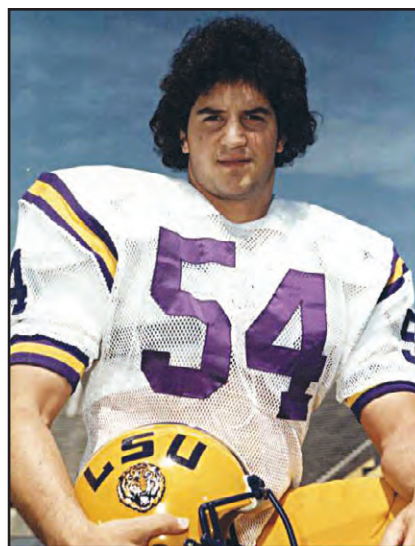


Photo courtesy of LSU Athletics

Michael Mahtook was a linebacker on Louisiana State University's football team from 1980 to 1983. He died at age 32 and has been an influential part of his son Mikie's life ever since.